

Doing innovative business in Trentino is possible

May 22, 2026

“Innovative Business in Trentino: It Can Be Done” is the title of the publication recently presented by the Foundation for the Enhancement of Trentino-Based Research (VRT Foundation), an instrumental body of the Caritro Foundation. The presentation took place at Palazzo Calepini as part of the Trento Festival of Economics and brought together key players from Trentino’s research, innovation, and business ecosystem.

Moderated by Pierangelo Soldavini, the panel featured the President of the University of Trento, Flavio Deflorian; the President of FBK, Ferruccio Resta; the Director General of the Department of Economic Development, Research and Labor, Laura Pedron; the President of the VRT Foundation, Francesca Reich; and the Vice President of Confindustria Trento, Alfredo Maglione.

At the center of the discussion was Trentino’s ability to transform research, expertise, and innovation into new entrepreneurial and industrial opportunities by strengthening connections among academia, businesses, and institutions. *“The University has always focused its efforts on research, which is the foundation of innovation and knowledge transfer. But its impact on the local area cannot be taken for granted, and we certainly cannot achieve it alone,”*said University of Trento President **Flavio Deflorian**, emphasizing the importance of *“building a system”* to support students and researchers pursuing entrepreneurial paths. *“We need people to understand that failure is not a stigma but part of the process. We need perseverance and an environment that encourages knowledge transfer. Trentino is a small region, and ensuring that companies founded here remain here is a challenge we must all address together. Collaboration with businesses is an added value in an economy where innovation is becoming increasingly important.”*



Ferruccio Resta, President of

Fondazione Bruno Kessler, also highlighted the strategic importance of Trentino's ecosystem: *"Today, competitiveness is increasingly measured by the ability to transform research, expertise, and innovation into new industrial and social opportunities. Trentino has a top-level research and innovation ecosystem, with distinctive scientific, technological, and industrial assets. The challenge is to further enhance these assets as a strategic lever to attract investment, generate new businesses, and build high-value supply chains. Initiatives such as 'PoC by Trentino' move in this direction by strengthening the region's ability to turn ideas into companies and skills into concrete development opportunities. At FBK, we see it as our role to help connect knowledge, applied research, institutions, and the production system, supporting a transformation centered on sustainability, people, and social impact."*

Laura Pedron, Director General of the Department of Economic Development of the Autonomous Province of Trento, recalled the region's strong public investment in research: *"In Trentino, there are 5,000 researchers for a population of 500,000. Our role is to invest in research and innovation, but above all to ensure that this knowledge increasingly translates into entrepreneurship."* Pedron also highlighted the potential of the PoC (Proof of Concept) pathways: *"There are potentially 41 new companies emerging from these ideas. Now we must encourage the local ecosystem to invest in and support the growth of these innovative new ventures."*

During the meeting, **Francesca Reich**, President of the VRT Foundation, presented the results achieved through the foundation's research enhancement support program: 15 calls published, 141 projects supported, and more than 400 researchers involved.

Fondazione VRT supports the final stage of bringing research to market. We want to show researchers that entrepreneurship is a viable path,” Reich said. She also emphasized the importance of communication and collaboration among local stakeholders: “We need to engage researchers, inspire them as we are doing today, and encourage them to take the next step. At the same time, it is essential that local stakeholders work together, avoiding overlaps and making the support system clearer and more accessible overall. In this era, change is constant, and we continue to evolve to improve and create innovative businesses in this region.

The discussion concluded with remarks from **Alfredo Maglione**, Vice President of Confindustria Trento, who stressed the need for stronger public-private collaboration: *“What Confindustria expects is teamwork and joint efforts to improve competitiveness and productivity. Innovation cannot happen in isolation within companies: we need networks, connections, and investments. Currently, research, development, and innovation investments in Trentino account for 1.5% of GDP: 0.9% comes from the public sector and 0.6% from the private sector, of which 85% comes from industry. Our goal is to reach 1%, while the European average is 2.2%, and in some Northern European countries it reaches 3%.”* Maglione also highlighted the importance of increasing private investment in innovation and young people: *“There are resources available, both in industry and in citizens’ savings. If we want to build a future for young people, we must start from local territories and turn commitments into concrete realities.”*

The discussion reflected a shared vision: Trentino has the expertise, infrastructure, and relationships needed to generate new innovative businesses. The challenge emerging from all contributions is now to consolidate these experiences, retain research-driven companies within the region, and further strengthen the links among education, applied research, investment, and the production system. Innovative business can be built in Trentino. Innovative business can be built in Trentino.



[Following this link to PAT's website](https://magazine.fbk.eu/en/news/doing-innovative-business-in-trentino-is-possible/)

PERMALINK

<https://magazine.fbk.eu/en/news/doing-innovative-business-in-trentino-is-possible/>

TAGS

- #enterprises
- #festival economia
- #festivaleconomia2026
- #imprese
- #innovazione
- #pocbyTrentino
- #proofofconcept
- #research
- #territories

AUTHORS

- Editorial Staff