May 2006 PRESS NOTICE

World's first test bed for commercial Quantum Cryptography applications

Isis Innovation, the technology transfer company of the University of Oxford, and Quantum Information Partners LLP (QIP), today announce their support for the creation of a facility based in the city of London, for commercial organizations to develop and trial applications over a completely secure quantum communications network. Professor Andrew Briggs of the University of Oxford will guide the technical side of this new venture.

The team intends to take existing quantum cryptography products from commercial suppliers and develop a network offering the design, engineering, and testing of applications and standards over fibre optic cable and free air systems. Early users are anticipated from the financial and defence industries.

In the rapidly emerging field of quantum technologies, Quantum Cryptography (QC) is seen as the most likely area from which fully-fledged commercial products and services will emerge. QC is a new technique for completely secure electronic communications whose unique quantum attributes allow the detection of hackers and can prove that a message has not been intercepted.

Quantum Cryptography is judged by many leading commentators to offer the next generation secure communications capability. Existing systems such as PKI (Public Key Infrastructure) could be compromised by the development of quantum computers, or the discovery of advanced mathematical algorithms capable of fast factoring large numbers.

Professor Andrew Briggs emphasized the critical role the UK has already played in the development of quantum information processing, and commented that “With the combination of Oxford and QIP, we have a formidable team to help organizations build and trial new applications based on this exciting new technology, for the first time anywhere in the world”.

Charles Ross, Partner at QIP commented, “We are delighted to be teaming up with Oxford to build on the market awareness campaign and industry briefings we ran last year for the DTI, which concluded the need for a test-bed facility in the UK.”

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Further Information for editors

Quantum Information Partners LLP (QIP) was founded in 2004 to highlight the emerging opportunities for quantum technologies. QIP's role is to provide the link between the technical experts and scientists, and the user community.

QIP has reported on the state of the art and emerging opportunities for quantum cryptography for the DTI, and ran a focused awareness programme during 2005 with support from the Bank of England and the DTI. QIP's founding partners are Mark Aldington and Charles Ross.

www.qipartners.com

Professor Andrew Briggs is Professor of Nanomaterials at the University of Oxford, and Director of the Quantum Information Processing Interdisciplinary Research Collaboration (QIPIRC).

www.materials.ox.ac.uk/peoplepages/briggs.html

Isis Innovation is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the University of Oxford, founded in 1988 to exploit know-how arising out of research at one of the World's premier research institutions.

Isis provides researchers with commercial advice, funds patent applications and legal costs, and negotiates exploitation and spin-out company agreements. Isis files, on average, one patent application each week and manages over 350 patent application families.

Isis has assisted in the formation of 49 University spin-out companies since 1997, generating significant value in equity holdings for the University of Oxford.

www.isis-innovation.com