

Finnish investors target Swedish start-ups

Written by Johan Nylander

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Conor Venture Partners, a Finnish venture capital firm, is opening a new office in Stockholm in a move to increase its Swedish presence and lay hands on promising tech start-ups.

Conor's managing partner, Jari Mieskonen, said opening a Stockholm office is a natural step as the firm continues the expansion of its Nordic and Baltic operations.

"Having a permanent position in Stockholm will be advantageous," he told The Swedish Wire. "Even if not all Swedish companies originate from Stockholm, most of them have some activities there. For us, Stockholm is a natural place to start."

The company also announced that former Microsoft executive, Stefan Lindeberg, would be joining as a partner. In his former role, Lindeberg worked to create a start-up community close to the American computer giant.

Managing around 70 million euros, Conor Venture Partners focuses on early stage investment in disruptive ICT technologies, embedded systems, electronics, new materials and optics in Finland, Sweden and the Baltics.

Conor normally takes an active role in the companies in its portfolio.

"The companies we invest in are usually in a early stage of growth and in need of guidance and help," Mieskonen explained.

What's your view of the Nordic VC industry and its potential?

"The potential is huge," Mieskonen said. "There are so many trends in the market that boost entrepreneurship. It used to be that everybody wanted to be hired by the big companies, like Ericsson and Nokia, but nowadays brilliant university graduates prefer to set up their own businesses.

"Many of these are potential VC targets," Mieskonen said.

The Conor portfolio includes Aito Technologies, BehavioSec, Crystalsol, Eniram, Imbera Electronics, Neo Technology, Plexpress, Scint-X, Sensinode and Supponor Systems.

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