

The Texas-EU Venture Growth Initiative, April 22-23, 2015

Austin, TX: The IC² Institute and the Center for European Studies, both at The University of Texas at Austin, have partnered with the Portugal Science and Technology Foundation (FCT) to hold a two-day networking and matchmaking event in Austin designed to accelerate technology startups in Austin and Portugal and encourage firms to develop U.S. and European markets for their products and services. The Initiative's main goal is to deliver measurable business development for Central Texas and Portuguese technology firms.

The event will expose the Portuguese delegation, including representatives from 24 technology companies, 8 tech incubators, and 3 venture capital groups, to the Austin technology ecosystem. From Central Texas, besides UT Austin's IC² Institute, speakers from 5 venture capital groups, 7 incubators/accelerators, the City of Austin, the Austin Chamber of Commerce, South-by-Southwest, and 2 corporations will also participate in the event. The first day will include visits to local technology incubators, including the IC² Institute's Austin Technology Incubator, to learn about co-locating in Texas, finding U.S. commercial partners, and using Austin as a "landing pad" for their U.S. operations. The second day will be a hands-on workshop during which both the Portuguese delegation and Austin-based tech and VC firms will get a chance to gain practical knowledge about entering the EU and U.S. markets and how to obtain start-up capital.

The U.S. Ambassador to Portugal, Robert Sherman, will address the workshop on April 23 via pre-recorded video. Other speakers include Kevin Johns, Director of Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services at the City of Austin; Michele Skelding, Senior VP of Global Technology and Innovation for the Austin Chamber of Commerce; and Hugh Forrest, Director of SXSW Interactive.

Who will attend: The event is close to capacity but is designed for entrepreneurs, venture capital firms, angel investors, incubator directors and international service providers (CPA's, immigration attorneys) interested in doing business in Central Texas and the EU, with special emphasis on opportunities in Portugal and Austin.

Where and When:

This workshop will be held Thursday, April 23rd from 8:30-5:00 in room 106 at the ATT Conference Center. **Media are encouraged to attend and should contact Diane Skubal (dskubal@ic2.utexas.edu) to arrange a badge.**

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Background: The Texas-EU Venture Growth Initiative grew out of the University Technology Enterprise Network (UTEN), itself a part of the larger UT Austin|Portugal partnership between the IC² Institute at The University of Texas at Austin and the Portuguese Science and Technology Foundation (FCT). UTEN's goal is to lead, facilitate, and accelerate the commercialization of science and technology innovations created by Portuguese researchers. Based on a vision to become a network connecting universities, technology transfer offices, research laboratories, incubators, and professionals in Portugal, UTEN has grown into a leading program bridging the gap between early-stage innovations and the marketplace.

Supported by the FCT, the IC² Institute launched the Global Startup Program in 2013 to provide business development, soft landing, incubation, and acceleration opportunities for Portuguese technology-based startups in the U.S. Participating ventures benefit from physical co-location space and feet-on-the-ground mentorship in Austin from an experienced team of business developers. The Program's tangible outcomes speak for themselves: to date, firms in the program have had an economic impact of more \$40 million in Portugal.

This year's Venture Growth Initiative is a component of the 2015 Texas-EU Summit (<http://conferences.la.utexas.edu/texaseusummit/>) and is co-sponsored by the Center for European Studies at The University of Texas at Austin.

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