



## PRESS RELEASE

# Wayra and Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative together to support innovative startups in Europe

*Intesa Sanpaolo Start Up Initiative, the end-to-end platform for startups from Intesa Sanpaolo , and Wayra , Telefónica's global startup accelerator, sign a partnership to exchange mentoring, acceleration services, business development and international expansion.*

**MADRID/MILAN, 20 June 2013** – **Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative**, the *end-to-end* platform for startups from Intesa Sanpaolo – the banking group leader in Italy in all business areas – and **Wayra**, **Telefónica's** global startup accelerator, have signed a partnership to support innovative startups.

The collaboration involves Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative and Wayra to nurture and help grow innovation ecosystems in Europe and Latin American. The agreement aims to find synergies between both initiatives to support the entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem, sharing deal flows in relevant technology areas, extending mentoring, acceleration services, business development, international expansion and investors reach for the top startups from both programs in their relevant territories.

Intesa Sanpaolo and Wayra have realized that a direct involvement in the support of innovative startups is a strategic move to improve long-term competitiveness for themselves, their customers, and their surrounding economies.

**Marco Lattuada**, Global Head of Telecom and Media, Corporate and Investment Banking Division of Intesa Sanpaolo, remarked: *“The Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative has always followed a systemic approach, bringing together top international investors, institutions and corporations to maximize the chances for success of the most promising tech entrepreneurs across Europe. The partnership with Telefónica's Wayra represents a natural step forward, leveraging the mutual belief that grassroots innovation is one of the key determinants for global competitiveness.”*

On this hand, **Gonzalo Martín-Villa**, CEO of Wayra, re-asserted Wayra's ambition to boost the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe: *“Growth in Europe is predicated on nurturing the skills and talent of future generations. Our success depends on identifying and backing great ideas and unleashing the positive potential of young people and technology. We're well positioned to do so with our six Wayra academies working together in Europe, and this agreement with Intesa Sanpaolo will help us to reach even more talented entrepreneurs and startups.”*



This agreement between a large telecommunications player and a large financial one on these topics can bring about significant and sustainable opportunities for a new generation of entrepreneurs.

Particularly, the partnership provides for:

- inclusion of Wayra startups into Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative (SUI) Arenas and, viceversa, inclusion of SUI startups into future Wayra acceleration batches.
- organization of Wayra and SUI co-branded events: joint early stage and later stage investment forums.
- exchange of know-how and other resources between SUI and Wayra events.

Wayra and Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative cover different geographies and have developed strong partnership networks with little overlap, so there is mutual benefit in exchanging deal flow and exposure. In the countries where both programs operate, a joint approach can leverage each other's strengths.

**Video:** *Gonzalo Martín-Villa, CEO of Wayra and Marco Lattuada, Head of Telecom & Media Intesa Sanpaolo, share some insights about the scope of this agreement:* <http://youtu.be/3gfJHo8VNJc>.

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#### ABOUT WAYRA

Wayra aims is to promote innovation and the detection of new talents in Latin America and Europe in the field of the Internet and the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). By means of its global project acceleration model, it supports entrepreneurs in their development, providing them with the technological tools, qualified mentors, a cutting-edge work space and the funding necessary to accelerate their growth.

With presence in twelve countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Czech Republic, Spain, Ireland, Germany, México, Peru, the United Kingdom and Venezuela), Wayra has received over 20,000 proposals for new digital businesses, making it the largest technological talent spotting platform in the ICT world. Its academies in Bogotá, Mexico City, Lima, Buenos Aires, Madrid, Barcelona, London, Sao Paulo, Dublin, Munich and Prague are currently home to over 230 startups going through the acceleration process.

#### ABOUT INTESA SANPAOLO START-UP INITIATIVE

Established in 2009, the **Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative** is a comprehensive program aimed at facilitating both equity financing and business relationships for start-ups. The start-ups go through a "Factory" of investment readiness training and selection. The best ones are selected for arena events where they can pitch to international investors and businesses. In addition to free training, coaching, and widespread media coverage, start-ups gain access to a rich network of partners providing key services and resources. The arena events are organized by sectors. Over a short period of time, the technologies and themes expanded from biotech, cleantech, and ICT & Web to include nanotech & materials, social ventures, electromechanics, and healthcare. The events soon extended their reach from Italy to other parts of Europe, including London, Frankfurt, and Paris, as well as the United States with its key hubs in New York and San Francisco. Since September 2009, Intesa Sanpaolo Start-Up Initiative held **49 editions** in **5 countries** (IT, UK, US, DE, FR) matching over **350 start-ups** and growing companies with over **4,000 financial and corporate investors**.



*Telefonica*



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