

PRESS RELEASE

BIOINITALY INVESTMENT FORUM & INTESA SANPAOLO START-UP INITIATIVE IN MILAN

- ***The fourth edition of the event in support of Italian biotechnological innovation***
- ***22 businesses introduce themselves to potential investors following a process of formation and selection***

Milan, 4-5 April 2011 – To arrange for innovative biotechnological and biomedical firms to meet with Italian and foreign industrial and financial investors: this is the objective of “BioItaly Investment Forum & Intesa Sanpaolo Start-up Initiative,” held in Milan on 4th and 5th April 2011 at the Palazzo Besana office of Intesa Sanpaolo.

For the second year in a row, the event joins together in a single venue two initiatives strongly committed to supporting and promoting potential start-up firms vis-à-vis the market: **BioItaly Investment Forum**, an event conceived and organised since 2008 by Assobiotec – the National Association for the Development of Biotechnologies, an adherent of Federchimica – and Innovhub – Special Bureau of the Chamber of Commerce of Milan for Innovation – and the **Intesa Sanpaolo Start-up Initiative**, the end-to-end process of Intesa Sanpaolo devoted to start-up firms and to the investors ready to support them.

Over the two days a total of 18 companies will introduce themselves to the investors after coaching aimed at strengthening their Business Plan and their communication addressed to investors, as well as a rigorous evaluation and selection of the start-up firms by a panel of experts. The coaching phase has been organised with the support of Maverick Angels, a network of informal investors focused on investments in and the mentoring of neophyte businesses, and a historic partner of the Intesa Sanpaolo Start-up Initiative.

“With this initiative we are aiming at very concrete objectives, namely to attract the attention of potential investors to high-value projects in the sector of biotechnologies and biomedical applications,” explained **Alessandro Sidoli**, President of Assobiotec. *“The results that the first three editions of this event have given make us hopeful: as a matter of fact, in 2008 and 2009, five agreements were reached between businesses and investors and, as regards 2010, about ten are in a phase of advanced negotiation. The wish is that this commitment of ours soon will be accompanied by the birth of the eagerly awaited national fund for the life sciences, which Assobiotec has been working on for several months.”*

“Research and innovation make the difference for those businesses that want to grow and to compete in the global economy and in a steadily evolving world. Intesa Sanpaolo has taken up this challenge by singling out and shaping our country’s fledgling innovative entrepreneurial realities with high technological content, and giving them a chance to present themselves to the market.”

*Since 2009, we have been giving the go-ahead to the Intesa Sanpaolo Start-up Initiative, the first Italian platform devoted to start-up firms and to their investors of reference, “ declared **Gaetano Micciché**, CEO and Head of the Corporate & Investment Banking Division of Intesa Sanpaolo, “with the aim of bringing the world of research and innovation nearer to the world of finance. Convinced by the results achieved in the Italian editions, beginning from last November we have undertaken a road show abroad in order to allow our start-up firms to confront one another beyond national borders as well, and we intend to continue to fill the role of “adhesive” and of driving force of a mechanism that is proving to be ever increasingly more important for the country.”*

*“Over the last years and with the recent global crisis, the support to entrepreneurship and to the growth of businesses has proved to be an ever increasingly more important element for ensuring recovery from the economic crisis and the wellbeing of tomorrow’s system,” explained **Alessandro Spada**, President of Innovhub, the Special Bureau of the Chamber of Commerce of Milan for Innovation. “Since innovation, creativity and technology form the basis of economic progress, the policies designed to support and facilitate the same cannot be disregarded. Our collaboration with Assobiotec and Intesa Sanpaolo in the realisation of BioItaly Investment Forum - Start Up Initiative testify to our commitment in favour of the creation of ever increasingly more occasions for development for the sector of biotechnologies, by now become strategic for our economy.”*

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