

## PRESS RELEASE

*The national event for innovative start-ups takes place on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March*

### **BiolItaly Investment Forum & Intesa Sanpaolo StartUp Initiative: top biotech and healthcare start-ups convene in Milan**

**Over 23 million Euros invested in 15 success stories since 2008**

Milan, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017 – Top biotech and healthcare start-ups will be presenting their businesses to Italian and international investors at this year's **"BiolItaly Investment Forum & Intesa Sanpaolo StartUp Initiative"** today and tomorrow in Milan at the Intesa Sanpaolo Group's Conference Facility.

Now in its tenth year, the event is organised by **Assobiotech** (the Italian Association for Biotechnology Development, part of the Federchimica organisation) and **Intesa Sanpaolo**. It aims to bring together innovative businesses and projects seeking capital with financial and corporate investors from all over the world.

Since its launch, Italy's leading event for biotech innovation has helped attract investment of over **23 million Euros** for **15 innovative start-ups**.

Over the years the project has also selected and trained more than **130 start-up finalists**, putting them in contact with **1,600 businesses and investors**.

The BiolItaly Investment Forum & Intesa Sanpaolo StartUp Initiative kicked off in January with a nationwide roadshow to gather projects and submissions. In February, twenty entrants embarked on a training pathway at the Filarete Foundation run by coach Bill Barber, the Californian investor who oversees Intesa Sanpaolo's StartUp Initiative.

On completing their training, the finalists were asked to present their projects on 13<sup>th</sup> March at a deal-line up before a panel of financial investors, market experts and business leaders.

Having completed their journey, **the 15 finalists are now taking part in the Investment Forum in Milan**. Seven start-ups and projects from the biotech sector and 8 from the Healthcare & Biomedical sector **will be given the chance to present their projects and business plans to investors during the two day session**.

*"The BiolItaly Investment Forum is attracting increasing attention from investors all over the world," explains Riccardo Palmisano, Chairman of Assobiotech. "This reflects the outstanding quality of biotech research in Italy, a sector which has great potential to boost the industry and create value to benefit the country as a whole. BiolItaly has become a pivotal event for everyone involved in bringing together start-ups and investors. We need to continue in this direction to lay the foundations for developing biotech research further in Italy. As far as businesses are concerned, we must carry on investing to help our researchers grow as entrepreneurs and learn how to transfer their technologies. As well as introducing tax incentives and simplifying bureaucracy, it is just as vital that we work at university level to ensure that researchers don't stop at publishing papers but go on to develop patents and set up their own businesses. This will help make our country a real competitor in the international biotechnology industry, bring to fruition the scientific excellence found at our research centres and boost Italy's GDP and employment levels."*

“The life sciences sector is a unique opportunity for growth for our country,” says **Maurizio Montagnese, the Intesa Sanpaolo Group’s Chief Innovation Officer**. “Italy’s robust industry is backed up by a network of research centres and hospitals which have international academic expertise. There is fertile ground for launching high-tech businesses not only in the biotech sector but in all areas linked to health – diagnostics, treatment, rehabilitation, telemedicine, services for the elderly, and so on. A generation of increasingly competitive start-ups (as shown by the investment and exits seen in recent years) is matched by the increasing availability of capital thanks to the recent entrance of specialist investors. One example among many is the BiovelocITA accelerator launched by Silvano Spinelli following the sale of Ethical Oncology Science, which has been supported through the Group’s venture capital funds. This explains why Intesa Sanpaolo has been involved in the BioItaly project since 2010, fostering life sciences start-ups and helping them access capital and enter the market.”

The BioItaly Investment Forum & Intesa Sanpaolo StartUp Initiative will also be handing out Assobiotec’s “Gabriele Corbelli Award” for the best presentation and the “Novartis Oncology Award” for the most promising research project or start-up in the field of medicine.

#### **BioItaly Investment Forum & Intesa Sanpaolo StartUp Initiative partners**

The 2017 event is presented in partnership with the Filarete Foundation, Assobiomedica, Innovhub, Novartis Oncology and Bird & Bird.

#### **The 15 finalists**

##### **> Biotech sector**

##### **Atlas Biovecblok S.r.l.**

A spin-off of Unicam which was set up in Camerino (Macerata) in 2016.

Atlas Biovecblok presents a biocide based on a natural, non-toxic molecule which will help combat mosquitoes carrying diseases such as Malaria, Dengue Fever and the Zika virus, the latest health emergency. The innovation lies in the fact that the biocide has no environmental impact and low costs: it affects the mosquitoes’ ability to bite and lay eggs, thereby slowing the spread of the diseases.

##### **Algaria**

Launched in Milan in 2016.

Algaria supplies the agricultural industry with a turnkey production system for spirulina farming. Its innovative method is based on the concept of the circular economy, utilising biogas by-products to improve spirulina production by guaranteeing continuous levels of high quality results over the course of the year.

##### **BrainDTech**

Launched in the Province of Milan in 2016.

This innovative start-up’s research was inspired by the fact that the most of the 400-plus known neurological and neurodegenerative conditions are diagnosed by observing clinical symptoms after cell damage has already occurred. BrainDTech is developing a revolutionary prognostic system using a recently discovered and patented molecular mechanism seen in the early stages of neuro-inflammation, when neurodegeneration has not yet triggered clinical manifestations.

##### **enGenome**

Launched in 2016 as a spin-off by the University of Pavia.

EnGenome is an innovative start-up whose mission is to supply data sequencing software for oncological applications. By combining bio-informatics, artificial intelligence and high performance cloud computing, the team has developed a unique software solution which pinpoints tumour-inducing mutations with incredible accuracy. The software is able to identify cell mutations in the rarest types of cancers, providing a complete map of tumours and providing vital support for precision medicine.

#### **Prindex**

An academic spin-off launched in Naples in 2010.

Prindex has developed a non-invasive diagnostic tool for multiple sclerosis which can identify auto-antibodies using a simple blood test. This discovery could become a new platform for selecting target therapies. Experiments with treatments are currently underway.

#### **ChemlCare:**

Launched in Novara in 2016.

ChemlCare is focusing on a class of rare and currently incurable genetic diseases caused by changes to intracellular calcium levels. The mechanism behind this regulation is known as Store Operated Calcium Entry (SOCE), a new frontier in life sciences. ChemlCare is seeking to develop calcium signal modulators which will alleviate the symptoms and improve the quality of life for patients living with these types of diseases.

#### **Novaicos**

Launched in 2016 in Novara by the University of East Piedmont. Novaicos is aiming to reduce the incidence of osteoporosis-related fractures using an innovative pharmacological method. It has adopted a biological and biocompatible approach which is flexible, reversible and efficient and uses the Icos-Fc molecule. Icos-Fc is the only active biological substance designed to treat osteoporosis, and it differs from other drugs currently available which simply delay the condition's effects.

### **> Healthcare & Biomedical sector**

#### **RespectLife**

RespectLife was launched in 2015 in Pavia to develop a new polypropylene-based fabric with specific risk protection properties, for the production of bed linen, uniforms and clothing which are bacteria-free, mite-proof, hypoallergenic, and resistant to mould, moths, acids, bases and stains, making them easy to wash, transpiring, soft and environment-friendly.

#### **NG Detectors**

Launched in 2015 at La Sapienza University, Rome.

NG Detectors is involved in research, development, production and sales for advanced medical devices, using innovative patented ionising radiation and ultrasound detection systems for diagnostic applications and advanced imaging in the field of oncology.

#### **Morecognition**

Launched in Turin in 2016.

The More (Motion Recognition) system makes the process of rehabilitation simpler and more effective, using sensors and services to support the work of the physiotherapist. The system is based on a wearable device which interprets muscular activity, along with a mobile application enabling a new approach to rehabilitation. While More was originally designed for physiotherapy purposes, it can be applied to a wide range of sectors such as sport, fitness and industry 4.0 for machinery and robot interfaces.

#### **Punto 8**

Launched in Parma in 2015.

Punto 8 has introduced a new patented medical device known as Alifix, with applications in many fields. Alifix is an innovative method of relaxing the vertebrae of the neck by spontaneously rebalancing the muscles involved in chewing. It is designed for professional use in dentistry, physiotherapy, sport and self-care treatments.

#### **Videum**

Launched in Salerno in 2012, Videum is an online video platform providing global end-to-end solutions which link pharmaceutical companies to an audience of health professionals and consumers. Through Videum, pharmaceutical companies can reach and engage with their customers by publishing videos on tailor-made channels, with premium services such as safe hosting, multilingual provision, global communication and analytics.

#### **EVARplanning**

Launched in the Province of Milan in 2017.

EVARplanning provides innovative software solutions for endovascular surgery planning and strategy. It has developed the first ever computerised configuration and rendering system for prostheses used to treat aortic aneurysms. The software and upcoming launch of the new web platform, which will connect surgeons and endoprosthesis manufacturers, will provide a revolutionary approach to planning aorta surgeries, streamlining time and resources and improving outcomes which are currently beset by a high percentage of complications.

#### **Carepy**

Launched in Bari in 2014.

The Carepy system manages medication and treatments via an app for smartphones and tablets (connected to a database of over 1,000,000 medicines, non-prescription drugs and medical products available on the main digital marketplaces) aimed at patients and their families. The app interfaces with the patient's pharmacist, who manages the availability and supply of the medication, and with their primary care physician, who monitors the treatment and ensures it is followed.

#### **U&O**

Launched in Milan in 2016.

U&O is an innovative start-up involved in robotics-based rehabilitation for patients who have difficulty standing and walking as a result of various conditions, including strokes, spinal injuries and multiple sclerosis. At the heart of its next-generation rehabilitation pathway is the high-tech HU.GO exoskeleton, which is affordable and ideally suited for use in rehabilitation centres. It also provides software services to gather and analyse patient data. U&O wants to make rehabilitation techniques and instruments more innovative and available to all.

#### **Assobiotech**

Assobiotech, the Italian Association for Biotechnology Development, liaises expertly with key stakeholders and represents some 140 businesses and science and technology parks operating in various sectors of Italy's biotech industry: health, farming, environment and industrial processes. The companies the Association represents differ in size and scope but all of them stand out for their emphasis on innovation and the use of biotechnologies: an incentive for growth in all areas of industry and a concrete response to increasingly urgent public health, environmental, farming and food-related concerns. Founded in 1986 as a branch of Federchimica, Assobiotech is a founding member of EuropaBio and the International Council of Biotechnology Associations.



FEDERCHIMICA

ASSOBIOTEC

Associazione nazionale per lo sviluppo delle biotecnologie

INTESA  SANPAOLO

#### **Intesa Sanpaolo StartUp Initiative**

Intesa Sanpaolo's international growth platform selects hi-tech start-ups, provides them with training and puts them in contact with financial and industrial investors. Since its launch in September 2009, the project has had an excellent track record: 97 investment forums in 6 countries (IT, UK, DE, FR, US, IL) with 9 technology clusters and sectors of industry (Digital & Mobile; Biotech & Healthcare; Cleantech; Nanotech & Materials; Social Ventures; FoodTech; Fashion & Design; Automotive & Transportation; Building & Construction). It has matched 700-plus start-ups with close on 9,000 investors, businesses and operators in the innovation ecosystem. The StartUp Initiative's alumni have attracted more than 107 million Euros of funding overall.

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