

Q1 2019 UPDATE

programs, events, academics



FEATURES

New Partnerships Elevate Institute Profile

Q1 saw a bevy of partnerships with the Blockchain Research Institute, Capital Factory, and Innov8te by the DEC Network.

New Efforts Increase Female Engagement

Record-breaking and trend-setting entrepreneurship programs for women, from middle school to middle age.

Academics See Major Growth

An inaugural program began in January for engineering majors to take entrepreneurship as an elective.



Startup Visionary Comes to Campus

In February, we were delighted to welcome Brad Feld, Techstars co-founder and managing director of Foundry Group. The word “visionary” is overused but, in Brad’s case, it applies. He was an early investor in startups that have since become embedded in our personal (the fitbit) and work lives (the makerbot 3D printer). While at the UT Dallas Blackstone LaunchPad, which is a global partner with Techstars, Brad led an hour’s-worth of Q&A with students. Topics ranged from his writing to investing experiences to growing up in Richardson, running in the empty fields where acres of pristine new buildings now compose the campus.

New Partnerships Elevate the University's Role in Entrepreneur-Driven Economic Development in North Texas and North America

Students with a desire to be entrepreneurs now have the opportunity to engage mentors, access workspaces and accelerate the launch of their products, thanks to new partnerships with two startup accelerator programs and a technology think tank that the Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship completed in Q1.

First, in January, UT Dallas became the first university in the U.S. to join the Blockchain Research Institute (BRI). An independent, global think tank headquartered in Toronto, the BRI works to identify the strategic implications and opportunities of blockchain for business, government and society.



Faculty members and students will have opportunities to participate in live webinars with global experts. Dr. Zhiqiang (Eric) Zheng, professor of information systems in the Jindal School, is the lead researcher involved from UT Dallas, with Dr. James Scott, clinical assistant professor of information systems, a lead mentor for student blockchain-related projects.



Then, in February, the Institute announced its founding partner role in the Innov8te Smart Cities Incubator, a multi-vendor initiative organized by the Dallas Entrepreneur Center (DEC) Network. Its mission is to support and highlight Dallas-Fort Worth companies focused on building products and technologies in areas such as data analytics and visualization, the “internet of things,” artificial intelligence and machine learning, blockchain and virtual reality.

Finally, the Institute announced in March that it partnered with Capital Factory, an early stage tech investor, accelerator, and co-working and event program. UT Dallas students and alumni with a tech-related product or service idea are encouraged to apply for co-working privileges and mentor network access at Capital Factory.



“Entrepreneurial success requires savvy investors, experienced mentors, and enthusiastic partners — bringing the very best that a region or industry has to offer to aid the startup” said Steve Guengerich, Institute executive director. “That was our motivation for the BRI, Capital Factory, and Innov8te partnerships.”



Comet Co-Working Spaces Expand

An important element of both the Capital Factory and Innov8te partnerships was an opportunity to “plant the flag” of UT Dallas, literally in the heart of downtown Dallas. Both partnerships include co-working space for students and UT Dallas stakeholders working on projects.



Capital Factory is located in uptown Dallas, in a newly remodeled Centrum Building, occupying nearly 50,000 sq.ft., including a UT Dallas-branded conference room.

Innov8te incubator is located in the West End in downtown Dallas, in the heart of the city’s innovation district. We’re excited to offer the opportunity to work out of both of these locations, making downtown meetings, project work, and networking far more convenient.

Incubator Firms Announce New Funding and Product Milestones

The Institute’s incubator program, operated at the Venture Development Center (VDC), continued to grow, with key milestones achieved by two of its older, UT Dallas-affiliated ventures.

Overall, the VDC provides dedicated office and cubicle space, experienced mentorship, access to specialized equipment & services (for example, clean room, dry and wet labs, large meeting video conferencing), mail center and package delivery processing, and a number of other amenities, all at a substantially below-market rate, as compared to private incubators.



Member companies, as of April 1, include:

Adaptive 3D	Interoperate	SOPHIELabs
Ares Materials	Logan Medical	Sotech Secure
Astrapi	Max-IR Labs	SqwaQ
Caplar	MicroSol Technologies	Tarski Technologies
CerSci Pharmaceuticals	OnPoynt Aerial Solutions	TechRover Solutions
Data Security Technologies	Players Revolution Sports	Ted’s Pain Cream
DegreeChamp	pSolv	TraceIT
Embedded Technology	Qualia Medical	TrivTech
System Solutions	Qubit Labs	Unibeas
Immosis	R9 Technology	Vital Art and Science



innovate(her)

Innovate(her) Commences For Second Year

Over 200 junior high girls from Dallas and Collin counties convened on the campus of The University of Texas at Dallas for a unique, hands-on program called Innovate(her).

Now in its second year, Innovate(her), pronounced [inno-va-tor], is a one-day program targeted toward middle school girls that focuses on teaching financial literacy, technology innovation, and topics in entrepreneurship.

Middle school girls from Dallas, Richardson, Fort Worth, and Grand Prairie school districts attended the February 22nd event. Professionals from various industries along with UT Dallas students volunteered for the day to serve as mentors, sharing their experiences and guiding the young girls through the various learning modules.

Innovate(her) was produced in partnership with Capital One, whose Future Edge mission is to prepare DFW for a digital-driven future. Through 2020, Capital One will invest \$150 million globally into programming, mentorship, and partnerships to inspire the next generation of leaders and thinkers.

“Innovate(her) is an empowering program for all those who attend. Whether you are a mentor or a mentee, you walk out of this event feeling uplifted, empowered and humbled by how much potential there is to learn, grow and create an impact. I think that this program gives a ton of inspiration to take a chance on themselves to define themselves and their upcoming or ongoing careers.”

-Harshini Rallapalli, Undergrad/Neuroscience

Spring Startup Accelerators

Q1 for our accelerator program was a definite mix of something old and something new. In the “something old” column, we were fortunate to have host, Shaz Amin, return to lead the CometX accelerator, in its 4th cycle this semester. Also, tried and true, was the roster of returning guest speakers, presenting their experiences and answering questions about “how they did it.”

In the “something new” column, we launched our first-ever, women-focused accelerator, GalXc. The objective was to increase the participation of women startup founders. To do so, additional programming and mentors were provided at various points during the multi-week schedule, exclusively for women founders.

Also new in this cycle was an experiment, combining the accelerators with upper-level classes in the ENTP curriculum, in order to stimulate the interaction among students and to better leverage the guest speakers for their lectures. If you’ve ever been to Davidson Auditorium in JSOM, the result was exciting to see, with a well-filled lecture hall of graduate, undergraduate and alumni founders intensely discussing their startups with one another!

Ultimately, the results from this semester’s accelerators were satisfyingly the same: another record broken of 81 total participants and 70 ventures, including business areas like fashion, social entrepreneurship and food. Thank you to sponsors Intelis Capital and Montgomery Coscia Greilich LLP for sponsoring dinner throughout the semester for our hungry student-founders!



Student, Faculty, and Alumni Startups Win Money, Awards, Media

SurvivR Heads to TigerLaunch Finals

Last Fall, the public safety training startup using virtual reality (VR) training scenarios, SurvivR, was awarded 1st place in the UT Dallas Big Idea Competition. Since then, the company has only increased its competitive profile, qualifying and/or placing in multiple other student pitch competitions.

In Q1, SurvivR won the regional competition to advance to the finals of the prestigious TigerLaunch Finals, hosted by Princeton University. The team, led by CEO Brian Hoang (who also served as Entrepreneurship Club president for the Spring), also competed in the TCU Values & Ventures competition and Texas Shark Tank in Austin, TX.



Ngan Nguyen Covered in D Magazine

In March, UT Dallas student Ngan Nguyen, earned a marvelous write-up/interview in D Magazine describing her startup journey, as the founder and CEO of Code Blue Jewelry, a maker of chic medical bracelets.

We'll let the D Magazine writer, Kathy Wise, tell the rest: Ngan started the company "as a senior with a \$5,000 student loan. In 2017, she filled close to 800 orders; last year, she sold more than four times that. Her mother sews the blue velvet pouches, and Nguyen ships the jewelry from her living room...

I met with Nguyen at the Blackstone LaunchPad on campus to talk about our respective counterintuitive career paths, meeting Queer Eye star Tan France, and the all-consuming nature of start-ups."



Adaptive 3D Announces Series A Funding

Adaptive3D, a Texas-based supplier of additive manufacturing polymers, announced the closing of a Series A funding round co-led by DSM Venturing, the investment arm of Royal DSM, and Applied Ventures, LLC, the VC arm of materials engineering company Applied Materials. The investment will enable Adaptive3D to keep delivering 3D printable photoretin materials to market for applications in various industries.



CerSci Trial Gets FDA “Green Light”

CerSci Therapeutics, a non-opioid drug development firm based in Dallas, Texas, recently announced that their Investigational New Drug (IND) application for CT-044 has received notification from the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) indicating that its Phase I safety and tolerability clinical trial may proceed. CT-044, a non-metal based, orally bioavailable, small molecule Radical Species Decomposition Accelerant (RSDAx) of peroxydinitrite and hydrogen peroxide, is proposed for the treatment of acute and chronic pain, including acute post-surgical pain and painful diabetic neuropathy.



Tankee Wins Major Streaming Award

In February, UT Dallas Seed Fund recipient and alumnus, Gerald Youngblood, took home the ultimate award for his Austin-based startup, Tankee. The 2019 Kidscreen Award for “Best Streaming Video Platform” in the Digital Kids Category!

Kidscreen is the leading international trade publication serving the informational needs and interests of kids entertainment professionals.



ENTP Courses Make Listing Debut in Jonsson School

The study of principles of entrepreneurship has benefitted from popular media attention for the past several decades. For our Innovation & Entrepreneurship academic program – currently 11th and 23rd ranked in the nation, graduate and undergraduate, respectively – this popular attention has bled over into degree plans and majors.

In recent years, a close collaboration with the Computer Science program in the Jonsson School of Engineering and Computer Science led to the pilot launch of a Computer Science-Software Launch Track (C-SLT) for CS majors interested in learning the basics of entrepreneurship.

In the Spring, our collaboration with the Jonsson school expanded to the Mechanical Engineering (ME) program, with the ability for undergraduate ME students to choose the “Introduction to Innovation & Entrepreneurship” class (listed as ENTP 3301, in our course catalogs) as an authorized elective in their degree plans.



“With on-going discussions with leaders in other Jonsson school academic programs, the School of Arts Technology & Emerging Communications (ATEC), and others, we are grateful for the opportunity to introduce principles of entrepreneurship on an even larger population of students, said Paul Nichols. We hope it will eventually be among the subjects that every student-scholar attending UT Dallas gets an introduction.”

