

## From Silicon Valley to Southeast Asia, Korea's Startup Hubs Open Doors to Global Markets

A new intake is under way for companies ready to test, scale and invest beyond their home base. Korea's overseas startup hubs – known as K-Startup Centers (KSC) – are inviting applications from high-potential ventures seeking a practical route into global markets.

Since its first launch in Seattle in 2019, the network has expanded across key innovation corridors, including Silicon Valley, Tokyo, Singapore and Hanoi. Each center is designed as a landing pad where startups can move quickly from market entry to market validation – supported by on-the-ground expertise and direct access to partners.

Rather than offering generic assistance, the program focuses on execution. Participating companies are matched with global corporates and public agencies to run proof-of-concept (PoC) projects, connect with investors, and work through local accelerators. They are also provided with office space and tailored advisory services spanning legal, tax and visa requirements.

The emphasis on real-world validation has already produced tangible outcomes. A maritime navigation startup secured overseas investment after completing pilot projects with Maritime & Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) and PSA International, while recycling company specializing in used cooking oil has expanded into multiple markets through partnerships in Vietnam and support from international funding bodies.

Performance data points to a widening impact. In the past year alone, 119 startups based across five KSC locations attracted approximately \$240 million in overseas investment. Domestic fundraising outcomes also improved markedly, with supported firms significantly outperforming their non-participating peers.

Feedback from participants reflects this momentum: over 90% expressed satisfaction with the facilities and support, and a similar proportion reported measurable gains in their overseas expansion efforts.

Looking ahead, the model is being strengthened through the creation of integrated "Startup Venture Campuses" (SVC). These campuses bring together key support institutions under one roof – offering a consolidated platform for market intelligence, PoC development, investment facilitation and cross-border scaling. The first such campus is already operating in Silicon Valley, with plans to expand to seven global locations over the next five years.

In parallel, pilot programs are being introduced to deepen engagement in Western markets. In New York, Korea's Global Business Center is set to host a collaborative platform involving multiple public agencies, providing coordinated support to startups entering the U.S. market. Across Western Europe – including the United Kingdom and the Netherlands – local venture capital firms will select promising Korean startups to join an intensive 15-week accelerator program focused on technology validation and investment readiness.

As global competition intensifies, the approach is clear: connect startups directly with markets, shorten the path to validation, and build partnerships that translate into growth.

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