PRESS RELEASE

INTESA SANPAOLO MISSION TO THE U.S. : NEW INTERNATIONAL SUPPLY CHAIN STRATEGY AND ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION OF ITALIAN SMES ABROAD

BANCA DEI TERRITORI INITIATIVE WITH INNOVIT IN SILICON VALLEY TO PROMOTE 12 ITALIAN AEROSPACE COMPANIES

- **12 high-potential SMEs in the fields of Space Economy, Aerospace, Security and Robotics selected for a programme combining training, business development and meetings with potential international investors**
- **Launch of the new *Connecting Markets* platform developed by Intesa Sanpaolo to identify new trade routes and international business partners for SMEs in more than 170 countries**
- **Intesa Sanpaolo has already provided more than €1 billion in financing to 500 SMEs in the Italian aerospace supply chain, one of Europe's production ecosystems with the highest growth potential**

San Francisco (USA), 7 September 2026 – Intesa Sanpaolo is strengthening the international growth of Italy's productive system through **a new mission to the U.S. dedicated to 12 Italian SMEs with strong potential** for innovation and international expansion, from different regions and industrial districts that are particularly important to the aerospace supply chain. The companies were selected by the Bank in collaboration with INNOVIT (Italian Innovation and Culture Hub) to take part in a growth programme in Silicon Valley.

The mission is part of **Intesa Sanpaolo Group's global strategy to support the international positioning of Italian industry** and, in particular, of the activities of the Banca dei Territori Division, led by Stefano Barrese. These activities are aimed at financing new initiatives and the establishment of Italian SMEs abroad, facilitating their engagement with foreign investors and supporting the international development of technology-intensive sectors that are strategic to the growth of the Italian economy worldwide.

The Intesa Sanpaolo mission was promoted by **Stefano Barrese**, Head of the Banca dei Territori Division, who was accompanied by **Anna Roscio**, Executive Director, Sales & Marketing, Companies, Banca dei Territori Division, and **Nicola Baiocchi di Silvestri**, Country Manager, USA & Americas, IMI CIB Division. Supported by the Consul General of Italy in San Francisco, **Massimo Carnelos**, and by **Filippo Fusaro**, Director of the Houston Office of the Italian Trade Agency (ITA), the mission was organised with the support of the Italian Innovation Centre, headed by **Alberto Acito** and established at **INNOVIT** in San Francisco. **ITA** (Italian Trade Agency) and **IIC** (Italian Cultural Institute San Francisco) are also key components of INNOVIT.

The new business-matching platform

As part of its broader internationalisation strategy, the Banca dei Territori Division used the occasion to present the **new *Connecting Markets* digital platform**, powered by Artificial Intelligence and developed by the Group **to support Italian SMEs in matching with international partners**. The platform draws on a highly structured and extensive body of information, enabling Intesa Sanpaolo customers to access data on more than 560 million companies across more than 2,000 business sectors in over 170 countries worldwide.

Through this innovative tool, developed in collaboration with Matchplat, and with the specialist support provided by Intesa Sanpaolo in engaging with counterparties, Intesa Sanpaolo's corporate customers will be able to identify new industrial, commercial and supply-chain partners, as well as potential acquisition or collaboration targets. The platform will also enable them to further diversify the markets in which they operate and expand their business.

Connecting Markets will provide access to a global pool of information and to the ecosystem of services offered by Intesa Sanpaolo and its partners worldwide, helping Italian SMEs expand into new markets. **Since 2020, the Group has already provided €12 billion in financing to Italian SMEs for internationalisation and export-support projects**.

The 12 aerospace supply-chain SMEs at the heart of Intesa Sanpaolo's mission to Silicon Valley

The small and medium-sized companies in the aerospace supply chain selected together with INNOVIT come from a wide range of regions that are both crucial and representative of Italian entrepreneurship. They were selected from among the more than 200,000 SME customers of Intesa Sanpaolo's Banca dei Territori Division:
ALI (Naples), **APR** (Turin), **Bercella** (Parma), **Bisiach&Carrù** (Turin), **Bright Solutions** (Pavia), **Cospal Composites** (Bergamo), **Curti** (Ravenna), **Dino Paoli** (Reggio Emilia), **Leas** (Padua), **Netgroup** (Naples), **Novation Tech** (Treviso), **SAB Aerospace** (Benevento)**.**

In recent years, the space sector in the United States has driven unprecedented innovation processes on a global scale. It is against this backdrop that, **in collaboration with INNOVIT** (Italian Innovation and Culture Hub), a programme of in-depth exploration and engagement with leading companies and innovative organisations has been developed. The aim is to showcase Italian manufacturing excellence in the aerospace sector and offer selected companies representing the excellence of Italy's regions a significant opportunity for training and business development in the U.S. This follows two previous programmes dedicated to start-ups and SMEs, whose success has strengthened Intesa Sanpaolo's cooperation with organisations in San Francisco and Silicon Valley.
The 2026 immersive programme brought the 12 Italian companies into direct contact with key players in the U.S. space industry and **the Silicon Valley ecosystem, through working and training sessions, first-hand insights and meetings with potential investors and partners.**

The new U.S. mission therefore represents a further step in implementing the strategy announced by **CEO Carlo Messina** in the presentation of the 2026–2029 Business Plan. It is the result of synergies between Intesa Sanpaolo's divisions and the Group's global network, and with institutions and business communities. This is a **comprehensive programme to support the international growth of Italian companies** that represent genuine examples of Made in Italy excellence and that the Intesa Sanpaolo Group has identified as potentially ready to engage with new partners, investors and markets.

Intesa Sanpaolo and the Italian aerospace supply chain

As the first European commercial bank to join the ESA Investor Network, Intesa Sanpaolo has already made a tangible contribution to the development of the aerospace sector: **it has supported more than 500 SMEs operating across the supply chain, providing them with more than €1 billion in financing.**
Intesa Sanpaolo is also the only Italian bank and the first in Europe to have established a **partnership with the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Space Agency (ESA)**. The agreement signed last July will unlock €300 million in new financing for SME investment, backed by European resources and dedicated guarantee instruments.

Collaboration with INNOVIT

The Intesa Sanpaolo project is also made possible through partners such as **INNOVIT** - an institutional initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation through Agenzia ICE (in collaboration with the Italian Embassy in Washington and the Italian Consulate General in San Francisco), which since October 2022 is managed by the *Giacomo Brodolini Foundation* and *Harmonic Innovation Xcelerator* (the *Harmonic Innovation Group*'s incubator and accelerator). Its objective is to foster entrepreneurial ideas by catalysing innovative projects and acting as an accelerator for their international development, supported by a permanent presence in Silicon Valley and across the U.S.
The U.S. mission is the third to be organised over a three-year period, building on the established partnership with INNOVIT. This partnership has helped create an ecosystem of international relationships between companies and strategic U.S. stakeholders, through growing cooperation that has expanded the network and business opportunities of **12 emerging Italian innovative start-ups** participating in the *Up2Stars* acceleration programme promoted by the Banca dei Territori Division in 2024, and **12 leading Made in Italy SMEs** selected in 2025 by the Banca dei Territori Division for the innovative potential of their projects as part of the *Imprese Vincenti* programme.

Stefano Barrese, Head of Intesa Sanpaolo's Banca dei Territori Division, commented: *"Historically, Italians have been explorers but, above all, exporters of products, machinery and exceptional know-how that is valued and sought after around the world. This is why we are increasingly convinced that opening up new trade and industrial routes is crucial for the Italian economy and, more broadly, for the European economy.*
We have always been the bank of reference for SMEs, and this is also true for the aerospace supply chain, which has grown out of our regions and industrial districts to pursue ambitious goals, including in the United States and Silicon Valley, a cradle of innovation and a source of many opportunities, as we have demonstrated through our work over the years.

Our role is to identify new opportunities with these companies to help them grow internationally and to develop new tools to support them in their industrial projects, partnerships with new investors and achievements that are cultural as well as economic. Thanks to our innovative platform, which was developed in response to insights gathered during our previous missions here, we will be able to offer our SMEs a global reach for growth and competitiveness. Since 2020, we have provided them with more than €141 billion in credit, including €12 billion for internationalisation and exports and €14 billion for extraordinary finance transactions such as acquisitions, mergers and equity investments. These will be the strategic factors for competing on the global stage, and our companies have all the characteristics needed to excel."

"The most technology-intensive sectors are a strategic area of economic and trade relations between Italy and the United States. Among these, aerospace stands out for the scale of trade and the complementarities between the respective supply chains of the two countries. The mission promoted by Intesa Sanpaolo is therefore a step in the right direction, seeking to tap into the significant opportunities that the U.S. market can offer Italian companies, including SMEs. Our Consulate General in San Francisco and INNOVIT stand alongside all the stakeholders of the Italian system seeking to establish a presence in Silicon Valley and, more broadly, in the Bay Area, one of the world's most important economic and innovation ecosystems." This was the comment of the **Ambassador of Italy to the United States, Marco Peronaci.**

According to the **Consul General of Italy in San Francisco, Massimo Carnelos**: *"Working together as a unified system is essential to showcasing Italian excellence in a strategic environment such as Silicon Valley. The collaboration between Intesa Sanpaolo and INNOVIT demonstrates the value of a shared commitment between organisations with complementary expertise, capable of supporting companies as they engage with a highly competitive ecosystem and fostering new connections with strategic partners across the Atlantic. The continuity of initiatives such as this one helps expand the opportunities available to our productive system and build stronger, more structured economic and industrial relations between Italy and the United States, particularly in technology sectors with the greatest potential for growth."*

"Space Economy has always been one of the technology verticals in which INNOVIT has chosen to invest, building expertise and relationships within the Silicon Valley ecosystem. Over the years, we have developed 48 programmes for innovative start-ups and SMEs, supporting almost 500 companies and 1,000 entrepreneurs, with more than 1,750 sessions and over 1,000 mentors and speakers. This is our third year of collaboration with Intesa Sanpaolo: this continuity enables us to put this wealth of experience and relationships at the service of 12 aerospace SMEs, in a sector where the convergence of space, AI, software and data is opening up new opportunities. This is INNOVIT's role: turning a permanent presence in Silicon Valley into access to expertise, relationships and concrete growth opportunities in the United States," explains **Alberto Acito, Director of INNOVIT's Innovation Centre**.

The figures for Italy's Space Economy

The Space Economy is now one of the production ecosystems with the greatest growth potential worldwide. According to estimates by the Space Foundation, Space Economy activities are expected to reach approximately $800 billion by 2027 and $1 trillion by 2032. The sector combines advanced manufacturing, high technology, specialised services and scientific research, generating positive spillover effects across a wide range of industries, including energy, environmental technologies, ICT, healthcare and transport. **Italy is one of Europe's leading countries in the aerospace sector, with an**

industry employing more than 50,000 people and active in the manufacture of aerospace vehicles, repairs and satellite telecommunications. Italy also stands out for its specialisation in the Space Economy, with a diverse supply chain spanning software and electronics, engineering and telecommunications, mechanics and spacecraft manufacturing. Many SMEs operating in the sector specialise in highly technological niche markets, alongside major integrated players offering a broad and diversified range of products and services. The sector's strong multidisciplinary nature encourages collaboration between different stakeholders and promotes the continuous transfer of knowledge, fostering innovation and creating powerful synergies.

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Intesa Sanpaolo, with over €1,500 billion in customer financial assets and almost €440 billion in loans at the end of June 2026, is the largest banking group in Italy with a significant international presence. Intesa Sanpaolo t is a European leader in Wealth Management and operates through an integrated Wealth Management, Protection and Advisory platform, built on fully controlled product factories and distribution networks managed under full strategic control. Through its International Banks Division, it operates through subsidiaries engaged in commercial banking activities in 12 countries in Central and Eastern Europe and in Egypt. Through its IMI Corporate & Investment Banking Division, it is present in 23 countries, supporting the cross-border activities of its clients. Intesa Sanpaolo ranks among the global leaders for social impact and reaffirms its commitment to decarbonisation and supporting clients in the sustainable transition. The Bank's museum network, the Gallerie d'Italia, is an exhibition venue for the Bank's own artistic heritage and cultural projects of recognised value. News: group.intesasanpaolo.com/it/newsroom X: @intesasanpaolo Substack: https://newsfulcontent.substack.com/

INNOVIT is the hub promoted by the Directorate General for the Promotion of the Country System of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, in collaboration with the Italian Embassy in Washington and the Consulate General in San Francisco. The implementing body of the project, through its offices in New York and Los Angeles, is the Italian Trade Agency (ICE-Agenzia per la promozione all'estero e l'internazionalizzazione delle imprese italiane). In addition to the Innovation Centre, INNOVIT also includes the ICE-Agenzia Desks and the Italian Cultural Institute in San Francisco. INNOVIT's goal is to create partnerships between the American and Italian economic and cultural ecosystems and to guarantee the Italian community a lasting presence in Silicon Valley also thanks to the IIC (Italian Cultural Institute San Francisco). INNOVIT is a strategic initiative of the Italian government to promote the country system's innovation in the United States. The activities of the Italian Innovation Centre were entrusted in October 2022 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and ICE-Agenzia to the Giacomo Brodolini Foundation, think and do tank for innovation and local development, and to Harmonic Innovation Xcelerator, incubator and accelerator of Harmonic Innovation Group.