



PRESS RELEASE

ANNOUNCING INNOVAHY, AN H2IT AND INTESA SANPAOLO INNOVATION CENTER INITIATIVE TO SPEED THE GROWTH OF INNOVATIVE SMES AND START-UPS IN THE HYDROGEN SECTOR

- **The project aims to combine technical and financial expertise to develop services for hydrogen entrepreneurs for an increasingly cohesive, innovative supply chain**
- **Montagnese: “Hydrogen and innovation go together naturally. Research and development related to its uses in many fields are the norm for those who do business in the sector”**

Milan, 13 October 2021 – **H2IT - Italian Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Association** and **Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center** have created **INNOVAHY**, an initiative aimed at fostering the growth of innovative SMEs and start-ups in the hydrogen sector.

The project was created to give a significant boost to the development of the supply chain in Italy through joint activities between **H2IT** and **Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center** aimed at new companies and start-ups, promoting their development and encouraging the creation of others. The partnership also aims to enhance projects under development involving Universities, Competence Centres, Start-ups and innovative SMEs through *ad hoc* initiatives (e.g. workshops, communication activities, awards, etc.).

Hydrogen is crucial for the achievement of the decarbonisation targets for 2050 set by the European Commission in its *Hydrogen Strategy*, and with its NRRP – National Recovery and Resilience Plan – Italy too has decided to focus on this vector, as demonstrated by the **€3.64 billion** dedicated exclusively to the development of supply chains for the production, distribution and end use of hydrogen. Support for all companies in the sector thus becomes necessary.

The partnership between Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center and H2IT will also help identify the actors in the hydrogen supply chain and to stimulate their innovation, sustainability and investment processes, as well as to promote initiatives for the interaction between start-ups and technology providers with SMEs, large companies and investors in order to address the technological challenges faced by the sector.

Intesa Sanpaolo is the first Italian bank admitted to the European Commission’s **European Clean Hydrogen Alliance (ECHA)**. The Clean Hydrogen Alliance aims to lay the foundations for an ambitious deployment of technologies related to the production of



hydrogen from renewable or low-carbon sources by 2030, bringing together the continent's most important industrial and financial players around working tables and regular forums.

*“Hydrogen and innovation go together naturally. Research and development related to its uses in many fields are the norm for those who do business in the sector. The partnership between Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center,” commented its Chairman, **Maurizio Montagnese**, “and the H2IT Association is an opportunity that I am sure we will be able to exploit to the fullest to support companies as they grow. The Intesa Sanpaolo Group has always been at the forefront in accelerating the energy transition in many sectors of the economy and the Innovation Center will offer all the necessary support to innovative SMEs and start-ups active on this front”.*

To achieve all the objectives, **INNOVAHY** can count on the expertise and technical knowledge offered by **H2IT**, which with its 90 members – including large, medium and small enterprises, research centres and universities – is now a key player in the industry and an increasingly valuable partner for institutions, along with the experience boasted by the **Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center** in selecting and supporting the acceleration, professionalisation, international scaling-up and support in the fundraising of new business ideas.

*“Innovation is a key asset to boost the growth of the hydrogen market and strengthen the competitiveness of the Italian industry,” said **Alberto Dossi**, Chairman of **H2IT**. “SMEs and start-ups play a very important role in the development of this sector, because they are more responsive thanks to leaner internal procedures and are able to attract investment and generate and consolidate skills. H2IT has thus set itself the goal of involving more and more of these innovative organisations, to support them in the process of inclusion in the hydrogen supply chain. And the partnership with the Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center goes in this direction, drawing on their experience in supporting young companies in preparing them for contact with the industrial world and investors, as well as on the broad technical background and network offered by H2IT.”*

H2IT – About Us

H2IT – Italian Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Association brings together **large, medium and small enterprises, research centres and universities** working in the hydrogen sector. It currently has **90 members** representing the entire hydrogen value chain, from production to end uses, including companies involved in hydrogen logistics for transport, distribution and storage, companies developing technologies such as electrolyzers and fuel cells, component companies and companies developing systems for the use of hydrogen in the mobility, residential, energy production and industrial sectors. Established in 2005, H2IT seeks to foster the creation of the infrastructure for the use of hydrogen, act as a spokesperson for the actors in the sector and ensure a leadership role for Italy in the world market.

Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center

Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center is the company of Intesa Sanpaolo Group dedicated to innovation: it explores the world of cutting-edge innovation, invests in applied research projects and high-potential startups and accelerates the implementation of the circular economy criteria, to make Intesa Sanpaolo the driving force behind a new economy that is socially and environmentally aware. Based in the Turin skyscraper designed by Renzo Piano, with its national and international network of hubs and laboratories, the Innovation Center is an enabler of relations with other stakeholders of the innovation ecosystem - such as tech companies, start-ups, incubators, research centres and universities - and a promoter of new forms of entrepreneurship in accessing venture capital. Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center focuses mainly on circular economy,



development of the most promising start-ups, venture capital investments of the management company Neva SGR and applied research.

Per ulteriori informazioni

MY PR - Ufficio stampa H2IT

Roberto Grattagliano – 02 54123452 – 338 9291793 - roberto.grattagliano@mypr.it

Fabio Micali – fabio.micali@mypr.it

Media Relations

Intesa Sanpaolo

Corporate & Investment Banking and Governance Areas

stampa@intesasanpaolo.com

www.intesasanpaolo.com/it/news