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**TECH TOUR SEEKS 30 MOST PROMISING
EMERGING BRITISH AND IRISH TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES**

Call for Applications for 2010 UK & Ireland Tech Tour: Deadline is February 15

London and Dublin, January 6, 2010 – The European Tech Tour today announced the 2010 UK and Ireland Tech Tour will be held April 27-29 in London and Dublin. The Tech Tour will pair the most promising early and later stage growth companies with representatives from leading cross-border venture capital and global corporate firms. The Funds that will be present at the Tour represent over €10 billion worth of investment capital.

Companies from across the technology spectrum based in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Ireland can register to compete to become one of 30 finalists. Finalists will be chosen from a pool of over 250 applicants. The deadline for applications is February 15.

Victor Basta, who has 25 years of experience advising technology companies on financings and exits, will serve as President of UK & Ireland Tech Tour. Currently Managing Director of Magister Artis, he founded Arma Partners and before that was Co-President of Broadview's worldwide business. Basta will be joined by venture capitalist Martin McNair, who will serve as Vice President of the Selection Committee and corporate finance advisor Pietro Strada, Vice President of Sponsoring.

"A number of companies in the UK and Ireland not only survived the downturn, but continued to grow," said Victor Basta. "The Tech Tour finalists will have that rare combination of innovation, ambition and ability to execute – and could become tomorrow's leadership companies."

Basta added: "The investment community is changing. There will be perhaps 50% fewer funds investing in growth companies 5-10 years from now. This makes it even more critical to bring the strongest investors together with the UK and Ireland's best prospects, and we are very fortunate to be able to do this at the 2010 Tech Tour."

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Sven Lingjaerde, President of the ETT, commented: “The UK and Ireland markets have always been hotbeds of innovation, underpinned by a strong culture of risk-taking and entrepreneurial spirit. This year we are combining these geographies for the first time in a single, potent Tour. Given the economic climate, the Tech Tour is a great opportunity for everyone involved.”

Registration

Applicants can register for the Tour at http://www.techtour.com/ukie2010/how_to_register.php. As part of the process applicants must submit a company profile, business plan and draft presentation together with the registration form.

Selection criteria

Applicants will be assessed on the uniqueness of their technology, the strength of their business model, vision, capability to execute on the business plan and the quality and track record of their management. Submissions will be reviewed by the selection committee, which is comprised of 20 senior business leaders from various backgrounds including venture capital, technology, research and economic promotion.

Rewards for finalists

The selected 30 finalists will each have a twenty minute slot to present their business plans to senior partners, vice presidents and CEOs from the global venture capital and technology industry, as well as service providers and academics. In addition, they will benefit from networking opportunities, local and international media exposure and potential opportunities to secure funding.

New format for Tech Tours

The UK and Ireland Tech Tour is the first of ETT's new formats which combine geographic regions. ETT will visit six defined regions on a three year rotation, giving entrepreneurs the opportunity to meet international investors more frequently and facilitate investor access to a wider range of start-ups. This change also reflects VC's desire for more cross border investment opportunities.

About the European Tech Tour

The European Tech Tour Association (ETT) was founded in Geneva in 1998 in response to the growing interest in emerging technology companies in various European regions. ETT is an independent, not-for-profit organisation composed of key contributors to the high technology industry. The Association recognises that continued prosperity in Europe lies in its ability to transform today's innovative projects into tomorrow's global technology leaders. For further information, please visit www.techtour.com