

PRESS RELEASE

The first Italian platform for start-ups and their key investors moves beyond Italy after a year of operation

THE "INTESA SANPAOLO START-UP INITIATIVE" COMES TO LONDON FOR ITS FIRST INTERNATIONAL ROADSHOW

- **Eight start-ups in the IT sector, chosen from participants in previous stages, get the chance to present their company to 50 potential investors and industrial partners in London's Square Mile.**
- **The first six stages have seen more than 550 start-ups and early-stage businesses contacted, more than 150 selected for training activities, and over 80 presented to about 450 business angels, venture capitalists, seed capital funds, foundations and private investors taking part in the initiative.**
- **A further five stages of the initiative are scheduled for 2011, taking place in January, March, June, September and November.**
- **As well as London, the initiative will call in Frankfurt and Tel Aviv in 2011.**

London, 30 November 2010 – Italian bank Intesa Sanpaolo today presented the "Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative" in London. The move follows six stages of the initiative already held in Italy and marks the start of an **international roadshow** of the first Italian platform for start-ups and their key investors. Eight IT start-ups are taking part in the roadshow, having already been involved in some of the Italian versions. **Around 50 investors**, including business angels, venture capital and seed capital funds, and international corporations took part in the **Investor Arena Meeting**, following the usual format for events of this type: a presentation of the business and the business plan was followed by a *Q&A session* between investors and the business, focusing on economic, financial and technical issues.

The aim of the event is to uncover highly innovative new businesses, prepare them for the market and provide them with an opportunity to present to potential investors and industrial partners, in order to **bring the worlds of finance and technological innovation and research ever closer together.**

One year on from the launch of the platform – which is promoted and organised by the Innovation Team at Intesa Sanpaolo's Corporate and Investment Banking Division – **more than 550 start-ups and early-stage projects** have been **contacted for the initiative.**

Overall, **more than 150** were **put through to the training phase** for the preparation of business plans and management of the meeting with investors, organised in cooperation with Maverick Angels – a network of informal investors concentrating on investments and mentoring of new businesses.

More than **80** of these have taken part in meetings in the **Arena**, including businesses from the cleantech, nanotech, ICT and biotech sectors. Each of these had the chance to **introduce themselves and hold discussions with around 450 potential investors and industrial partners**.

Participating companies have received a total of more than **550 expressions of interest following the first five stages**, and in many cases talks are underway to seal investment deals.

Five new stages of the "**Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative**" are scheduled to take place in 2011, during January, March, June, September and November. As well as London, the **international roadshow** will also visit **Frankfurt** and **Tel Aviv** for special stages which are currently being planned.

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The Start-Up Initiative adds another layer to the range of services and products that Intesa Sanpaolo provides for Italian businesses, particularly those intending to follow a growth path through innovation and research. This may include university spin-offs, start-ups, high-tech SMEs and technology groups, to whom the Bank offers support, advice, funding and equity through dedicated units such as:

- **Intesa Sanpaolo Eurodesk**, a European desk to facilitate companies' access to EU financing schemes;
- **MedioCredito Italiano**, which manages various credit facilities for innovation, including **Nova+**;
- The **Corporate and Investment Banking Division**, through its **Merchant Banking** and **Innovation Team**;
- **Atlante Ventures** and **Atlante Ventures Mezzogiorno**, two venture capital funds for businesses planning to grow through innovation and research;
- **Banca IMI**, through its advisory services on stock market quotation and/or other growth strategies;
- The partnership in **Fondazione Filarete**, together with the Milano University and Fondazione Cariplo;
- Participation in the **SME Development Fund** promoted by the Italian Ministry of Economy and Finance.;
- The **Research and Entrepreneurialism Foundation** partnership, supported by the bank and the Sant'Anna School of Higher Studies, which also involves important academic and business organisations such as Telecom Italia, Finmeccanica, Enel, the Milano Polytechnic Foundation and the Italian Institute of Technology.

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