

## AGREEMENT BETWEEN UBI BANCA AND THE LOMBARDY CONFINDUSTRIA (CONFEDERATION OF INDUSTRY) TO SUPPORT INNOVATION AND DIGITALISATION IN COMPANIES

*Firms belonging to Industry 4.0 supply chains will have access to a €1 billion “Research, development and innovation loan pool”. Objective: to support the growth of firms in the community by focusing on innovation, digitalisation and the development of sustainable projects through special purpose finance within a given supply chain. A key role played by the Lombardy Digital Innovation Hub.*

**Milan, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019** – To support firms committed to innovation and digital transformation processes with specialised advisory services, dedicated loans and finance within a supply chain is the objective of the memorandum of understanding signed by UBI Banca and the Lombardy Confindustria. This agreement is yet another component of the synergies created between the Bank and Confindustria and it forms part of the partnership formed last March within the credit project launched by Lombard businessmen. This was set up with the aim of facilitating access by SMEs, and especially those firms that have not been able to finance growth and development, to financing instruments from banks dedicated to investments and above all those destined to supply chains and to Industry 4.0.

An important part of this understanding is substantial involvement of the Lombardy Digital Innovation Hub, where it plays a key role to offer concrete support to firms by launching a joint training programme between UBI Banca and the employers’ association on ways to assess a firm’s investment projects, credit and the subsidies offered by Industry 4.0. This collaboration aims to exploit “Industry 4.0 Supply Chains” in order to improve the ability to extend credit to the firms that belong to them. It is with this objective that the Lombardy Confindustria and the Bank, with support from the Lombardy DIH, will study the needs of firms that form part of industrial supply chains on which they will base a specific range of credit facilities. The partnership will allow firms to access the €1 billion “Research, development and innovation loan pool” through a range of medium and long-term loan and lease products.

Great attention is paid to social responsibility as a competitive strategy where sustainability-oriented projects are targets of the investment analyses. These are business initiatives designed to reduce environmental impacts, maintain and create new employment, establish public-private partnerships, improve levels of welfare and help to support disadvantaged areas or those hit by natural disasters with dedicated projects.

“A greater ability to compete and innovate in the economy are the objectives of the work that has been started with Confindustria at national level and the memorandum signed with the Lombardy Confindustria falls within this context” **said Frederik Geertman, Chief Commercial Officer and Deputy General Manager at UBI Banca.** “Our Bank is making a network of specialists linked to the Digital Innovation Hub available who are experts on “*Piano Nazionale Industria 4.0*” (the Industry National 4.0 Plan) instruments and financing for transformation projects, which include the use of subsidised funds and access to capital markets. As UBI Banca we are playing our part working together, side-by-side, with players in the local economy”.

“Today we are adding a new component to the Lombardy Confindustria Credit Project”, said **Marco Bonometti, President of the Lombardy Confindustria**, “a project born in the interests of our SMEs and our communities in Lombardy. After the framework agreement signed on 4<sup>th</sup> March with five major banks, that with UBI is already the third bilateral understanding signed to provide an operational follow-on to the framework agreement. With UBI we have focused on support for investments in innovation and digitalisation, two competitive levers that are no longer optional, but compulsory for firms. This is why the role of the Lombardy Digital Innovation Hub will be key to the process of assessing and supporting firms. We want to support industrial supply chains in Lombardy because they are our strategic asset. Faced with technological change we want to put all firms in a position where they are able to meet this important challenge in order to defend their competitiveness and to grow our production. In order to do this firms, and small firms especially, must be placed in a position to be able to make the necessary investments, to produce new high performing products and to adopt new, more modern and more competitive digitalised processes” concluded **Bonometti**.

“Digital solutions are an enabling factor for the growth of firms in communities”, said **Gianluigi Viscardi, president of the Lombardy DIH**. “That is why the agreement signed today provides a further tool to deploy in the Lombardy Digital Innovation Hub’s portfolio and in the community network of which it is composed. I have always been convinced that the ability to work as part of a network is value added for our SMEs also and above all as a way to address the challenges of digital transformation” concluded **Viscardi**.

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