

PRESS RELEASE

BARCOLANA PRESENTED BY GENERALI: DOCTORS AND SCIENTISTS JOIN THE ADVISORY BOARD TO BETTER PREPARE FOR BARCOLA 52

Four healthcare professionals will work with the Organizing Committee to provide medical and health guidance to respond to new needs and regulations

Trieste, May 7th, 2020 - The Board of Directors of both Barcolana Llc. and the Società Velica di Barcola and Grignano have merged their Advisory Boards, (usually comprised of sailing experts), with a team of doctors and scientists. These new members are themselves avid sportsmen and sea enthusiasts who studied and trained in Trieste and have vast international experience. This group is comprised of **Alessandro Bavcar**, the point person for Disease Prevention & Control within the Department of Health of the Azienda Sanitaria Universitaria Giuliano Isontina. Joining him is **Stefano Fabris**, physicist and director of the Institute of Materials for the National Research Council, **Paola Storici**, biochemist and senior researcher at the Synchrotron of Trieste, and **Serena Zacchigna**, Associate Professor at the Department of Medical Sciences at the University of Trieste and Director of ICGEB's Cardiovascular Biology Lab. In May, these four scientists will join the Advisory board, which, for the last five years, has advised the organizers of the Barcolana presented by Generali regarding the introduction of new ideas and innovations for the event.

The expansion of the Advisory Board is motivated by the desire to work with a tireless group of science and health experts who can support the Barcolana organizing committee in the great challenge that is being faced: to create, together with the authorities, an event that is safe and in full compliance with the rules and the guidelines to date (which may be subject to change); an event that may be different from the past but with a commitment that will remain firm: a beautiful event to be experienced first-hand, while ensuring safety.

*"In these two months of working in tandem with the authorities and partners - said **SVBG President Mitja Gialuz** - we have identified a number of scenarios and options. The Barcolana will be held, and will be held on October 11th, 2020, preceded by the events that are historically part of our calendar. We now need researchers and doctors, sailing enthusiasts and Barcolana connoisseurs, to help us by evaluating the organizational options and operational protocols that we are developing, allowing us to optimize them even before we submit them to sports, city and regional authorities".*

The choice to integrate the Advisory Board also stems from the need to apply the protocols issued by World Sailing, the International Sailing Federation, which in March published a series of directives regarding the role of the organizers of regattas in times of the Covid-19 pandemic.

*"Barcolana - commented **Mitja Gialuz** - is working on several options, with the awareness of the role that it plays: promoting sailing, and making it come alive to as many enthusiasts and spectators as possible, to tell the story of our beautiful sea, the city of Trieste and the territory. Now in the region we can get back to the sea and we can start sailing: it is a good first step and although the road is still long, the hurdle is clear to us and we want to share this journey with our city, our region and our sponsors, together and safely".*

Below are the CVs of the four new members of the Advisory Board:



ALESSANDRO BAVCAR is the point person for Disease Prevention & Control within the Department of Health of the Azienda Sanitaria Universitaria Giuliano Isontina. He graduated from the Medical School at the University of Trieste, specializing in Hygiene and Preventive Medicine, and is an expert on the topic of pediatric vaccinations. In the fight against tuberculosis and HIV in Kenya, South Sudan and Somalia, Bavcar was in charge of strategic management, communication and technical coordination. He was also active in Uganda, monitoring the state of malnutrition and spread of infectious diseases. He oversaw a hospital infection prevention project at Beira Central Hospital (HCB), one of Mozambique's leading hospitals. He is now in charge of the Medical

Directorate of International Medical Corps Health Programs in Guinea Bissau and Mali, as well as Angola. He conducted research in the field of the prenatal health at the IRCCS Burlo Garofolo in Trieste. He currently deals with the prevention of infectious diseases, including the COVID-19 emergency, vaccines, environmental health and the health of international travelers. He is an avid seaman.



STEFANO FABRIS is a graduate of Materials Engineering at the University of Trieste and holds a PhD in Physics from the University of Belfast (UK). He specialized at the Max Planck Institute in Stuttgart and subsequently carried out research at the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab (USA), Centre Européen de Calcul Atomique et Moléculaire (CH), National Institute for Materials Science (Japan) and University of the Chinese Academy of Science (China). He was a Professor at SISSA and the Universities of both Padua and Trieste. He is research director of the National Research Council; he led his research teams at the Elettra Synchrotron and at SISSA in Trieste. His research is centered on the fundamental study of new materials and chemical-physical processes relevant to renewable energies.

He is currently Director of the CNR Materials Workshop Institute, which is based at the Area Science Park campus in Trieste and has secondary offices in Grenoble, Perugia, Genoa and Cagliari. The Institute, which is highly interdisciplinary, works in the fields of nanoscience, new materials and nanobiotechnology, combining the skills of physicists, chemists, and material engineers. He participated in regattas during his youth and remains a passionate sailor to this day.



PAOLA STORICI is a graduate in Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Technologies with a doctorate in Biochemistry both obtained at the University of Trieste. Today she works at Elettra Synchrotron Trieste as the lead researcher and is responsible for the Protein Facility. She has research experience in both academia and industry having worked for several years at the University of Basel and later in R&D of a major pharmaceutical company in the Milanese hinterland (now Nerviano Medical Sciences). She studied macromolecular biology, applying her expertise in the development of new drugs. At this time her research team is actively involved in EXSCALATE4CoV (E4C), a major research and development project just funded by the European Community with the aim of identifying therapeutically effective molecules against Covid-19 and structuring an

operational model of rapid intervention to combat future viral epidemics. Paola participated in a study on recurrent mutations in the SARS-CoV-2 virus that has just been published in a major international medical journal. She is a passionate sailor: as a youth, she was part of the national competitive teams in the 470 and Europe classes and has always enjoyed spending time on the water.



SERENA ZACCHIGNA was born in Trieste, where she obtained a degree in Medicine and Surgery and a PhD in Molecular Genetics at the International School for Advanced Studies (SISSA). In 2006 she was the winner of a Marie-Curie postdoctoral fellowship, which allowed her to work with Prof. Peter Carmeliet at VIB (Vlaams Instituut voor Biotechnologie) in Leuven, Belgium. She is currently Associate Professor of the Department of Medical Sciences at the University of Trieste and directs the Laboratory of Cardiovascular Biology of the International Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) and is also responsible for trials that involves the use of disease models. Since 2014 she has represented the ICGEB at the Bioethics Committee of the United Nations International Organizations. Since 2019 she has been a member of the Regional Ethics Committee of Friuli Venezia Giulia. Her research interests are aimed at understanding the mechanisms by which the various cells of the heart communicate during development and under different pathological conditions. In 2018 she was

elected Nucleus Member of the Working Group focusing on Myocardial Function for the European Society of Cardiology. In 2017 she received the ITWIIN Award for “Best Inventor” for her research on cardiac regeneration. She is a great sportswoman and has excelled at gymnastics, swimming and skating at a competitive level.

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