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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND WORLD BUSINESS CHICAGO ANNOUNCE NEW COWORKING  
AND INNOVATION HUB REFERRAL PROGRAM**

*Unique Discount Program Connects Emerging Companies and Entrepreneurs to Chicago's  
Leading Coworking and Innovation Spaces*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and World Business Chicago today announced a new Coworking and Innovation Hub Referral Program, which offers companies and entrepreneurs new or relocating to Chicago discounted access to the city's diverse network of coworking spaces and innovation hubs. Nine leading hubs are included in the program and represent a range of industries, providing new and emerging businesses with the ability to grow and expand their Chicago presence.

"Chicago's thriving coworking and entrepreneurial community offers emerging business leaders more than two million square feet of collaboration space and endless opportunities for innovation," Mayor Emanuel said. "This referral program lowers the barrier of entry for businesses to build their Chicago presence and offers flexible and low-risk office solutions that allows companies to focus on what they do best."

The Mayor announced the program today during a panel discussion in London with local business leaders from Chicago and the UK. Facilitated by World Business Chicago and offered to new or newly-relocating businesses and entrepreneurs, the referral program provides discounted monthly rates at Chicago's leading coworking and innovation spaces. Selected based on industry expertise, geographic coverage and a track record of collaboration, initial program partners include:

- **1871** – a technology and entrepreneurship innovation hub home to more than 1,000 inventors, designers and entrepreneurs and housed in Chicago's iconic Merchandise Mart.
- **2112** – a music, film, video and creative technology incubator located within the 160,000-square-foot creative industry ecosystem at Fort Knox Studios.
- **BLUE1647** – a technology and entrepreneurship innovation center and coworking space focused on economic and workforce development and business acceleration.

- **MakeOffices** – an affordable and business-friendly coworking and shared office space supporting entrepreneurs, startups, freelancers, nonprofits and businesses large and small; “collaborative collision coworking” spaces build for productivity and community.
- **MATTER** – the leading healthcare technology incubator with state-of-the-art innovation and simulation facilities, a community of 200 healthcare startup ventures, and deep relationships with 70 large healthcare companies, hospitals and universities.
- **mHub** – Chicago’s premier innovation center focused on physical product development and manufacturing containing labs for electronics, plastics, metals, 3D printing and other technologies.
- **TechNexus** – a venture collaborative that builds ecosystems by finding, funding, and accelerating technology ventures with enterprises. Anchoring this global network is the TechNexus Venture Collaboration Center, a 65,000 square foot workspace in Chicago.
- **UI LABS** – an innovation accelerator with nearly 100,000 square feet of collaboration space that brings together more than 300 partners from corporations, start-ups, universities and government to transform industries including manufacturing and infrastructure through IoT and digital technologies.
- **WeWork** – a platform for creators, providing beautiful workspace, an inspiring community, and meaningful business services to tens of thousands of members around the world. From startups and freelancers to small businesses and large corporations, WeWork’s community is united by a desire for our members to create meaningful work and lead meaningful lives.

“World Business Chicago is often approached by companies around the world looking for a strong landing spot to grow their presence in Chicago,” Jeff Malehorn, president and CEO of World Business Chicago said. “In addition to giving our organization the opportunity to truly support a company’s growth, this program opens up the office location pipeline and gives companies instant access to Chicago’s global business community.”

“We are excited to launch this initiative with World Business Chicago and are eager to work closely with Chicago's startup, business, and civic leaders to further establish the city as a thriving community for creators, entrepreneurs, and change makers,” Megan Dodds, director of community for WeWork, a leading referral program partner and home to six coworking spaces in Chicago said. “Whether a freelancer, a local startup or a non-profit, or a Fortune 500 enterprise, WeWork will provide the space, community and services Chicago companies need to thrive. We are committed to this community, and we are just getting started.”

"Any opportunity for 1871 to expand its network and welcome new, diverse members is exciting for our community," Howard A. Tullman, CEO of 1871 said. "We look forward to the pipeline of new talent the city's program will bring, and are proud to be a partner in the launch of this initiative that will greatly benefit the Chicago tech community."

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