

ASU partners with Mexican businesses

BY JAMES KING
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Mexican businesses seeking to expand globally can now receive help from a new ASU venture.

ASU plans to help bring Mexican businesses to the global market through a program called the Technology Business Accelerator or as ASU officials refer to the program, TechBA.

TechBA, created by the U.S.-Mexico Foundation for Science and the Ministry of the Economy of Mexico, was designed to help promote Mexican entrepreneurship.

The program will be located at SkySong, the ASU Scottsdale Innovation Center, where about 10 Mexican businesses will have access to many ASU resources.

Julia Rosen, ASU associate vice president for innovation and entrepreneurship said in an e-mail that TechBA Arizona is a win-win situation for ASU, Phoenix and Mexican businesses.

"TechBA Arizona will raise the profile of the metro Phoenix area, and Arizona, as a global innovation hub," she said. "This deal will bring \$400,000 in new money to ASU and is an opportunity to create new jobs and additional business opportunities in Arizona."

Rosen said she is thrilled about the opportunity and is excited that SkySong will be just one of six global TechBA locations.

TechBA is also located in Austin, Texas; Detroit; Silicon Valley, Calif.; Montreal and Madrid, Spain.

SkySong spokeswoman Ali-

son Bendler said in return for the money TechBA will pay ASU every year, businesses will have access to office space at SkySong and to several ASU resources.

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

Bendler said that between 10 and 20 companies will take part in a pre-accelerator educational program starting in January, where they will be involved in business strategy sessions and consultations with ASU staff. About 10 companies will be selected after the pre-accelerator program to join the program and begin expansion plans.

"ASU will look for those businesses that take part in the pre-acceleration phase that have a viable business plan and look like they have a good chance at being successful in the U.S. marketplace," Bendler said.

ASU officials said they believe this program, and programs similar to TechBA, will help state and national economies with direct foreign investment in times of economic turmoil.

"Mexico is Arizona's largest trading partner, and TechBA provides a new mechanism to create mutually beneficial economic linkages," ASU President Michael Crow said in a statement.

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