

PRESS RELEASE

Banks: ABI launched a call for applications for a microcredit scholarship

A research project for Italy. The “Microcredit Italy” scholarship for young researchers in financial subjects, which is worth 4,000 euros, will be presented tomorrow at the “2009 Retail Credit” Conference. This two-day event, in which esteemed representatives will participate to discuss the issue pertaining to providing credit for social development, will be held on June 23 and 24 at ABI’s headquarters in Rome.

The “Microcredit Italy” scholarship aims to help strengthen and support the proactive actions taken by the Italian banking industry with respect to microcredit. The call for applications will be made available tomorrow on the following website: www.abi.it. The scholarship for young researchers in financial subjects is worth 4,000 euros.

This initiative will be presented tomorrow at the two-day “2009 Retail Credit” Conference, which will be held at ABI’s headquarters in Rome; esteemed representatives will participate in round tables and meetings to discuss the issue. On Tuesday 23, Giuseppe Zadra, General Manager of ABI, Giuseppe De Rita, President of Censis, Filippo Cavazzuti, President of PattiChiari, Umberto Filotto, Secretary-General of Assofin, Carlo Giovanardi, Vice Minister for Family Affairs, Presidency of the Italian Council of Ministers and Giorgia Meloni, Italian Minister of Youth, will also participate in the Conference. On Wednesday 24, Alessandro Azzi, President of Federcasse and Vice President of ABI, Roberto Centaro, Senator of the Republic of Italy, Valentino Guelfi, President of Assofin, and Giustino Trincia, Head of the European Consumer and User Policies Department of Cittadinanzattiva, will also participate in the Conference.

The scholarship aims to implement a specific research project on the issue pertaining to microcredit, specifically referring to this sector’s growth potential and Italian banks’ contribution to its growth. Applicants may therefore identify one or more specific issues on which their scholarship programs will focus, in accordance with certain requirements which will be set out in ad hoc regulations and which are provided below. Application forms must be submitted by email to ABI by 30 September 2009. The scholarship will be awarded by a Committee of experts by the end of October. Students who are awarded a scholarship will have until 30 June 2010 to carry out their approved research projects. Final scholarship essays will be published in ABI’s Bancaria journal.

Candidates and application requirements

Candidates must hold a degree in economics or related subjects and must be below 30 years of age; they must also carry out or have carried out research with respect to the above-mentioned subjects at public agencies or private firms. The scholarship is open to Italian citizens and foreign nationals, provided that they have good knowledge of Italian, necessary to carry out the research project.

Scholarship award procedure

Candidates who are interested in participating in the scholarship selection must submit the application forms and their research project proposals to ABI by 30 September 2009, by sending them by email to the following address: borsamicrocredito@abi.it. Candidates may enclose their resume, their educational qualifications, certificates issued by the public agency or private firm at which candidates carry out or have carried out research, as well as publications, if any. The scholarship will be awarded by a Committee made up of five experts by 31 October 2009. For purposes pertaining to the scholarship selection, special attention will be paid to the quality of the research project submitted, which will be assessed on the basis of its innovative nature, of Italy's growth potential as well as the importance of its objectives to the Italian banking industry.

Application form

The application form and the call for application will be made available tomorrow on the www.abi.it website and at the Retail Credit Department Secretariat (borsamicrocredito@abi.it) upon request.

Rome, Palazzo Altieri, 22 June 2009