

For the first time in Italy, ILO: *Industry Liaison Office*, a strategic service to increase industry funding of research on the most common life threatening genetic disease

22 December 2014 – Milan, Italy. The Italian Cystic Fibrosis Research Foundation (FFC) and Zebra Ventures srl, announce the creation of the Industry Liaison Office (ILO): a new service for FFC-funded scientists which has, to date, received funding support from an international biopharmaceutical sponsor.

The objective of the ILO is to generate additional value from FFC-funded research projects by facilitating collaboration between academic groups and biopharmaceutical companies.

This is the first initiative of its kind in Italy.

FFC, acknowledged as National Agency for CF research and certified by MIUR (Italian Ministry for Research) as a CF research promoting entity, has the mission to translate scientific results into new therapies for CF patients through funding of biomedical research within academia and research institutions.

By establishing partnerships with the industry, the most promising research results can be fully developed into drugs, therapies, devices and diagnostics with the ultimate goal of generating more effective treatments for patients. In order to facilitate the transition from basic research into clinical development, an Industry Liaison Office has been set up in September and is managed by Zebra Ventures, a life science advisory firm collaborating with FFC since 2013.

The service provides **FFC-funded investigators** with support on intellectual property matters and technology transfer activities, assisting scientists in the assessment of their research results for patentability and potential transfer to industry.

Professor **Gianni Mastella**, FFC Scientific Director, comments: *“Over the years, projects funded through FFC grants have generated important data on novel drug candidates and technologies that help our understanding of the disease. ILO is a challenge and a path towards the generation of new therapies for patients, and is based on the excellence of the work of our scientific community.”*

In order for the service to be operational and grow in scope, Zebra and FFC have invited the biopharmaceutical industry and the main FFC stakeholders to become **sponsors** through help and financial support of this initiative. In return, sponsors are given visibility on the ILO website (<http://www.fibrosicisticaricerca.it>) and among the CF community, and receive support in accessing the Italian FFC network, knowhow, research results and facilities.

To date, an industrial sponsor has accepted to be part of the project: Cubist Pharmaceuticals Inc., a company involved in research and development of novel therapies in the acute care environment.

The Italian Cystic Fibrosis Research Foundation (www.fibrosicisticaricerca.it) is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1997 with scientific and social purpose and based in Verona. Its mission is to promote and fund innovative research projects in cystic fibrosis. Every year Fondazione allocates around €2M to fund innovative research projects on CF.

Zebra Ventures (www.twozebras.com) is a life sciences specialized consultancy firm based in Milano, Italy, providing services in the area of intellectual property management, technology transfer and business development. Zebra Ventures' clients include research institutions, not-for-profit entities, startup enterprises, biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies.

Cubist Pharmaceuticals, Inc. is a global biopharmaceutical company focused on the research, development, and commercialization of pharmaceutical products that address significant unmet medical needs in the acute care environment. Cubist's corporate headquarters is based in Lexington, Massachusetts, with international headquarters located in Zurich, Switzerland. Additional information can be found at Cubist's web site at www.cubist.com. Also, connect with Cubist on Twitter [@cubistbiopharma](https://twitter.com/cubistbiopharma) and [@cubistcareers](https://twitter.com/cubistcareers), [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cubist-pharmaceuticals), or [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...).

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