

Shim Sunok, Smart City Director of Incheon Economic Free Zone Authority, Promised Assistance to Incheon Startups at CES

In the interview, Director Shim Emphasized Active Support to Incheon Startups at CES 2024 While Creating Symbiotic Growth Between Corporations and the City.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- On December 12th, an 'Incheon Special Global Press Conference' occurred at the [Incheon Startup Park](#) in Songdo, Incheon.

This global press conference served as a promotional event for local startups participating in the CES 2024, the world's largest IT and consumer electronics exhibition, to introduce their capabilities to the global media through the support programs provided by the Incheon Startup Park.

The [Incheon Free Economic Zone](#) Authority (IFEZ) was established in 2003 to develop Incheon into an international economic hub and a center for specialized services. Forming a free economic zone centered around Incheon, IFEZ has been contributing to the city's development and growth and furthering the national economy. In February 2021, they opened the Incheon Startup Park, positioning it as the 'nursery of startups.'



Shim Sunok, the Director of Smart City of Incheon Free Economic Zone, conducted the presentation to companies that won the CES Innovation Awards 2024



Representatives from companies and global media listened to the presentation by Director Shim Sunok.

Q1: Please introduce IFEZ, responsible for the leap to a global smart city in Incheon.

A: Director Shim Sunok: Understanding the 'Korean Free Economic Zones' is crucial. 'KFEZ' refers to special economic zones formed to improve the business environment and living conditions for foreign-invested companies by relaxing various regulations to maximize their financial autonomy and attract investment. Incheon, possessing international harbors and airports, took on this role in 2003, giving birth to the Incheon Economic Free Zone Authority. For 20 years, IFEZ has selected seven future visions such as a Life Science and healthcare City, a Global Education City, a Future Smart City, a K-Contents City, a Startup Venture Polis, an International Financial City, and a Tourism and leisure Hub City, aiming to make Incheon a 'first-class city' recognized worldwide, not just in South Korea.

Q2: IFEZ exudes remarkable confidence and pride in Incheon as a smart city. What is the background for this?

A: Director Shim Sunok: IFEZ has been the leading force in transforming Songdo, Yeongjong, and Cheongra—three city zones—into intelligent cities over the past 20 years. Songdo International City is a global hub for advanced knowledge and service industries with facilities like international business districts, knowledge information industrial complexes, and bio-clusters. Moreover, Yeongjong International City perfectly fits the logistics and tourism industries with world-class airport facilities. Cheongra International City embodies a new concept of business towns coexisting with business and residential spaces. IFEZ aims to establish an international-scale advanced service industry hub under the 'Global Business Frontier' vision and continue expanding its influence.



Incheon Special Global Press Conference at the Incheon Startup Park on December 12th



Le Café du Geek from France and Ubergizmo from the United States interviewed with Director Shim Sunok.

Q3: IFEZ announced support for local startups' participation in CES 2024 under the global smart city strategy. What is the connection between startups' global stage entry and smart city capabilities?

A: Director Shim Sunok: We believe there is no better place than CES to showcase Incheon's smart city technological prowess to the world. CES, the world's largest IT exhibition, attracts over 150,000 attendees annually.



Director Shim Sunok answering questions from the media Large

Our goal is to imprint Incheon as a city with international competitiveness in the minds of people gathered on this global stage. The technology and systems constituting our city originate from the ideas of innovation companies and startups nurtured by Incheon. If we can demonstrate these in the competitive arena of global tech companies, it validates our competitiveness and fulfills our goal.

Moreover, this is a pivotal platform for startups with limited opportunities for global market expansion compared to established corporations. 'Bursys,' an Incheon company that participated in CES 2023, is a good example. It received significant attention after its participation and winning the Best Innovation Award. It even received serious proposals from 'Warner Bros,' a content production company, and is collaborating with the metaverse platform 'ZEPETO,' boasting 200 million users worldwide.

IFEZ believes in the potential for future startups to become the next supernova after 'Verses.' Our role is to support them to translate their potential into tangible results. Hence, we started supporting startups' participation in CES this year.

Furthermore, IFEZ plans to operate an Incheon IFEZ Promotion within the Las Vegas Convention Center (LVCC) during the exhibition, showcasing products from 34 startups and enhancing Incheon's bright city image. LVCC is a hub during CES, utilizing the entire city area. As the only local government operating a joint pavilion here, we expect a substantial promotional impact.

Q4: We are curious about the companies IFEZ and Incheon Startup Park supported for CES 2024 participation and their achievements before the exhibition.

A: Director Shim Sunok: Out of the 30 startups IFEZ and Incheon Startup Park supported for CES participation, 16 received final approval from the Consumer Technology Association (CTA) to

enter Eureka Park. Though more companies couldn't make the list, considering it's the first attempt, it's a decent outcome.

Significantly, more than half of the participating startups, 9 out of 16, swept 11 innovation awards at CES 2024. As known, CES Innovation Awards are granted to products and technologies showcasing differentiation and market potential before the exhibition, translating to global market opportunities.

Last year's Best Innovation Award winner, 'Verses,' consecutively won the award with their 'Bit-based AI Music Video Generator.' 'Lordsystem,' presenting the 'Trip Pass Mobile Passport Platform,' won the Best Innovation Award in the financial technology category and the Cybersecurity & Personal Safety category, achieving double victories.

Similarly, startups like 'Sheco,' dual winners of the Innovation Award, and 'TheLittleCat,' 'Safeware,' 'Microsystems,' 'BANF,' 'Gole Robotics,' and 'K-Rangers (OhMyApp),' each winning in a category, will shine at Eureka Park during the exhibition.

Q5: What are the future directions and plans of IFEZ post-CES 2024?

A: Director Shim Sunok: IFEZ aims to expand Smart City Incheon's influence overseas continually. To achieve this, it plans to participate consistently in globally recognized mega exhibitions such as Germany's IFA (Internationale FunkAusstellung) and Spain's MWC (Mobile World Congress) to maximize promotional effects. Especially, CES marks the first step in overseas-oriented promotional activities, and we will do our utmost to reap the maximum outcome.

Moreover, while based in Incheon, the authority will continue discovering companies and startups with exceptional capabilities and potential, offering them more opportunities. The dream is to realize symbiotic growth between corporations and the city, paving the way for future developments.

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