

## PRESS RELEASE

### FONDAZIONE CATTOLICA: €2 MILLION FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN 2019

*Next year's interventions aimed at social assistance, culture, education, coaching and training. Projects for Catholic infant schools and for parish Grests.*

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Verona, 21 December 2018. Fondazione Cattolica is enhancing the “Call for Ideas” and allocating two €2 million, double the amount for 2018, to the start-up of new social enterprises. This was decided by the organisation's Board of Directors, which met this morning at its head office located on Via Adua in Verona, which chose to allocate an additional €1 million to the programme that accompanies the founding of these new initiatives, encouraging their growth, in order to meet the needs of the elderly, families, the disabled and the poor. In 2018, thanks to the Call, 215 new job opportunities were created for excluded individuals. In 2019, however, the aim is to increase this figure even more.

The Board also outlined the 2019 areas of intervention to which the resources made available by the next Cattolica Shareholders' Meeting shall be allocated. 60% of the available funds will be allocated to social assistance activities; 15% to cultural activities with a significant social value; 15% to education, coaching and training, and 10% to study and research. The guidelines are the result of a constant dialogue that Fondazione Cattolica has established with the entities within the national territory in which it operates: a direct relationship that has also enabled the organisation to monitor and analyse the results of the actions implemented during its 10 years of activity and which have led to the construction of the new model of intervention.

Fondazione, led by Paolo Bedoni since 2011, has gained a new vision, a change of paradigm that has led the organisation to transform its model from the mere donation of contributions into a support platform for social entities seeking to achieve autonomy and economic sustainability.

The goals for 2019 also include the development of the *Progetto di Vita* [Life Project], a social responsibility initiative launched by 2012, which, in recent years, has listened to and guided over 7,500 young people.

It will become an incubator aimed at social initiatives proposed by young people within the scope of the Call for Ideas. The aim is to create a context in which start-ups based on social innovation can take off. Over 5 years, *Progetto di Vita* has laid the groundwork for the launch of 10 new initiatives conceived by young people: 9 of these have grown year after year, such as the QUID social cooperative, a business initiative founded in 2013 from the commitment of five young people from Verona with a passion for sustainable fashion. At present, it is a company that has achieved a turnover of €3 million and has created over 100 jobs, employing mainly women, over half of whom come from a vulnerable background.

The company will also commit to launching a series of educational and training-based initiatives, starting with children. In fact, €200,000 will be allocated to training projects at Catholic infant schools in Verona, which account for 80% of the city's education system. €100,000 shall be allocated to Grests, i.e., activities that parishes and NOI circles in Verona aim at young people during the summer. In 2018, Fondazione supports 148 Grests: real educational workshops in which over 22,000 young people participated, monitored by 7,700 young educators.

In 2019, other training interventions aimed at young people will be launched, which are currently under consideration with some of the associations belonging to the "Contagiamoci" network, which Fondazione created in November 2017, bringing together a total of 140 entities throughout Italy.

*"In 2018 alone, Fondazione Cattolica helped to reintegrate over 200 people back into the job market", explained Chairman Paolo Bedoni "a clear sign that the path taken is capable of reactivating the economic fabric in a social context, generating a value higher than the capital value. The organisation is Cattolica's main tool in the field of corporate social responsibility, supporting the communities and territories in which it operates. It intends to be a generator of development, helping people, associations and social enterprises to grow, so as to create a virtuous path within our territories. Also,"*

*he continued "we need to continue supporting the training activities to offer opportunities for development and growth - also in a social context - to our young people, as is taking place with the Catholic infant schools and activities within the parish Grests".*

*"When skills and values - the typical efficiency of the profit world - are combined with the social sensitivity of the non-profit world, the results are surprising", said the General Secretary of Fondazione, Adriano Tomba. "Social activities become generative and their impact on the needs they deal with increase exponentially. Promoting social enterprise has been the key adopted by Fondazione Cattolica to transform donations that risk creating dependence on investments that generate freedom. An important freedom for all those who question the future of welfare in the face of increasing needs and decreasing resources".*

## **CONTACTS**

**Media Relations Manager** Erminia  
Frigerio (Cell. +39 337/1165255)  
[erminia.frigerio@cattolicaassicurazioni.it](mailto:erminia.frigerio@cattolicaassicurazioni.it)  
[t](#)

**Press Officer**  
Pietro Moneta (Mob. +39 337/1176726)  
[pietro.moneta@cattolicaassicurazioni.it](mailto:pietro.moneta@cattolicaassicurazioni.it)

**Local Media Manager**  
Angelo Cipriani (Mob. +39 347/5074052)  
[angelo.cipriani@cattolicaassicurazioni.it](mailto:angelo.cipriani@cattolicaassicurazioni.it)

**Press Officer**  
Camilla Pisani (Mob. +39 335/7138669)  
[camilla.pisani@cattolicaassicurazioni.it](mailto:camilla.pisani@cattolicaassicurazioni.it)