



Print >>

Close >>

Tmura generates first NIS 1m

Public service venture fund Tmura receives stock from companies and uses the proceeds from successful exits to fund charitable initiatives in Israel.

Globes correspondent — 6 Sep 05 15:07

Tmura - The Israeli Public Service Venture Fund today announced that it has reached a new milestone, exceeding NIS 1,000,000 in grants to Israeli charities.

Established just over three years ago, Tmura launched an innovative model to enable high-tech start-ups to give back to the community. Rather than accepting cash donations, Tmura receives grants of stock from these companies and uses the proceeds from successful exits - such as a public offering or acquisition - to fund education and youth-related charitable initiatives in Israel.

Tmura's portfolio currently includes 55 Israeli and Israel-related companies that have granted options to Tmura. Recent additions to the portfolio include Viola Networks, Oblicore, Identify Software, CyOptics, Celltick, Celletra, Onset Technology, Mazor Surgical Technologies, and Global Digital Health. Of these 55, Tmura has already successfully exited from five companies - Orckit Communications, MagniFire WebSystems, Phonetic Systems, Native Networks, and ModemArt - generating over NIS 1,000,000 for charity via Tmura.

Much of this has been a result of the increase in value of Orckit's (NASDAQ: ORCT) shares in the three years since Orckit's option donation to Tmura. Izhak Tamir, President of Orckit, commented: "We are honored to be associated with Tmura and with its valuable social activities. I am pleased to see that Orckit's option contribution to Tmura has appreciated greatly since its grant, to become a major enabler in the operations of Tmura. I wish to thank our employees, suppliers, customers, and shareholders that led to the success of Orckit and this market appreciation."

Tmura will be publicly recognizing Orckit's contribution at a reception later this month, hosted by US Ambassador to Israel Daniel C. Kurtzer.

Yadin Kaufmann, founding Partner of Veritas Venture Partners and Tmura's founder and chairman, said: "We're delighted to see Tmura's model begin to prove itself. With almost all the active venture funds in Israel participating in Tmura, I hope we can soon get almost every Israeli high-tech company to allocate options for charity, via Tmura. It's truly a 'win-win' way to help the community."

Proceeds generated from these successful exits were contributed to 12 Israeli non-profit organizations active in the areas of youth and education, including two donor-advised grants. These include:

- College4All - enrichment program focusing on students with potential to excel
- Kadima - after school youth clubs for children in poor neighborhoods
- Latet - a program to teach youth about humanitarian values and the importance of giving
- Misholim - expansion of this center's unique group therapy model for children
- Rosh Pina Mainstreaming Network - programs to lower the level of violence in schools
- Shiur Acher - volunteers from industry delivering lectures in schools
- Summit Institute - support of a tutoring program for foster children
- Tel Aviv Rape Crisis Center - an outreach program targeting youth
- Yaacov Herzog Center - leadership training program for youth
- Yedidim - neighborhood drop-in centers for youth
- JVP Community - enrichment programs in poor neighborhoods in Jerusalem (donor-advised)
- Tzeva - educational enrichment centers in several locations around the country. (donor-advised)

Tmura was established as a non-profit organization in 2002, and is supported by leading Israeli venture capital firms as well as other service providers including Veritas, Jerusalem Global, Concord, Gemini, GKH, Giza, IHCV, JVP, Magnum, Mofet, Tamir Fishman, Walden, Genesis, Vertex, Delta, Evergreen, Fortissimo, Infinity, Israel Seed, Pitango, Apax, Bowne, Star, ZAG / S&W LLP, and new member Carmel Ventures.

A number of leading professional service firms including the law firms Gross, Kleinhendler, Hodak, Halevy, Greenberg & Co.; Mintz, Levin; and Morrison Cohen, the accounting firms Price Waterhouse Coopers/Kesselman, Shimony & Co., and Philip L. Stein & Assoc., the PR firm Ruder Finn Israel, and others, provide pro bono services to Tmura.

Tmura's model was pioneered by the Entrepreneurs' Foundation, a non-profit organization that operates in Silicon Valley, Boston, Austin, Texas and other leading US high-tech centers.

Published by Globes [online], Israel business news - www.globes.co.il - on Tuesday, September 06, 2005