

## **THE BIRTH OF THE TAKEOFF ACCELERATOR IN TURIN: OVER 21 MILLION'S WORTH OF INVESTMENTS FOR AEROSPACE AND ADVANCED HARDWARE**

**An initiative of CDP Venture Capital, Fondazione CRT, UniCredit with Plug and Play Tech Center and OGR Torino to boost the country's competitiveness**

**Applications open until 25 May on [takeoffaccelerator.com](https://takeoffaccelerator.com): Italian and international start-ups intending to set up a registered office in Italy can join the programme**

**Rome, 27 April 2022 - Takeoff**, the acceleration programme dedicated to start-ups that develop solutions and services in the aerospace and advanced hardware sectors, was launched at the OGR Torino to boost the competitiveness of the entire country, starting from the academic and entrepreneurial excellence represented by Piedmont in these areas.

Part of the CDP National Accelerators Network, the network operating across the territory to help the growth of young companies specialised in high-potential markets, Takeoff is a joint initiative of promoters and investors including **CDP Venture Capital**, through the Accelerators Fund, **Fondazione CRT**, through the Development and Growth operational branch and **UniCredit**. The project also involves **Plug and Play Tech Center**, as co-investor and operational manager of the acceleration programme, and **OGR Torino**, in as innovation & networking partner. **Unione Industriali Torino** is institutional partner, **Leonardo** Group corporate partner, which will provide start-ups with its distinctive industrial skills and technologies, acquired in the Aerospace and Advanced Manufacturing sectors, throughout all stages of the programme.

With initial assets under management of over **21 million euro** (10 million euro of which allocated by CDP Venture Capital Sgr's Accelerators Fund, 10 made available in total by Fondazione CRT and UniCredit and 1.35 by Plug and Play Tech Center) for acceleration investments and for the subsequent start-up growth steps, Takeoff will support the implementation and development of companies operating in aerospace, aeronautics, air mobility and advanced hardware, characterised by the application of artificial intelligence and Big Data to the manufacturing sector.

There are numerous possible project options, including the technological development of satellites and the related software applications, space launchers, advanced and sustainable air mobility solutions, autonomous aircraft, data driven logistic services, as well as sensors, batteries, semiconductors, computing technologies, robotics and data centres.

The programme will select every year, for three years, up to 10 start-ups in the seed and pre-seed phase that will be able to access a 5-month acceleration programme structured by the project partners, which will guide them towards the definition of their business model by helping them to correctly identify the target market and the most suitable marketing strategy to achieve their objectives.

The best teams selected by the accelerator will also have access to further investments already allocated by the promoters of the initiative, so as to allow them to tap into the local industrial fabric and to strengthen the ecosystem in which the excellences operate in the sectors on which Takeoff focuses.

*"CDP National Accelerators Network now has more than 10 hubs throughout Italy, each focused on an industry with high market potential and all connected to one another to enable the growth of a new generation of innovative companies"* comments **Francesca Bria, President of CDP Venture Capital Sgr**, *"The aerospace industry is one of our country's flagship sectors, including with regard to the quality of research and development in strategic technologies such as semiconductors, batteries, drones and artificial intelligence applied to manufacturing. Accelerating new start-ups operating in this strategic sector means consolidating Turin as a European technology hub, investing in frontier technologies, and encouraging, through technology transfer, local companies to open up to innovation to help generate quality employment, competitiveness and strategic autonomy"*.

*"With Takeoff the country really does take off: we are really proud of the agreement reached with CDP Venture Capital for this programme, which is the first of its kind at the national level for the development and strengthening of Italy's competitiveness in a strategic and transversal sector such as aerospace and advanced hardware"*, says **Massimo Lapucci, Secretary General of Fondazione CRT and CEO of OGR**, *"In the international OGR Tech innovation hub, together with the global accelerator Plug and Play and in synergy with industrial and financial partners of national and global importance, Fondazione CRT invests patient capital to attract the best companies capable of proposing ideas and implementing projects with a high industrial and technological potential: a virtuous path that enhances the OGR ecosystem and consolidates the local territory as a European hub for aerospace, vertical mobility and advanced manufacturing, creating value for the country as a whole"*.

*"Takeoff is part of the country's economic transformation process that sees us actively involved together with the banking Foundations"*, says **Niccolò Ubertalli, Head of UniCredit Italy**. *"It is the result of UniCredit's positive relationship with the Cassa Depositi e Prestiti group and with the other entities and associations we liaise with in pursuit of sustainable growth, representing a concrete investment in support of a local territory with a strong focus on innovation culture. Furthermore, it allows us to further strengthen our close cooperation with Fondazione CRT, also enhancing the investments already made in OGR - Officine Grandi Riparazioni, as a hub dedicated to business innovation and acceleration where UniCredit also plays an important role as shareholder. We therefore confirm our role as a Bank that is strongly attentive to the local territory, its dynamics and its excellences, moreover in a region like Piedmont that has always been at the forefront in the field of innovative production"*.

*"We are aware that Italy still has a lot of catching up to do in the digitisation process at a global and European level, but now that this transformation is increasingly involving hardware-related industrial sectors, we are able to leverage the strengths that have always been a hallmark of our country. In aerospace more than in any other sector we have to think big and Plug and Play's task is to bring this ambitious mindset from the Silicon Valley to Turin"*, remarks **Andrea Zorzetto, Managing Partner of Plug and Play Italy"**.

Takeoff will be based at OGR Tech, a hub dedicated to business innovation and acceleration in which 11 programmes dedicated to the support of start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs are already underway in collaboration with national and international corporations and investors, and can be followed by participating start-ups in hybrid mode, both physically and remotely.

The call for the selection of the top 10 start-ups is open from today until 25 May 2022 on [takeoffaccelerator.com](https://takeoffaccelerator.com). Applications can be submitted by Italian and international start-ups intending to set up a registered office in Italy.

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#### **CDP Venture Capital SGR**

CDP Venture Capital is an asset management company (70% owned by CDP Equity and 30% owned by Invitalia) with over 1.6 billion euro of assets under management. It aims to make Venture Capital a strategic pillar to Italy's economic development and innovation, creating the conditions for a comprehensive and sustainable growth of the Venture Capital ecosystem. It operates through a series of funds that aim to support start-ups in all their life cycle stages, making both direct and indirect investments.

#### **Fondazione CRT**

Established in 1991, it is Italy's third banking foundation in terms of asset size. It has disbursed more than 2 billion euro for over 40,000 projects for research, culture, welfare, the environment, and innovation in the North West in the interest of the whole country. The Foundation also implements venture philanthropy and impact investing projects to measure their social and environmental impact: an example at European level includes the urban redevelopment of OGR Torino, the former train workshops redeveloped by the Foundation and converted into an innovative hub of international creativity and innovation.

#### **UniCredit**

UniCredit is a **pan-European retail bank** with a one-of-a-kind service model in **Italy, Germany, Central and Eastern Europe**. Our primary goal is to provide our communities with leverage for progress, offering the best to all stakeholders and unlocking our customers' and people's potential across Europe.

We serve over **15 million customers**, who are at the heart of what we do in all of our markets. UniCredit is broken down into four main geographical macro-areas and two product factories, Corporate and Individual Solutions. This allows us to be at our customers' side by leveraging the Group's scale to provide a full range of products. **Digitisation** and our commitment to **ESG** principles are key factors in the service we provide. They help us deliver excellence to our stakeholders and create a sustainable future for our customers, our communities and our people.

([www.unicreditgroup.eu](https://www.unicreditgroup.eu)).

#### **Plug and Play**

Plug and Play is the largest Open Innovation platform in the world: on the one hand it connects start-ups with the main Corporates, while on the other it invests and fosters investments to help start-ups grow, all with a global approach that facilitates international expansion and relations with Silicon Valley.

Launched in 2006 in the legendary Lucky Building in Silicon Valley where the likes of Google, Paypal and Dropbox took their first steps, Plug and Play now operates in more than 40 cities worldwide and is positioned as a leading innovation platform with over 530 Corporate partners, over 45,000 start-ups available in its proprietary database, and a total investment value of over 9 billion dollars in companies such as Dropbox, Paypal, N26 and Hippo. It opened its first Italian office in April 2019.