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# Digital Garage and The Hokkaido Shimbun Press Launch “Open Network Lab HOKKAIDO”, an Accelerator Program ~Developing Start-ups and Promoting Open Innovation in Hokkaido~

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Digital Garage, Inc. (TSE first section: 4819; HQ: Tokyo; Representative Director, President Executive Officer and Group CEO: Kaoru Hayashi; DG) and The Hokkaido Shimbun Press (HQ: Hokkaido; President and Representative Director: Kenzo Hirose; Hokkaido Shimbun) have agreed to a joint business for developing start-ups and promoting open innovation in Hokkaido. The two companies launch “Open Network Lab HOKKAIDO” (<https://onlab-hokkaido.jp/>), an accelerator program for developing start-ups with products and services utilizing technologies in Hokkaido. “Open Network Lab HOKKAIDO” put out a call for teams to participate in the accelerator program starting on April 20 (Friday).



## Open Network Lab HOKKAIDO

DG and Hokkaido Shimbun will implement this accelerator program to discover and develop start-ups that are active on the global stage, leveraging Hokkaido’s resources such as primary industry, tourism, and rich natural world. Other initiatives will include an open innovation program aiming to match start-ups with local governments and companies, resolve issues, and create new businesses. Moreover, DG and Hokkaido Shimbun will collaborate with the Sapporo Electronics and Industries Cultivation Foundation (HQ: Hokkaido; Chairman: Katsuhiro Akimoto; SEC), which will provide the base for “Open Network Lab HOKKAIDO”’s activities, in carrying out this joint project.

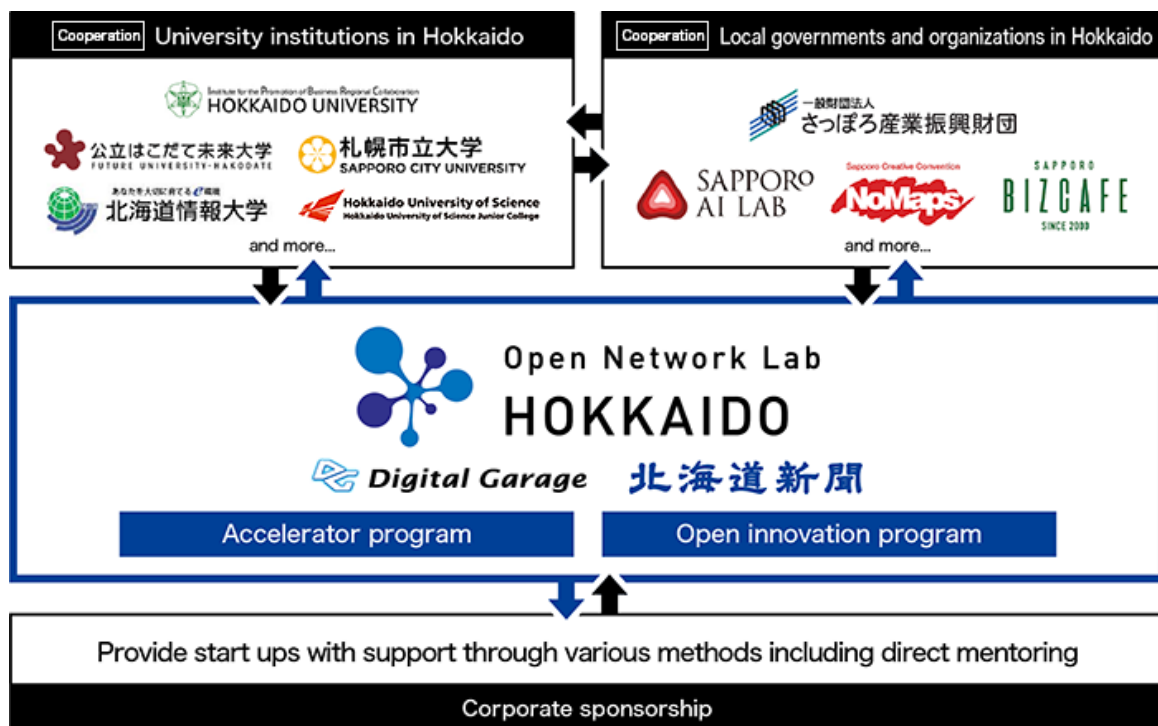
To support companies taking part in the accelerator program, experienced professionals with cutting-edge knowledge and skills from various industries will serve as mentors, including Hiroyuki Ito (President of Crypton Future Media, INC.), Professor Hitoshi Matsubara (Department of Complex and Intelligent Systems, Future University Hakodate), and Professor Hidenori Kawamura (Harmonious System Engineering Lab, Hokkaido University). Depending on the content of the projects by the participating companies, opportunities will be created for field trials with DG Lab and collaboration with the DG Lab Fund. DG started Open Network Lab (<https://onlab.jp/en/>), Japan’s first accelerator program, in 2010. DG is striving to build an innovation ecosystem unique to Hokkaido by utilizing expertise cultivated in the Open Network Lab and through collaboration with Open Network Lab’s global community, Hokkaido Shimbun’s media network, and Hokkaido universities and companies.

“This year marks the 150th anniversary of the Meiji Restoration and the naming of Hokkaido. Together with The Hokkaido Shimbun Press which has a wide range of network of industry, academia and government in Hokkaido, we are very pleased that the DG Group will work together to build a Hokkaido-style innovation ecosystem that makes use of the Global Incubation Stream that extends to Japan, the United States, Europe and Asia. We will do our utmost to

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support Hokkaido's new talents so that Hokkaido's new talents can be passed on to the world.”(Kaoru Hayashi, DG Representative Director, President Executive Officer and Group CEO)

“Through joint ventures with Digital garage, which have been successful in managing the Open Network Lab, we will identify and nurture promising entrepreneurs in Hokkaido, and provide them with the opportunity to grow globally. Our goal is to create an economic climate in which innovative companies can emerge one after another. We will work with companies, universities, local governments, and other entities in Hokkaido to boost this momentum.” (Kenzo Hirose, Hokkaido Shimbun President and Representative Director)



**[Open Network Lab HOKKAIDO outline]**

• **Support**

- Providing funding (investment) for activities in the program
- Mentoring by a diverse range of specialists including entrepreneurs, investors, and university professors
- Providing office spaces
- Domestic and international network

• **Eligible candidates**

- (1) People with ideas or business plans utilizing Hokkaido’s resources, including primary industry, tourism, and rich natural world
- (2) People with other services, products, or business plans who plan to launch businesses in Hokkaido (in any field), mainly utilizing technologies



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### • Schedule

Applications accepted : April 20 (Friday) to May 21 (Monday), 2018  
Teams selected : Mid-June 2018  
Program provided : Late June to end of September 2018  
Demo Day\* : Early October 2018 (to be held in Sapporo)

\*Demo Day: Japanese investors are invited to this pitch event that is a fundraising opportunity.

### • Website

<https://onlab-hokkaido.jp/>

**[DG Lab]** <https://www.dglab.com/en/>

An open innovation R&D organization jointly established by DG, Kakaku.com, Inc. (TSE first section: 2371, HQ: Tokyo; President and Representative Director: Shonosuke Hata) and Credit Saison Co., Ltd. (TSE first section: 8253; HQ: Tokyo; President and CEO: Hiroshi Rinno).

### **[DG Lab Fund]**

The DG Lab Fund (also known as DG Lab Fund 1) has been operating by DG Daiwa Ventures, Inc., a joint venture between DG and Daiwa Securities Group Inc. (TSE first section: 8601; HQ: Tokyo; President and CEO: Seiji Nakata).