

The venture capital operation aims at promoting Italian excellence in production and new technologies

PRESS RELEASE

TT VENTURE AND ATLANTE SEED ARE BETTING ON MILKYWAY

- **The two funds managed by Intesa Sanpaolo and Fondamenta SGR have invested in MilkyWay**
- **The start-up in Modena is an emerging company which provides a meeting point for extreme sports lovers**
- **First round of investments of EUR 720,000**

Milan, 18 July 2013 – The passion for sport as a business concept with a high growth rate. With this goal the two venture capital funds **TT Venture** – fund managed by **Fondamenta SGR** – and **Atlante Seed** – fund managed by **IMI Fondi Chiusi SGR**, an **Intesa Sanpaolo** Group company – invested in **MilkyWay**, a start-up in Modena focused on the design, manufacture and on-line sales of bike-trial and extreme sports equipment.

The investment operation totals an initial EUR 720,000, which MilkyWay will use to expand its range of products on the extreme sports market (such as kitesurfing, downhill biking, *parkour* etc.) and to develop the on-line community (www.milkywaytribe.com). In just a few months the MilkyWay community has positioned itself as a reference point in the sector and will aid the company in developing new products with the support of community members, real experts and enthusiasts in their specialties.

MilkyWay took shape in 2011 from an idea of Jacopo Vigna, a young mechanical engineer from Modena. Following experience in the biomedical field and the racing departments of Ducati and Aprilia, Vigna decided to start his own business, transferring technological innovations to the bike-trial sector, thereby giving life to MilkyWay.

The start-up began its operations thanks to the actions of angel investors and the support of **Democenter-Sipe**, the technology transfer centre of the Engineering Faculty of the University of Modena.

In 2012 MilkyWay was selected to participate in the **SeedLab** acceleration program.

The round of investment recently concluded gathered seed capital from two leading investment funds, TT Seed (lead investor of the operation) and the Atlante Seed fund. In addition to two institutional investors, several angel investors also participated in the round, several of which were the first to believe in the project. The operation was supported by the attorney Maria Lisanti of the legal firm LTPartners.

“Today is a very important day for us, a day that marks the definitive step from the dream of building a company that reflects our passions and our values to an entity through which that dream has come true”, stated **Jacopo Vigna**, the founder of MilkyWay. “The company has already hired over fifteen resources, and we are certain to grow quickly, leveraging the capacity of the Italian manufacturing districts to restock our products (mechanical parts and sportswear) of the highest quality, and counting on the creation of a community of extreme sports lovers”, Vigna concluded.

“We decided to invest in the extreme sports market due to both its high growth rate and the energy, passion and set of skills of the MilkyWay team”, stated **Mauro Odorico** from TT Venture. “MilkyWay has created an innovative business model, which is unique and has a high potential, becoming part of a manufacturing district which has always been famous for its ability to innovate and produce at maximum levels”.

“One of the distinctive traits of MilkyWay is the community of athletes, who provide ideas and suggestions useful in best targeting e-commerce and own brand manufacturing”, commented **Andrea Ballestri** from Atlante Seed. “We believe that this particular formula makes MilkyWay a reference point for all bike-trial and extreme sports enthusiasts. The differing types of partners supporting the initiative in various forms (investment funds, business angels and local operators) provide the company with an important set of skills and a network which will undoubtedly favour its growth”.

For more information:

<p>Intesa Sanpaolo Media Corporate & Investment Banking and International Media Office</p> <p>Tel.: +39 02-87963531/2489</p> <p>stampa@intesasanpaolo.com</p>	<p>Fondamenta SGR</p> <p>Tel.: +39 02-72147766</p> <p>info@ttseed.it www.ttventure.com</p>	<p>MilkyWay Tel.: +39 348-4381018</p> <p>info@milkywaybikes.com www.milkywaytribe.com/ (community) www.milkywaybikes.com/ (e-shop)</p>
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