Tech Trailblazers Awards Announce "Firestarter" Bursary for Non-VC Funded Early Stage Startups

New deadline of September 19th to reflect new categories of IoT and FinTech

London, UK - August 29th 2014 - The highly successful Tech Trailblazers Awards today announced a new bursary for early stage non VC backed startups, the Firestarter program. This has been created to ensure that entry fees are not a barrier for the new lean startups who are still securing major funding from VCs. This new program will attract more earlier stage startups within the accelerator and incubator communities as well as those self-funding or with angel, seed and crowdfunding as their primary source of investment.

The recent Tech Trailblazers Tech Startup Index surveyed the funding environment for nearly 200 enterprise tech startups. 35% of those surveyed indicated that raising funds took considerably longer than anticipated and 31% said that it was considerably harder than expected. The bursary aims to ease that pressure in the early stages for a startup. It ensures that these tech firestarters get a shot at recognition with all eligible entrants 2 years or younger who are pre-VC funding can receive a bursary for the $295 entry fee to their chosen Tech Trailblazers category as well as a chance to also win the new cross category early stage "Firestarter" award.

The other startup awards include the following categories: big data, cloud, emerging markets, FinTech, IoT, mobile technology, networking, IT security, storage, sustainable IT and virtualization. All startups up to and including "series C" VC backed funding who are younger than 6 years old have until September 19th as the final extended deadline to complete their entries.

Rose Ross, Chief Trailblazer and founder of the awards, explained "We had some amazing winners over the last two years, who have gone on to very successful exits, major funding

rounds and commercial success and we are delighted that we have been part of their exciting journey. But a comment from one of last year's contestants has echoed in my ears. "How can an early stage startup compete with someone with major VC backing?" Yes they can and we have seen early stage startups like SaaSID, Ventisys and Iceotope crowned as Tech Trailblazers in their field. However, it feels that the time is right to give more of the newest kids on the tech startup block more help and greater opportunity for hard earned reward and recognition. That's what the Firestarter bursary program is all about."

All entrants will also be automatically entered free of charge for Regional Trailblazers Cups – a further chance to win an award, and be crowned Trailblazer for their geographical region as well as the new Firestarter Award if eligible.

The Tech Trailblazers Awards will be determined by a combination of public voting and an extensive expert panel of judges from around the world. Industry analysts, editors, entrepreneurs, startup specialists and CTO's from all backgrounds in enterprise technology make up this year's panel, and are eager to review a new wave of startup talent and crown this year's Tech Trailblazers.

Notes to editors:
Media briefings and more information on awards and the Tech Trailblazers Tech Startup Index is available upon request.

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About the Tech Trailblazers Awards

www.techtrailblazers.com @techtrailblaze

Tech Trailblazers is a new concept in awards, designed explicitly for smaller businesses and startups that are five years old or less and at C-series funding or below. The awards have low barriers to entry and prizes that not only recognize startup innovation, but also proactively help startups grow their business with access to exclusive coaching, mentoring and development and prizes. The awards include the following categories:

- Big Data Trailblazers
- Cloud Trailblazers

- Emerging Markets Trailblazers
- FinTech Trailblazers
- IoT Trailblazers
- Mobile Trailblazers
- Networking Trailblazers
- Security Trailblazers
- Storage Trailblazers
- Sustainable IT Trailblazers
- Virtualization Trailblazers

In addition to the above categories, all entrants are automatically entered into the Regional Trailblazers Cup competition free of charge. The Regional Cups will be announced at the end of November and the individual Cups are:

- African and Middle East Trailblazers Cup
- Asian-Pacific Trailblazers Cup
- European Trailblazers Cup
- Latin American Trailblazers Cup
- North American Trailblazers Cup

Early stage startups (2 years and younger without VC funding) will be able to apply for a chosen tech category free of charge via the new bursary and will also be automatically for the new Firestarter award as well as their Regional Cup.

The Tech Trailblazers Awards prize fund, projected to be worth in excess of $1m, is supported by sponsors and industry partners including AfriLabs, Amoo Venture Capital Advisory, beSUCCESS, bnetTV, BigDataStartups, China AXLR8R, the Cloud Security Alliance, Computing, The Data Chain, ExecEvent, GFT, Gigaom, GoMoNews, The Green Grid, GSMA, The Icehouse, Innovation Warehouse, Internet of Things Events, IP EXPO Europe, Launchpad Europe, L'Informaticien, Lissted, MIT/Stanford Venture Lab, Mynewsdesk, The Next Silicon Valley, Outsource, Prezi, RealWire, Seed Forum, Silicon Cape Initiative, Skolkovo, StarTau, Startup America, Storage Networking Industry Association (SNIA), Tech in Asia, TechNode, TiE Silicon Valley, Wazoku, Ventureburn and VMware.