



*D-Orbit Signs €26-Million Contract  
with ESA for IRIDE Satellite Observation Program*

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*The program, developed under the framework of Italy's Space National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), will lead to an Earth observation constellation that will monitor critical infrastructure, air quality, and meteorological conditions.*

**Fino Mornasco, Italy April 5, 2023:** Space logistics and orbital transportation company [D-Orbit](#) signed a 26-million euro contract with the [European Space Agency \(ESA\)](#) for **IRIDE**, a space-based observation program initiated by the Italian government that will leverage national competencies and responsibility with the support of the European Space Agency (ESA), which will manage the project, and the [Italian Space Agency \(ASI\)](#) under the framework of Italy's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR).

According to the contract, **D-Orbit will provide one SAR (synthetic aperture radar) satellite and will manage its flight operations segment** on behalf of the end user; the deal also includes **an option for an additional SAR satellite, worth €24 million**. The SAR sensor will be implemented by [MetaSensing](#), an Italian company specializing in advanced radar technologies.

The IRIDE program will consist of a **satellite constellation, ground operational infrastructure, and services for the Italian public administration**. The satellite constellation, which will be launched between 2025 and 2026, will use various detection techniques and technologies, including microwave and optical imaging in different frequencies, and will **provide data for applications in commercial startups, SMEs, and industry**.

*"We are proud of this contract which perfectly fits into our Satellite as a Service line of business," said **Stefano Antonetti, D-Orbit VP Business Development and Institutional Sales**. "Since inception, our successful partnerships with esteemed organizations like the European Space Agency and the Italian Space Agency have paved the way for our company's growth, allowing us to participate in cutting-edge research and development initiatives while making a significant social impact."*

*"The IRIDE project represents a great achievement for MetaSensing and a key step for the StarSAR-X, our high-performance X band radar system" said **Adriano Meta, CEO and founder of MetaSensing**, "and we are proud to provide our contribution to such a large and performant Italian constellation."*

IRIDE will support the Italian Civil Protection and other organizations in monitoring critical infrastructure, air quality, and meteorological conditions. The data gathered by the constellation will also be used to support applications in commercial startups, SMEs, and industry.

The PNRR has allocated about €2 billion to the space economy as part of its Digitalization Mission.



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## **About D-Orbit**

D-Orbit is a market leader in the space logistics and transportation services industry with a track record of space-proven services, technologies, and successful missions.

Founded in 2011, D-Orbit is the first company addressing the logistics needs of the space market. ION Satellite Carrier, for example, is a space vehicle that can transport satellites in orbit and release them individually into distinct orbital slots, reducing the time from launch to operations by up to 85% and the launch costs of an entire satellite constellation by up to 40%. ION can also accommodate multiple third-party payloads like innovative technologies developed by startups, experiments from research entities, and instruments from traditional space companies requiring a test in orbit. The whole, fully redundant ION can be rented for edge computing applications and space cloud services to provide satellite operators with storage capacity and advanced computing capabilities in orbit.

D-Orbit's roadmap includes becoming a relevant player in the in-orbit servicing market, which is forecasted to become one of the largest, growing markets within the space sector.

D-Orbit has offices in Italy, Portugal, the UK, and the US; its commitment to pursuing business models that are profitable, friendly for the environment, and socially beneficial, led D-Orbit S.p.A. to become the first certified B-Corp space company in the world.

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