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CRIF invests in 5 innovative start-ups in the Fintech, Insurtech and Agritech sectors selected in the I-Tech Innovation 2021 acceleration program

*A total of 1 million euros will be invested in the call launched in partnership with
Fondazione Golinelli*

Today sees the announcement of the start-ups selected for the first edition of “I-Tech Innovation 2021”, the call launched by CRIF and the Golinelli Foundation for innovative start-ups in three strategic sectors. A total of €1 million will be invested in the 8 projects that were chosen in the final selection process out of more than 200 applications received from Italy and abroad: 3 projects in Fintech/Insurtech, 2 in FoodTech/Agritech, and 3 in Life Sciences/Digital Health.

Created from the synergy between two seemingly different organizations, but complementary in terms of expertise and strategic vision, the aim of I-Tech Innovation 2021 - initially promoted also with the support of Digital Magics - is, in the short term, to encourage the creation of a new kind of entrepreneurship with highly innovative and technological content, investing in Italy’s areas of excellence, and in the long term to help bridge the gap in Italy’s technological development.

The chosen start-ups will now be involved in G-Force, the acceleration program of G-Factor, the incubator-accelerator of the Golinelli Foundation aimed at emerging entrepreneurial businesses.

The teams will have the chance to embark on a 7-month program, from April 12 to the end of November, to support the development of their business models, with an initial intensive phase through July, and a second follow-up phase carried out remotely.

The G-Force acceleration program is one of a kind: it is not purely academic but rather a type of venture building process, working alongside the start-up, and it is designed and built around the specific characteristics and practical development needs of every single project and team. The training content and mentoring will be provided by industry entrepreneurs, international managers, trainers, and by G-Factor staff, also made up of entrepreneurs, managers, and technical-scientific and financial advisors.

Several areas will be addressed: market definition and analysis, technical-scientific validation of products-services, design of business models and development plans, determination of the correct value proposition for future investors, understanding regulatory aspects at a national and international level, protection of the brand and intellectual property, and learning techniques to better present the idea and approach investors, industrial or scientific partners, customers, suppliers, and future staff in the right way and at the right time. During the program, start-ups will be introduced to important industrial partners in a national context and to a group of investors comprising investment funds, venture capital funds, business angels, and family offices, chosen ad hoc for each start-up.

“Financial institutions, as well as insurance companies, utilities, and large corporations, increasingly want to expand their offering of innovative products and services and are therefore extremely interested in the opportunities offered by new ecosystems that rely on collaboration with third parties to create value for the end customer. New technologies play a key role in this area, enabling further acceleration in the development of digital solutions. CRIF’s involvement in the I-Tech Innovation project stems from the desire to offer the selected start-ups access to its clear strategic vision, advanced skills, and more than 30 years’ experience gained in the most competitive markets at a global level,” commented Carlo Gherardi, CEO of CRIF. “Our ambition is to become a point of reference for young companies in the Fintech, Insurtech, and Agritech sectors that want to embark on a structured growth path. We gathered a huge number of brilliant ideas during the selection process, and it was very difficult to identify the innovation projects with the greatest potential to be really successful. Our role will be to help the selected start-ups express their full potential so they can find a place in the market. We are also thinking of starting a community program with ad-hoc initiatives extended to all the start-ups that took part in the call and are interested in undertaking a program with CRIF.”

For more information about startups and the I-Tech Innovation Program, visit the [official G-Factor website](#)

THE SELECTED STARTUPS

Life Sciences-Digital Health

Drug Discovery Clinics s.r.l. *Spin-off University of Turin*

Drug Discovery and Clinic s.r.l. was born to bring to human experimentation a new compound called DDC#1 for the treatment of Acute Myeloid Leukemia and COVID-19. The drug candidate, the result of the research of excellence of the University of Turin in the pharmaceutical and clinical field, is the result of a process that lasted more than ten years and is positioned in a market of great innovation for both diseases. In the treatment of Acute Myeloid Leukemia, of which in Italy there are about 2000 new diagnoses every year (19000 in the USA), DDC#1 selectively induces the death of leukemic cells saving healthy cells. Compared to virus-infected cells, such as SARS-Cov-2 or its variants, in the presence of DDC#1 the virus loses the ability to replicate. The fact that the molecule can act as a broad-spectrum antiviral, its high potency associated with its low toxicity makes the candidate drug very competitive on the market.

InSimili *Spin-off University of Bologna*

Insimili brings to the market a device that makes faster and more effective the process of selecting the drug through the creation, in laboratory plastic, of an environment similar to the tissues of the human body and therefore close to the one in which the drug will act. The start-up project, which uses patented technology and which in 2019 won the Start Cup competition Emilia Romagna, allows overcoming some limitations of the pre-clinical phase of experimentation of new drugs, as it proposes the use of camouflage environments of human tissues instead of the models currently used in vitro. The objective is to improve the drug selection process, reduce the time and costs of

the entire process, limit in the pre-clinical phase the use of animal models, and in the clinical phase the testing of ineffective drugs on humans.

NovaVido

Independent start-up

Novavido was born from a research project developed over 10 years by the Italian Institute of Technology in Genoa with the collaboration of the Sacred Heart Hospital Don Calabria in Negrar (Verona). The project is based on the use of polymeric retinal prostheses for vision recovery following retinal degenerations induced by diseases such as retinitis pigmentosa. The idea was born from the work of two research groups, one of the Center for Nanoscience and Technology in Milan and one of the Center for Synaptic Neuroscience and Technology in Genoa, which has translated organic solar energy production technology into the field of biostimulation and demonstrated how semiconductor polymers are implanted in the eye of blind rats to replace photoreceptors, allow almost complete recovery of vision. The start-up aims to further develop the product, test it on humans and finally market it. Technology, innovative and revolutionary in its field, could improve the living conditions of thousands of people around the world.

Fintech/Insurtech Call for Innovation

Bit&Coffee

Bit&Coffee is offering *Core Solution*, a cloud-based platform for the creation and management of quotes, electronic invoices (PA, B2B and B2C), and related payments, with real-time status updates and directly linked to the tax authorities and banks. The platform already has 10,000 active users, between premium and freemium accounts. An ecosystem of solutions was recently developed for freelancers and small and medium-sized enterprises such as payments, accounting and tax support, and AISP (through Saltedge).

CRIPTALIA

Independent start-up

CRIPTALIA is a blockchain-based platform that combines crowdlending as an alternative form of lending for small and medium-sized enterprises with an artificial intelligence-based robo-advisor solution to assist investors in project selection. Today, many companies struggle to finance their growth projects, and obtaining loans is often a long and laborious process. Using artificial intelligence, CRIPTALIA aims to immediately notify the person requesting the loan whether the loan will be accepted or not. How? The robo-advisor automatically downloads and analyzes the company's accounts through artificial intelligence algorithms, which are then evaluated by a team of analysts in order to constantly improve the algorithm. The start-up operates as a MangoPay agent.

Fintastico srl

Independent start-up

Fintastico has long been known as one of the leading Italian web portals to search for innovative digital financial services, with more than 18,000 users and more than 70,000 visitors per month, and the only entirely Fintech-focused player in Europe. Through its services, Fintastico allows consumers to choose innovative financial services that best meet their needs and gives suppliers access to a unique distribution channel that allows them to contain purchasing costs. Leveraging its expertise in the Fintech sector and its customer base, the start-up is aiming to move from portal to financial market business model in order to offer consulting on remote onboarding services and financial products by 2022, and to integrate all-in-one personal financial management solutions by 2024.

FoodTech/Agritech Call for Innovation

Biorfarm

Independent start-up

Biorfarm is the first virtual agricultural community and is based on two pillars: small producers and end consumers. Adopt, follow, taste: this is the concept of the start-up, where people and businesses can adopt or gift trees, follow their growth online, then receive fresh produce at home, directly from farm to table. In this way, the digital world creates a real relationship between producer and consumer. As well as adoption, Biorfarm also acts as a marketplace where you can purchase and receive produce right away. Thanks to the Biorfarm model, growers are paid a fair price, on average 70% higher than the traditional supply chain, as well as being guaranteed product placement and immediate liquidity. In fact, thanks to the adoption system, the grower knows in advance the quantity of product required for this sales channel and can request advance payment to meet the costs. The grower also benefits from other advantages, including real financial support in the case of unforeseeable events and the possibility of using network services. Users who adopt trees are giving tangible support to growers and their local area, contributing to a sustainable economic and social system and to organic and eco-friendly farming.

Latitudo 40 srl

Independent start-up

With the growing demand for food, the optimization of agricultural production is essential, and so Latitudo 40 srl has created a fundamental working tool for the modern farmer: a unified, fully automated data analysis platform capable of automatically extracting information from satellite images. By removing technological barriers to using satellite data, the platform enables satellite images to be transformed into geospatial information, providing the data farmers need in a way that is simple to interpret. Through innovative machine learning and AI algorithms, AgriAlitycs monitors agricultural fields and supports precision farming by increasing production. The

algorithms are used to predict the yield of each field, identify the need for nutrients or irrigation, and identify the condition of each specific crop or field. The data provided can also be imported into the farm management system and transferred directly to connected agricultural machinery to increase farm efficiency. The project was launched last year and today the platform is used by a number of farmers in Italy and internationally, with over 15,000 hectares of land monitored.

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