

**30th edition of the Marisa Bellisario Award "Donne ad alta quota" -
Second edition of the "Women Value Company Intesa Sanpaolo" Award**

PRESS RELEASE

**ZETA SERVICE AND ARTERRA BIOSCIENCE AWARDED
SPECIAL RECOGNITION
«WOMEN VALUE COMPANY 2018 INTESA SANPAOLO»**

**HONOURING THE ABILITY TO HARNESS
GENDER EQUALITY AND FEMALE TALENT**

- **The two winning businesses - Zeta Service, with its main headquarters in Milan, and Arterra Bioscience, from Naples – were chosen from 460 SMEs hailing from all across Italy who sent in applications, who were then included on a shortlist of 110 finalists.**
- **The award, that will be presented tomorrow during the prize giving ceremony "Mele d'Oro" (Golden Apples), was founded by the Marisa Bellisario Foundation and the Intesa Sanpaolo Group to encourage and give greater visibility to the SMEs that implement practical and innovative policies in managing gender diversity**
- **In 2017, female employment in Italy was 55.9%, still being one of the lowest in Europe, despite constituting a 4.8% increase compared to 2010, and the female employment rate reaching 80.8% for women with the highest educational attainment**

Turin, 14 June 2018. The Marisa Bellisario Foundation has chosen the winners of the "**Mele d'Oro**" of the 30th edition of the Marisa Bellisario "Donne ad alta quota" ("Women on Top") Award, established in 1989 and inspired by Italy's first ever female top manager.

For a second year, a special award was given to two businesses, one small and one medium-sized, that have stood out in the field of gender diversity management through development policies and strategies, promoting careers for women, and innovative and effective company welfare measures: the "**Women Value Company Intesa Sanpaolo**" award, which was set up by the Marisa Bellisario Foundation and the Intesa Sanpaolo Group with the goal of getting businesses involved in celebrating female empowerment and putting the spotlight on the most positive and innovative practices implemented.

The winners were **Zeta Service**, with its main headquarters in Milan, that offers medium-sized and large enterprises personnel administration, employment consultancy and human capital development services; and **Arterra Bioscience**, a small biotech business based in Naples that develops innovative technology that identifies active dermo-cosmetic molecules.

Silvia Bolzoni, president and CEO of Zeta Service, and **Gabriella Colucci**, CEO of Arterra Bioscience, will be presented with the award tomorrow in Rome by **Teresio Testa**, Head of Sales

& Marketing Companies Department of the Intesa Sanpaolo Banca dei Territori, during the "**Mele d'Oro**" awards ceremony, that will be broadcast on television channel Rai 2 on 19 June.

The success of the "Women Value Company Intesa Sanpaolo" initiative can be seen in the figures: 460 businesses sent in applications for the award, with 110 making it through the selection stage.

Between May and June, all 110 businesses took part in events across Italy, organised by the Marisa Bellisario Foundation and Intesa Sanpaolo, that highlighted how a greater involvement of women in the working and business world could be a strategic factor for the economic and social development and transformation of the country.

Still to this day, the untapped potential is huge. The **female employment rate** in Italy is one of the lowest in Europe, at **55.9% in 2017** out of all women aged between 15 and 64 (only Macedonia, with 51.7%, and Turkey, with 37.5%, fare worse). With that said, continued improvements have been noted, **with a 4.8% increase compared to 2010, and with the female employment rate reaching 80.8% for women with the highest educational attainment.** Higher female employment could boost growth: according to estimates from the Bank of Italy, female employment increasing to **60%** would lead, almost "automatically", to a **GDP increase of up to 7%.**

Women-driven businesses are also on the rise: based on Unioncamere's figures, there were over **1,331,000** businesses run by women (an increase of 10,000 compared to 2016, and an increase of 30,000 compared to 2014), constituting 21.86% of the overall number of businesses. **Growth is also apparent for more structured businesses:** limited companies managed by women increased by approximately 284,000 (a 17% increase from 2016) and count for over 21% of the total number of businesses run by women. **Young people's contribution to this figure also stands out:** more than 170,000 businesses are run by women aged under 35 (12.78% of the total number of women-driven businesses, and 28.7% of the total number of businesses run by young people), highlighting the high level of interest that young generations of women have in appreciating the value of their work. **The most significant growth of women-run businesses is concentrated in four regions:** Sicily, Lazio, Campania and Lombardy (an increase of 8000 businesses in 2017 compared to 2016). Almost half of the overall amount earned is attributed to an increase in women-led businesses operating in the **tourism sector** and in **other service sectors** (e.g. personal services). The greatest percentage increase compared to 2016 is found in **professional, scientific and technical businesses** (+3.8%).

Teresio Testa, Head of Sales & Marketing Companies Department of Intesa Sanpaolo, said: *"We are very happy that the Women Value Company Intesa Sanpaolo award has managed, in just two editions, to involve hundreds of businessmen and women of many generations, and from many sectors, establishing a key opportunity to exchange experiences. We have shed light on the stories of a multitude of SMEs which, like this year's two winners, build their strength on the talents of people, merit, and new ideas. Our goal is to help spread a corporate culture free from gender bias."* Testa said. *"Investing in women, who demonstrate preparation, attentiveness, perseverance, and an ability to work with others in their work, means having faith in the future, and where there is gender equality, there are new opportunities to be found. However, a welfare system is necessary, one that supports women workers who are too often forced to quit their jobs due to the difficulties of balancing their work with caring for their children. Intesa Sanpaolo, that has women make up 54% of employees and 40% of executives and middle managers, is already exemplary in this area, thanks to a company welfare system that has been developed over the years. This is a success that we hope to bring to our business customers with the Welfare Hub platform."*

As well as the well-established collaboration with the Marisa Bellisario Foundation, the Intesa Sanpaolo Group has put several initiatives into action that promote gender equality, so much so that it is the **only Italian company included on the 2018 Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index (GEI)**, that assesses the commitment and actions taken by major globally listed companies in the field of gender equality. Furthermore, it has been ranked **64th in the Equileap – Gender Equality Global**

Ranking, that ranks the top 200 companies in terms of gender equality, compiled by assessing over 3,000 listed companies from 23 countries.

Intesa Sanpaolo's **employees** can benefit from an **integrated welfare system** that offers, among other services, a time bank, company nurseries, more maternity/paternity leave, smart working, flexible start and finish times, and part-time opportunities. These are solutions that practically address the issues of inclusion, time management, and more generally, the ability of employees to strike the balance between their personal needs and working requirements. **For women who work in or manage a company**, the bank has set up **tailored loans**, such as Business Gemma, that benefits from the Guarantee Fund for SMEs, and **business development training programmes** that are based on topics such as digitalisation and internationalisation. **Opportunities to have a discussion** have also been provided, such as the WorkHer platform, with mentorship, networking and training projects. With **Welfare Hub**, Intesa Sanpaolo also makes a benefits system available to companies to improve the personal and family welfare of their employees. By accessing a digital, multimedia, and multi-channel platform (from a PC, tablet or smartphone), employees can select goods and services to spend their "welfare credit" on that are related to their areas of greatest interest: home and family, health and wellbeing, savings and leisure.

ZETA SERVICE, winning company in the "medium-sized enterprise" category

Zeta Service is a company specialising in payroll outsourcing, personnel administration, employment consultancy and HR consultancy. Founded in 2003 by president and CEO **Silvia Bolzoni**, her initial vision was to create a company that could not only have generating turnover as a goal, but also promoting the wellbeing of individuals. Zeta Service has six offices, with the main headquarters being in Milan, and employs 220 workers, of which 80% are women. The company prepares over 1,200,000 payslips every year for more than 420 customer companies, that range from medium to large in size. Yoga, medical examinations for employees, workshops on the science of happiness, a "butler" to run personal errands, and no time cards to swipe (what matters is achieving results, and workers can work from home) are some of the initiatives promoted in order to bring the focus of the organisation towards positivity and a personal-professional life balance, and in order to continue to enjoy solid growth over time. Since 2010, Zeta Service has been included on the ranking of the best places to work in Italy, compiled by the Great Place to Work Institute (this year placing second among the medium companies). In 2013, the company received the *Ambrogino d'Oro* award for personnel management policies, and for having been the first Italian company to give wedding leave to one of their employees who had signed the civil partnership register with his partner. Zeta Service was also selected as a finalist in the European Business Awards for their customer focus. In 2017, Zeta Service set up the *Progetto Libellula* project: the first network of companies to join forces combating violence against women.

ARTERRA BIOSCIENCE, winning company in the "small-sized enterprise" category

Arterra Bioscience is a biotech company hailing from Naples, that develops innovative technologies to discover and produce naturally occurring active molecules. By studying the signal transduction mechanisms in plants and human cells, Arterra Bioscience identifies and distinguishes new active compounds for industrial application, particularly in the dermo-cosmetic and agricultural sectors. The company was founded by CEO **Gabriella Colucci**, a Neapolitan researcher who returned to Italy after accumulating ten years of experience at the *University of California San Diego*. Over time, she has been able to transform Arterra Bioscience into a leading company, so much so that she is one of the finalists of the EU Prize for *Women Innovators 2018* this year. The company is a fine example of how innovation and research, together with partnerships with Italian and international universities and the local area, can combat brain drain and allow a small company to achieve great things, having a significant impact on the community. Women enjoy complete inclusion at Arterra Bioscience: out of 23 employees, 19 are women, who are valued for their flexibility, inquisitiveness, being venturesome, and their practical skills in research.

The “INTESA SANPAOLO WOMAN VALUE COMPANY” Award

The “Intesa Sanpaolo Woman Value Company” Award is given to small and medium-sized public and private enterprises (based on criteria set out in European Commission Recommendation 2003 361/EC) that have a majority Italian capital, are not part of a group, and have a strong financial performance track record. They are also to stand out for their application of policies that value women’s work and gender diversity management, including services that maintain a family/work life balance; initiatives designed to guarantee employees a stress-free management of their time within the company (benefits, vouchers, in-house nurseries etc.); flexible organisation of work policies; non-discriminatory merit-based remuneration policies; development and promotion of skills and careers for women, with a strong presence of women in managerial or top-level positions.

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