



## ***For Immediate Release***

### **Asia to Launch “Sports Pre-Accelerators” powered by VARCIS, ASTN and GSIC powered by Microsoft.**

**THURSDAY 29<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2020 | HONG KONG:** VARCIS is pleased to announce it is working together with Australian Sports Technologies Network (ASTN) and Global Sports Innovation Center powered by Microsoft (GSIC) and will soon announce a full series of “Sports Pre-Accelerator” and Sports innovation commercialisation programs targeted in the Asian region. Led by governments and sports stakeholders, VARCIS is pioneering and architecting an open innovation platform for Sports Technology and Sports Digitization for the 48 countries across Asia.

Recent early successes include the Victorian Government innovation agency, LaunchVic, announcing that ASTN has been awarded a significant grant to deliver a major Sports Technology Pre-Accelerator program in partnership with Global Sports Innovation Center (GSIC) and VARCIS in Melbourne. The two-year program, consisting of multiple 10-week mentoring programs, will support 60+ Victorian entrepreneurs to validate their “*Business of Sport*” idea and prototype against world’s best practice with mentoring from many of the best Sports Tech executives in the world. VARCIS plays an important day-to-day role in advice and supporting these companies with an Asia Market Entry and supporting program delivery.

#### **ASTN has seen Sports Tech success since 2012**

“ASTN deserves congratulations and has always been a pioneer in developing early-stage Sports Technology within Australia. ASTN delivered the world’s first pre-accelerator sports technology program back in 2012. Pre-Accelerator is really the “idea” and “commercialisation” stage of building a long-term sustainable company where you can shape and strategize the problems and solutions. Fast-forward to 2020 and ASTN has continued to develop Australia as one of the most successful and forward-thinking innovation ecosystems in the world of sports – creating more jobs, more companies, more university research and more venture capital per capita than anywhere else in the world. VARCIS members and partner networks continue to proudly support ASTN, a not-for-profit organization, with resources including Asia strategic market entry advice for businesses and venture capital for Australia’s most promising start-ups and scaleups. Now ASTN is moving into Asia, and working together with VARCIS and GSIC, helping 63% of the world’s population (4.7 billion people) unlock the human potential and jobs potential of technology in Sports, Media, Entertainment, Digital Health and Esports” said Mr James Demetriou, Chairman of the ASTN.

#### **Leaving a Legacy in Asia**

“VARCIS, in partnership with ASTN and GSIC, are working together on expanding this early success and will soon announce a series of sports pre-accelerator programs across the Asia region. VARCIS is in advanced discussions in Hong Kong, Greater Bay Area (GBA), mainland China and other key Asian countries that are looking to bring “Sports Pre-Accelerator” innovation models to Asia’s emerging sports markets as a way to get the foundations right of commercialisation.” Said Mr. Phillip King, Chairman and Founder of VARCIS.

#### **GSIC entering Asia Pacific market**

The GSIC promoted by Microsoft since 2015 has been supporting sports entities worldwide in their digital transformation processes. More than 1500 start-ups have been a part of GSIC’s screening process, participated in its programs and activities, and are currently working on its expansion in Asia with a content and services program of digital transformation supported by entities like ASTN or Sport Singapore. With the help of over 100 international experts, the GSIC is building a bridge of knowledge and experience transfer between Europe, America and Asia.

#### **World’s Largest Addressable Market is Asia**

“China alone is planning to build a US\$813 billion sports industry by 2025, a strategy covering everything from improved fitness to encouraging foreign investment, grassroots sport to elite performance. That means China itself could be between 30-40% of the world’s market for sports by 2025. Other Asia countries including Singapore, India, Indonesia and Malaysia are investing in sports of the future – winning gold medals is only a



small part of the big picture -- it's about driving everyday mass participation and creating healthier, more active, happier and engaged citizens, fans, venues and youth communities” said Dr Martin Schlegel, ASTN Director and program manager of the Australian SportsTech Pre-Accelerator program. “Pre-Accelerators are strategic innovation programs that are showing significant impact because of the resources, mentoring, expertise and world’s best practice we can bring together on Day 1. VARCIS is pioneering and architecting across 48 countries of Asia, a super-charge Sports Technology Ecosystem that is long-term sustainable, drives jobs and continuous economic growth. We believe this aligns to ASTN’s core values and presents an incredible growth opportunity for Asia”.

For more information, please contact Phillip King and Martin Schlegel on the contact details below.

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**Varcis Group Ltd**

*VARCIS is the pioneer and master architect of the Asian Sports Technology ecosystem and is a global Investment, Strategy and Research House specializing in Sports Technology and Health Tech in the Asian region. Created by a world-class leadership team, VARCIS has combined elite sports experience, investment management and brand licensing, venture growth research and transaction expertise in Sports, Fitness, Health, Wellness and Human Performance. The VARCIS global networks have access to tens of thousands of sports teams, leagues and organizations in Asia and internationally – as well as the world’s leading sports entrepreneurs and exciting young companies. For more information, please visit [www.varcis.com](http://www.varcis.com)*

**Australian Sports Technologies Network Ltd**

*Australian Sports Technologies Network (ASTN) provides leadership in the commercialization, development and promotion of Australian-inspired Sports Technologies. Established in 2012, ASTN is today a world-leading pioneer with over 600 member organizations in its national network across the landscape of Sports Digital, Sports Research, Stadium/Venues, Media, Entertainment, eSports, Human Performance, Fan Engagement, Sports Data, Artificial Intelligence in Sports, Sports Equipment, Sports Smart Apparel and Sports Universities. For more information, please visit [www.astn.com.au](http://www.astn.com.au).*

**Microsoft GSIC**

*Global Sports Innovation Center powered by Microsoft (GSIC), connects the sports industry to innovation by facilitating synergies and provides its members with value-added services that enable sports entities and companies to grow and develop with the help of experienced professionals in Sports Technology and Sports Innovation ecosystem. For more information, please visit: [www.sport-gsic.com](http://www.sport-gsic.com)*