

PoC by Trentino: 20 projects funded to turn research into new businesses

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€1.4 million has been allocated to support innovations in health, industry, and the energy transition. The technological development phase is now underway for the teams selected by a jury of experts from the research, business, and investment sectors.

Twenty teams have been selected for PoC by Trentino, the program promoted by **Fondazione Bruno Kessler (FBK)** and the **University of Trento**, with the support of the **Autonomous Province of Trento**, to transform research results into new business opportunities. The winning projects were awarded a total of **€1.4 million** to support the technological development of their solutions and guide them toward market entry through the Proof of Concept (PoC) model.

*"Thanks to this project, we are taking another step toward strengthening the connection between research and business, reinforcing the pathway that brings the most promising ideas from the laboratory to the market. Research is a fundamental driver of concrete technologies and innovative solutions capable of addressing today's and tomorrow's challenges. The pilot experience has shown us that, when researchers have access to the right tools, skills, and opportunities, scientific projects can become applications that generate value for companies, attract investment, and promote regional development. In this process, the direct involvement of the business community is an essential added value, helping steer innovation toward practical, sustainable, and competitive solutions. We want young talent to find in Trentino an ecosystem that supports the growth of their ideas by providing expertise, capital, and a network of companies capable of ensuring a virtuous transfer of knowledge between research and industrial innovation," said **Achille Spinelli, Vice President of the Autonomous Province of Trento and Councillor for Economic Development.***

From health to industry, the winning PoC by Trentino teams are addressing major challenges with proposals that are innovative, ambitious, and already highly mature. Two of the top three projects—**R.E.S.C.U.E.-CHD2** and **Brain Cancer Therapeutics**, both from the **Department of Cellular, Computational and Integrative Biology (CIBIO) at the University of Trento**—focus on innovative therapies. Second place went to **MBS4INDUSTRY**, an **FBK project** applying formal methods to industrial safety. Eight teams also received special awards from strategic partners who recognized the strong potential of their proposals for business and regional development



1° prize: R.E.S.C.U.E.-CHD2, CIBIO
Department-UniTrento



2° prize: MBS4INDUSTRY, Fondazione
Bruno Kessler



3° prize: Brain Cancer Therapeutics, CIBIO
Department-UniTrento

The projects recognized today in the Depero Hall of the Province of Trento main offices will now enter the development phase, continuing the support and mentoring pathway already launched with the **Trentino Innovation Hub Foundation (HIT)**, leading to the conclusion of the program and the presentation of the final results.

A total of **175 researchers and academics from FBK and the University of Trento participated in the selection process**, submitting **41 project ideas** in the **fields of energy, health, industry, society, agritech, and space tech**, demonstrating the breadth and multidisciplinary nature of research carried out in the region. Following an initial evaluation, **30 teams** advanced to Pitch Day, where they presented their projects to the jury. At the end of the event, the projects honored today were selected.



*"With PoC by Trentino," said **Ferruccio Resta, President of FBK**, "we are reaffirming a strategic direction launched by FBK in 2025: investing in the ability of research to generate innovation, value, and new opportunities for the region. The results have shown that when researchers are given the opportunity to develop the potential of their ideas, the market responds with concrete interest. Projects launched last year have already attracted more than €700,000 in venture capital investment, confirming both the value of the research developed in Trentino and its ability to evolve into successful companies. In 2026, together with the University of Trento and with the support of the Autonomous Province of Trento—joined by the region's economic and social stakeholders—we have taken another major step forward through an unprecedented investment for a territory of this size, strengthening a collaborative model among institutions, research organizations, and businesses that will make Trentino increasingly competitive in knowledge-intensive sectors."*

PoC by Trentino therefore represents a strategic investment in strengthening the region's ability to transform scientific research into innovation. It promotes **collaboration among universities, research institutions, companies, and investors** while creating the conditions for the



This vision is shared by **Flavio Deflorian, President**

of the University of Trento: *"With PoC by Trentino, we are investing in the future by building a concrete bridge between cutting-edge research and applied innovation. It is a tool that enables us to validate technologies, markets, and technology transfer*

pathways, preventing scientific ideas from remaining confined to academic publications. The University of Trento's contribution to this second edition confirms this commitment: 17 finalist projects, including six developed jointly with FBK, spanning fields from health and energy to industry, agriculture, robotics, and environmental sustainability. For the region, this means a continuous flow of innovation; for the University, it means fostering a technology transfer culture that increasingly brings together research, entrepreneurship, and local development."

The initiative also engages the region's economic and social ecosystem through the support of the **Trento Chamber of Commerce, the Trentino Federation of Cooperatives, Fondazione Caritro, Confindustria Trento, Dolomiti Energia, GPI, Innova, and Optoi.**

The Jury:

Luca Passoni, Partner, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti Venture Capital Tech Transfer; **Maria Imbesi**, Partner, Step Venture Capital; **Alessandro Rossi**, Professor, University of Trento, and Head of the School of Innovation; **Maurizio Gianordoli**, Vice President of FBK and Founder & CEO of Social IT; **Andrea Silli**, Director of the Startup Division, Trentino Sviluppo.

Symbolic Awards and Their Meaning

In addition to project funding, the winning teams received symbolic awards.

The eight teams recognized by the strategic partners received an engraved silicon *wafer*—the material used to produce microelectromechanical systems (MEMS)—manufactured in FBK's Clean Rooms, one of the Foundation's flagship facilities. The *wafer* symbolizes innovation and internationally recognized research excellence.

The top three projects received a 3D-printed model of the three peaks of Monte Bondone—Cima Cornetto (2,178 m), Doss d'Abramo (2,140 m), and Cima Verde (2,102 m)—designed and produced by the University of Trento's FabLab. Each peak represents a milestone achieved while also encouraging participants to look beyond the summit toward new ideas, new collaborations, and new challenges

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