

## ALES SVOBODA



**ESA Astronaut  
Fighter Pilot**

Aleš Svoboda (\*1986) is a fighter pilot, keynote speaker, member of the European Space Agency's Astronaut Reserve, and holds a PhD in Aircraft and Rocket Technology.

Aleš is a seasoned Gripen pilot, a graduate of leadership schools in Spain and USA. Leading the charge, he is entrusted with planning, briefing, execution, and debriefing of multinational air operations. He has acted as Mission Commander at the largest air defense exercise in NATO's history. As a combat-ready pilot, Aleš was deployed to safeguard the skies of NATO allies in the Baltics, where he intercepted foreign military aircraft, including armed fighters and bombers. He has experienced life-threatening emergencies, including the ejection of his wingman, and completed extensive training in extreme environments, including the famous S.E.R.E. course. In his role of Chief of Weapons and Tactics, he shaped the core business of his Fighter Squadron.

In 2022, Aleš succeeded in the most extensive astronaut selection campaign in the history of human spaceflight. Beating a competition of more than 22,500 applicants, he became part of the European Space Agency's Astronaut Class of 2022. Since then, he has participated in plenty of media events, panel discussions and outreach activities. He has been selected one of the "22 faces of the year of 2022" by the Czech national radio. Aleš has actively worked with the country's key stakeholders to return the Czech Republic to space. He has taken part in a space analog mission – isolated in a mile-long cave system in Spain, he led his crew during a simulated mission to Mars. In 2023, Aleš was promoted to the rank of Major. Becoming part of a unique project team, he is now responsible for facilitating a seamless transition from the current fighter aircraft fleet to the latest generation of fighters – the coveted F-35. Leading operations, weapons, training, and personnel, he is instrumental for the largest defense contract in the country's history.

In his engaging keynotes, Aleš talks about the power of fighter pilot culture – leadership, communication, team problem-solving, decision-making and managing risk. He shares fact-based knowledge and techniques, and uses a wealth of practical examples to explain what helps him being an effective leader. Aleš gives his lectures online, in the Czech Republic, and worldwide, in English and in Czech. He is a sought-after panelist and, as an expert on your topics, is also available for workshops.

### **Topics (Selection):**

- Leading from the Front
- Fighter Pilot Culture (Team Problem-Solving)
- Extreme Decision-Making (and Communication)
- Managing Risk