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UC SAN DIEGO EXTENSION AND DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO PARTNERSHIP LAUNCH COLLABORATORY FOR DOWNTOWN INNOVATION

New initiative will offer connections, support and workforce training to assist tech entrepreneurs in the urban core

SAN DIEGO, CA – University of California San Diego Extension and the Downtown San Diego Partnership today announced a two-year initiative designed to support and strengthen Downtown's growing tech ecosystem. The partnership, which will be called the Collaboratory for Downtown Innovation, or CDI, will offer a variety of programs to help entrepreneurs develop the networks critical for future growth as well as provide business support and workforce training. The Collaboratory for Downtown Innovation, which is made possible by foundation and private funds, will operate out of the Downtown San Diego Partnership's redesigned offices and will serve as a hub for a variety of programs, including:

Ideas Forum: To encourage collaboration and the exchange of ideas, CDI will develop a series of roundtables to connect Downtown tech entrepreneurs with researchers and scientists at UC San Diego and on the Torrey Pines Mesa. These roundtables will provide participants an opportunity to learn from experts and discover new ways that science and technology intersect and identify new business opportunities.

Talent Accelerator: Because talent is so critical to a thriving innovation economy, the CDI will leverage UC San Diego Extension's robust certificate and pre-college offerings to provide a variety of education and training programs, with a special focus on providing computer science and information technology skills to youth in underserved communities.

Entrepreneur Exchange: To ensure that entrepreneurs at every stage of development have the support and mentorship needed to excel, CDI will offer a wide range of entrepreneurship support and incubation activities including skills development workshops and pre-accelerator programs.

UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla said the new initiative will help the university to deliver on its Strategic Plan by strengthening the region's innovation economy and ensuring educational and economic equity to middle and high school students in urban communities.

"Service to our community is a vital aspect of UC San Diego's mission," Chancellor Khosla said. "The Collaboratory for Downtown Innovation enables UC San Diego and the Downtown San Diego

Partnership to work together to grow our regional economy and provide the education and training that ensures opportunity for all."

Kris Michell, president and CEO of the Downtown San Diego Partnership, said the Collaboratory for Downtown Innovation is about tapping into the talent and expertise at UC San Diego and in the research institutions on the Torrey Pines Mesa to better inform the opportunities available to tech companies in Downtown in such growing sectors as cybersecurity, personalized medicine and big data.

"With more than 110 tech startups – and counting – in Downtown, we know that we are innovation's next frontier," Michell said. "We must do everything to connect the know-how at UC San Diego and on the Torrey Pine Mesa to help grow Downtown's emerging tech ecosystem. The Collaboratory for Downtown Innovation is the first step in strengthening that connection with the entire community and the region's larger economic goals."

Mary Walshok, UC San Diego's vice chancellor of public programs and dean of Extension, said CDI will be crucial in addressing San Diego's skills gap by providing coding academies and other educational programs for middle and high school students, especially in underserved communities, as well as education and certificates relevant to the Downtown tech sector.

"We need to develop an inclusive innovation economy," Walshok said. "To do that, we must offer cutting-edge educational programs that align with what our tech companies need and make certain that those programs are available to a wide range of San Diegans."

Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer said the Collaboratory for Downtown Innovation represents the very best of San Diego.

"Our region is defined by our world-changing research and our commitment to collaboration," he said. "This initiative cements that reputation and lays the foundation for new avenues of excellence, expanding our innovation economy so that when it comes to opportunity, we are all one San Diego. Kudos to the Downtown San Diego Partnership and UC San Diego Extension for working together to help write the next chapter for our region."

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About UC San Diego Extension: As the continuing education and public programs arm of the university, UC San Diego Extension educates approximately 63,000 enrollees a year, which translates to about 33,000 students in nearly 4,300 courses. UC San Diego Extension is recognized nationally and internationally for linking the public to expert professionals and the knowledge resources of the University of California.