



# BACKGROUND & HISTORY

## About BAIA

BAIA stands for Business Association Italy America. We are a business network created by and for professionals operating between Italy and the United States. As a nonprofit, BAIA is a collaborative organization open to new members and focused on promoting innovation.

BAIA's mission is to offer its community opportunities to network; to facilitate the open exchange of knowledge between Italy and the US; and to promote a business ecosystem that fosters innovation. BAIA operates as a non-profit corporation and aims to enjoy the support of anyone who shares its vision of an open exchange network. How it started

The organization was established by Matteo Daste, Giorgio Gherzi, and Michele Ursino in San Francisco in early 2006. The three founders recognized the need to provide ongoing professional networking opportunities for the growing community of Italian entrepreneurs and executives working in the Bay Area.

They decided to launch a place, physical and virtual, that would serve as the intellectual and professional epicenter of this growing community, focused on exchanging knowledge and encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit of the businesses and professionals with strong ties to Italy.

**BAIA in Italy and other locations** With the creation of BAIA Italia in 2007, the organization has recently expanded its presence to Rome, Milan and other Italian cities.

In 2009 it has started organizing events in Los Angeles and Boston – a sign of strong interest in its agenda throughout the US.



## **Current focus**

BAIA's Executive Director is executing on the Board's mandate to:

serves and represents the community of Italian professionals, managers, and entrepreneurs operating in the Bay Area

increase the visibility and prestige of Italians within the international business community

leverages BAIA Italia to facilitate business opportunities among the two Countries

The BAIA approach to business networking is based on an open source model, where its Board of Director and Governance team strive hard to guarantee BAIA's independence and inclusiveness.

The overall direction of the organization is set by its Board of Directors, who is responsible for the strategic plan as well as major decisions.

Its Governance team includes several co- chairs who are active in the organization and take responsibility for specific areas.

Most decisions are consensus-driven; the Board has established a highly collaborative tone and welcomes input from all members of the BAIA community.

BAIA is open to all individuals, companies and associations who have an interest in promoting networking opportunities between Italy and the US. The value of BAIA lies in its members and their individual contributions.

Several industry sectors are represented in the BAIA community, and regular events target different business topics designed to satisfy a diverse business community.



## **BAIA in bullet points**

- What: a business network created by and for professionals operating between Italy and the United States.
- Why: our mission is to offer its community opportunities to network; to facilitate the open exchange of knowledge between Italy and the US; and to promote a business ecosystem that fosters innovation.
- Who: Board and Governance Members
- Expertise in multiple sectors
- Success stories
- Social media groups: BAIA Link, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr