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## The 21st Investment Forum organised by Catalonia Trade & Investment brings together 700 entrepreneurs and investors in Barcelona

- It is Catalonia's most important event for start-ups and entrepreneurs in the fundraising process: in previous years participating companies have raised €150M.
- During the session 21 projects from Catalan entrepreneurs seeking funding were presented to a jury and 450 networking meetings were held between attendees.
- This year Israel was chosen as guest country: Alon Lifshitz, CEO of Blumberg Capital investment fund, spoke about trends in venture capital and Israel's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Barcelona, July 14, 2016.- Catalonia Trade & Investment, the Catalan public agency for business competitiveness, celebrated the 21st edition of the Investment Forum on Thursday, gathering together over 700 entrepreneurs and investors in Barcelona. It is Catalonia's most important event in this area and has allowed the entrepreneurs who have participated in it over the last 6 years raise €150M in financing.

This year's edition had 21 finalist companies and 24 investors on the jury. After studying more than 100 candidate companies, 50 were selected to be part of the 2016 Companies Catalogue. Out of these, the 21 best companies pitched for one-minute elevator pitch. The companies were divided into three categories: life sciences and health, ICT and other technologies. The public could vote and choose 9 finalists that presented plus 3 cutting edge companies from Israel, who then answered questions from investors and demonstrated the great business potential of their proposals.

This year's winner was the Catalan company Nektria, recognized as the most promising start-up in terms of innovation and internationalization. The company has introduced the RECSHipping logistics solution, allowing consumers to choose the exact day and time slot when you want to receive your purchase, thereby improving delivery options for online shopping. The award consists of 120 hours of consulting services to implement an internationalisation project with a Catalan Government Trade & Investment Office abroad, including a travel allowance of up to €1,500 and, if needed, free use of a workspace in one of the offices for a three-month period.

Israel was chosen to be the guest country in this 21st edition of the Investment Forum. Thus, the inaugural conference of the Forum was given by the Israeli Alon Lifshitz, CEO of Blumberg Capital investment fund, who spoke about trends in venture capital and Israel's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Lifshitz said that Israel ranks second in world economies in terms of technological entrepreneurship: **"every year 500 start-ups appear in Israel, which in 2015 captured 4 billion dollars in investment"**. Lifshitz encouraged Catalan entrepreneurs to think globally **"we investors like to invest in companies that are born global from day one"**. He also added **"the sectors that are currently setting trends are the IoT, drones, robotics and blockchain"**.

For his part, the Catalan Government Minister of Business and Knowledge, Jordi Baiget, opened the Investment Forum and stressed during his speech that **"the Forum is an event fully consolidated in Catalonia"**. One of the facts that prove this is that those companies that have participated in the last six editions of the Forum have raised nearly €150M from private investors and venture capital funds. **"There are many elements that make Catalonia a key location in the entrepreneurial ecosystem world"**, said the Minister. In this regard, he added that **"alternative financing has grown in Catalonia, which in 2015 received more than 300 million euros in venture capital"**.

One of the main goals of the Investment Forum is to create a space where entrepreneurs are able to pitch their projects to investors so that they can secure resources and put their expansion plans into practice. The initiative also aims to promote contacts between all attendees and facilitate relations between people from the same sector through participatory, dynamic networking. In this regard, some 450 networking meetings were held between attendees.

### **About Catalonia Trade & Investment**

*Catalonia Trade & Investment is the public agency that works to attract foreign direct investment to Barcelona and Catalonia, promoting the area as an attractive, innovative and competitive business location. In the last 30 years, the agency's track record includes 5,000 investment projects managed, €8.1 billion attracted in inward investment and 40,000 jobs created. Catalonia Trade & Investment operates from 36 offices around the world.*

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