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PRESS RELEASE

KAIROS VENTURES ESG ONE INVESTS IN *MATERIA MEDICA PROCESSING* TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHYTOCHEMICAL START-UP

- **The fund, at its fourth investment, is the lead investor in a € 2.2 million round alongside US investor Merida Capital Holdings**
- **Matteo Bonfanti joins the management team of the fund**

Kairos, a group active in the asset management and wealth management sector, announces the closing of its fourth investment with the venture capital fund Kairos Ventures ESG One. The investment aims to support the growth of the Tuscan start-up *Materia Medica Processing*, a company engaged in the development of pharmaceutical extracts from cannabis sativa, a variety rich in cannabidiol. Kairos Ventures ESG One, launched in December 2021 and active since April 2022, thus confirms its interest in life sciences, following the investments in Endostart and BetaGlue Technologies and a third one closed in the energy sector in favor of the nuclear technology start-up Newcleo. The fund is also looking at the digital B2B and space economy sectors, to sustain the development and growth of the many innovative Italian SMEs that excel in these fields.

Founded in 2018 by Giovanni Isoldi, Gerardo Di Francesco, and Caroline Valois, *Materia Medica Processing* operates at the bio-incubator Toscana Life Sciences with a multidisciplinary team that boasts over 20 years of experience in the pharmaceutical and phytochemical industry. Previously a testing lab and producer of cosmetic raw materials, the start-up currently focuses on developing a CBD-based active ingredient for the pharmaceutical cannabis sector, which is estimated to grow to more than \$50 billion in 2030¹. The start-up aims to obtain the licenses necessary to operate in this market, thanks to the support of some specialised international investors, such as the American private equity fund Merida Capital Holdings, which joined the round led by Kairos. Merida Capital Holdings is a leading US-based private equity firm investing in the cannabis sector with 75 active portfolio companies that operate in the entire cannabis ecosystem: cultivation, retail branded products, data and technology, compliance, genetics, and industrial hemp.

¹ <https://www.alliedmarketresearch.com/medical-cannabis-market-A14250>

The arrival of Matteo Bonfanti will strengthen the management team of the fund led by Roberto Zanco and Elisa Schembari, bringing the total headcount to 5 investment professionals. Matteo Bonfanti brings over 15 years of experience in the venture capital and Technology Transfer sector to the team. Thanks to a solid scientific background, a degree in Physics from the University of Milan and a PhD in Nanotechnology obtained between Milan and Zurich, he was the Technology Transfer Director of the Italian Institute of Technology from 2018 to 2022, leading the Institute to its highest ever achievements in Technology Transfer, particularly in the start-up ecosystem; he is also an advisor of the Berkeley Skydeck Europe accelerator. His experience in Venture Capital started with Fondamenta SGR and continued at Quadrivio SGR where he acted as senior investment manager for almost five years overseeing transactions for over €40 million.

Roberto Zanco, Head of Alternative Illiquid Investments and Key Partner of Kairos Ventures ESG One Fund, commented: “As lead investor in Materia Medica Processing, we strongly believe the company will be able to position itself among the European leaders in the pharmaceutical and phytotherapeutic use of cannabis, a currently underdeveloped market which will benefit from an easing of regulatory barriers which will make room to significant growth on a global scale. This will be possible thanks to the long-term vision and intuition of professionals with proven scientific expertise, developed at a multidisciplinary level in over twenty years of research and market study. We are also proud of the commitment of a specialised American investor in the round, highlighting the potential of Italian companies at the international level. With this investment, the fourth in just a few months since the launch of the fund, we are in line with the objectives set for the creation of the portfolio and satisfied with the choices we have made. I would like to thank my entire team which, with the addition of Matteo’s extensive experience, is well-positioned to fulfill the goals of the fund.

Giovanni Isoldi, Founder of Materia Medica Processing, added: “Kairos’s commitment to Materia Medica Processing’s project is certainly a reason of great pride for us, as well as an implicit recognition by the market of the quality of our work as the first mover in Italy in the field of extraction and purification of active ingredients derived from cannabis. This important milestone will enable us to fulfill our mission with determination: to become the first fully Italian cannabis pharma company. We are now starting a challenging path which we hope will soon allow us to supply the market with highly standardised and high-quality cannabis-based herbal APIs completely made in Italy”.

Kairos was assisted by the law firm Chiomenti, while Materia Medica Processing and its founders were assisted by the law firm Legalitax Studio Legale e Tributario.

Kairos

Kairos, a Julius Baer Group company led by Alberto Castelli as Chief Executive Officer, was founded in 1999 as an entrepreneurial initiative in the asset management industry sector. With over EUR 5 billion in assets under management in June 2022 and its own offices in Milan, Rome, Turin and London, it offers a select platform of services and investment solutions for private investors, professional players and institutional clients. Kairos is a point of reference both in asset and wealth management. Its asset management activities are characterised by a flexible management methodology, orientated towards performance and risk control, while its wealth management service offers effective responses to financial and asset management needs. Majority shareholder Julius Baer, the leading Swiss wealth management group and a premium brand in the global wealth management industry, also contributes to enhancing the investment boutique business model at European level. The participation of some of Kairos' top managers in the share capital of the company strengthens the complete alignment of interests with clients. Kairos intends to position itself in the market as a leader in product innovation, anticipating with foresight the new investment trends that will impact our future.

www.kairospartners.com

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