



The city of Rimini says goodbye to WMF2021 and thanks Search On Media Group – the 9th edition of the Digital and Social Innovation Festival that brought together thousands of people, both online and on site, in a three-day event dedicated to the Digital, the Society and the Future

WMF's 9th edition – the first Italian event carried out physically after a long period of stop caused by Covid-19 – has resulted in a three-day event full of education, entrepreneurship, and scientific research, with over 100 events and the participation of national and international startups and more than 600 speakers coming from all over the world. An event full of technology addressing current events and the societal impact of innovation, with live music, moments of show and entertainment. WMF2021 Mainstage – hosted by Cosmano Lombardo (Search On Media Group CEO) and Diletta Leotta (Italian TV presenter) – welcomed guests as Patrizio Bianchi, Luigi Di Maio and Enrico Giovannini (Italian Ministers), Gino Strada (founder of Emergency), Roy Paci (singer), Alessandro Borghi (actor), the youtubers groups The Jackal and i Sansoni and many more.

Bologna, 22/07/2021

The curtain came down on the 9th edition of [WMF – the biggest Festival on Digital and Social Innovation in Europe](#) – on July 17. After two years of waiting, the Festival welcomed its guests physically reinforcing its role as an innovation accelerator. **More than 3.000 people (per day) arrived at the Rimini Palacongressi** to witness the event – reaching the facility maximum capacity allowed by Covid-19 restrictions. The first Italian event to have such a high number of attendees after the pandemic has been managed in complete safety thanks to the work of **Search On Media Group** and the service offered by [ibrida.io](#). The management of such a big event in complete safety has been a challenge not only for Italy, but for the whole international community, and constitutes a model of successfully running events during the sanitary emergency, a new starting point for events and networking.

Such as in the two 2020 appointments, the Festival was carried out in a hybrid format also in this edition, both on site and online throughout the interactive platform [ibrida.io](#), which allowed **over 24,000 online participants** to follow the entire agenda of the event.

Ibrida.io, not only provided the **event organization platform** on which all the contents have been streamed, but also the on site technology to manage access to the conference center, ticketing and access to the conference rooms.

“**We Make Future**” – this is the claim adopted to express the **WMF mission** also for this edition, expressing the desire to explore the world of innovation to build a better future. How? Focusing on professional development, carrying out more than 60 thematic rooms about innovation, web marketing and entrepreneurship; and **over 100 events** dedicated to current events, culture, entertainment, entrepreneurship, and new technologies with their social potential both in Italy and abroad. “*Italy is much more than we think. Italy is a propulsive centre*”



*that merges innovation, traditions, and culture. We proved it, also this year, together with the thousands of people that attended WMF” says **Cosmano Lombardo**, Search On Media Group’s CEO and WMF Chairman. “WMF2021 was more than a recovery event after Covid-19, but an act of courage. Courage to re-build, to commit for everybody’s wellbeing and create a better future. During these three days we took concrete steps towards the creation of a better future, together. The credit goes to all the people who believed in this feat: participants, speakers, moderators and sponsors that feel and experience labor as a form of construction of the collective society”.*

WMF Mainstage: Italian Recovery and Resilience Plan, robotics, startups, shows and more than 60 guests from all over the world

Roy Paci and **Aretuska** opened the WMF2021 Mainstage with the first stop of the “La Despedida” tour, their final tour to greet their fans after 25 years of music.

Never so wide the Parterre of speakers and institutional guests, among which **Ministers such as Patrizio Bianchi, Enrico Giovannini and Luigi Di Maio**, MISE undersecretary **Anna Ascani** (Italian Ministry of Economic Development), **Laura Moro** for MiC (Italian Ministry of Culture), the vicepresident of the region Emilia Romagna **Elly Schlein**, Mayors and Assessors such as **Chiara Appendino** (Mayor of Turin), **Federico Pizzatorri** (Mayor of Parma), **Valeria Mancinelli** (Mayor of Ancona), **Stefano Ciuoffo** (Assessor of Tuscany), **Vincenzo Colla** (Assessor for green economy, economic development, labor and education of Emilia-Romagna), **Cecilia Del Re** (Municipality of Florence), **Paolo Petralia Camassa** (Municipality of Palermo), **Giacomo Angeloni** (Municipality of Bergamo), **Giovanni Pagano** (Municipality of Naples), **Lorenzo Lipparini** (Municipality of Milan), **Fabrizio Manzulli** (Municipality of Taranto), **Roberta Lombardi** (Assessor for Ecological and Digital Transition of Lazio).

WMF Mainstage hosted meetings and institutional roundtables to discuss different Missions of the **Italian Recovery and Resilience Plan**, addressing topics such as ecological and energy transition, digital transformation, the future of education, Covid-19 pandemic management from a social and health perspective and the enhancement of Italy’s cultural heritage – discussed with the UNESCO Creative Cities Network with the participation of **Gabriele Santarelli** (Mayor of Fabriano), **Alessandro Tambellini** (Mayor of Lucca), **Marco Bosi** (vice Mayor of Parma), **Daniele Vimini** (vice Mayor of Pesaro), **Marco Acito** (Assessor of Matera) and **Emanuele Bolla** (Assessor of Alba).

Technology, robotics and scientific research at the heart of WMF Agenda, thanks to the contribution of several influential voices as the ones of **Maria Fossati and Manuel Catalano from IIT** (Italian Institute of Technology), **Chiara Cocchiara** (aerospace engineer), **Giuseppe Borghi from ESA** (European Space Agency), **Anna Grassellino from FermiLab**, **Philip Kotler** and **Federico Faggin** (inventor and physician). **Luciano Floridi** (Professor of Philosophy and Ethics of Information) and **Sanzio Bassini** (IFAB Scientific Director) awarded six young



researchers on WMF Mainstage delivering the first National Award of Research on AI and Big Data organized by WMF and IFAB.

From technology to current happenings, human rights and fight against the mafia – **Gino Strada, founder of Emergency**, activist **Siyabulela Mandela** and **Giuseppe Lombardo**, Deputy Attorney of Reggio Calabria – brought their testimony on WMF Mainstage.

Wide space also for Italian and International entrepreneurship – **the Final of the biggest Italian Startup Competition**, hosted by **Diletta Leotta and Cosmano Lombardo**, awarded the startups **Recornea** (winner of the jury award) and **MyLeg** (winner of the audience award); while Bidroom, SumUp, foodpanda, Revolut, Contensquare and PatchAi attended the Scaleup for Future panel.

Moreover, a round table involving Cosmano Lombardo, Luca Carabetta (Italian politician) and Gabriele Ferrieri (President of ANGI) about the Italian and International startup world has focused on upcoming possibilities and potential limitations that must be addressed. WMF Mainstage saw the participation also of corporate representatives such as Carlo Tursi (**Tim Venture** CEO) and representatives of **TikTok, BEREC, Amazon, Intel, LinkedIn** and Deloitte, illustrating the company's Visions and most innovative projects and assets.

Several were the moments of show and entertainment that animated the three days of the Festival - guests such as **Alessandro Borghi** (Italian actor), Neri Parenti (director) and Angelo Maggi (actor and voice actor) spoke about the changes that the world of cinema and entertainment is undergoing.

The Youtubers group **The Jackal** talked about their upcoming project and the key role of the digital creators, meanwhile the group I Sansoni played a role throughout the whole Festival attending WMF Mainstage entertaining the audience and interviewing guests together with Cosmano Lombardo. Concerts and exhibitions were translated in LIS language (Italian Language of Signs) thanks to the collaboration between WMF and Rai Accessibilità, to make WMF accessible to all.

“We want to continue, and we will continue to co-construct the Festival together with WMF’s broad community, to whom we dedicate our work and to whom today we feel more united than ever. Together with all the people that believed in us today we will move to Rimini Fiera in 2022” – anticipates Cosmano Lombardo talking about WMF 10th edition – “to create an even more innovative format and experience what I would define an augmented event”.

Education, Innovation Districts, Open Stages and Expo Area

WMF2021 educational offer was enriched by the **over 600 National and International speakers that in more than 60 training rooms** addressed topics such as Cybersecurity, AI,



Robotics, Circular Economy, social media, Open Innovation, Blockchain, Aerospace, Public Administration, eSports and **SDGs** (room created in collaboration with UNESCO).

Three days of Networking in safety also within booths of the [WMF Expo Area](#) – over 100 the exhibitors, with companies such as **Stellantis, Trustpilot, Big Commerce, Hoepli** and **Sprinklr** – and the Sponsors of the Festival, such as **Aruba, Mashfrog, Nexi, ESA** and **TIM**. A brand-new Startup District was one of the big news of this 9th edition of the Festival, which welcomed over 40 startups that from an open-stage presented their elevator-pitches to the audience. Other innovative panels were the Women in Tech, the Book District – dedicated to readers, writers, and publishers – and the Innovation Film Fest, that saw the projection of many short films both at Rimini Palacongressi and at Samsara Beach in Riccione.

Outdoor activities during WMF2021 – artists and buskers performed outside and inside the Rimini Palacongressi while innovative and interactive robots performed during the festival. Space also for drones and cars – during the three days participants could become pilots of Stellantis Cars – the official cars of WMF2021. Speeches of young innovators within the WMF Youth were held inside the Postal Police Track, along with the project “Una Vita da Social”, educational campaign on social media and cyberbullying.

WMF2022 will come back on June 16, 17 and 18, 2022, held at **Rimini Fiera**, to welcome more digital professionals and passionate to look more deeply at the future and at the Digital and Social Innovation World.

WMF – We Make Future

Beyond 24,000 attendances online and on site in 2021 and more than 600 speakers and guests and from all over the world: WMF is the biggest Festival about Digital and Social Innovation in Europe, designed and powered by Search On Media Group. WMF2021 has been one of the first events carried out physically while guaranteeing an online participation thanks to the interactive platform [ibrida.io](#). Already confirmed the date for 2022, when the WMF will be carried out at Rimini Fiera.

Search On Media Group

Spreading digital culture and managing communities since 2004 – Search On Media Group keeps enhancing sharing activities while working as consultant for several corporations about digital marketing topics. The Business Unit “Events”, organizer of WMF and other educational events, and the interactive platform [ibrida.io](#), capable of carrying out tailor-made online and on-site flexible events, were born from Search On Media Group’s experience.

For further information, please contact:

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