

NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE FUTURE OF TOURISM: THIRD CALL FOR STARTUPS FROM ARGO ACCELERATOR KICKS OFF

Early-stage startups with innovative solutions for digital and sustainable tourism are invited to apply for the third edition of the Argo Accelerator

- *Selected startups will receive pre-seed funding of up to €75,000 and may qualify for an additional €25,000 non-dilutive grant from the Ministry of Tourism*
- *Argo has supported 17 startups, raising €3.8 million and launching over 30 industry collaborations*

Venice, January 16, 2025 – The third startup call for **Argo Accelerator**, Italy's leading Tourism and Traveltech accelerator, kicks off today. Backed by CDP Venture Capital in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, Argo is based in Venice and jointly managed by **Zest** and **VeniSIA**, the sustainable innovation ecosystem of Ca' Foscari University of Venice. The program also benefits from the support of key partners: **Intesa Sanpaolo**, **Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center**, and **Human Company**, with the **Scuola Italiana di Ospitalità** serving as a technical partner.

Argo's mission is to drive innovation in tourism and hospitality, accelerating digital transformation with a sustainability-first approach.

The third edition targets early-stage startups developing innovative solutions in business, cultural, sports, health, religious, educational, or organized travel; open-air experiences; and food and wine tourism. Teams must have a functioning MVP. **Applications are open until April 30, 2025**, via www.argoaccelerator.com, with selection rounds in February and May.

Startups admitted to the program will receive pre-seed funding of up to €75,000 and can access a non-dilutive grant of €25,000, funded by the Ministry of Tourism.

“Once again, the Ministry of Tourism is proud to support the most dynamic players in our industry—innovative startups driving the digital, sustainable, and high-performance future of tourism. Investing in these creative powerhouses today is essential to unlocking their vast potential. Together, we'll elevate Italian tourism even further,” said **Daniela Santanché**, Minister of Tourism.

Results so far: Argo has accelerated 17 startups, collectively raising €3.8 million, and enabled more than 30 industry collaborations. The accelerator focuses on scaling business potential and maximizing fundraising opportunities:

- **Herop:** *“The Argo program transformed us from a startup into a structured business. It equipped us with the strategies and tools needed to scale effectively and optimize our fundraising approach”*, said CEO **Fabio Cicchinelli**.
- **Cora:** *“Argo was a game-changer, offering more than funding—it inspired us to think bigger. From exclusive perks to expert networks, we evolved our business, vision, and revenue potential”*, shared **Jessica Modica**, CCO and Co-founder.



L'Acceleratore Turismo & Traveltech
della Rete Nazionale CDP

- **MAE:** "In just five months, we moved from beta testing to a public app launch, pivoted from B2B to B2C, and scaled to 10,000 users," added CEO **Pasquale Marino**.

About Argo Accelerator

Part of Italy's National Accelerator Network, Argo was launched by **CDP Venture Capital SGR** in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism. The three-year program is co-managed by **Zest Group** and **VeniSIA – Venice, the oldest city of the future®**. Main partners include **Intesa Sanpaolo**, **Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center**, **Human Company**, and the **Italian School of Hospitality**.

Discover more: www.argoaccelerator.com

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