



Support policies for young business-owners in Emilia- Romagna

The Region of Emilia-Romagna supports young business-owners through a reward system as opposed to specific action plans and targeted funding, very much like it does for women.

Regional youth policy L.R.14/2008 and the national GECO agreements (jointly signed with the governmental department for youth), that provide limited funding mainly for youth community centres, have instigated specific policy-making regarding the new generations. In 2011, there was a new effort to build networks between local bodies, associative organizations and cooperatives in order to inspire young people to become entrepreneurs. The past years have seen many initiatives being undertaken in that respect, some of those initiatives having become actual businesses.

The Region of Emilia-Romagna has however been extremely active, notably in terms of funding, on the matter of competitiveness, innovation and internationalization, research and start-ups. In 2016 alone, funds allocated to supporting the entrepreneurial system will amount to Euro 400 million.

Innovative start-ups, who often have young people at their helm or among their staff, will receive Euro 27 million in funding.

In order for a business to qualify as innovative, its business purpose must be technological innovation and at least 2/3 of the staff must have a master's degree and at least 15% of its activity must be dedicated to research and development.

Between 2012 and 2014, 110 innovative businesses received financial support during their start-up phase out of the 683 ones in Emilia-Romagna, which represent a fair share of the total amount of new businesses in Italy, i.e. 5.818.

The Region of Emilia- Romagna has created a website for innovative start-ups:

<http://www.emiliaromagnastartup.it>. It constitutes a comprehensive and intuitive guide to those wishing to start a business. Created in 2011, it has become a local point of reference for all those involved in the promotion and support of budding businesses: universities and research centres, entrepreneurial associations, social hubs, banks, underwriting syndicates, "private equity" companies, business angel networks and consultants specialized in start-ups. The EmiliaRomagnaStartUp community comprises 381 innovative start-ups out of the 683 registered in Emilia- Romagna and the 66 local organizations. Between 2012-2014, the Region has financed 110 innovative start-ups.

The website offers an initial guidance service, as well as comprehensive information regarding existing regional competitions, online advice from consultants and experts, free passes to business fairs, help in finding investors, networking opportunities, notably with well-established companies and managers as well as updates regarding financing opportunities, various initiatives and events.

More specifically, the website includes:

1. The possibility to obtain expert advice from an on-hand accountant, patent expert, employment consultant and workplace safety expert.

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2. The “meet the accountant” service provides a free consultation on questions regarding the Growth Decree 2.0, Investment Compact and Labour Decree regulatory policies, as well as tax, administrative and corporate issues.
3. Through the InfoDesk service you can make an appointment with a mentor for an initial guidance meeting whereas the FinancER service helps you look for investors.
4. The START-UP section includes a database consultable daily by businesses, investors, journalists and other sector operators.
5. Exclusive opportunities for start-ups who sign up: free access to entrepreneurial fairs, networking opportunities, notably with well-established companies and managers, client harvesting programs and internationalization.
6. The Competitions page is constantly updated with information on start-up competitions .
7. The Workspaces page in full of information about available office spaces, co-working options and available labs.
8. The Network page contains information about how to contact start-up supporters in Emilia- Romagna (local hubs, research and innovation centres, business facilitators)
9. News and Events for start-ups and entrepreneurial projects.
10. Real-time updates on competitions and opportunities on Twitter and Facebook.

Services and opportunities are constantly evolving: EmiliaRomagnaStartUp has launched international partnerships in view of broader internationalization and has developed a network of managers dedicated to advise young entrepreneurs and accountants specialized in innovative start-ups.

EmiliaRomagnaStartUp is an initiative promoted by the Region of Emilia-Romagna in cooperation with Aster (a consortium of different entities such as the Region, universities, the CNR (National Research Centre), the ENEA (National Agency for new technologies, sustainable energy and economic development), the INFN (National Institute for Nuclear Physics) and the Chamber of Commerce) as well as the Regional Operative Program of the European Fund for Regional Development (Por Fesr), together with the involvement of network partners – public administrations, research centres, universities, agencies and innovation centres, category associations, credit operators, information bodies – which in Emilia- Romagna offer services and opportunities in the field of innovative self-entrepreneurship.

Becoming a member of EmiliaRomagnaStartUp is completely free and implies no obligation whatsoever.

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