



Press release

Luxembourg teams up with ESA to create a unique “European Space Resources Innovation Centre” to be established in the Grand Duchy (18.11.2020)

Luxembourg entered a strategic partnership with the European Space Agency (ESA) to create a “European Space Resources Innovation Centre”, called ESRIC in abbreviated form. Unique of its kind, ESRIC aims to become an internationally recognised centre of expertise for scientific, technical, business and economic aspects related to the use of space resources for human and robotic exploration, as well as for a future in-space economy.

Based in Luxembourg, ESRIC will partner with public and private international players in this field to create a hub of excellence for space resources in Europe. The creation of ESRIC is part of the Luxembourg government initiative SpaceResources.lu launched in 2016 to establish an ecosystem favorable to the development of activities related to the exploration and use of space resources.

ESRIC’s activities will focus on space resources research and development, drawing together excellence from public research and its facilities, with private sector initiative and efficiency. The centre will also contribute to economic growth by supporting commercial initiatives and start-ups, offering a business incubation component and enabling technology transfer between space and non-space industries.

On 18 November 2020, an implementation agreement concerning cooperation activities at ESRIC was signed between the Ministry of the Economy, as the supervisory body of the Luxembourg Space Agency (LSA), the Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology (LIST), a leading mission-driven research and technology organisation, and ESA. ESRIC is operated and hosted by LIST. Among others, ESA will provide equipment, implement research activities at ESRIC and give technical and business support to the business incubator.

When signing the agreement, the Luxembourg Minister of Economy Franz Fayot said: “ESRIC is the first research, business and innovation centre wholly focused on the utilisation of resources which you can find in space. Mission-driven research and applications, best-in-class talent and state-of-the-art facilities unique in Europe are the keys to success.”

Jan Wörner, the ESA Director General, stated: “I warmly welcome the strategic partnership between ESA and Luxembourg in establishing ESRIC, a one-of-a-kind centre dedicated to research and innovation in the field of space resources. I have been closely following the Luxembourg initiative on space resources since its very inception and I am very happy to see ESA Member States driving new endeavours and a concrete outcome.”

Press release by the Ministry of the Economy / Ministry of Higher Education and Research / Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology / Luxembourg Space Agency