

**PRESS RELEASE**

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The Italian Space Agency has awarded Telespazio a contract for upgrading the Sardinia Deep Space Antenna

The Italian Space Agency (ASI) has chosen Telespazio, a joint venture between Leonardo (67%) and Thales (33%), to provide activities expanding the space capacity of the ASI Sardinia Deep Space Antenna (SDSA), located in the town of San Basilio, in the province of Cagliari (Italy).

The SDSA already shares a portion of its systems and infrastructures with the Sardinia Radio Telescope (SRT), managed by the National Institute of Astrophysics (INAF) for the purposes of radio astronomy. Thanks to the upgrade project, SDSA will be provided with state-of-the-art equipment that the Agency will use in its own work in space.

The project aims to further develop Italy's infrastructure for research in space, helping consolidate the country's role in the field of navigation and communication services for both Deep Space (over 2 million km from Earth) and Near Earth (within 2 million km) missions of robotic and human exploration, specializing in lunar missions and support for scientific experiments.

For Telespazio, the contract award confirms the importance of space exploration activities, and in particular those related to the lunar economy. The company, as Prime Contractor, will be joined by leading industrial partners such as OHB Digital Connect and Nautilus, together with numerous companies from southern Italy and prestigious academic institutions, including the University of Bologna.

Under the contract, the Italian Space Agency has asked Telespazio to upgrade the Sardinia Deep Space Antenna with renewal of cryogenic systems for reception in the X and Ka bands in Deep Space applications and introduction of advanced systems for the X and K bands in Near Space, essential to ensure reliable, accurate communications during scientific and experimental missions.

In addition to technological improvements, the project includes expansion of existing civil infrastructure and construction of new buildings, including a laboratory for the collection and analysis of mission data, both at the main site of San Basilio and at the future SDSA Research Centre currently being completed in Selargius, also in the province of Cagliari.

Following the upgrade, the Sardinia Deep Space Antenna will provide strategic infrastructure for the missions of the Italian Space Agency and other space agencies, strengthening scientific collaboration at the national and international levels. The antenna will also be used for joint research with INAF, research institutions and universities, offering Italy's scientific community new opportunities for collaboration on a global scale.

Telespazio, a Leonardo and Thales 67:33 joint venture, is one of the world's leading operators in space services. Its activities range from the design and development of space systems to the management of launch services and in-orbit satellite control, from Earth observation, integrated communications, satellite navigation and localisation services to scientific programmes. The company plays a leading role in the reference markets, supported by its infrastructure and the technological experience acquired in over 60 years of activity, which include participation in space programmes such as Galileo, EGNOS, Copernicus and COSMO-SkyMed. Telespazio, which is Thales Alenia Space's partner in the "Space Alliance", generated sales of EUR 700 million in 2023 while employing 3,300 people in 15 different countries.

The assignment is one of the initiatives included in Italy's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), specifically the Earth, Moon and Mars (EMM) project, led by INAF, in partnership with ASI and Italy's National Research Centre (CNR) and supported by the Ministry of Universities and Research. As part of the EMM project, which includes study, design and prototyping work aimed at creating scientific instruments for an Italian base on the moon, the Italian Space Agency carries out, among other things, reinforcement of SDSA/SRT, the research infrastructure permitting communication between Earth and Space.

In addition to PNRR funds, the Italian Space Agency (ASI) has made available additional resources from the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, with the aim of completing the development of the Sardinia Deep Space Antenna so that the station meets international standards, improving and extending its current capabilities to increase its availability, continuity and safety and offer the high performance essential for research.