

February 2021

ITALY



ECOSYSTEM WELCOME GUIDE



This guide offers you a **journey through the Italian innovation ecosystem**. You will find **advice from all the key players of French Tech** in Italy, before launching your startup in the transalpine adventure.

Guide produced by the Regional Economic Service of Rome, with the support of the Business France Italy office and the French Tech Milan community.



FRENCH TECH MILAN: THE BOARD



Paola Trecarichi
President
French Tech Milan
General Manager Italy
HiPay



Luca Mastroianni
Vice-President
French Tech Milan
VP International
PrestaShop



Patrizia Galbiati
Head of ICT & Services
Department
Business France Italy



Capucine Louis
Economic Affairs
French Treasury
Embassy of France in Italy



Cecile Bourland
Managing Director
Chamber of Commerce
France - Italy



Greta Salina
Head of Institutional, Marketing
& Communication Division
Chamber of Commerce
France - Italy



Roberto Liscia
President
Netcomm



Isabelle Andrieu
CEO
Pi School



Emmanuel Becker
Managing Director Italy
Equinix



Andrea Bovarini
Country Manager
South Europe
Commanders Act



Francesco Ecclesie
Operations Manager
Le Wagon Milan



Dionigi Faccenda
Italy Partner
Programme Manager
OVHcloud



Michael Lagarde
CEO
Leyton



Clara Sauzet
Press & Pr Manager
Marketing
Veepee



Gabriella Scapicchio
Mayor
Le Village by CA Milano

“All the members of the office are at your disposal to share our experience and our common passion for the economic and human adventure that is Italy. Do not hesitate to join the large French Tech Milan community which promotes our know-how in this land of opportunities.”

Paola Trecarichi

GETTING TO KNOW THE ITALIAN ECOSYSTEM

1



1

France's rank as an investor in Italy. You won't be lost! Thanks to its high potential, Italy really is an excellent 1st country to invest and trade in.

2

Italy is the 2nd most competitive country in world trade, according to the International Trade Centre.

3

Italy has the 3rd largest GDP in the European Union and a market of 60 million people.

6 numbers, 6 reasons to set up in Italy

197

There are 197 startup incubators in Italy, public, private or mixed management. Their number and budget have been rising sharply for 10 years!

5,000

The 5,000 Italian *Business Angels*, added to the many venture capital investment funds, are constantly looking for projects to finance.

12,000

The number of innovative startups identified in Italy by the Italian Chambers of Commerce.

INNOVATIVE STARTUP ACT AND OTHER SUPPORTING PROGRAMMES

More than 12,000 companies are registered as “startups and innovative SMEs” in a special section of the register of the Italian Chambers of Commerce. Since 2012, a decree has offered them many advantages. Here are the conditions for a startup to be eligible:

- ✓ Created/established for under 5 years
- ✓ Registered office in Italy, or in an EU country on condition of producing or having a site in Italy
- ✓ Turnover below €5m
- ✓ No dividends
- ✓ Possession of innovative technology

Other programmes and measures: [Smart&Start Italia](#), [Italia StartUp Visa](#), [Italia Startup Hub](#), [Investor Visa for Italia](#), [Clabs](#), [waived R&D taxes](#), [hyper-depreciation for purchases of “Industry 4.0” machines and technologies](#), [Patent Box](#), [“Startup Sponsors”](#), [National Innovation Fund](#), [Voucher for “innovation managers”](#).

For further information, we're here to help!

ITALIAN STARTUPS

- 73.6% provide business services (software production and IT consulting, R&D activities, information service activities)
- 17.6% operate in the manufacturing industry
- 3.4% are in commerce

Examples of Italian successes:

Fintech



Biotech & Health



Other sectors



Media & Digital

Proptech

E-commerce

To find out more, read bebeez.it and startupitalia.eu, focused on funding and the world of Italian startups.

FRENCH TECH IN ITALY



The French Tech Milan ecosystem brings together nearly 100 stars of French Tech. Mostly based in Milan itself and having arrived there over the past ten years, these companies have joined a solid community of French companies established in Italy, consisting of over 2,000 subsidiaries in all sectors.

There are different types: from mature companies and unicorns to scale-ups and startups. Almost all sectors are represented: digital services, software publishers, collaborative economy, FinTech & InsurTech, e-commerce and RetailTech, FoodTech, IoT, cloud, digital marketing and interactive advertising, etc.

Subsidiaries of the main FT120 startups located in Italy:

BlaBlaCar, Cityscoot, Deezer, ManoMano, October, OVHcloud, Papernest, Qonto, Sigfox, United Credit, Veepee, Wynd, Zelros...

Impact Italy: the acceleration programme of Business France Italy

This programme is aimed at an innovative selection of French startups, scale-ups and SMEs wishing to accelerate their development in Italy. Designed in 3 complementary phases, the customised support provided allows them to improve their understanding of the Italian market, build an effective *go-to-market* strategy and appropriate communication, generate new lists of potential customers (*leads*) and strengthen their network and brand awareness, which are essential in this market. For more information: [the April-October 2021 edition](#).

A few words from an entrepreneur:

Why did I choose Italy?

“First of all, the country has a qualified and affordable workforce.

As the third biggest economic power in Europe, the market has great potential that has not yet been fully exploited. E-commerce in particular still has a lot of room for improvement, and we have seen the beginnings of this growth following the strict COVID-19 restrictions.

Italians are generally capable of producing high-quality products, and the market is fond of them.

Second, the ability to adapt is a characteristic of the Italian DNA.

Finally, the *dolce vita* is the icing on the cake. In general, we live well, we eat well and we enjoy life there.”

Isabelle Andrieu,
CEO - Pi School

DOING BUSINESS IN ITALY

2



MAIN INCUBATORS

There are nearly 200 incubators in Italy, 60% of which are in the north of the country, particularly in Lombardy. A quick overview.

LAZIO

[LUISS Enlabs - Startup Factory](#)

Following an agreement with LUISS University in Rome, this accelerator was founded by Luigi Capello (business angel and co-founder of *Italian Angels for Growth*).

[PiCAMPUS](#)

Hybrid structure: half-fund, half-incubator.

[Startupbootcamp FoodTech](#)

This Rome-based accelerator, a member of the global network of Startupbootcamp accelerators, specialises in food technologies, and has many partners among the major Italian groups.

TUSCANY

[Nana-Bianca](#)

This Florence-based startup studio is active in Europe, America and Asia.

VENETO

[H-Farm](#)

The new acceleration programme from H-Farm Seed Ventures. It consists of 3 months of training and mentoring in Roncade (Treviso), and seed funding of up to €300,000.

LOMBARDY

[Cariplo Factory](#)

After many initiatives and projects focused on youth, work and innovation, the Cariplo Foundation decided to create a business based in a physical place that could catalyse and amplify value and opportunities for the region's different businesses.

[PoliHub Milano](#)

Incubator of the Politecnico di Milano (POLIMI) university, it is the 1st European university incubator. It supports startups in fields ranging from social networks to mechanics, including computer security and medical devices.

[Impact Hub](#)

This certified incubator and co-working space is part of a global network of over 100 sites bringing together more than 15,000 entrepreneurs united around projects with a social, environmental or cultural impact.

[ComoNExT - Innovation Hub](#)

Incubation in ComoNExT, based in Lomazzo, near Como, is an inclusive and structured process of assessment, mentoring and development of business ideas.

[Le Village by CA Milano](#)

Innovation Hub of Crédit Agricole opened in Milan in 2018, it is part of an international network of 37 Villages.

Its mission is to help startups in their growth path, and medium and large companies to be more innovative, leveraging the synergies and the connection between large corporate, young companies and the international group Crédit Agricole.

EMILIA-ROMAGNA

[B-Ventures DOCOMO Digital](#)

Founded by Mauro Del Rio in 1999 and bought by the Japanese telecommunications giant NTT Docomo, B-Ventures is a startup accelerator based in Parma for a selection of Italian and European companies.

PIEDMONT

[I3P](#)

The famous business incubator of the Polytechnic of Turin, I3P supports startups founded both by university researchers and by external entrepreneurs. It has encouraged the creation of 182 companies, which have obtained venture capital of over €40m and generated more than 1,400 jobs.

TRENTINO

[Techpeaks - The People Accelerator](#)

An international programme for aspiring entrepreneurs from around the world. For 4 months in Trento, they are called upon to improve their business skills with a network of international mentors.

CAMPANIA

[Digital Magics](#)

As well as being established in Naples, this incubator for innovative startups has branches in Milan, Padua, Palermo, Rome, Bari, Turin and Ascoli Piceno. With €93 million raised for the 66 startups that have benefited from the incubator, Digital Magics is a key player in the world of Italian startups.

ASSOCIATIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR FACILITATING THE ECOSYSTEM

Italia Startup: founded in 2012, it is the biggest Italian startup association. It has over 2,600 members.

Netcomm: founded in 2005, this is the Italian Consortium which acts as a reference point for e-commerce and Retailtech. It has more than 400 members.

IAG - Italian Angels for Growth: association of Italian business angels.

IBAN: Italian Business Angels Network.

PNICube: network of university incubators.

Roma Startup: association that promotes the world of startups in Rome.

Startup Turismo: association of startups in the tourism sector.

PROFESSIONAL TECH EVENTS

Startupitalia! Open Summit: 2020-winter.startupitaliaopensummit.eu

Organised by the editorial staff of the magazine StartupItalia!, this annual event takes place in Milan with the goal of whittling 10 finalists down to the best startup of the year. The last edition, held from 1 to 14 December 2020, was won by a biotechnology start-up, Wise, which develops electrodes against pain.

Le Bridge Milan: <https://www.chambre.it/attualita/n/news/le-bridge-milan.html>

Organised by CCI France-Italy, this annual event takes the form of “speed-dating” between start-ups and companies (over 150 participants during the November 2020 online edition). All startups looking to develop in Italy are invited to attend.

Web Marketing Festival - Startup Competition: www.webmarketingfestival.com

The most important startup competition in Italy, bringing together more than 21,000 participants and 150 investors. The six finalists for the 2020 edition (online) are: Flowpay, LightScience, ReWing, Staiy, YobsTech and CyberEvolution.

Netcomm Forum: www.netcommforum.it

The forum, organised by the retail and e-commerce federation Netcomm, brings together several thousand people each year, around 200 exhibitors and a high-level conference programme on the subjects of e-commerce, online retailing and innovation in general. Since 2010, the France pavilion has enabled French SMEs and startups to gain visibility in order to position themselves in this market. It has thus become the essential meeting point for French players in these sectors. The last edition was held online on 7 and 8 October 2020.

SMAU: www.smau.it

The Italian meeting and networking platform dedicated to innovation. This takes the form of an annual Roadshow of regional meetings, a multiregional international event in Milan and three stages abroad in London, Berlin and Paris, bringing together more than 50,000 companies from all sectors.

Maker Faire Rome: [Maker Faire Rome - The European Edition](#)

This innovation forum, which takes place in several cities worldwide, has an annual edition in Rome. The 2020 edition, which was to be held on 28 December, was postponed due to COVID-19.

RECRUITING IN ITALY

Despite the improving level of English in Italy, it is a real necessity to have at least one employee with a perfect command of Italian. Fortunately, these people are out there. The labour market in two characteristics:

- Affordable labour (€28.20/hour versus €35.80/hour in France in 2018, according to Eurostat), including highly qualified people
- Abundance of young job seekers and unemployed young people (around 30% of NEET)

In addition, the status of “innovative startup” offers many recruitment advantages (zero-cost notaries, tax benefits, etc.).

FINANCING YOUR STARTUP

What solutions are there?

The Franco-Italian fund **360 Capital Partners** is a good entry point into the world of Italian financing.

Over 6,000 companies invest in innovative startups each year.

The **5,000 Business Angels**, sometimes united in groups such as the *Italian Angels for Growth* (210 members), funded startups to the tune of €53m in 2019.

Equity crowdfunding platforms carried out 138 campaigns in 2019, raising a total of €62m.

Venture capital investments amount to ≈ €600m each year.

7 TIPS BEFORE SETTING UP IN ITALY

- 1 Rely on mentors and professionals in the sector, and don't bank on doing everything alone.
- 2 Don't invest in a workspace, but favour *Co-Sharing* (e.g. [Le Booster](#) in Milan).
- 3 Don't look at whether the product is good, but at the competition and the market share.
- 4 Be prepared to be part of a market whenever possible.
- 5 Have an Open Cloud digital platform ready when you get started.
- 6 Hire at least one Italian in your startup in order to integrate well into the markets.
- 7 Before heading to Italy, check out the local taxation and management costs.



THANK YOU ET *CI VEDIAMO*

Clause de non-responsabilité

Service Economique Régional de Rome – Mission French Tech – Business France ne peuvent en aucun cas être tenus pour responsables de l'utilisation et de l'interprétation de l'information contenue dans cette publication dans un but autre que celui qui est le sien, à savoir informer et non délivrer des conseils personnalisés. Les coordonnées (nom des organismes, adresses, téléphones, télécopies et adresses électroniques) indiquées ainsi que les informations et données contenues dans ce document ont été vérifiées avec le plus grand soin. Service Economique Régional de Rome – Mission French Tech – Business France ne sauraient en aucun cas être tenus pour responsables d'éventuels changements.

Copyright

2020 – Service Economique Régional de Rome – Mission French Tech – Business France. Toute reproduction, représentation ou diffusion, intégrale ou partielle, par quelque procédé que ce soit, sur quelque support que ce soit, papier ou électronique, effectuée sans l'autorisation écrite expresse du Service Economique Régional de Rome, de la Mission French Tech et de Business France est interdite et constitue un délit de contrefaçon sanctionné par les articles L.335-2 et L.335-3 du code de la propriété intellectuelle.