

Grand Prix ACF AutoTech 2026 Unveils Its Six Finalist Startups

PARIS – February 10, 2026 – The jury of the Grand Prix ACF AutoTech 2026, which met on February 9 at the Automobile Club de France, has selected six finalist startups following several hours of deliberation.

The selected companies stand out for their technological ambition, economic viability and tangible impact on automotive cost reduction and industrial performance. Key themes this year include AI-assisted engineering design, strategic independence from critical materials, and advanced LiDAR optimization.

Finalist startups include:

Grand Prix ACF (Mature startups)

- Altrove (Paris, France): Develops innovative alternatives to high-risk critical inorganic materials using a proprietary algorithmic approach and unique artificial intelligence, strengthening industrial resilience and technological sovereignty.
- Cognitive Design Systems (Toulouse, France): Provides an AI-powered engineering design platform that accelerates design exploration and automates complex engineering workflows.
- Spark Cleantech (Essonne, France): Has developed a breakthrough plasma technology that splits methane into hydrogen and solid carbon with zero CO₂ emissions.

ACF Pioneer Prize (Seed-stage startups)

- Sumot (Grenoble, France): Develops an over-flux inverter technology that increases electric motor performance or reduces motor size for equivalent power.
- Bloomineral (Saclay, France): Produces a carbon-negative mineral material designed to replace polluting minerals used in automotive plastics, components and batteries.
- Iridesense (Paris, France): Has created the world's first multispectral 3D LiDAR capable of identifying material types to enhance vehicle perception and safety.

Four awards will be presented in 2026: the Grand Prix ACF, the ACF Pioneer Prize, the GPACF GreenTech Mention, and a new Industrialization Trophy recognizing a former finalist that has most successfully industrialized its solution since 2018.

Founded and coordinated by Richard de Cabrol, the Grand Prix ACF AutoTech is held under the high patronage of Yann de Pontbriand, President of the Automobile Club de France, and Thierry Peugeot, President of the ESSEC Auto & Mobility Club.

"Automotive and industrial innovation is deeply rooted in the DNA of the Automobile Club de France. For nine years, this competition has highlighted international startups whose pioneering spirit reflects our own," said Yann de Pontbriand, President of the Automobile

Club de France.

"The quality of projects presented this year is outstanding. Artificial intelligence, productivity gains, material sovereignty, energy performance and electric powertrain innovation are all represented. This edition confirms that the Grand Prix ACF AutoTech remains fully aligned with the key challenges facing the industry," said Richard de Cabrol, Managing Director of the Grand Prix ACF AutoTech.

The Grand Prix ACF AutoTech 2026 Final will take place on Wednesday, April 15, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the Automobile Club de France in Paris. The event will be livestreamed on YouTube and will include audience voting.

Press accreditation requests: presse@agencevlc.com

About the Grand Prix ACF AutoTech

Founded in 2018, the Grand Prix ACF AutoTech is an international startup competition dedicated to innovation in the automotive, mobility and industrial sectors.

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