

SYDNEY--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--At a time when policy change proposals are going unheard, angel investor tax deductions are non-existent, and venture capital investment is declining, Apple Co Founder, Steve Wozniak and Talent International have called for more support for Asia Pacific's tech entrepreneurs & professionals.

Richard Earl, Founder and Managing Director of Talent International, said that not enough is being done to encourage innovation in the APAC region and if the industry and its entrepreneurs don't act now, it could be too late.

"Our concern is the insufficient interest and activity at a grass roots level in terms of innovation, ideas and technology start-ups. This is becoming more of a concern in Australia than ever before - we need provide the same support as our counterparts in Northern America," said Earl.

Wozniak - judge for Talent International's awards program - agreed with Earl, adding that global industry attention is often biased towards Silicon Valley to the detriment of originality and creative difference from global influences.

"We all know diversity brings so much more to the table and by focusing outside of the usual and rewarding all sorts of people in tech, we can only make it better," he said.

"When we think of great start-ups and where they began you can't help but look towards the United States and Silicon Valley where I first started and the history making achievements there. But more and more we're seeing interesting start-ups flourish outside of Silicon Valley in places such as the UK and India but also in Israel, New Zealand, Singapore, Finland, and Brazil to name just some" he added.

Earl is calling for government and business leaders to put greater faith in start-ups by increasing access to start-up capital for new businesses, tax incentives for innovation, support for research, and a better business culture to assist entrepreneurs and promote competition.

“We need to recognise that at times we live in a risk averse region and this needs to be addressed. If we’re naturally less inclined to support and finance innovation, to implement new processes and to apply new technologies; then we need strategies to overcome that.” he said.

Wozniak called for a meaningful platform for regional entrepreneurs and tech start ups to connect with credible investors who will support them.

“APAC has some great start up hubs but what it needs is the global recognition. The USA works well to promote its industry and the start ups there are well placed to access VC and other types of support and financing. But now we need to focus on the rest of the world.”

These statements come as Talent International demands attention to the issue by launching the 2014 Talent Unleashed Awards to draw attention to the technology super stars across APAC.

Wozniak said he believed the awards would work to inspire people and provide exposure to some great minds and achievers.

“Talent International is one of those organisations who are determined to make the technology industry better by promoting the game-changers and rewarding not only those technology superstars at the top, but seeking out and recognising the individuals. I’m delighted to be a part of this program across Asia Pacific” he said.

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