

Italia Restarts Up: Milan, 9-10 December 2014 - Concept Brief

Background

Over the last few years the Italian government enacted various measures to support innovative startups and in 2012 assigned to the Italian Trade Agency (ITA) the task of developing initiatives that will facilitate bringing together Italian startups at the early stage and expansion stages with potential investors.

To that end ITA, in coordination with other Italian public and private organizations is organizing a major conference to attract foreign investors to Italy.

The improving macroeconomic environment coupled with upcoming international events that Italy will host, such as the Global Entrepreneurship Congress (<http://gec.co/>) and EXPO 2015 (<http://www.expo2015.org/en>) and with European Union's initiatives to support innovative industries as inspired by the Startup Manifesto (<http://startupmanifesto.eu/>) have suggested to name the event "ItaliaRestarts up".

Italian Startups

"ItaliaRestarts Up" aims to present to domestic and foreign investors a few dozen Italian startups selected amongst those with the highest growth potential as well as the best regional ecosystems from which successful Startups come from.

On the premise that major foreign investors would mostly be attracted by deals of significant dimensions, priority will be given to mature startups, however not more than six years old, in search of expansion capital. This focus is based also on a recent report by AIFI, the Italian Association of Private Equity and Venture Capital, which emphasizes that Venture Capital investments in Italy get scarcer when it comes to advanced rounds of financing, i.e. in the range of 3-5 million Euros and over.

The companies selected will have a solid, well defined operational and financial history. Their presentations will not only be based on pitches of a few minutes but will leverage off an ample documentation that will illustrate not only their business model and management team but also their growth path, projects under development and outlook for the future. Other prerequisites for participating Italian companies include a proven track record and having received at least one round of financing from investors outside of the company. Finally, they belong to sectors and niches where Italy has a proven competitive advantage and on which compelling global investment trends are focussed, such as for example energy, design, biotech, nanotech, environmental technologies, avionics, information and communications technologies and agro industrial technologies.

The preselection will be done in collaboration with well established professionals in the industry (Venture Capital Funds, business angels, incubators and accelerators) that will be actively involved in vetting the startups to be presented to foreign investors.

Foreign Investors

Potential foreign investors are not limited to Venture Capitalist but include also other financial and industrial investors, such as big companies interested in new products and processes.

The event will also be an important networking occasion between international and Italian VCs and an opportunity to partner in co-investments.

Other partners

The event might see also the participation, with delegates and/or exhibition booths, of local Institutions, companies, banks and the University system.

Logistics, promotion and timing

As of July 2014 the region of Lombardy (488 startups) and Milan, its capital (314), are the most densely populated with innovative startups. Lombardy also has the largest number of incubators and VCs. These features coupled with important international events that will take place in Milan in 2015, such as the Global Entrepreneurship Congress and Expo 2015, make Milan the preferred venue to host an event such as this. The event will have a national scope and will convene companies from the whole of Italy, with the notable exception of four Southern Regions, which will be covered by a similar event to follow.

Qualifying foreign investors will be admitted to participate and provided with accommodation and meals on a complimentary basis.

A tentative schedule follows. Please note that the working language will be English only.

Day 1

* Morning – Plenary session followed by concurrent seminars on three theme, e.g. Italian government policies on innovative startups, Startup financing, talent attraction (Italia Startup Visa), and integration between Research and Development and companies which integrate in their production processes. Brief conclusions from the seminars.

* Lunch

* Afternoon – Business-to Business (B2B) meetings between Italian Startups and Italian Venture Capitalists (VC) on one side and foreign investors on the other, according to priorities highlighted by the latter, who will be seated at fixed tables among which Italian Startups will rotate

* Evening – networking cocktail and/or dinner event

Day 2

Visits to regional ecosystems, e.g. local incubators, research centers, specific companies, to be announced and based on foreign investors' preferences.

The event is currently being promoted by ITA's foreign offices and by Italian Embassies and Consulates.

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