

Lugano, 25 September 2023

Joint press release

## Lugano ready to welcome new hub for digital innovation

The City of Lugano and the Lifestyle Tech Competence Center (LTCC) Association have announced today that the competence center LTCC, part of Switzerland Innovation Park Ticino, will move to Lugano in February 2024. It will be housed in the new Dagorà Lifestyle Innovation Hub, at Via Peri 21, with around 20 other companies. Dagorà will invest CHF 2 million in renovating the building and fitting out the interior spaces. This is a further step in the strategy of diversifying the city's economy towards activities in the digital innovation sector.

The LTCC's relocation to Lugano is the result of a collaboration between the City and the LTCC that began in 2017 and represents an important building block for the intervention area "Lugano as a hub city between the North and South of the Alps," defined in the 2018-2028 Development Guidelines. In particular, the City has committed to work towards positioning Lugano as a center for digital innovation. Support for the development of the lifestyle-tech sphere on the City's territory has been ensured cohesively by the Municipality, the City Council and the Canton. The City, for its part, supports the LTCC Association and research laboratories with CHF 250,000 annually for five years for the competence center.

The Municipality is very pleased with this transfer, particularly since it represents a concrete prospect of growth for the competence center and for the entire sector, thanks to the expansion allowed by the new location. In fact, the complex at Via Peri 21 has an area of almost 10,000 sqm: a significant potential for expansion for the activities of the lifestyle-tech sector. The location near the stop of the Lugano tram-train network is, in addition, an important sustainability factor. The hope is that the establishment of new companies in the city, which are active in an innovative sector, will bring jobs, know-how and indirect economic spin-offs, as well as enable close exchanges with academic institutions - also members of the LTCC association - and to strengthen a network of collaborations and synergies with other innovative growth sectors in the digital world and in blockchain.

During the presentation, Mayor **Michele Foletti** did not conceal his satisfaction: "This step strengthens Lugano's position as an international hub in the lifestyle-tech sector and in the field of digital innovation, as it favors the establishment of companies in the city and creates qualified jobs." **Filippo Lombardi**, Municipal Councilor and Head of the Department of Territorial Development, for his part, notes that "Lugano contributes to the concretization of the Switzerland Innovation Park Ticino, the Dagorà Lifestyle Innovation Hub, and the Lifestyle Tech Competence Center: a synergy that well expresses the City's farsightedness and its role in realizing the growth potential of our region."

"We are thrilled to see how many concrete projects are and will be realized thanks to the Lifestyle Tech Competence Center that is developing within Switzerland Innovation Park Ticino, alongside the Drone Competence Center in Lodrino and the Life Sciences Competence Center in Bellinzona," says **Stefano Rizzi**, director of the Canton's Economy Division and vice president of Fondazione Agire. "The Innovation Park is an important project that aims to strengthen collaborations between the world of research and companies in strategic and future-oriented sectors. This initiative contributes to creating new and interesting job opportunities. It is no coincidence that the consolidation of the Switzerland Innovation Park Ticino is one of the central elements of the message presented in July by the Department of Finance and Economy and the Department of Education, Culture and Sports with measures to support innovation and regional economic policy for the period 2024-2027. We therefore welcome the transfer of the LTCC to Lugano, as it helps to further anchor this initiative to the Lugano area and, thanks to its 'physical' proximity to the universities, to provide an additional boost to research and development activities."

"Today I can say with certainty that we are gradually approaching the ambitious goal of the move," explains **Jelena Tasic**, Managing Director of LTCC. "Over the past three years, our association has seen significant growth, involving 16 members so far, both international leaders in their fields and important companies in the Ticino region. We are also working," she adds, "in close and fruitful collaboration with the University of Lugano (USI), the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland (SUPSI) and the Dalle Molle Institute, our founding partners."

These words are echoed by **Lorenzo Cantoni**, Deputy Rector at USI: "USI is one of the founding partners of the LTCC and has from the very beginning contributed wholeheartedly to its development. The collaboration with the competence center is relevant at the educational level, with the involvement of programs and courses such as, in particular, the Master's degree in Digital Fashion Communication. In addition, a Ph.D. on the topics of digitization, communication and enhancement of corporate heritage has been activated."

**Emanuele Carpanzano**, Director of Research, Development and Knowledge Transfer at SUPSI notes: "We are motivated to contribute proactively to the activities of the LTCC through our institutional mandates of training and research, development and knowledge transfer to interested companies and sectors, which will then be able to find increasingly favourable framework conditions in the area to promote their technological and business innovation capacity."

**Serse Bonvini**, CEO of Dagherà Lifestyle Innovation Hub: "We have chosen Lugano for the expansion of our co-working space by investing more than CHF 2 million to renovate the six floors of the Via Peri building and to create spaces conducive to exchange and innovation. The investments are aimed at creating a hub that will host more than 200 managers active in the technology and lifestyle sectors, in particular: fashion, food, design, cosmetics, and tourism. Also planned within the co-working space are an event space and an outdoor terrace that will be able to accommodate up to 60 people. In November we will announce an agenda of more than 15 events and workshops in 2024, which will bring companies, managers and investors from Switzerland and Europe each month to the city."

**Marco Huwiler**, country manager of Accenture Switzerland, says, "Ticino is an important innovation hub, especially in the lifestyle-tech sector. As a founding member of the LTCC we have been supporting companies in developing innovative projects in Ticino since 2021. We are therefore very happy to be part of Lugano's business environment and to actively contribute to the network in the future as well."

**Remo Cramer**, representative of UBS, adds: "As a financial partner, we enthusiastically welcome this further development that allows us to collaborate in creating new opportunities in the technology and innovation landscape, helping to inspire and attract the next generation of talents."

### **Lifestyle Tech Competence Center Association**

The City of Lugano was the first public entity to join the LTCC Association in 2022, founded by USI, SUPSI, Accenture, Bally, Guess and Microsoft, and joined by Barilla, Lavazza, UBS, Moresi.com as well as Antares Vision. Municipal Councilor Filippo Lombardi is a member of the Committee, representing the City. LTCC - part of Switzerland Innovation Park Ticino (SIP) - is committed to promoting and supporting innovative companies that carry out research and development activities by applying technological solutions to the fashion, food, communication and design, sports, and further sectors. The aim is to improve their competitiveness with a positive impact on the area in terms of economy, skilled employment and quality of life. In particular, the Association promotes collaborations between companies and academic institutions, technology and knowledge transfer, as well as the activities of the Lifestyle Tech Competence Center, part of the Switzerland Innovation Park Ticino (SIP - Ticino).