

SOUTH WEST SILICON START-UPS GET ON THE 'FASTTRACK'

Submitted by: University of Bath

Friday, 28 September 2007

Bristol: Early stage semiconductor start-ups in the South West are set to receive a boost following the launch of a new programme called FASTtrack by Silicon South West. The pilot scheme, supported by UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) and the South West Regional Development Agency, will accelerate these high-growth potential companies by introducing customer contacts early on in their development, along with mentoring and networking tailored specifically to their needs.

Silicon South West Chairman, Greville Commins, said: "Semiconductor start-ups are special. They're born global and offer phenomenal growth potential however they also require tremendous up-front investment. FASTtrack will provide a tailored programme of assistance that will boost their opportunity for growth and success."

The FASTtrack pilot launches today with five companies:

- * Art of Silicon
- * aTempo
- * Power Oasis
- * Silicon Basis
- * Systems4Silicon

The FASTtrack programme will be delivered with the resources of UKTI and the Business Acceleration Centres of SETsquared, the partnership of the Universities of Bath, Bristol, Southampton and Surrey. The programme has also been given a vote of confidence with the association of investment group YFM, investment managers of the South West Ventures Fund and the Finance South West Growth Fund.

Nick Weiner, the founder of the FASTtrack company, aTempo, said: "We're delighted to join FASTtrack – it's a terrific initiative, providing an intense focus on strategy, customers and growth markets that will make a real difference at an early stage"

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Notes to editors:

Silicon South West(www.siliconsouthwest.co.uk) is the industry network for semiconductor, wireless, and microelectronics companies in the region. It is managed by SETsquared's business incubators for high-tech start up ventures – see: www.setsquared.co.uk

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