



## WMF Success in Silicon Valley: The Strategic Italy-USA Bridge for Innovation is Open

The first WMF event in Silicon Valley has concluded with great success: more than 200 investors, VCs, startups, and Big Tech companies—including Google, Meta, TikTok, LG NOVA, and Pinterest—gathered for a day dedicated to new business synergies and international collaborations. Moreover, from San Francisco, the first VCs, investors, and Open Innovation stakeholders from around the world have been announced for WMF 2025, scheduled to take place from June 4 to 6 at BolognaFiere.

**San Francisco, March 27th 2025** - AI For Future concluded successfully, an event organized by WMF - We Make Future - and Search On Media Group in the heart of Silicon Valley. The gathering brought together over 200 institutions, VCs and investors, Big Tech companies, startups, and AI experts for a day dedicated to Artificial Intelligence, international collaboration, and open innovation.

Among the attendees were Google, Meta, TikTok, Pinterest, LG NOVA, investors from the Bay Area, AI startups, and key stakeholders from the U.S. tech ecosystem.

The event took place on March 18 in San Francisco (CA) at INNOVIT and was supported by ITA – the Italian Trade Agency for the promotion and internationalization of Italian businesses. It marked the first U.S. stop on the Road to WMF 2025, which will culminate at BolognaFiere from June 4 to 6. Institutional representatives in attendance included Sergio Strozzi, Consul General of Italy in San Francisco; Giosafat Riganò, Director of ITA Los Angeles; and Alberto Acito, Director of INNOVIT.

"As the Consul General of Italy in San Francisco, I am pleased to present the best of Italian innovation to our partners," stated **Sergio Strozzi, Consul General of Italy in San Francisco**. "In front of me, I see individuals and representatives from Stanford University, people from Meta and Google, the network of Italian scientists here in California, other organizations such as the Business Association Italy America, and numerous stakeholders and experts from Silicon Valley and beyond. It is an honor for me to be here to introduce We Make Future, an event dedicated to showcasing Italian excellence in innovation and technology. I hope for the broadest possible participation from our American partners in this important event in June."

Next on the main stage was **Giosafat Riganò, Director of ITA Los Angeles**, who stated: "We Make Future in Italy is what INNOVIT represents here in San Francisco: a unique stage, an unparalleled platform where Italian excellence can fully express and amplify its potential. It is truly wonderful to have such an extraordinary combination of people and expertise here today."

He continued: "Let me add that this first We Make Future roadshow in the United States is just the beginning: the first step in a journey that will continue in Bologna from June 4 to 6, bringing the largest American delegation ever seen—investors, venture capitalists, incubators, accelerators, and specialized journalists. A truly significant delegation, organized by the ITA Agency in close collaboration with the Consulate General of Italy in San Francisco."

**AI For Future** also brought together some of the leading AI experts, who shared diverse perspectives on stage. Among them were **Nestor Maslej** (Stanford University), **Simona Capece** (Google), **Alicia Hanf** (LG NOVA), **Julia Yan** (TikTok), **Serena Perfetto** (Pinterest), **Simone Bianco** (Altos Labs), **Veronica Pitea** (ACEPER), **Paolo dello Vicario** (Datrix Group), and **Giorgio Taverniti** (Search On Media Group).

Additionally, prominent local VCs participated in the panel "Investing in AI: Spotting the Next Game-Changing Startups," including **Yamaha Music Innovations**, **Coelius Capital**, **Alchemist Accelerator**, **Fusion Software Solutions Co**, and **US Market Access Center**.



## A Global Ecosystem with Innovation Diplomacy at Its Core: San Francisco as a Strategic Hub

With the participation of institutional representatives and leaders from **Big Tech, corporations, VCs,** and innovative U.S. startups, AI For Future reaffirmed the importance of Innovation Diplomacy, a key concept introduced by **Cosmano Lombardo**, Founder and CEO of Search On Media Group and creator of WMF - We Make Future, during his opening speech.

*"Innovation Diplomacy is the key to building a more equitable and sustainable future. Only by uniting talents, businesses, and institutions can we turn innovation and Artificial Intelligence into an opportunity for all,"* explained **Lombardo**. *"This is the heart of Innovation Diplomacy: creating a constructive dialogue to ensure that AI becomes a driver of equitable, sustainable, and accessible development for everyone. The business of tomorrow is not measured just in profits, but in the impact it generates, and WMF is a platform built to enable this vision."*

## The 2025 edition of the VC & Open Innovation Fest at WMF was presented in preview

During AI For Future, the new edition of the [VC & Open Innovation Fest](#), one of the central vertical events of WMF 2025, was presented in preview. With over **214 billion in Assets Under Management**, **1.3 trillion in Total Portfolio Value**, and more than 13,630 investment rounds managed, the Fest will bring together **VC and CVC funds**, corporates, startups, scaleups, institutions, and stakeholders from over 90 countries in Bologna. The event will feature **B2B and B2G meetings**, roundtables and panels, startup and scaleup pitches, and exclusive business and networking events, such as the **Special Dinner** (June 4), **Investors Night**, and **Innovation Night**.

Also revealed from San Francisco were the **first international VCs, investors, and stakeholders** who will participate in WMF 2025, including **SoftBank, European Council, EIT Digital, LG NOVA, Invest Qatar, Intebridge**, and many others from the **USA, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia**.

## Startup Competition: The Winners Who Will Fly to WMF

AI For Future also placed significant focus on the startup world with the **finale of the Startup Competition**, a key moment of the event that saw some of the most promising emerging AI startups competing.

The two winning startups, **Cleverfi** from Italy and **Workee** from the U.S., will participate in WMF 2025 with a **stand in the exhibition area**, the opportunity to organize **B2B meetings with investors and venture capitalists**, and the chance to present on the **Startup Stage**, a platform entirely dedicated to pitch sessions from selected startups worldwide.

Additional opportunities for startups promoted to the international audience in Silicon Valley include the [WMF International Startup Competition](#), open until April 11, and the new challenge "**Future of Manufacturing**", which will be launched in the coming days on the official WMF website. There is also a collaboration between WMF, the **Tecnopolo of Bologna**, and the **Metropolitan City of Bologna**, offering selected startups the chance to access the Tecnopolo's spaces.

## WMF: An Innovation Valley Active 365 Days a Year

The AI For Future event in Silicon Valley is part of WMF's ongoing commitment both in Italy and internationally, with the ultimate goal of being a tool and accelerator for synergies and expertise to build a better future, also through business and education. After the 2024 edition—featuring **70,000 attendees from 90 countries, 2,000 startups and scaleups, 1,000 speakers, 1,000 VCs & investors, and 700 exhibitors**—WMF continues to establish itself as a leading platform for innovation, entrepreneurship, and social impact.



The next edition is set for **June 4, 5, and 6, 2024**, at **BolognaFiere**, where WMF will bring together the main players in global innovation to shape the Business of Tomorrow.

#### Useful Link

- [WMF - We Make Future](#)
- [Startup Competition](#)
- [First speakers announced](#)
- [First VCs announced](#)

#### WMF - International Fair on Artificial Intelligence, Technology, and Digital

On June 4-5-6, 2025, at BolognaFiere, the WMF - We Make Future returns—an internationally certified trade fair entirely dedicated to the world of innovation. As a globally recognized event, WMF annually brings together the best of digital and social innovation, top international players, startups, scaleups, investors, institutions, universities, and non-profit organizations.

With over 70,000 attendees from 90 countries in 2024, more than 700 exhibitors, over 1,000 speakers and guests from around the world, 3,000+ startups and investors, and partners involved in an investment portfolio worth \$1.3 billion, \$214 billion in assets under management (AUM), over \$60 billion in funded deals, and more than 13,000 investment rounds managed, WMF stands as the leading international trade fair for the world of innovation.

#### Search On Media Group - Humans Leading Innovation

Since 2004, the company has aimed to spread digital culture by managing communities, supporting sharing activities, and providing strategic and operational consulting through Search On Consulting in Digital Marketing and Digital Transformation for large companies. From the expertise and professionalism of Search On Media Group, the Education Business Unit was born, organizing WMF and other training events, as well as the ibrida.io platform, managing customizable and flexible online, hybrid, and offline events.

#### For information and materials

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