

PRESS RELEASE

INTESA SANPAOLO AND ALTIS TRAIN YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS OF THE FUTURE WITH A GREAT, POSITIVE SOCIAL IMPACT

- The tenth Global Social Venture Competition – Italian Round is ready to get underway: two days of Boot Camp for the selected teams
- Over the 9 editions, 83 start-up finalists have met more than 800 potential investors, raising more than 9 million euro.
- For the first time ever, the final of the international competition will be held in Milan and organised by ALTIS of Università Cattolica

Milan, 1 February 2018 – The **Global Social Venture Competition (GSVC)** is in its tenth edition, and for its eighth year running, **ALTIS** and the **Intesa Sanpaolo Group** will host the *Boot Camp* today and tomorrow at the Bank’s headquarters on Piazza Belgioioso for the 18 teams of young Italian *startupper*s. These teams have set their sights on winning the international competition that honours the best *business* ideas with the greatest positive social and environmental impact. Italy’s results in the GSVC have been significant to date: over the 9 previous editions, **83 start-up finalists** have met more than **800 potential investors**, raising more than **9 million Euro**.

Notably, the *Boot Camp*, set up thanks to Intesa Sanpaolo’s springboard programme, the **StartUp Initiative**, is an intensive training course that arranges both classroom activities and individual *coaching* to support the teams who are developing their *business* idea and beginning to prepare their pitches for the final stages of the competition.

“**Intesa Sanpaolo’s Innovation Center**, through the *Startup Initiative*, wishes to provide indispensable support for participants in the GSVC with a structured course, and over time has proven its effectiveness, allowing start-ups involved in the programme to obtain funding and establish business partnerships with leading players in the Italian innovation ecosystem”, said **Luca Pagetti**, Head of Innovation for Corporate and SMEs at the *Innovation Center*. “We will provide support for the *Boot Camp* thanks to the mentoring role of Bill Barber, a coach with extensive experience in international business and project manager of the *Innovation Center’s Scale Up*, whose goal is to bring very select start-ups onto international markets where the Group already has a presence. Intesa Sanpaolo demonstrates its role as the “Bank of start-ups” by supporting and assisting entrepreneurs, who are also customers, in their development and internationalisation strategies with specially-designed platforms and credit services”.

“The partnership with Intesa Sanpaolo’s *StartUp Initiative*, which goes back to 2010, has been an important step for the GSVC’s *Italian Round* in that it allows us to offer the semifinalist teams some coaching support that even gives them a competitive edge on the international stage,” noted **Andrea Mezzadri**, the *Project manager* of *GSVC Italy*. “The *Boot Camp* represents a one-of-a-kind opportunity for the selected young *startups* – he continued –, because they can benefit from the expertise and know-how imparted by qualified trainers so that they can best determine the content and structure of an effective presentation, as well as deepen their understanding of relations with investors”.

“The *Boot Camp* - said **Aurelio Serrao**, co-founder of **Atlas**, the winning start-up of the *Italian Round* that came third place in the 2017 GSVC Global Finals - was undoubtedly a defining moment for our start-up. Indeed, discussing ideas with the Intesa Sanpaolo coach meant that we could create the basis on which to develop our business strategy, and could transform our idea from the research laboratory into a fully fledged business. The practical and precise suggestions, and the work done on our pitch in those two days were crucial to ending up on the podium in the world final, but moreover they have made our pitch a true strong point in our project, and even to this day with our relationship with investors.”

With the vast knowledge acquired at the *Boot Camp*, the 18 teams will progress to the semifinals of the GSVC’s *Italian Round* that will be held at the Intesa Sanpaolo headquarters on 15 February. In the semifinals, 6 finalists will be selected who, on 28 February, will compete to be in the top two and progress to the *Global Finals* of the international competition, where the winning team will win 80,000 dollars in prize money. In the final, teams will be competing from over 60 countries in the world. This year, for the very first time in the competition’s history, the final will take place in Europe, in Milan, from the 11 to 13 April thanks to ALTIS of Università Cattolica’s coordination of the event.

Intesa Sanpaolo was formed through the merger of Banca Intesa and Sanpaolo IMI, two great Italian banking institutions with common values that joined together to develop, to better support families, and to further contribute to the country's business development growth. Intesa Sanpaolo is one of the top banking groups in the Euro zone with market capitalisation of 46.4 billion Euro.

Intesa Sanpaolo is the leader in Italy in all business areas (retail, corporate and *wealth management*). The Group offers its services to 12.6 million customers through a network of more than 4,800 branch offices located throughout the country, with market shares of no less than 12% in most regions.

The ALTIS Postgraduate School of Business & Society of Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore has been the organiser of the Italian Round of the Global Social Venture Competition (GSVC) since 2008.

Now in its 20th edition, the GSVC is an international competition, conceived and sponsored by the HAAS School of Business and UC Berkeley. Its aim is to achieve a synergy between the academic, business and financial domains in order to promote the formation and development of businesses that integrate economic sustainability and positive social and/or environmental impact within the company strategy, with a view to establish a win-win dynamic.

For more information

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