

PRESS RELEASE

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HSBC calls for Georgia's best business talent to come forward as deadline for European Business Awards approaches

HSBC Commercial Banking is calling for businesses in Georgia to help demonstrate the country's economic recovery and prosperity by bidding to be named one of Europe's top businesses. The call to action comes as the entry deadline draws near for the European Business Awards 2010 which recognise and celebrate innovation and business success across the EU.

Now in its fourth year, the European Business Awards sponsored by HSBC provide an opportunity for businesses of all sizes and sectors in Georgia to represent their country on a pan European level across eight awards categories*.

After an intense judging process led by some of Europe's most respected business leaders, winners will accept their accolades before an audience of over 400 of Europe's top politicians, business leaders, entrepreneurs, business commentators and media at an Awards Ceremony in Paris in November.

Guy Lewis, CEO of HSBC Bank Georgia comments: "With optimism returning after a difficult two years for businesses, we are calling for companies which have flourished despite adversity, innovated effectively through the downturn or are delivering sustainable business with positive results to enter. We believe that now is the time for us to celebrate and reward the excellence and resilience that has enabled many companies to survive – and often thrive – in Georgia and prove the nation's credentials to potential customers, peers and business influencers right across Europe."

Adrian Tripp, CEO of the European Business Awards, said: "The European Business Awards were founded to recognise excellence in business and provide a showcase for

Europe's business skills, achievements and innovations. Each year we receive an incredibly high standard of entries from businesses that are passionate about their role in driving the economy of their home nation. One thing I'm looking forward to this year is uncovering some fantastic stories of businesses who are achieving high levels of success through innovative methods. We get to work with the brightest businesses across Europe and showcase them on a global stage."

Dave Wheeler, Production Manager at Manchester Rusk, 2009 winner of The Environmental Awareness Award, said: "We are delighted that our efforts have been recognised with a European Business Award and we are incredibly proud of our success against the best businesses in Europe. Winning a European Business Award is a significant achievement as it demonstrates that we compete with some of the most progressive businesses in Europe to constantly raise the bar on professional standards. Not only has the Award done great things for our business externally, it's been a tremendous boost to our staff and supply chain alike."

Past judges for the European Business Awards have included Wim Kok, former Dutch Prime Minister; Petar Stoyanov, former President of Bulgaria; and Emil Constantinescu, former President of Romania. José María Aznar, former Prime Minister of Spain says, "I have the highest opinion of the European Business Awards. It is a great initiative to promote the values and principles we believe in: liberty, democracy, freedom of speech, open markets and open societies."

To register your interest in the awards please contact the entries team on + 44 (0)20 7234 3535, or email info@businessawardseurope.com. Alternatively visit www.businessawardseurope.com.

Ends

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About the European Business Awards 2010:

The European Business Awards recognises and rewards excellence, best practice and innovation in companies across the European Union. The competition is free to enter and open to organisations of all sizes and from any industry sector. The European Business Awards programme serves three purposes for the European business community:

- It provides examples for the business community to aspire to
- It celebrates and endorses individual's and organisation's success
- It provides case studies and content for learning from these exceptional organizations

***There are eight categories:**

- The Business of the Year Award
- The RSM International Entrepreneur of the Year Award
- The Business Innovation of the Year Award
- The HSBC Growth Strategy of the Year Award
- The Award for Customer Focus
- The Award for Corporate Sustainability
- The Environmental Awareness Award
- The Employer of the Year Award

HSBC Holdings plc

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