

Italian Excellence Award Announces First 21 Nominations for 13th Edition

From Dubai to Washington, DC, the 2026 nominations highlight a new generation of Italian talent, innovation, culture and international entrepreneurship.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- The nominations for the 13th edition of the Italian Excellence Award have officially been announced. Founded in 2014 on the initiative of economic journalist Massimo Lucidi, the international event tells the story of that part of Italy that creates Value, builds relationships, innovates, and brings to the world a distinctive Italian style that is recognizable far beyond the traditional boundaries of Made in Italy.



The Awards Ceremony will take place on Friday, October 16, 2026, in Washington, DC, hosted once again at the prestigious National Press Club, located between the White House and Capitol Hill. Over thirteen uninterrupted years of the Award—even through the COVID-19 pandemic—have confirmed an insight: Italian Excellence is neither a purely economic category nor a simple geographic label. It is a way of doing things. It is the ability to combine expertise and creativity, Beauty and responsibility, roots and Future. Above all, it is People.

"When we started, we naturally talked about Made in Italy, about businesses and professionals capable of bringing Italian quality to the world. Today, that narrative has grown," explains Massimo Lucidi, founder of the Award and President of the E-novation Foundation. "Alongside Made in Italy, there is increasingly the concept of Made by Italians. Italians working in Dubai, New York, Luxembourg, across Europe and in the United States; Italians working in research, innovation, culture and information. But it also includes entities that preserve Memory,

Territories, and the extraordinary history of Emigration that made our Identity global. "That is what the Award is about: discovering stories, telling them, and connecting them.

Networking and Netreputation, certainly. But above all, Values and People. And the work of the Award does not end with the presentation of the Statuette."

And it is precisely the geography of the 2026 nominations that tells the story of how much Italy has changed as it competes on the global stage.

Among the nominations for the 13th edition, several profiles linked to the new frontiers of technology stand out. From Dubai comes the story of Michele Fiscalini, CEO and co-founder of Red

Rock Technology, an agentic AI infrastructure company operating at the frontier between Artificial Intelligence, food security, and sovereign systems.

In the Business Culture and Innovation section, this first shortlist highlights the nomination of Eni Joule – Business School, an expression of a model that views entrepreneurial education as a lever to build new skills and the new generations of businesses. It is clear evidence that the traditional "Fs" of Made in Italy – Food, Fashion, Furniture – remain global icons, but are no longer sufficient on their own to describe the contemporary Italian Excellence.

From the Motor District, the Motor Valley of Modena, comes a company that has evolved over time to become a leading name in predictive mechanics: a nomination in Washington, DC, for Carlo Ventura of Setti Ferramenta, in Modena since 1910.

The Award was born in Washington, DC, and has always maintained an international vocation. This is well illustrated by the nomination of Stefano Marra, CEO and founder of HOAEXP LLC-FZ, a Dubai-based tour operator and B2B/B2C platform specializing in private travel, high-end safaris, and tailor-made experiences in Africa.

From Luxembourg comes Severino Laface, General Manager and founder of Come à la Maison Group, a hub of Italian Excellence where elegance and refined taste in dining meet the European Institutions.

Also in the international hospitality sector, the Domina Group – Preatoni Family features among the nominations, adding to the Award's story a long-standing entrepreneurial experience in hospitality.

Finally, Fabrizio Ventimiglia, a lawyer committed to protecting the victims of Crans-Montana,



brings a different yet equally central dimension to the nominations: that of professional responsibility and personal commitment in service to others.

Technology and memory. Young industries and ancient knowledge. Dubai and New York, Naples and Sicily, Luxembourg and Washington. Researchers, entrepreneurs, managers, journalists, professionals, and cultural organizations. A composite picture, once again. And perhaps it is precisely this heterogeneity that explains what the Italian Excellence Award has become over thirteen years.

Not a ranking of the best. Not a celebration for its own sake of those who have achieved success. But a continuous search for Stories that deserve to be told and connected, so that, through their example, they can create Trust, Opportunity, and the Future. Because the Value of an Award is not in the statuette. It lies in the People it brings together. In the Stories it tells. In the Opportunities it shares.

The ambitious goal is to build "Reputational Communities," which requires time and continuity, as well as new impetus—including the Nominations we will announce from Australia starting in 2027.

The next event will take place in Washington, DC, on Friday, October 16, 2026, at the National Press Club, for the 13th Awards Ceremony of the Italian Excellence Award.

In fact, September and October are also packed with events held alongside the Award, all produced by the E-novation Foundation. These include: Bellessere & Fairplay, the General Assembly on Sustainability and Safety, International Days of Freedom, and a conference at the Hotel Excelsior on the Lido, held as part of the 83rd edition of the Venice International Film Festival.

FIRST 21 OFFICIAL NOMINATIONS – 13TH EDITION

Michele Fiscalini – CEO and Co-founder, Red Rock Technology

Stefano Marra – CEO and Founder, HOAEXP LLC-FZ

Luigi Carrino – University of Naples Federico II, DAC Campania, Fondazione Aerospazio Campania Academy

Antonello Mineo – Senior Innovation Manager, President of Confimi Industria Sicilia, President of Distretto Meccatronica Sicilia

Biagio Semilia – Publisher of BlogSicilia.it and CEO of Digitrend

Fabrizio Ventimiglia – Lawyer

Severino Laface – General Manager and Founder, Come à la Maison Group

Gabriele Pao-Pei Andreoli – President of IASC and Founder of IASC World Changers Summit

Antonio Genovese – CEO and Founder, AG Sports Agency LLC

Sabrina Zuccalà – President of Polo Nazionale Droni and Founder of 4ward360

Paolo Masini – President, Fondazione Museo Nazionale dell'Emigrazione Italiana

Delfina Licata – Head of Studies and Research, Fondazione Migrantes

Nunzio Ferraro – Founder, Pastificio Arte & Pasta

Massimo De Angelis – Journalist and Documentarian

Giovanni Giacchi – Founder, Periodico22

Marco Cartoni – Trainer and Founder, MeC Centers Cammino dell'Angelo

Raffaello Iovine – President, Lapis Museum Naples

Eni Joule – Business School

Preatoni Family – Domina Group

Carlo Ventura – Setti Ferramenta (Modena, est. 1910)

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