



**Interreg**  
Italia-Österreich



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## **START2 Living Lab – Closing Event** **Drones in Mountain Rescue: A Roadmap to 2030**

20.03.2026 | 9:00 – 17:00

NOI TECHPARK BOLZANO, SEMINAR ROOM 1

When an emergency happens in difficult terrain, every minute counts. That's where drones can help. They can locate people faster on trails, deliver equipment and critical supplies to hard-to-reach sites and reduce the burden on rescue teams moving through challenging ground.

The Interreg project START2 brings together researchers, companies and mountain rescue teams to advance the use of drones for rescue in extreme terrain – user-centred, interdisciplinary and cross-border. During the closing event, we will present the results and discuss the next steps with stakeholders from Italy and Austria to make unmanned aerial rescue in mountain regions safe, reliable and operationally viable.

What to expect:

- **Key findings and lessons** from the START2 Living Lab
- **Practical use cases** from mountain rescue and industry (including light UAS and cargo drones)
- Insights into the UAS **R&D landscape** at NOI Techpark
- **Panel discussion** on using drones in extreme environments – from training and test sandboxes to automated risk assessment for flight planning
- **Networking and exchange with stakeholders** from Bavaria, Italy and Austria

[Register now](#) to secure your place.

Participation is free. The event will be held in German and Italian with simultaneous interpretation.

## PROGRAMME

09:00 **Welcome & opening remarks**

Filipp Frei, NOI Techpark

### **Signing of the agreement on cross-border cooperation**

09:30 **Start Living Lab – Cooperation Models in UAS Research and Development**

Sebastian Mayrgündter, NOI Techpark

10:00 **The Professional Drone Market: State of the Art and Prospects at European and Italian Level**

Paola Olivares, Politecnico di Milano

10:30 **Coffee break & networking**

11:00 **Light UAS Support for Mountain Rescue Operations**

Gianluca Ristorto, MAVTech

11:30 **Cargo Drones and Training for Mountain Rescue**

Lia Popaz, FlyingBasket

12:00 **Lunch**

13:30 **Drone-Assisted Emergency Medical Evacuation Versus Ground Evacuation: A Controlled Experimental Trial**

Michiel van Veelen, Eurac Research

14:00 **Applied Drone Research and Automatic Risk Assessment of Drone Operations**

Gernot Paulus, CUAS-SIENA

14:30 **Autonomous Rescue Drones in Mountainous Areas by Applying Reinforcement Learning Algorithms and Enhancing Controlling Capabilities by Broadcasting and Visualising Positions of Team Drones**

Julian Bialas, Robert Kathrein, FH Kufstein

15:00 **Coffee break & networking**

15:30 **Panel discussion – Challenges for UAS in Extreme Environments**

- Overview of relevant projects
- Operative activities of collaboration mountain rescue – companies – research
- Training & professionalisation
- Next steps and upcoming challenges in mountain rescue
- Transport & Delivery of rescue means
- AI and automated flight planning
- Lessons learned form START2
- Sandboxes for testing new approaches

17:00 **End of event**

## CONTACT

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