

IBM and Partners Launching a new Innovation Hub in Rhode Island

On Tuesday December 18, 2018, Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo announced the first round of RI Innovation Campus projects at the University of Rhode Island. These projects will catalyze academic research into new commercial products and businesses. IBM's partnership in **the Rhode Island Innovation Hub** is one of the three chosen projects to drive technology innovation, new business and job opportunities in the state.



Governor Gina Raimondo made the announcement

The Rhode Island Innovation Hub (iHub) will be established as a startup incubator and accelerator that will enable and catalyze collaborations between start-ups, entrepreneurs, funders, industry and academic research entities. iHub was conceived by a partnership between The University of Rhode Island, Brown University, IBM and MassChallenge. IBM's [Uri Hayik](#) (IBM Israel CTO), [Richard Kaplan](#) (VP and Global Business Development Leader, Industry Platforms) and [Henry Hu](#) (Corporate Development Executive) have been driving the effort with teams in Rhode Island to make this happen. Avi Nevel (President & CEO, Rhode Island Israel Collaborative), was instrumental in linking IBM Israel with this Rhode Island Commerce Corporation Initiative.

iHub will establish an innovation community with physical space powered by curated and proven cutting-edge acceleration programs from MassChallenge and [IBM Alpha Zone](#) (our accelerator in Israel), free of charge for pre-revenue and early stage startups. iHub anticipates sponsoring joint education events between Brown's Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship and the URI SPARC program. iHub will be located in the Providence Innovation and Design District.

"We are excited to move forward with the University of Rhode Island and other partners in launching iHub, which will create new opportunities for collaborative ventures among entrepreneurs, industry and university research teams," said Brown University President Christina Paxson. "By convening world-class startup accelerators IBM Alpha Zone and MassChallenge under one roof, iHub will amplify the innovation and discovery that continues to incubate in the Jewelry District."



Stephen Piper, IBM Senior State Executive, spoke at the event.

[Stephen Piper](#), IBM's Senior State Executive for Rhode Island, spoke at the announcement ceremony, saying, "IBM is delighted to be part of iHub, together with our partners, Brown University and The University of Rhode Island. IBM has been in the state of Rhode Island since the 1930s. President Dooley of The University of Rhode Island mentioned the 'Frontiers of Knowledge.' We [at IBM] have been proud to ride the frontier of knowledge around the world, especially in Rhode Island, from the P-TECH schools to the iHub Innovation center that we are launching with our partners. IBM brings technical expertise and history of knowledge, and a passion for collaboration with universities and corporations. We are delighted to be part of this 'lively experiment'"

"We embrace the opportunity to partner with various stakeholders to co-cultivate the RI Innovation Hub as a place to connect, collaborate and innovate," said [Henry Hu](#), Corporate Development Executive M&A, Innovations and Investment for IBM. "A major element of the Hub is its accelerator. IBM is excited to create with the iHub team a best-in-class accelerator in Rhode Island. We can bring our know-how and demonstrated best practices from the successful IBM Alpha Zone accelerator in Israel to support the creation and development of leading-edge startups. We are excited to be a major partner to create a dynamic innovation hub powered by IBM technology and knowledge that can spawn, build and test new innovative solutions for the digital economy, for the State of Rhode Island and for the world."



**Stephen Piper and Henry Hu talking with David Dooley,
President of Univ. of Rhode Island**

From this innovation effort, the potential benefits for IBM and our clients include:

- Leveraging startups to accelerate innovative solutions that could complement IBM in addressing our clients' needs in Rhode Island and beyond. We have several large clients in the State such as CVS, Citizens Bank, Hasbro, etc.
- Collaborating with university resources for research and education development in areas of our interest: Cloud, Analytics, AI, Blockchain, IoT, Health, etc.
- Tapping into leading innovation communities and networks in Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Israel.
- Contributing to the local community and local economy, enhancing the goodwill, reputation and network connections for IBM, which can lead to more business opportunities.

To realize such benefits, we will need IBMers in Rhode Island and beyond to volunteer their time and efforts. You can play a major role in:

- Teaching the startups in the IBM Alpha Zone Accelerator class
- Providing technical support and enablement, on site and/or remotely

- Working with startups resources to solve our clients' problems, etc.

If you are interested in getting involved, please send a note to [Stephen Piper](#) and [Jeff Land](#). We surely will need all the help that we can get to make this innovation initiative successful.



Daniel Behr (Brown University), Stephen Piper and Henry Hu (IBM) and Michael Shumann (MassChallenge)

Press Release: <https://www.prnewswire.com/new...>