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ROMA – *“We strongly believe in the school as an element of rebirth of the territory. It is the most complex system in our society, but also its best part ”.* With these words Mirta Michilli, director of the Mondo Digitale Foundation, presented the ‘Smart & Heart Rome’ project this morning at the comprehensive ‘Melissa Bassi’ institute in the Tor Bella Monaca district in Rome.

A three-year program developed by Mondo Digitale, with the support of Roma Capitale, to promote social inclusion, the right of all citizens to quality education and full participation. The challenge is to bridge the gap of opportunities, which the Covid-19 emergency has made even more evident in the most deprived contexts, thanks to a training ecosystem built on synergistic actions between schools, universities and the educating community. The program envisages the construction in the outskirts of the city of seven Innovation Gyms, on the model of the first one already successfully tested at the Quadraro by the Fondazione Mondo Digitale (innovationgym.org), and the transformation of the Educational City of Rome into a permanent training center. digital for all citizens.

“Our main ambition is to create a true union between the different dreams of schools, universities and companies– explained Alfonso Molina, scientific director of the Fondazione Mondo Digitale- join forces between the different sectors to promote the development of the territory starting from education and vice versa. Without imposing models from above, but on the contrary by putting ourselves at the service of the

territory starting from the schools, we want to develop an education for life, for the children but also for the whole educating community, to form a team that always looks ahead . This is why we build the Innovation Gyms in schools, to bring down their walls and truly open them to the territory, to the university, to the educational environment “.

The construction of the first three Innovation Gyms involves Municipalities IV, VI and X. Spaces for training skills, from the robotics center to the coding and digital manufacturing laboratories, take shape in three local schools: the comprehensive institute ‘Via Poppea Sabina ‘in Casal Monastero, the’ Carlo Urbani ‘high school in Ostia and, precisely, the’ Melissa Bassi ‘comprehensive school in the Tor Bella Monaca district.

“Today we are starting a difficult school year with many difficulties– said Alessandra Scamardella, head teacher of the host institution- Initiatives like these do particularly well in such a complex phase. What does it mean in a territory like this? Not just implementing ministerial indications on key competences in practice. More generally, it is a question of making the centrality of formal learning operational, preparing our students in the best possible way, right from the initial classes, for moments of learning and accompaniment to digital “.

The project was supported by the ‘Smart City’ program of Roma Capitale, represented by Raffaele Gareri, director of the Digital Transformation Department.

“The great challenge of this important program is to reduce the inequalities between the center and the periphery– said Gareri- we started from a programmatic document with the objectives aimed at improving the quality of life of our city. In this process it is essential to work in synergy, which is why, as Roma Capitale, it plays the role of orchestrator. We have identified 81 projects, with an investment of 200 million euros “.