



**HAWAII  
STRATEGIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION**



UNIVERSITY of HAWAI'I  
SYSTEM



**HAWAII STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I  
NATURAL ENERGY LABORATORY OF HAWAII AUTHORITY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Waves of Change – State Agencies and UH Form Unique Strategic  
Partnership to Expand Global Aquaculture Growth**

HONOLULU, HAWAI'I – A unique partnership between the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation (“HSDC”), University of Hawai'i (“UH”), UH Ventures, LLC, (“UHV”) and Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority (“NELHA”) has been formed to undertake a concerted and collaborative effort to raise Hawai'i's global visibility in marine aquaculture and to capitalize on the commercial opportunities available globally.

“The establishment of a Hawai'i aquaculture accelerator and a related investment fund is an effort to demonstrate the State's commitment to developing Hawai'i's commercial aquaculture industry and to focus entrepreneur and investor interest on Hawai'i as a location for globally relevant aquaculture companies” said HSDC President Karl Fooks. “The initiative will also be focused on attracting investor capital and a follow-on fund for aquaculture in Hawai'i to develop technical and intellectual property that can benefit a global industry.”

According to UH Vice President for Research and Innovation, Vassilis L. Syrmos, the initiative will provide proof-of-concept and commercialization services to start-ups in Hawai'i's aquaculture cluster. “It is critical that we work together to promote innovation as a new economic growth engine that will spark new industry technologies, maintain our competitiveness and generate new high-wage job opportunities for our students,” said Syrmos. “The project will build upon our existing regional strengths in aquaculture research, including programs at UH Mānoa's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, UH Hilo's Pacific Aquaculture and Coastal Resources Center, and the UH Sea Grant College Program, which have been focused on advancing long-term sustainable use and conservation of coastal areas worldwide through aquaculture and resource management for many years.”

The partnership seeks to create a facility and program at NELHA, using the existing world-class facilities, to attract entrepreneurs in startups, help them get into the market, and find a commercial space for their project. “We will continue to pursue strategic relationships such as this to allow NELHA to maintain its competitive advantage and make available to the global aquaculture community an asset found only in very few

places around the world.” said NELHA Executive Director Gregory Barbour. “The effort will focus on launching and scaling startups in the developing cluster of aquaculture companies operating in Hawai‘i that service global markets, develop new cultured species, pioneer new feed sources and the technologies needed to support open ocean and land-based aquaculture.”

The partnership is also receiving guidance and advice from other key representatives from the Department of Agriculture, Agribusiness Development Corporation, Hawaii Technology Development Corporation and Ulupono Initiative.

#### **About NELHA (Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority):**

NELHA is a state agency, attached to the state Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT). NELHA administers the world’s premier energy and ocean technology park (HOST Park). This unique master-permitted park is on 870 acres of prime coastal property in Kailua-Kona, Hawai‘i and offers research support facilities for the development of marine science, renewable energy and other demonstration projects that use the unique resources found at the park. It is the world’s only facility that continually brings ashore high quality, pristine supplies of both warm surface and cold deep seawater 24 hours a day, which helps to reap economic potentials from the dual temperature seawater delivery system and high solar insolation. Tenants located in HOST Park work at the pre-commercial, commercial, research and educational levels. It is the largest diversified economic development project in the state and is focused on sustainable economic development projects and blue technology.

#### **About the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation (HSDC)**

HSDC is a State agency, attached to the state Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT). HSDC’s mission is economic development: to establish programs to stimulate private capital investment in Hawaii toward investments that promote the welfare of citizens in this State, economic growth, employment, and economic diversification.

#### **About University of Hawai‘i (UH) Research**

Research conducted by the University of Hawai‘i (UH) impacts the quality of life in the islands and around the world. As the state’s major research university, and because of Hawai‘i’s tremendous geographic diversity, UH plays a prominent role in the state’s economic growth and development through its diverse and world-renowned research programs in astronomy, earth and ocean sciences, medicine and tropical agriculture. <http://www.hawaii.edu/research/>

#### **About UH Ventures**

During the 2017 legislative session, the Hawai‘i State Legislature passed Acts 38 and 39 that established the statutory framework to support renewed efforts by the University of Hawai‘i (UH) to contribute to the development of a vibrant innovation eco-system. As a result, UH created a limited liability company called UH Ventures LLC, to facilitate,

promote, and where appropriate, hold equity in start-up companies that form around UH-generated discoveries and inventions. Through UH Ventures, UH is working to identify strategic opportunities to creatively use its resources to promote innovation and commercialization in the state.

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