



Allegheny Health Network, Innovation Works Announce New Startup Accelerator Focused on Health Care Technologies and Life Sciences

AlphaLab Health marries the expertise of Innovation Works and AHN, and will be housed in laboratory space now under development at the AGH Suburban campus in Bellevue

Pittsburgh, PA – Allegheny Health Network (AHN) and Pittsburgh-based technology investor Innovation Works today announced the creation of a health care and life sciences accelerator to be headquartered at the Allegheny General Hospital Suburban campus in Bellevue.

The accelerator, AlphaLab Health, will serve as an innovation hub for the region's life sciences sector, cultivating promising medical technologies and making early-stage investments in participating companies. The collaboration between AHN and Innovation Works is also supported by Pittsburgh-area universities, corporations, and foundations.

AlphaLab Health builds on the success and reputation of Innovation Works' other accelerator programs, AlphaLab and AlphaLab Gear. Like those accelerators, AlphaLab Health will offer its cohort companies early-stage funding, mentorship opportunities from industry experts, clinical resources, and office and lab space when available and as appropriate.

AHN is part of one of the nation's largest integrated health and wellness organizations, while Innovation Works is one of the nation's top 10 most active seed-stage investors. Innovation Works' AlphaLab and AlphaLab Gear accelerators are consistently ranked among the world's top accelerator programs.

"AlphaLab accelerators specialize in helping great entrepreneurs build great companies," said Innovation Works President and CEO Rich Lunak. "Marrying our capabilities to AHN's health care expertise will benefit founders, who can test their concepts with clinicians, researchers, and operational experts on an accelerated timeline. This will result in better health care products and greater capital efficiency as they scale their businesses and find the right product-market fit."

By surrounding promising companies with a network of investors, mentors, and other resources, entrepreneurial teams will be able to accelerate their businesses toward a successful launch, and faster customer growth. AlphaLab Health will also help participating companies navigate the regulatory pathway and manage other issues affecting their traction, Lunak said.

Initially, the AlphaLab Health collaboration will focus on seeding four business categories – diagnostics, therapeutics, medical devices, and health information technology. Companies selected for the formal cohort will receive investment from Innovation Works and AHN.

AHN will also pilot some of the technologies that are developed, allowing the health network to act as a living commercialization lab for translational, "bench-to-bedside" research.

In addition to the formal AlphaLab Health cohort, AHN and Innovation Works may also invite other health- and life-science-focused startups to share office space in a co-working environment at AGH Suburban. Those startups will have access to AlphaLab Health programming and resources, and will be able to collaborate side-by-side with other life sciences companies.

The application cycle is open now. Entrepreneurs should go to www.alphalabhealth.org for more information and to access the application.

Six companies are targeted for the first cohort. Over the coming cycles, the investments and AlphaLab Health curriculum are expected to spur the creation of hundreds of regional jobs.

"Starting a new company can be risky, especially in the life sciences field," Lunak said. "By providing seed funding, Innovation Works and AHN are helping to de-risk those businesses in the earliest stages, preparing them to attract talent and secure future investors."

When completed, the new AlphaLab Health hub will include wet and dry labs, offices, and shared conference areas for companies participating in the accelerator programs at AGH Suburban, bringing new intellectual resources and economic activity to the Bellevue community, which is 10 minutes from Downtown Pittsburgh.

"Suburban has been a fixture in Bellevue for more than a century, and we are extremely pleased to be able to creatively reuse this space for the benefit of the community and Western Pennsylvania's life sciences sector," said Jeffrey Cohen, MD, AHN's Chief Physician Executive for Community Health and Innovation. "We believe AHN's partnership with Innovation Works will spur further economic development in this region, and contribute to a stronger investment ecosystem for all health care entrepreneurs."

AHN is partnering with Innovation Works, Dr. Cohen said, because of the organization's national reputation as a true business accelerator for early-stage companies.

"Our goal is not to take ownership of the technologies or manage the companies," Dr. Cohen said. "We want to provide startups with the tools, resources and space they need to grow and thrive."

Suburban General Hospital opened at its current location in 1912. Since 1994, when the hospital affiliated with Allegheny General, the site has been home to an inpatient hospital, administrative offices, an urgent care clinic, outpatient services, and a privately-operated long-term care facility.

In 2010, the hospital's inpatient units and emergency department closed, and the private nursing facility closed in June 2019, allowing the facility to be more fully redeveloped. AGH Suburban's urgent care clinic and outpatient clinics continue to operate.

Designs for the new lab and office spaces are currently being finalized, with construction to follow.

"We're excited to see a new use for this regional asset, and we anticipate that the collaboration of AHN and Innovation Works will create a premier accelerator for launching new life science innovations," Dr. Cohen said. "AlphaLab Health will be a leading resource for life sciences startups that want to build the next great innovations in our region, improving the quality and efficiency of care for patients."

###

About AHN

Allegheny Health Network (www.AHN.org), a Highmark Health company, is an integrated healthcare delivery system serving the greater Western Pennsylvania region. Among the network's 300 clinical locations are 13 hospitals and five Health + Wellness Pavilions. AHN also is home to a comprehensive research institute; home- and community-based health services; and a group purchasing organization. The network employs more than 20,000 people and has more than 2,400 doctors on its medical staff. Established in 2013, AHN's member hospitals share legacies of charitable care that date back more than 160 years.

About Innovation Works

Innovation Works is one of the nation's top 10 most active investors in seed-stage technology companies and is the leading supporter of the Pittsburgh region's tech startups with investment, business assistance and connections to other resources. Innovation Works is the Ben Franklin Technology Partner (BFTP) of SWPA. The BFTP network of four centers financially and operationally support innovative startup, early-stage, and high-growth companies across the Commonwealth. The BFTP is supported in part by the Ben Franklin Technology Development Authority and is overseen by the state's Department of Community and Economic Development.

Contacts

Dan Laurent

daniel.laurent@highmarkhealth.org

412-807-8103

Terri Glueck

tglueck@innovationworks.org

412-818-8191