



PRESS RELEASE

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Michelin and Scale Up Booster are partnering to accelerate the development of OYA Urban Tree, a smart shading solution developed by the Michelin Innovation Lab

- Following successful trials in Toulouse, OYA Urban Tree – an innovative inflatable solution designed to tackle climate challenges – will be rolled out from summer 2026;
- A partnership combining the expertise of the Michelin Innovation Lab with the entrepreneurial drive of Scale-Up Booster;
- A shared ambition for large-scale development and international roll-out.

In response to the increasing frequency of heatwaves in urban areas and during large-scale events, Michelin has announced that it is accelerating the development of OYA Urban Tree, which is based on the Sombrero prototype. This smart inflatable shading solution is the result of research carried out at the Michelin Innovation Lab.



Sombrero prototype in Toulouse – 2024

Following an exploratory phase, the Group has selected Scale Up Booster to support the development of a dedicated entrepreneurial project and accelerate its market launch as early as this year, with a confirmed ambition to roll it out internationally by the end of 2026.

OYA Urban Tree: a practical solution to the climate challenges facing cities and events

OYA Urban Tree is based on the Sombrero prototype, which has been under development for several years by Michelin's teams to tackle extreme heat events in urban environments.

The engineers have designed a very large, inflatable shade structure that can be deployed rapidly and can provide over 260 m² of shade. Its lightweight, innovative structure allows for flexible and reversible installation, without the need for heavy infrastructure. This solution creates a vast cool haven in public spaces or event venues heavily exposed to the sun, including in areas where traditional solutions (such as greening or fixed structures) are difficult, if not impossible, to implement.

Tested on two occasions in Toulouse, Sombrero proved a great success with the public, demonstrating not only its practical usefulness and its ability to cope with significant operational constraints, but also its appeal and its potential for large-scale deployment.

Building on these findings, the project is now organised under the name OYA Urban Tree, with the aim of offering a technologically advanced, multi-purpose solution that can be adapted to different contexts.

Technology born of Michelin's expertise

Developed by Michelin, OYA Urban Tree draws on the Group's expertise in innovative materials, structures, sustainable design and industrial performance.

The solution demonstrates Michelin's ability to transform innovations from the Michelin Innovation Lab into practical solutions that help regions adapt to climate change.

Scale Up Booster, a partner in structuring and scaling up

Michelin has selected Scale Up Booster's proposal to support the structuring of OYA Urban Tree's entrepreneurial project. This partnership is based on a significant commitment in terms of both human resources and financial support, aimed at accelerating OYA Urban Tree's industrialisation, the structuring of its business model and its transition to commercial scale.

Launched in 2026, the industrial start-up OYA Urban Tree is tasked with rolling out this solution. It brings together a management team comprising entrepreneurs and experienced industrial experts. To ensure an effective transfer of expertise, the start-up relies on Michelin's support, notably through the involvement of Sombrero's founding team on the Advisory Board.

OYA Urban Tree launches a fundraising campaign

To accelerate its industrialization and commercial roll-out phases, the start-up is launching a fundraising campaign aimed at supporting its development in France and internationally.

With the backing of Scale Up Booster and the support of Michelin, OYA Urban Tree aims to launch its product on the market as early as 2026 and begin international roll-out in the same year. This collaborative project is part of a long-term initiative with significant potential.

"In just a few weeks, the Scale-Up Booster team has managed to give our prototype a genuine entrepreneurial edge. Their approach combines industrial vision, business structuring and international strategy. This paves the way for this innovation, developed at Michelin, to find the best conditions for roll-out on international markets," says Olivier Vuichard, Head of Innovation at Michelin.

"We are very proud and excited to have been chosen by Michelin to transform this remarkable prototype into a genuine business solution. OYA addresses a current global need: adapting cities and events to extreme heat whilst creating new uses and value. Our ambition is now to accelerate its international roll-out, starting with Europe and the United States," say Albert Szulman and Michel Ktitareff, co-founders of Scale-Up Booster.

Photos and/or attachments are available at:

<https://contentcenter.michelin.com:443/dam/wedia/shared-board/2e822a68-5ea4-4d20-9ee0-05426087848a>

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