



For Immediate Release

VARCIS GROUP AND GLOBAL SPORTS INNOVATION CENTRE (“GSIC”) POWERED BY MICROSOFT AND ASTN LAUNCH FIRST EVER SPORTS TECH PRE-ACCELERATOR IN ASIA BASED IN HONG KONG

THURSDAY 26th November 2020 | HONG KONG: Based on the success of the joint program in Melbourne, Australia, the Global Sports Innovation Centre (GSIC) powered by Microsoft have entered into a formal strategic partnership with Varcis Group Ltd supported by Australian Sports Technologies Network (ASTN) to deliver the highly successful sports tech pre-accelerator as an international access program in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area (GBA). It will be the first sports tech pre-accelerator of its kind in Asia.

GSIC powered by Microsoft was launched in Madrid, Spain on May 2015 with the aim to create a broad and inclusive international ecosystem composed by entrepreneurs, universities and institutions, which, through the Centre can generate synergies, new projects, products and business opportunities, in an atmosphere of co-creation, cooperation and innovation. GSIC was born at an intersection for all economic sectors linked to sports (performance, health, fitness, fan-engagement, gamification, IT, sporting goods, wearables, tourism, education, etc.). The purpose of GSIC is to support sports tech companies and organizations in order to foster projects and activities that strengthen the sports industry and enable people to achieve a better quality of life, both through the experience of sports itself (professional and amateur) and as viewers.

“Due to VARCIS’s current efforts in building an Asia sports tech ecosystem making Hong Kong the springboard to China by linking Asia’s local, regional and national governments, universities, their manufacturing community and corporate and professional firms to promote and support entrepreneurship specifically by promoting sports tech start-ups, this has given us a strong attention and interest, to be a part of the Asia sports tech ecosystem and VARCIS’s expansion plan. Based on that, we believe that Hong Kong Greater Bay Area should be one of the key cities/regions to establish a GSIC collaboration program. We are proud to have VARCIS and ASTN as our partner.” said Iris Cordoba, General Manager of GSIC.

“VARCIS is very excited and pleased to have GSIC powered by Microsoft as its partner in the Hong Kong Greater Bay Area. We have worked very hard together with the ASTN to bring GSIC powered by Microsoft to come to Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area to launch a new GSIC collaboration program and establish the first ever sports tech pre-accelerator in Asia and to earn their support in building the Asia sports tech ecosystem”, said Phillip King, chairman of VARCIS.

“The world largest addressable market is Asia ranging from sporting events and everyday mass participation to creating a healthier, more active lifestyle”, explains Dr Martin Schlegel, ASTN Director and program manager. “The VARCIS-GSIC-ASTN pre-accelerator provides a strategic innovation program to global sports entrepreneurs and founders”.



The 10-week program will support international start-up entrepreneurs and researchers to validate their on-field and off-field sports tech business idea against competitors, vendors and VCs. In addition to ASTN and GSIC domain experts, it will include other industry specific specialists to support program delivery. Furthermore, participating founders and entrepreneurs will be part of the open innovation collaboration with some of Asia's largest and highly established sports and health retailers, manufacturers, suppliers and customers across the region.

This program aims to prepare international early-stage start-ups for subsequent sports technology accelerator programs and is estimated to be offered in 4 cohorts over a two-year period with the intention to strengthen the reach, international standing and access for start-ups into the Asian sports tech market.

Applications for Cohort 1 of the pre-accelerator program is expected to open in early 2021 with the first cohort to hopefully commence in Q2 of 2021. The program will include 2 online sessions per week over a 10-week period. Visit the website at www.varcis.com or www.astn.com.au for further announcements of full program and application details.

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

Phillip King
Founder and Chairman
Varcis Group Ltd
phillip.king@varcis.com

Dr Martin Schlegel
Board Director
Australian Sports Technologies Network (ASTN)
martin.schlegel@astn.com.au

VARCIS

Varcis Group Ltd is the pioneer and master architect of the Asian sports technology ecosystem with its 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.

GSIC

Global Sports Innovation Centre (GSIC) powered by Microsoft 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 tech ecosystem.

ASTN

The Australian Sports Technologies Network (ASTN) provides leadership in the commercialisation, development and promotion of Australian-inspired sports technologies. Established in 2012 the ASTN is an industry-led Australian ecosystem of organisations with a vested interest in sports technology development.