

XXIX edition of the Marisa Bellisario “Donne ad alta quota” Award

PRESS RELEASE

**“WOMEN VALUE COMPANY 2017 - INTESA SANPAOLO” AWARD:
FROM THE BELLISARIO FOUNDATION AND INTESA SANPAOLO
A SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR BUSINESSES
THAT STAND OUT FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

Turin, 19 October 2016. The **Marisa Bellisario Foundation** in collaboration with the **Intesa Sanpaolo Group** has established the **“Women Value Company 2017 - Intesa Sanpaolo” Award**: a new award for **small and medium enterprises that stand out in the field of gender equality**, implementing significant and innovative policies and strategies aimed at guaranteeing equal career opportunities and recognition to both men and women.

Two winning enterprises, a small and a medium-sized one, will be selected by the panel led by Professor Antonio Catricalà and Lella Golfo, President of the Bellisario Foundation. For the first time, they will be awarded next June in Rome during the **XXIX edition of the Marisa Bellisario “Donne ad alta quota” Award**. The other successful enterprises that have met the application requirements will receive an additional recognition during a series of events held throughout the country and promoted by the Bank.

In recent years, women participating in the workplace and in entrepreneurial endeavours is growing and represents a clear factor in economic and social development and transformation. Analyses confirm that **working with women pays off**: their presence increases financial and operational performance and the focus on innovation, it improves the problem solving capacity of work groups and the company’s public reputation. However, it is still evident today that women continue to face **difficult conditions and discrimination** in the workplace. Their career paths generally tend to be slower and more difficult, salary differences are still significant and often a woman’s skills are not valued like those of their male counterparts. A lack of adequate family policies at a Public Administration level and an unresolved reconciliation of work and home life persist still today.

The **“Women Value Company 2017 - Intesa Sanpaolo” Award** is aimed at **small and medium public and private enterprises** (in accordance with the criteria set out in European Commission Recommendation 2003 361/EC) that have a majority Italian capital, are not part of a group and have recorded good financial results. Moreover, they are required to stand out for their application of policies that value women’s work and their management of gender diversity, such as: services to reconcile family/work; initiatives aimed at guaranteeing employees, both men and women, peaceful management of their time in the company (benefits, vouchers, internal nursery...); flexible work policies; non-discriminatory merit-based remuneration policies; development and assessment of skills and careers for women, with a high presence of women in managerial or top-level positions.

The candidate enterprises may **apply by 31 January 2017** by filling out the **on-line questionnaire** published on the websites: www.intesasanpaolo.com and www.fondazionebellisario.org. Intesa Sanpaolo will also make a selection of excellent small and medium enterprises from among its customers and encourage them to submit an application.

Lella Golfo, President of the Marisa Bellisario Foundation: *“I am extremely happy and proud that Intesa Sanpaolo selected the Marisa Bellisario Foundation for such an ambitious project. The role of Italian women is always increasing and today, like never before, it is important that all the interested parties, banks and businesses in particular, commit to its promotion and enhancement. While business welfare data give us a reason to be optimistic, the outcome is not as positive from a careers for women and gender gap point of view. With the “Women Value Company 2017 - Intesa Sanpaolo” Award we aim to engage enterprises in a programme for empowering women, and at the same time, highlight sound and innovative practices. I am certain that Intesa Sanpaolo’s skills and experience together with the Bellisario Foundation’s know-how will be major success factors for a project that puts women at the centre of growth strategies.”*

Stefano Barrese, Head of the Banca dei Territori Division of Intesa Sanpaolo: *“The award established along with the Bellisario Foundation is based on the premise that the presence of women in the workplace is an opportunity. We understand and appreciate the quality women bring to the workplace: they are educated, prepared, attentive, collaborative and resilient. The way to overcome discrimination is still quite long but our commitment to gender equality, for our colleagues as well as our customers, is an objective we gave ourselves a while back and whose effectiveness we continue to value. For us, as a Bank, women represent a world with which we need to engage in order to develop profitable commercial relationships but above all, new stimuli and challenges.”*

For further information:

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