A European Gateway to Commercial Space is established in Dübendorf

Zurich Gains Direct Access to the International Space Station and the Starlab Space Station

ZURICH, ZURICH, SWITZERLAND, September 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Center for Space and Aviation Switzerland and Liechtenstein (CSA) is bringing together a fully integrated pathway at the Switzerland Innovation Park Zurich, from laboratory preparatory through parabolic flight test and qualification to low Earth orbit. With international partners across Europe and the United States, the hub now provides a practical route to orbital research and development aboard the International Space Station (ISS) - including three initial free competitive experiment slots provided jointly by the Center for Space and Aviation Switzerland and Liechtenstein (CSA) and Starlab Space - and, in the future, to commercial space stations such as Starlab.

> “Thanks to strong global partnerships of the CSA, the Switzerland Innovation Park Zurich and Dübendorf airfield are developing into a European hub for commercial space activities.”
>
> *Carmen Walker Späh, President of the Government Council, Canton of Zurich*

Starting on 7 September, Dübendorf will bring two complementary levels of access to microgravity into a single operational framework: parabolic flight and orbital research aboard the ISS. The launch of the 8th Swiss Parabolic Flight Campaign and the new CSA-Starlab orbital pathway give Zurich direct access to orbital research and mark an important step toward an integrated European gateway for commercial space activities. Together, CSA and Starlab are launching this Dübendorf-to-orbit pathway by offering the first three selected competitive experiment opportunities with free access to the ISS.

Building on nearly two decades of mission experience, CSA is developing the Switzerland Innovation Park Zurich as the ground-based hub of this system, together with the Switzerland Innovation Park Zurich Foundation. From a single location, researchers, start-ups, and companies will be able to develop, test, and qualify technologies before progressing from parabolic flight qualification to orbital applications.

International partnerships provide direct access to the next stages of this pathway: Royal Netherlands Aerospace Center (NLR) and Novespace for parabolic flights, Starlab for orbital research and future commercial activities in low Earth orbit, and Space Florida for access to the Kennedy Space Center and Cape Canaveral launch ecosystem. Dübendorf thus connects

European users with major orbital research and launch infrastructure on both sides of the Atlantic. The gateway to space is now operational through CSA and is available to national and international partners.

These partnerships are a key element of this strategy. Dübendorf is being developed as a European upstream and mission-preparation hub for orbital research and commercial activities in low Earth orbit. At the same time, the infrastructure of CSA and the University of Zurich in Florida creates an operational bridge to the U.S. launch ecosystem, serving both the current ISS era and the transition to commercial space stations. Starlab, a U.S.-led, global joint venture among Voyager Technologies, Airbus, Mitsubishi Corporation, MDA Space, Palantir Technologies, and Space Applications Services, is building a next-generation space station and ecosystem designed to provide a new industrial park in low Earth orbit after the retirement of the ISS. Through the Starlab joint venture ecosystem, customers can already conduct research aboard the ISS and establish a direct pathway to Starlab once the station becomes operational.

By the end of 2030, the CSA and the Zurich Innovation Park Foundation are set to develop this gateway into an established European end-to-end system open to companies, start-ups, and research institutions. It will integrate ground-based development, flight and microgravity qualification, direct access to orbital missions, and a transatlantic bridge for business and investment.

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