

Hyun Woo Kim, CEO of Seoul Business Agency 'Global Innovation Forum Unite Startup Leaders from Seven Countries'

LAS VEGAS, NV, UNITED STATES, January 11, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Seoul Business Agency](#) (SBA) announced the successful conclusion of the Global Innovation Forum, a global startup ecosystem networking event held on Wednesday, January 7 (local time), in Las Vegas, on the second day of CES 2026.

The Global Innovation Forum was launched to leverage CES, the world's largest technology exhibition, as a platform where startup ecosystems from different countries can connect naturally and foster cross-border collaboration. The initiative began in 2025 under the name "Seoul Innovation Forum," when it was held in cooperation with five national pavilions and marked the first joint gathering of Eureka Park countries participating in CES.

Moving beyond the traditional model of individual booth exhibitions, the forum was designed to bring national pavilions together in a single venue to promote international cooperation. Representative innovative startups from each participating country also took part in an IR pitching competition, demonstrating the forum's potential to



Hyun Woo Kim, President and CEO of the Seoul Business Agency, delivers a welcome address at the Global Innovation Forum held on Wednesday, January 7, the second day of CES 2026.



Firsthabit of SBA won the Grand Award, awarded by SBA President Hyun Woo Kim.

evolve into a sustainable platform for inter-country collaboration. This structure was cited as a key factor behind the strong response and success of last year's Seoul Innovation Forum.

Building on that foundation, the program was further strengthened in 2026 to provide CES-participating startups with more stable and expanded opportunities for global collaboration. Reflecting this growth, the event was rebranded as the Global Innovation Forum, and cooperation was expanded to include startup ecosystem leaders from seven countries, drawing increased attention from industry stakeholders.

The 2026 Global Innovation Forum was held through close collaboration among startup support organizations from seven countries. The hosting organizations—Seoul Business Agency (SBA), TTA, Switzerland Global Enterprise, Israel Economic and Trade Office, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), Quebec Government Office, and Business France—combined their capabilities to ensure the event's successful execution.

In his welcome address, [Hyun Woo Kim](#), President and CEO of the Seoul Business Agency, said, "On behalf of the City of Seoul and the Seoul Business Agency, it is an honor to open the Global Innovation Forum here in Las Vegas, a global hub of innovation." He added, "Today, we have gathered to celebrate the spirit of startups and to share this meaningful moment together."

Kim continued, "Our forum, which began last year through groundbreaking collaboration among five countries, concluded successfully with an extremely encouraging response. This year, it has taken a step further, growing into an event where representatives of startup ecosystems from seven countries come together." He noted that the participating countries demonstrated their



Judge panel consisting of media and VCs, and other guests of the Global Innovation Forum listen to the pitch from one of startups



SBA President Hyun Woo Kim speak with one of participants of Global Innovation Forum 2026

strengths by showcasing cutting-edge technologies that reflect each nation's unique capabilities.

Concluding his remarks, Kim said, "I applaud all those who will present brilliant ideas and passion here today, and I extend my sincere gratitude to the judges who undertook the in-depth evaluations." He added, "I hope the inspiration we exchange today will blossom into strong partnerships in the future and remain as a shining milestone in the journeys of business and innovation ahead."



A group photo of startups, judges, and officials in the Global Innovation Forum 2026

This year's Global Innovation Forum also expanded its judging panel beyond global media representatives to include venture capital professionals, further enhancing the competition's credibility and increasing investment opportunities for participating startups. As a result of the evaluations, the Grand Award was presented to [Firsthabit](#) from the Seoul Business Agency, the Scale-up Award to Hua Tec International from TTA, and the Impact Award to CubicSpace from the Quebec Government Office.

Through the successful conclusion of the Global Innovation Forum at CES 2026, the Seoul Business Agency reaffirmed its role in connecting Seoul's startup ecosystem with global innovation hubs and laid the groundwork for deeper international cooperation and sustained growth driven by startup exchange.

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