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# San José Community Innovation Hub

We are building a Community Innovation Hub with a dedicated youth-oriented informal STEM learning center and neighborhood business incubator and accelerator in the historic Century 21 dome theater in West San Jose. The Hub will be a space with more than 20,000 sq ft of classrooms, meeting rooms, workspaces, tools & equipment ready for STEM projects. The initial focus of the Hub will be five program domains: virtual reality, robotics, game design, web design, and mobile app development. In addition, the Hub will provide low-cost co-working space and support for new and existing neighborhood businesses and social entrepreneurs to incubate or accelerate their operations.

The Hub will use project-based learning and informal STEM activities to foster an entrepreneurial mindset and provide youth and young adults with broader perspectives on their future pursuits. The Hub will use hackathons, pitch competitions, and global contests to inspire and engage youth and young adults to build interest in STEM and entrepreneurship.

The Hub will look to partner with and amplify existing STEM and business support efforts in San José. In addition, the Hub will actively solicit San José nonprofit youth STEM hobby groups that often must scramble for space to use the Hub's resources.

## Entrepreneurial Skills Building

The Hub will partner with the [Network for Teaching in Entrepreneurship](#) (NFTE) to ensure that the entrepreneurial mindset is a part of all training. In addition, providing hands-on projects in a group environment allows youth to learn and practice soft skills needed for real-world success.

The Hub will use Intuit's [Design for Delight](#) approach and NFTE's [Start It Up!](#) Program to prepare young adults and those seeking career transitions for the new, more dynamic economic environment.

## A Place to Grow

San José already has innovative programs for youth STEM activities. The new Hub will augment in-school learning with various hands-on, informal STEM learning opportunities out-of-school and outside of regular class hours - after school, evenings, weekends, holidays & summer vacations. As a result, youth will have a whole new range of activities available to them.

## A Place for Neighborhood Business

Leveraging the resources available for SJPL, SBDC, SCORE, and the [Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center](#), the Hub will help launch and maximize new and existing neighborhood small businesses, delivering a range of services from training and consulting, access to capital, networking, and special programs for women.

The Hub will supply low-cost co-working space and support for new or existing neighborhood businesses and social entrepreneurs to incubate or accelerate their operations.

## A New Home for STEM/Business Competitions

The Hub will allow teams to meet outside school. It will make it easier for parents & mentors to find needed resources and help teams to learn & thrive. In addition to the robotics competitions above, the Hub will prepare teams for:

- Business pitch competitions
- Hackathons
- App competitions - [International Technovation Challenge](#), [nationwide Congressional App Challenge](#).
- [NFTE World Series of Innovation](#)

## Hands-On Robotics Lab

The Hub will provide access to project-based, hands-on [FIRST](#)® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) programs to introduce students to engineering and coding in an engaging, inclusive, and creative out-of-school or in-class learning environment where young people work collaboratively to solve robotics challenges.

Hands-on activities are available for ages 4 – 18:

**FIRST® Robotics Competition:** Grades 9-12 (ages 14-18)

**FIRST® Tech Challenge:** Grades 7-12 (ages 12-18)

**FIRST® LEGO® League Challenge:** Grades 4-8 (ages 9-16)

**FIRST® LEGO® League Explore:** Grades 2-4 (ages 6-10)

**FIRST® LEGO® League Explore & Discover:** Grades PreK-1 (ages 4-6)

The PreK-12 programs inspire innovation and help young people build a better future.

More on FIRST - [https://youtu.be/hT4H4F\\_s-jA](https://youtu.be/hT4H4F_s-jA)

It is expected the older youth in the robotics teams will take a leadership role in guiding the younger groups. In addition, participants in the robotics program will cross-pollinate with other Hub programs.

## A San José Innovation Showcase

The Hub will act as a showcase for STEM activities and other innovation programs across San José. While providing hands-on activities for youth and young adults, a wide array of programs would be more robust with broader exposure. In addition, many small programs will benefit from the shared resources available in the Hub, increasing their sustainability.

The Hub will also facilitate recruitment of corporate mentors, NFTE Training, FIRST team building, and highlight volunteer opportunities at the Hub and across the city. Bringing them together in one location will make it easier for families to take part in the Hub's unique programs.

## A Collaborative Environment

The Hub brings together dozens of different nonprofit youth, STEM, hobby, small businesses, and social entrepreneurs, working together sharing space, tools, resources, skill sets, and expertise. This catalytic ecosystem is how new opportunities are born!

## Programming In STEM Out-of-School Curriculum

Through project-based learning (PBL), students gain knowledge, learn elements of the core curriculum, and apply what they learn to solve authentic problems in real projects. In addition, PBL gives students the advantage of building their own projects. Sessions are for kids from 6-18. This curriculum is modeled on a program out of Harvard, MIT, and Stanford - <https://www.ivy-seed.com/afterschoolprograms>

## A Safe Space for Girls

The Hub is determined to be an inclusive space to ensure that all children and youth can learn in a welcoming environment. The Hub will partner with [Technovation Girls](#), a program that equips young women (ages 8-18) to become tech entrepreneurs and leaders. With the support of volunteer mentors and parents, girls work in teams to code mobile apps that address real-world problems. Find more model girls/women-focused organizations at - <http://socialenterpris.es/1nak>.

The Hub will host a San Jose chapter of [Girls in Tech](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating the gender gap in tech.

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**The San José Innovation Hub focuses primarily on hands-on activities and provides both introductory and advanced learning opportunities that participants can revisit daily/weekly/monthly throughout the year. It will be a space where business and social enterprise ideas are incubated and accelerated, fostering innovation throughout the community.**