

**Intesa Sanpaolo meets with investors and start-ups in Naples**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**“RESTART, ANSWERING WITH INNOVATION”**

- **A day dedicated to new entrepreneurs, organised by “Atlante Ventures Mezzogiorno” and “Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative”**
- **Success stories and meetings with the key players: the importance of innovative realities in the South of Italy**

*Naples, 3 July 2012* – **Intesa Sanpaolo** opens its doors to investors and new entrepreneurs in Naples to help spread the culture of technology innovation in the South of Italy, by telling entrepreneurial success stories and bringing together start-ups and investors.

**“Restart, answering with innovation”**, is the day organised by **Atlante Ventures Mezzogiorno** – the **Venture Capital fund of the Intesa Sanpaolo Group** – and by **Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative**, the platform dedicated to highly technological projects for the development of the innovation ecosystem. The event was held today at the Meeting Room of **Banco di Napoli**.

The introductory speech was delivered by **Giuseppe Castagna**, General Manager of Banco di Napoli, who illustrated the Bank’s commitment towards the promotion and development of the business community in the South of Italy, with special emphasis on new businesses. A round table ensued with speeches by **Roberto Battaglia** from Officine Formative, **Massimo Deandreis** from SRM Studi e Ricerche Mezzogiorno, **Tony Gherardelli** from Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative, **Aurelio Mezzotero** from Atlante Ventures and **Giuseppe Bonini** from Intesa Sanpaolo’s Neoimpresa portal.

In addition, special attention was paid to some success stories being told about new southern Italian businesses, with the aim of understanding the direction which the Italian Venture Capital must follow in order to become the driver of a sound economic development for the country.

Lastly, the third part of the day was dedicated to new businesses, which presented their business plans to investors. The experts from Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative and Atlante Ventures encouraged the contact between the start-ups in attendance and the audience made up of early stage investors and Italian companies.

*“It is important to help young people with a business idea get started on a process which is far from easy, but which perhaps offers better opportunities than a permanent job contract nowadays”* – stated **Giuseppe Castagna**, General Manager of Banco di Napoli. *“This holds even more true for the South of Italy and today also serves the purpose of introducing universities, entrepreneurs, researchers and young people from Campania to*

*the opportunities available. Our contribution through the Start-Up Initiative platform and the Atlante Ventures Mezzogiorno fund mainly consists of discovering young entrepreneurial realities, establishing them and putting them in contact with those who have experience in the development of business ideas and with investors. In two and a half years, 330 new businesses were established and over 260 were introduced to 3,500 potential investors. However, our commitment is not limited to technology start-ups, but is also addressed to those who wish to start a more traditional business such as in the handicraft or commercial sectors”.*

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### **Atlante Ventures Mezzogiorno**

Atlante Ventures is one of Intesa Sanpaolo’s three Venture Capital Funds. It invests in the technological innovation and development of digital companies in the South of Italy. The Fund **holds 25 million euro in assets**, half of which are subscribed by the Intesa Sanpaolo Group and half by the Department for Digitisation and Technology Innovation of the Prime Minister’s Office. Launched in 2009, **with an expected life of 10 years**, the Fund is positioned to act as an ideal partner for Italian SMEs and start-ups located in the South of Italy that are developing cutting-edge products and technologies. This is possible partly thanks to its extensive global network of companies and its relationships with leading players in the research and university sectors.

[www.atlanteventuresmezzogiorno.it](http://www.atlanteventuresmezzogiorno.it)

### **Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative**

Started in 2009, it is Intesa Sanpaolo’s platform dedicated to the development of the innovation ecosystem which sets out to bring finance and industry closer to innovation in high-growth potential technologies such as Biotechnologies, Electronics, ICT, Cleantech, Nanotechnology. The purpose is to identify and develop new businesses and new entrepreneurs with a positive impact on employment. Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative, created and promoted by the Corporate & Investment Banking Division Innovation Team, pursues the aim of discovering highly innovative new businesses, preparing them for the market challenge and giving them the opportunity to present their ideas to potential investors and industrial partners (Business Angels, Venture Capitalists, Seed Capital Funds, Foundations, private and corporate investors). After going through a selection and training phase, the new entrepreneurs meet with investors and introduce their business plan for funding. Two and a half years on from the launch, there have been **23 editions in Italy** and **17 international appointments** whereby over **1,600 start-ups** went through the selection process, with over 375 accessing the training phase (*Boot Camp*), and over 260 were presented to the Arena where they met with over **3,500** potential investors and industrial partners, for a total of around **1,900** expressions of interest gathered on the plans.

*For information*

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