

Interreg Alpine Space 2014-2020



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The A-Ring project is coming to an end, but the work on the three strategic themes, digitalisation, sustainability and mobility, does not seem to stop. The cross-border initiative is part of the European Interreg Alpine Space Programme 2014-2020, whose objective is to identify Research and Innovation (R&I) priorities for the Alpine area, creating a network between companies, universities and local institutions, capable of developing shared policies. Since its inception in October 2019, the partnership has aimed to increase collaboration between the different actors in the territories of the Alpine region in order to increase their degree of innovativeness and shared opportunities.

Italy, France, Germany, Slovenia, Austria and Switzerland are the countries that have been involved in the project. The University of Milan led the consortium, while the project partners are Confindustria Belluno Dolomiti, the Austrian University of Applied Sciences of Vorarlberg, the Ministry of Education of Slovenia, the Faculty of Public Administration of the University of Ljubljana, the two German Universities of Applied Sciences of Kempten and Constance, the Burgenland Regional Authority, Area Science Park, the University of Italian Switzerland and Polymeris, a French innovation cluster for the plastics and composites industry.

In spite of the fact that the pandemic had a significant impact on normal habits and ways of interaction and cooperation, the project never stopped and continued even in the hardest months to work at a distance to increase cross-border cooperation in the Alpine macro-region. In these last months of the project, the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport



concluded the stakeholder engagement process and the analysis of current cooperation perspectives in order to elaborate the 'Blueprint for Alpine Region Research and Innovation Agenda'. This document defines an approach for the Alpine region to create a shared research and innovation agenda, prioritising R&I topics for the activation of synergetic and complementary transnational collaboration. Similarly, in this last period, Area Science Park optimised the 'Policy Brief', which, more focused on public administrations, identified specific recommendations on national, regional and local policy topics in order to increase cooperation. In addition to this, the German Universities of Applied Sciences of Kempten and Constance, in cooperation with the University of Milan, finalised the document 'Alpine R&I Chart', which defines an action plan for cooperation between universities and representatives of research centres.

A key opportunity to present the project results and stimulate discussion will be the final event on 31 May, to be held in Milan at the Sala Napoleonica in Via Sant'Antonio 12. The morning session on 31 will be introduced by Prof. Giuseppe De Luca of the University of Milan, project coordinator for the University of Milan, which is Lead partner. Partners from the University of Ljubljana (Faculty of Public Administration), the Hochschule of Kempten (University of Applied Sciences) will take the floor. This will be followed by a round table discussion involving companies, projects, services and products that, by working together, contribute to making R&I a solid reality. In the afternoon, Area Science Park and the Wirtschaftsagentur of Burgenland will present the Policy Brief. At the end of the day there will be a second panel discussion moderated by the University of Milan on the important topic of the relationship between public authorities and R&I in the Alpine region. The event in Milan will also offer a 'poster session' where





companies and institutions will have the opportunity to present their projects, practices, services and products in the field of research and innovation and for the following topics: circular economy, sustainable mobility, digitalisation and social innovation. Participation in this event will be possible both in person and online by registering at the following link: <https://lnkd.in/dDz7DWhn>

Finally, it is also worth mentioning that the last Caravan event of the project will be held on 27 June 2022, organised by Area Science Park with the support of Confindustria Belluno Dolomiti. The event will be online and will deal with the role of digitisation in innovation policies for the Alpine area.

