

Press release:**Yuri signs contract to launch ESA life-science mission on Haven-1, scheduled to be the world's first commercial space station, launching in 2027**

Award marks a major step for commercial end-2-end services in LEO, with ESA-selected research set to launch aboard Vast's Haven-1

MECKENBEUREN, Germany, April 17, 2026 - Yuri has secured its first contract from the European Space Agency (ESA) to carry out a life-science research mission aboard [Haven-1](#), marking a major milestone for ESA and Yuri.

Under the agreement, Yuri will deploy its ScienceTaxi platform as a Lab-as-a-Service solution for ESA on Haven-1, the commercial space station being developed by Vast. The mission is scheduled for early 2027 and will position Yuri as the first European company to deliver institutional research services on a commercial orbital destination.

The award underscores a broader shift in the space sector: commercial spaceflight is no longer a future concept, but an emerging reality shaped by close cooperation between public institutions and private infrastructure providers.

"For Yuri, this is a landmark moment," said Maria Birlem, Co-Founder & Co-CEO of Yuri. "This contract shows that the next chapter of space is being built now and that Europe is actively shaping it together with strong commercial partners. By bringing ScienceTaxi to Haven-1, we are enabling a new way to access microgravity: faster, more flexible, and commercially scalable."

As agencies prepare for a future beyond the International Space Station, the mission highlights how service-based access models are becoming central to research and development in orbit. Yuri's ScienceTaxi platform is designed to give institutional and industrial customers streamlined access to microgravity for biotech, life sciences, and advanced R&D applications.

"Haven-1 support a new era of government and commercial missions in low Earth orbit," said Max Haot, CEO of Vast. "Having Yuri and ESA as part of Haven-1 Mission 1 is a strong signal that commercial stations will play a critical role in enabling the next generation of microgravity science and innovation."

The contract also reflects ESA's strategy to prepare for the post ISS era, investigating new opportunities with commercial providers for LEO to gain operational experience with end-to-end service providers while creating reliable pathways for European research in orbit.

"This type of mission marks an important step in ESA's efforts to expand access to commercial low Earth orbit services, in partnership with companies such as Yuri, said Antonella Sgambati, LEO Payload Team Leader at ESA. ESA looks forward to supporting European research and technology development through several collaborations like this one."

For Yuri, the contract strengthens its role as a key European interface between scientific demand and commercial space infrastructure. The company has built its business around making space more accessible for research and production, offering customers a fully managed Lab-as-a-Service model that lowers operational barriers and accelerates time to orbit.

With ScienceTaxi set to fly on Haven-1 Mission 1, Yuri is positioning itself at the forefront of a new commercial space economy, one in which research, development, and industrial innovation can move beyond government-only access and into a more scalable orbital marketplace.

About Yuri:

Yuri is a leading commercial space biotech company that leverages the unique conditions of microgravity to research and develop groundbreaking biotechnological innovations and providing the implementation services (Yuri Lab-as-a-Service). With over 25 successful research missions to the ISS and partnerships with NASA, ESA, GSK, Charité Berlin, and MIT, our interdisciplinary team of aerospace engineers and biologists is taking pharmaceutical and biotech research to a new level - advancing drug discovery, optimized biomaterials, and sustainable food production processes both in space and on Earth. To achieve these goals Yuri manufactures space-based multi-user research, production and fabrication facilities for commercial biotechnology and pharma companies as well as international space agencies. Together with its partners, Yuri builds up the future commercial in-space life-science infrastructure.

About Vast

Vast is developing next-generation space stations to ensure a continuous human presence in space for America and its allies, enabling advanced microgravity research and manufacturing, and unlocking a new space economy for government, corporate, and private customers. Using an incremental, hardware-rich and low-cost approach, Vast is rapidly developing its multi-module Haven Station. Haven Demo's 2025 success made Vast the only operational commercial space station company to fly and operate its own spacecraft. Next, Haven-1 is expected to become the world's first commercial space station when it launches in 2027, followed by additional Haven modules to enable permanent human presence by 2030.

Headquartered in Long Beach, California, and with more than 1,000 employees and over a billion dollars in private capital, Vast has built the facilities required to manufacture and operate America's next space station. The company plans to develop future habitats for the Moon and Mars, dedicated space stations for government partners, and other crewed systems that will unlock the expanding long-term space economy.

About ESA:

ESA is an intergovernmental organisation, created in 1975, with the mission to shape the development of Europe's space capability and ensure that investment in space delivers benefits to the citizens of Europe and the world. ESA has 23 Member States: Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia are Associate Members. ESA has established formal cooperation with four Member States of the EU. Canada takes part in some ESA programmes under a Cooperation Agreement.

By coordinating the financial and intellectual resources of its members, ESA can undertake programmes and activities far beyond the scope of any single European country. It is working with the EU on implementing the Galileo and Copernicus programmes as well as with Eumetsat for the development of meteorological missions.

Learn more about ESA at www.esa.int

Contact:

Felix Steiner, Yuri GmbH

Head of Business Development – New Space

Felix.steiner@yurigravity.com