



PRESS RELEASE

The first transaction of 2010 for the Venture Capital Fund of the Intesa Sanpaolo Group

“ATLANTE VENTURES” ENTERS SILICON BIOSYSTEMS SPA WITH AN INVESTMENT OF 2 MILLION EUROS

Milan, 18 March 2010 – **Atlante Ventures**, the Venture Capital Fund of the Intesa Sanpaolo Group, **enters Silicon Biosystems S.p.A. with an investment of 2 million euros**, in the ambit of a capital increase totalling 5 million euros also underwritten by the current shareholders, in particular Innogest Capital and a group of Business Angels. The transaction was led jointly by Atlante Ventures and Innogest Capital.

Silicon Biosystems S.p.A. is a Bologna-based biomedical company that has developed a world-level innovative platform (comprising machines, chips, software and reagents) for the extraction and analysis of rare cells, based on the principle of dielectrophoresis.

The new resources with which the company is provided are intended for the marketing of the platform for purposes of research in the Italian and international markets, the continuation of the product research and development activities, the clinical testing of medical applications, and the international expansion of the organisation.

With the entry of Atlante Ventures, **Aurelio Mezzotero**, *Investment Director* of the Fund, and **Fabrizio Landi**, *Managing Director and General Manager* of **Esaote**, enter the Board of Directors of Silicon Biosystems, demonstrating Intesa Sanpaolo's ability to form a system by creating forms of collaboration between companies that operate in the same sector so as to improve the competencies and the opportunities for growth of the realities involved.

The *Financial Advisor* of Silicon Biosystems S.p.A. in the transaction was **Centerboard Partners**.

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“We believe that the technology developed by the Silicon Biosystems team is a point of excellence at the world level in a very promising area of oncology and prenatal diagnosis; we'll put at the disposal of the management financial resources, ideas and networks in order to contribute to making the company successful on the international markets,” stated **Davide Turco**, *head of Atlante Ventures*.

“Thanks to the proprietary technology for the individual manipulation of cells, Silicon Biosystems is positioned in an ideal manner to seize the important opportunities that present themselves today in diagnostics, in personalised therapy and in various fields of medical and biological research. The strengthening of the share team with the investment of the Intesa Sanpaolo Group, through the Atlante Ventures Fund, represents a recognition for the persons – in particular the researchers – who have devoted their professional life to the attainment of the current important results, and will make it possible to meet the needs of patients, thus allowing the full exploitation of the potentialities of the firm,” declared **Giuseppe Giorgini**, *President and Managing Director of the company*.

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The principal applications of the platform currently forming the object of development are:

- **non-invasive oncological diagnosis:** extraction of circulating tumoral cells (CTC) from samples of peripheral blood and their subsequent genetic analysis to provide personalised oncological therapies;
- **non-invasive prenatal diagnosis:** extraction of foetal cells from a maternal blood sample and subsequent genetic analysis directed toward prenatal diagnosis, eliminating the risks associated with amniocentesis;
- **advanced research activity:** manipulation of living and non-living cells, with resolution on the single cells, and extraction of rare cells for medical, pharmaceutical and biological research activities.

The company avails itself of a multidisciplinary team of highly qualified engineers and biologists, led by the founders and by high-profile managers with experience in international leader companies in the pharmaceutical sector and microelectronics.

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Atlante Ventures is one of the two venture capital funds of Intesa Sanpaolo. It invests in technological innovation and in the development of Italian businesses. The project arose from the initiative and experiences gained in the bank’s **Corporate & Investment Banking Division** and in **Intesa Sanpaolo Eurodesk**, a team of the Group specialised in institutional and technical support to concerns engaged in research projects.

The Atlante Ventures Fund, which began to operate in late 2008, was established with an initial endowment of 25 million euros (entirely underwritten by the Intesa Sanpaolo Group). With a foreseen duration of 12 years, the Fund positions itself as an ideal partner for Italian small and medium-sized businesses and start-ups that are developing products and technologies of excellence, thanks in particular to its extensive network in the business world and to its relations with the major realities of our country in the sector of research and of the university. Atlante Ventures presents itself as an open platform that will endeavour to make the most of the opportunities for collaboration, including between the public and private spheres.

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