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Press Release:

HM THE QUEEN HONOURS WSET FOR TEACHING THE WORLD ABOUT WINE

Wine & Spirit Education Trust wins prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in International Trade

The Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET) is today celebrating being awarded The Queen's Award for Enterprise 2015 in International Trade. Widely regarded as one of the most prestigious awards in British business, WSET has won this award by demonstrating consistent growth and sustained success in reaching international markets.

Founded in 1969 to meet the training needs of the UK trade, WSET has since grown to become **the** world leader in wine and spirit education. In the last academic year alone 56,215 people worldwide sat for a WSET qualification. WSET courses are available in 18 languages, across more than 60 countries, and in the past decade the proportion of candidates taking their qualifications outside the UK has grown from 37% to over 75%. Over the same period, annual candidate numbers have more than quadrupled.

Perhaps most satisfying for a British business operating in the wine sector though, is the growth in student numbers from some of the world's most well-established wine producing and exporting countries, including France and Australia who sit firmly within WSET's top ten markets. WSET candidate numbers in France have quadrupled since 2008, whilst Australia delivered an eightfold increase over the same period. As well as growth in traditional wine producing markets, Greater China is fast on the heels of the UK to become WSET's number one market.

Developed and maintained by a dedicated team of experts, WSET qualifications are now delivered through a network of over 600 approved course providers worldwide. This international expansion has been led from its London headquarters by WSET's Chief Executive, Ian Harris. With a successful career in sales and marketing within the wine and spirit industry prior to joining WSET in 2002, Ian sees WSET's success as a reflection of the industry's continued recognition of the UK as a hub for the global wine and spirits trade.

"As a country with a historically low domestic production, the UK has always been one of the world's largest importers of wine. This exposure to different styles and grape varieties has given the British a rich understanding of wines and spirits from all over the world – making us well placed to be world leaders in the industry's education.

"Originally founded as an organisation for training the UK trade, the team at WSET has worked tirelessly to expand its influence overseas and now attracts the interest of keen amateurs as well as seasoned professionals across the

globe. It is fantastic to have our efforts acknowledged by HM The Queen.”

Ian Harris and WSET's Chairman of Trustees, James Simpson MW, will attend a reception at Buckingham Palace on 14th July to celebrate WSET's win alongside representatives from other companies who have won Queen's Awards this year.

-ENDS-

For more information, interview requests or images, please contact Ian Harris or Jacki Reid;

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About The Queen's Award for Enterprise

The Queen's Award for Enterprise is the UK's most prestigious award for British business, designed to recognise and encourage British businesses in the fields of innovation, international trade and sustainable development. The awards scheme was instituted in 1965 with the first awards given in 1966. HM The Queen bestows the awards on the advice of the Prime Minister who is assisted by a committee of industry experts and representatives from government. Approximately 140 Queen's Awards have been announced this year. Previous industry winners include Fine & Rare (2011) and Farr Vintners (1995).

About Wine & Spirit Education Trust

Wine & Spirit Education Trust is the largest global provider of qualifications in the fields of wines and spirits. WSET qualifications are formally recognised by the UK Government and have a strong reputation worldwide. In the last academic year (2013/14) 56,215 people sat for a WSET qualification. Courses are open both to industry professionals and interested enthusiasts.

For more information about WSET, please visit: www.WSETglobal.com

Notes to editors:

WSET offers a suite of courses and qualifications ranging from Level 1, which is studied over six hours, through to the Level 4 Diploma in Wines and Spirits, which usually takes 18 months to complete and is the equivalent of a university degree.

About Ian Harris

Ian Harris joined WSET in 2002 as Chief Executive following a successful career of over 25 years in sales and marketing in the wine and spirit industry. He spent 10 years with Waverley Vintners, followed by 15 years in the Seagram Spirits and Wine Group.

Ian holds the highest level of WSET qualification, the Level 4 Award in Wines and Spirits, and also lectured on the subject of spirits at Diploma Level in the 1990s.