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SPECIAL NUMBER INNOVATION HOUSE DUBAI

Innovation House, Italy's talent and innovation on show in Dubai



Connecting Minds, Creating the Future is the theme of Expo 2020 Dubai, the first global exhibition held in an Arab country. **Creativity, Experience, Talent, Skills and Innovation**, the distinctive core values of Italian excellence, are the inspiration behind Innovation House. For 180 days, Italian businesses and international players will lay the foundations to play a centre part in the near future on an international stage.

"About a year ago, Prof. Resta and Prof. Sianesi put forward the suggestion that we should take part in Expo Dubai with a totally unconventional project, thinking outside the box", said **Attilio Fontana**, the governor of Lombardy. "The objective was to exhibit and promote the organisations we represent. I didn't think twice, and accepted with enthusiasm. We then thought of 'Innovation House', as a showcase where companies could introduce themselves to the world. This was the occasion to promote the excellence of our economic and productive system on the international market". This pact is the outcome of shared projects, the synergy created when Universities, Companies and Institutions form an



alliance.

"Expo 2020 Dubai is a great occasion to present the uniqueness of Italian regions to the world. In this spirit, Innovation House is where the production world of Lombardy can display its many faces, its thoroughly unique companies, its tradition and its drive towards innovation", said **Ferruccio Resta**, Rector of Politecnico di Milano. "Innovation House is thus a meeting place, a forum for exchanging ideas and much more. Politecnico di Milano, as a great test laboratory for ideas, has joined its Foundation in this initiative to strengthen the international outlook and image of our region abroad. Working through a solid partnership with the regional government of Lombardy, it is able to gather the great potential for development and growth flowing between Milan and the Arab Emirates".

"Innovation House was conceived from the idea of a 'fringe' Expo, a place decoupled from the Universal Exhibition but in the city of Dubai, within all the excitement and wonderful opportunities that these six months can offer for trade and international connections", said **Andrea Sianesi**, President of Fondazione Politecnico di Milano. "Lombardy-based businesses need new life after the stagnation caused by Covid-19, and what better medium could there be than a space where they can talk about what makes them so special and unique. The Hotel InterContinental Dubai Marina will be a laboratory of events, ideas and cross-fertilisation. This is our reset button, we are starting from this new vision of the future, from an ecosystem of excellence and innovation that is second to none and expressed in its union between universities and local territory".



7 October 2021. Innovation House is officially open



On the 7th of October, during the Climate & Diversity Week, we cut the ribbon and opened **Innovation House**. Over the next six months, this event space at the Hotel InterContinental Dubai Marina will showcase the best ideas and innovations 'made in Lombardy' to a global audience gathered at Expo 2020 Dubai.

The inauguration ceremony started with a welcome from **Andrea Sianesi**, President of Fondazione Politecnico di Milano, who greeted the guests present and everyone connected from Italy via the Cisco Webex platform.

Attilio Fontana, President of Regione Lombardia, was present at the event, while **Ferruccio Resta**, Rector of Politecnico di Milano, attended online.

"For six months, Dubai will be transformed into a world stage for our best ideas and innovations", said Prof. Sianesi, "Fondazione Politecnico di Milano is taking a big step forward and looking at foreign markets". His comments were taken up by **Alan Christian Rizzi**, Undersecretary for relationships with international delegations at Regione Lombardia, who reminded listeners of the legacy of Expo Milano and that, six years ago, it was the driving force for our country and today can re-launch its image.

Attending the ceremony was also **Abdulla Al Saleh**, Undersecretary for foreign trade at the UAE Ministry of Economy, who spoke about his country as a modern, advanced and dynamic nation, a young country, which in less than 50 years has been able to transform itself into one of the most developed economies of the Middle East.

Focus of the day was the panel discussion on circular economy and climate change. **Raffaele Cattaneo**, councillor for the environment and climate at Regione Lombardia, started the proceedings by underlining the need for a radical change in perspective on the climate, saying that change must come first from people, and then from their behaviour. The roadmap must combine policies of innovation and research, businesses from Lombardy and stakeholders, so that we all can work together to protect the environment.

The perfect setting to develop new synergy and international relationships

Set against the international backdrop of great worldwide uncertainty, it is a clear fact that SMEs were the segment hit hardest by the pandemic. Companies face a stark choice. Do they try to recover while remaining faithful to their long-established business models or do they see the crises as an opportunity to embrace change.

Innovation House was also created for the small and medium-sized companies of Lombardy and Italy; by showcasing their individuality and attractiveness, they can be the trail blazers for all companies and are the true leaders of our recovery. **An ability to innovate and be international** will be the primary drivers for business recovery and growth.

What does Innovation House offer? First of all, **the opportunity for businesses to develop their international network**. They can present themselves to **an audience targeted** by needs, and create a **network of contacts** crucial to entering the UAE market. Companies can choose between a **Golden, Platinum or Subscription Experience**, according to their business needs. We can organise events, conferences and seminars, with the right speakers, an international audience and the logistics of the day properly attended to, including the communication part. We can also **organise B2B events**, defining the criteria for inviting companies, providing assistance in logistics and managing the follow up. Lastly, the most complex topic is how to enter new markets. This part concentrates on the legal, tax and custom aspects, as well as on searching for and managing personnel and the promotional side of launching a company.



One venue: the InterContinental Hotel Dubai Marina



From 7 October 2021 to 31 March 2022, in the **Conference Centre and Penthouse**, Innovation House will be hosting a series of events, temporary exhibitions, and see the launching of innovative and experimental projects. **Innovation House** is inspired by the idea of a home, a physical and spiritual place, based upon relationships. The community is perceived as an extension to the concept of home, where everyone benefits from the interweaving of relationships. And the strength of Innovation House lies in relationships, especially the **Penthouse**. This 350 m2 venue on the 38th floor of the **InterContinental Marina Hotel** welcomes the world of research, industry and institutions. Made in Italy is on display in the furnishings sourced by **Baituti Design**, where Italian style meets Dubai culture.

All this is what companies and other interested parties will find, with everything geared to their business needs. The rooms can be used for conventions, round table discussions, meetings, B2B events and workshops. Companies will, above all, be able to arrange bilateral meetings in their search for potential partners to develop and internationalise their business, as well as meetings with financial backers. Over the next six months, InterContinental Hotel Dubai Marina will become the **symbol of Italian hospitality**, its particular ability to forge relationships, to transform a meeting into a lasting commercial connection. Innovation House can fully embody the theme of Expo Dubai "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future": people come together to generate innovation and so create the future.

In Lombardy, as in Dubai. A blended experience and six months full of events



Innovation House gives you an exclusive blended experience, allowing you to join live events whether in Lombardy or in Dubai. Politecnico di Milano has been a leading light in distance teaching throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. On the strength of this experience, after living with the pandemic for more than a year, the first event on this scale is the backdrop for a project that interprets the theme of **Connecting Minds** and generating a **blended experience to bring Dubai to Lombardy** through a series of events held on site and at a distance. Two physical venues, in Milan and in Dubai, are connected through technology that overcomes the barrier of distance, giving the feeling of being a single location. You can join an event through the **videoconference platform** from any device, including your smart phone. Many events and workshops will enliven Innovation House in the upcoming months, all purposed towards **networking and promoting knowledge**. The **General Assembly of Women** will provide one such occasion, giving voice to the many women mastering the various areas of knowledge and expertise. Women scientists, economists, writers, politicians and entrepreneurs will meet and debate, offering their perspective on how to make a better society. There are programmes to help Lombardy-based businesses strengthen their **export skills**, and to launch or consolidate their **process of internationalisation** in markets strategic to the regional economy. There will also be workshops on **climate, circular economy, renewable energy and the journey of decarbonisation**. There is room for space and design. Lombardy-based businesses and young designers will work together on innovative projects. And there will be the presentation of the next big international event, the Winter Olympics of Milan and Cortina in 2026.

Innovation House. A bridge taking Italian startups to Dubai

“The spaces in Innovation House and Fondazione Politecnico di Milano’s arrangements in Dubai are a wonderful opportunity”, said **Enrico Deluchi**, General Manager at PoliHub. “Startups in the PoliHub ecosystem will be able to introduce themselves to potential financial backers and companies that see Expo as a superb and highly efficient occasion to discover new investment opportunities”. If we observe the recent trends in sectors of interest for venture capitalists operating in the UAE, there is a rapid growth and attention towards topics that relate to deep tech and innovations which address energy transition and sustainability. These are the areas in which PoliHub excels as it responds to the increasing number of projects that are emerging from inside and outside Politecnico di Milano, and whose creators need support to validate their technological ideas and establish new startups. In the first quarter of 2022, PoliHub will exploit Innovation House’s pivotal role and organise a series of meetings with the leading operators in the world of Emirati startups (investors, corporate VC, incubators). They will invite the most promising startups operating in **Life Science, Green Energy & Sustainability and Industry Transformation**, and whose value offer is centred on solid and innovative patents and intellectual property. E. Deluchi continued: “We will help them learn about the innovation that is generated within the Politecnico ecosystem, and will present the most exciting innovative businesses to have emerged from under PoliHub’s wings in recent years. For our startups, this could lead to interesting exchanges of ideas and, through subsequent meetings, to potential opportunities for fundraising or commercial development”.



We joined Innovation House because...



Alessandro Spada, President of Assolombarda

“Innovation House is a physical and virtual space where private and public sector can co-exist in win-win harmony, creating the landscape where companies, territories and institutions can grow. Public-private interaction and intermingling is the right formula to ensure new markets, broader vision and deep and lasting alliances. We experienced this with Expo 2015, and we see it at work here in the setting of Expo Dubai, and in Innovation House, as a priceless accelerator of competition”.

“Academic research and support to technological development in Italian companies are two of the distinguishing features of the partnership between Fondazione PoliMI and Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center. This strategic synergy is reiterated in my dual role as Councillor of Fondazione and President of Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center. Taking charge of a physical and virtual space at Dubai Marina to support companies and leading international startups underlines the commitment of the IPS Group for Expo 2020 Dubai, and is also an ideal occasion for Italian excellence to meet emerging technology”.

Maurizio Montagnese, President of Intesa San Paolo Innovation Center



Antonio Calabrò, Head of Institutional Affairs Pirelli

“Expo 2020 Dubai is stimulating the recovery of worldwide economy and culture. Innovation House tempers the international outlook of Lombardy companies, among the engines driving our country, providing a space where institutions and business can meet, helping to spread digital technology and develop the aspects of environmental and social sustainability that underpin competition. The future lies in a ‘multi-technical culture’, as the connection between science and industrial humanism, basic research and technological tradition, continuous learning and evolution in production, market and lifestyles. Lombardy offers fine examples of culture meeting business”.

“We believe very firmly in Innovation House, and are watching it with interest mixed with curiosity.

We are strongly committed to our partnership with Fondazione Politecnico, and this is certainly a flagship initiative to promote the excellence of our economic and productive system on the international market during Expo Dubai.

This virtuous public-private partnership is a starting point to join forces and bring the world of work closer to the world of production, so that Italy can continue to nurture expertise and professionalism in productive sectors where there is an increasing demand and hunger for talent”.

Roberto Crippa, Executive Vice President of Technoprobe



Igor De Blasio, Chief Executive Officer at Arexpo

“The world is rapidly changing. Research and innovation can give us the tool we need to meet tomorrow’s challenges. In MIND, we are crating a district that brings together institutions, universities and centres of excellence, such as Human Technopole and IRCCS Galeazzi, as well as many private firms that see the wonderful opportunities in technology and innovation. This principle inspired Arexpo to join Innovation House with Fondazione Politecnico di Milano, and this is the roadmap we must follow”.

Andrea Sianesi
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Giampio Bracchi
Emeritus President
Eugenio Gatti
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