

GLOBAL INNOVATION EXCHANGE



Global Innovation Exchange (GIX) Announces Inaugural Academic, Industry Members
*GIX opens in Bellevue's Spring District and welcomes first two cohorts of graduate students;
new building is named in honor of Steve Ballmer*

SEATTLE, Wash., Sept. 14, 2017 – The Global Innovation Exchange (GIX), a collaboration between major research universities and companies from around the world, is pleased to announce that it has been joined by eight Academic Network members and five Industry Consortium members. The two founding partners are the University of Washington and Tsinghua University, with foundational support from Microsoft. In addition, Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft, announced that the new GIX facility will be named the “Steve Ballmer Building” in honor of the former CEO of Microsoft.

GIX represents a new model of learning and practice focused on developing leaders in innovation who work collaboratively on solving global challenges. The eight members of the GIX Academic Network are: École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, the Indian Institute of Science, Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology, National Taiwan University, Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, Tecnológico de Monterrey, and the University of British Columbia. GIX Industry Consortium members include: Arm, Baidu, Boeing HorizonX, and T-Mobile. In addition, Hainan Airlines has joined GIX as a Valued Partner providing travel support, fellowships and project support for students. We would also like to acknowledge the generous support from companies like InnoAngel, Taiyou, Hinacom, Bright Oceans, Elco, ZheJiang Zhong Kun, Minsheng Pharma, Fujian New East Lake, Tusstar, and Tuspark.

Academic Network members promote GIX to their students, connect faculty with relevant areas of research expertise, and may offer projects to GIX learners in connection with industry partners. They benefit by gaining connections to UW research and Seattle’s innovation ecosystem. Industry Consortium members gain access to the GIX community of faculty, inventors and learners, and may submit projects for students in the launch phase of the curriculum. The goal shared by this member network is to forge connections and foster long-term relationships leading to technical exchange, co-invention, and collaboration.

“With these new members, GIX is at the forefront of collaborative innovation, not only internationally, but also between universities and industry,” said Ana Mari Cauce, president of the University of Washington. “Our students will have world-class faculty, professionals, and industry leaders to help ignite their passion for discovery and solving pressing global challenges.”

Regarding the naming of the new building, Nadella noted that Ballmer has always been an advocate for business collaboration across international borders. He advanced Microsoft’s global footprint and operations and forged groundbreaking new partnerships around the world. Under

his leadership, Microsoft was the first company to open a basic research facility in China and as a result, Microsoft has a 20-year relationship with Tsinghua University.

“Steve had vision for how two partners could achieve more together than they ever could on their own,” said Nadella. “I can’t think of a more appropriate way to honor the Global Innovation Exchange than by naming its home the Steve Ballmer Building.”

The announcement comes as GIX celebrates the opening of its new home, a 100,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art facility in Bellevue’s growing Spring District. As part of a 36-acre mixed-use development built around planned light rail, the GIX building is just 10 miles from the UW campus and offers proximity to multiple technology corridors. Specifically designed for the program, the building features design studios, an incubation space, electronics prototyping labs, presentation spaces and one of the largest and most comprehensively equipped makerspaces in the region. Skanska partnered with Bora Architects as the progressive design-build team for the GIX project. Level 11, an Experience Design Engineering firm, designed and developed a custom experience solution for GIX’s 28-foot touch-interactive video wall in the facility’s “living room” that will serve as a digital gateway to enable users to learn about GIX and its partners, students, and projects.

GIX is holding an opening celebration for the building on September 14. Slated to speak at the event are Washington Governor Jay Inslee; University of Washington President Ana Mari Cauce; Tsinghua University President Qiu Yong; Microsoft President Brad Smith; China Consul General Luo Linquan; and Vikram Jandhyala, co-executive director of GIX and vice president for innovation strategy at the UW.

“GIX has moved from a vision to a reality with the completion of the Steve Ballmer Building and its first cohorts of students,” said Smith. “This unique partnership brings together talented people from around the world to advance new ideas and solve some of the most pressing challenges in health, sustainability and social equity.”

In late September, the GIX building will be occupied by the program’s first two cohorts of Master of Science in Technology Innovation (MSTI from UW) degree students and dual degree students, which combines the MSTI with a Master of Engineering in Data Science and Information Technology (MEDSIT from Tsinghua) degree. Half the students are from the United States and China. The rest hail from all over the world, with students from Canada, Estonia, France, India, Pakistan, Paraguay, Russia, and Switzerland.

“We just “opened the door” to the brand new GIX building,” said Qiu. “I know we have opened the door to a level of cooperation that is unlimited by boundaries. We have opened the door to a collaboration that will facilitate international and interdisciplinary integration for technological innovation. And we have opened the door to an innovative education model and greater global capacity to tackle the world’s greatest challenges.”

The GIX opening celebration will coincide with the [UW Innovation Summit](#), an AT&T-sponsored gathering of academic, industry, and community organizations focused on sharing experiences in global innovation in the areas of sustainability, future of computing, and health.

About GIX

The Global Innovation Exchange (GIX) is a new model that is changing the game in innovation education and practice. It is a collaboration between universities and industry partners from around the world focused on developing leaders in innovation. The first two academic partners are the University of Washington and Tsinghua University, with foundational support from Microsoft. More universities and companies are joining and in a decade more than 3,000 learners will enroll. This new model combines learning and practice focused on solving pressing global challenges.

Contact:

Donna O'Neill

Marketing & Communications

CoMotion at the University of Washington and the Global Innovation Exchange

p: 206.685.9972

f: 206.543.0586

e: donnao3@uw.edu

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