

## **STLVentureWorks Receives InBIA Global Soft Landings Designation**

### **Program to attract and welcome foreign startups**

STLVentureWorks is pleased to announce they have been awarded the Soft Landings designation from InBIA to support international start ups moving to St. Louis. InBIA is an international non-profit organization and global advocate for the support of building entrepreneurial-driven economic ecosystems. STLVentureWorks is the first incubator in St. Louis and the first incubator system in Missouri to be awarded with this designation. Only eighteen incubators have achieved this status nationally. As a part of the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, STLVentureWorks collaborates within the organization and with many St. Louis partner organizations to help global soft landings thrive in St. Louis. Sheila Sweeney, CEO of the Partnership, stated “We are extremely happy and honored to be recognized as an incubator system that welcomes startups from all over the world. It will enable us to attract start ups and focus on innovative ways to grow our economy.”

Talking with our collaborating partners, there has been an immensely positive feedback on this triumph. Anna Crosslin, the President/CEO of the International Institute of St. Louis, mentioned, “We are pleased to hear that the SLEDP has been awarded with this designation. The International Institute of St. Louis looks forward to working with them and assisting the Soft Landings with our expertise.” Anthony Bartlett, Founder of St. Louis Transplants, added “St. Louis Transplants gladly welcomes all new Soft Landings to this city and we hope to assist them with finding community and friendship in St. Louis. Congratulations to the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership got achieving this designation”. “InBIA’s Soft Landings program was created to help entrepreneurial support organizations gain international awareness for the highly specialized services they offer,” states Kirstie Chadwick, President and CEO of InBIA. “The St. Louis Development Partnership has earned this distinction for its demonstrated success helping foreign companies succeed in their domestic market. We are excited to announce their incubator system as our newest Soft Landings designee.”

This designation comes at a crucial time with the growth of the Global Plant Life Sciences cluster, where the Helix Center incubator is located. Sam Fiorello, the COO of Danforth Plant Science Center and president, Bio Research & Development Growth (BRDG) Park, had to say that “Attracting international companies to the region is an important component to our strategy to grow our innovation ecosystem and goes hand-in-hand with promoting local entrepreneurship. Our entire community benefits when innovators from other parts of the world choose the Saint Louis region to build and grow their businesses. I believe that the Helix Center’s International Soft Landing designation will tell innovators worldwide that our region is open for business”. This continues to show the community looks forward to developing the entrepreneurial ecosystem with the help of this designation. The first Helix Center soft landings company, Kaiima, will join in November and STLVentureWorks looks forward to recruiting more successful soft landing companies in the future.

STLVentureWorks started in 1994, has a network of five incubators covering and supporting between 600-700 entrepreneurs, this incubator system is one of the first in the area where successful companies have flourished during the long standing period.