

TRIBUNE

ASU to host Mexican tech startups at SkySong

Up to 10 companies will be selected

By **DONNA HOGAN**
TRIBUNE

Arizona State University plans to make room for up to 10 Mexican high-tech startup companies in its offices at SkySong, the in-progress makeover of Scottsdale's former Los Arcos Mall into an ASU research center at Scottsdale and McDowell roads.

Scottsdale will get the sixth version of the Mexican "technology business accelerator," dubbed TechBA, said Julia Rosen, ASU's associate vice president for innovation and entrepreneurship.

It will be funded mostly by the Mexican government, she said.

ASU will kick in new university staff positions to run the operation, Rosen said, but she did not know how many of those jobs would be created or when.

The university plans to launch the program in Jan-



uary with a series of classes and seminars aimed at culling potential Mexican startups to fill the business-accelerator slots.

ASU can host up to 15 hopefuls for the preliminary portion of the program, which is expected to continue through April, she said. Later, the university and the Mexican government will select up to 10 of the best companies to move forward with, she said.

The university occupies one floor in one of the two SkySong buildings built so far, and it is housing several international startup com-

panies already in the facilities, Rosen said.

Besides providing office space for those selected to join TechBA, ASU will offer consulting, contacts and other support services to help the companies get a firm footing and find customers.

The idea, she said, is to help the Mexican businesses become successful. If they succeed, they may do business with U.S. companies or eventually set up some U.S.-based operations and potentially hire U.S. workers, she said.

Mexico is Arizona's biggest trading partner, said Barry Broome, president of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, and the state has a big stake in keeping the Mexican economy humming.

"There is really no such thing as a U.S. capital market or a U.S. job market," he said. "This should be a profit center for the state and for the region."

CONTACT WRITER:
(480) 970-2338
or dhoqan@evtrib.com

