## Tech Nation continues to see rising worldwide demand for UK tech visas

- Tech Nation reports a fifth consecutive year of year-on-year growth in the numbers of applications for the Tech Nation Visa as the UK tech sector continues to attract exceptional talent worldwide
- 45% rise in applications for the financial year 2018-2019 compared to the same period for the previous year
- 44% of Tier 1 Exceptional Talent Visa applications were for the tech sector in 2018-2019
- The outstanding levels of talent resulted in Tech Nation endorsing roughly half of applications received
- India and US among countries with the highest number of incoming applicants in Software Development, AI & Machine Learning, Fintech, and Enterprise/Cloud sectors
- Tech Nation endorsement application processing for Start-up and Innovator visa categories due to begin in September

Tech Nation, the leading network for ambitious tech entrepreneurs in the UK, has for the fifth-year running revealed a continued rise in demand for applications for the Tech Nation Visa, as the UK's world-leading digital technology sector continues to attract exceptional talent from around the world.

First launched in 2014, the visa enables the brightest and best tech talent from around the world to come and work in the UK's digital technology sector, contributing their cutting-edge expertise, creativity and innovation to maintain the UK's position at the forefront of the global digital economy.

Since its inception, the scheme has experienced year-on-year growth in the number of applications received for the Tier 1 Exceptional Talent Visa for Digital Technology. For the financial year 2018-2019 it saw a 45% increase with a total of 650 applications, compared to 450 for the previous year.

Tech Nation is one of five designated competent bodies (DCB) appointed by the Home Office for the Tier 1 Exceptional Talent Visa, which together endorse applicants who can demonstrate exceptional talent or exceptional promise across digital technology, engineering, medicine, science, the arts and media. Tech Nation specifically endorses those applicants via the digital technology track, and receives approximately half of all the Tier 1 Exceptional Talent Visa's applications.

Each DCB is allocated 200 endorsement places per financial year, with the opportunity to draw upon a contingency pot of 1,000 additional places allocated by the Home Office in the event of unprecedented levels of incoming exceptional talent. As a result of the outstanding quality and demonstrable talent of applicants during the financial year 2018-2019, Tech Nation endorsed roughly half of the applications it received, and as a result exceeded its allocation of 200 endorsement places by roughly 63%. The visa  has received over 1,650 applicants, with 900+ endorsed from over 50 countries worldwide since 2014.

The countries with the highest amount of visa applications continue to be India and the USA, from Software Engineers and Business Developers in Software Development, AI & Machine Learning, FinTech and Enterprise/Cloud sectors. Nigeria, Russia, Canada, Australia, China and South Africa also top the list for number of applications.

**Margot James MP, Minister for Digital and the Creative Industries, commented:** "The UK continues to attract talent from all around the world. This is thanks to our world-leading academic institutions, strong access to finance and long standing reputation for innovation.

"Making sure we have the talent and skills so the tech sector can continue its incredible growth, is a priority of our modern Industrial Strategy.

"Following the publication of the Immigration White Paper, Home Office have also launched the new Startup and Innovator routes as part of Tier 1 to attract the brightest tech entrepreneurs. We are determined to ensure the tech sector has access to the talent that it needs."

**Caroline Nokes MP, Minister of State for Immigration, commented:** "The tech industry is vital to the UK economy and I am encouraged to see that there has been an increase in the number of visas issued to people investing in the UK and choosing to start a business here.

"We announced the new Start-up and Innovator visa to enhance the UK's visa offer to leading international talent and I am determined to see this continue as we leave the EU and introduce a skills-based immigration system.

"I am spending this year speaking with businesses and communities, including the tech sector, about our plans for a system that focuses not on where someone is from but on the skills and talents they can bring to our country."

**Matt Jeffs-Watts Head of Visas at Tech Nation commented:** "The UK tech sector is an incredibly attractive place to work, with its unparalleled connectivity, access to exceptional talent, and significant levels of innovation and investment.

"This view is evidenced by the overwhelming enthusiasm from Tier 1 Exceptional Talent applicants wishing to enter the UK tech sector. It is this level of talent and skill that will help in the UK keeping its position at the forefront of the global digital economy."

**Herman Komashko, Digital Engineer from Uzbekistan and Tech Nation Visa alumni commented:** "Receiving endorsement from Tech Nation is a public recognition that tells you 'your work has a positive impact, keep it up', and at that very moment, every particle of your brain starts working faster.

"The UK tech network is the biggest asset, and it's fascinating what kind of people you can run into. The freedom to work and move within the UK provided by the Tech Nation Visa is what allows us to experiment and understand where we can contribute the most."

**Brenda Della Casa, award-winning Content Leader, Writer and Strategist from New York, and Tech Nation Visa alumni commented:** "I am extremely humbled and proud to be a Tech Nation Visa recipient and I love the Tech Nation community. I am an ambassador for the programme and do all I can to make others aware of the scheme and assist them in their application journey. This has been the biggest achievement and blessing of my professional life."

**Josue Vivas, Nuclear Design Engineer based in Oxfordshire and Tech Nation Visa alumni from Venezuela commented:** "Clearly, the tech sector is moving fast thanks to the focused investment in

different cities across the UK and the push for Tech Nation outside London. This diversification across cities and academic centres has created tech hubs away from London.

"The Tech Nation Visa route provides you with access to a great network of professionals and thinkers, and widens your vision of the sector."

To find out more about Tech Nation's Visa Alumni Network, visit
https://technation.io/tech-nation-visa-alumni-network/

In September, Tech Nation will begin processing endorsement applications on behalf of digital technology entrepreneurs for the two new Start-up and Innovator Visa routes, building upon the successful operation of the Tier 1 Exceptional Talent visa and extending its support for international entrepreneurs wishing to establish their tech business in the UK. For more information, visit
https://technation.io/visa/startup-and-innovator/

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