

SPECIAL REPORT: 10 Kansas City Startups to Watch in 2021



Digital Sandbox KC selects diverse health, AI and filmmaking startups for latest funding

By: Startland News Staff · October 24, 2019



Digital Sandbox KC cohort; Mario Pabaroue, Len Frye and Brandon Dunlap, FilmDove Inc.; A.J. Mellott, Ronawk LLC; and Sunti Wathanacharoen, Pulmonaer Analytics LLC

The latest trio of Digital Sandbox KC companies pushes the proof-of-concept program deeper into Johnson County with a new Overland Park partnership.

"This group showcases the wide spectrum of businesses assisted by the Sandbox, from a data platform for creative filmmakers and studios, to improved patient care in asthma, to biologics in regenerative medicine," said Jill Meyer, senior director of technology ventures at the UMKC Innovation Center who now oversees the program.



Jill Meyer, UMKC Innovation Center

Digital Sandbox KC has provided project development funding for 121 area early stage startups, which has spurred more than \$70 million in follow on funding, since 2013. It is a unique collaboration among private, public, university/research and philanthropic organizations, Meyer said, noting Overland Park's addition to the roster of partners.

"It is young, growing companies that will develop the future leaders of Overland Park's business community and drive new innovation," said Beth Johnson, senior vice president of the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce, and who will coordinate with Digital Sandbox. "By providing a base of funding that accelerates smart, talented individuals and the teams they build to develop viable ideas into functioning businesses, Digital Sandbox KC plays a critical role in helping businesses scale and finding the best ways to integrate business with burgeoning new technologies."

Funding from the City of Overland Park will support entrepreneurs based in that city.

The program previously established an ongoing relationship with the City of Olathe, under the leadership of former executive director Jeff Shackelford, who now leads Fountain Innovation Fund and Mid-America Angels.

Among the newly funded cohort companies:

- **Pulmonaer Analytics** — Sunti Wathanacharoen, founder — Through its mobile platform Asthma Insight, Pulmonaer Analytics improves collaboration between patients and doctors, provides access to personalized asthma care plans and provides education on how to best control asthma.
- **FilmDove** — Mario Pabaroue, Len Frye and Brandon Dunlap, co-founders — FilmDove is an intelligent analytics platform that empowers filmmakers and studios to build their brands by connecting them to the right audiences, resources, film festivals and distributors. FilmDove's mission is to bridge the gap between content producers and distributors.
- **Ronawk LLC** — Olathe — A.J. Mellott, founder — Ronawk has developed a T-Block technology with the potential to quickly produce patient-specific biologics to treat cancer, diseases, organ injuries, and burns by enabling mass production of patient stem cells while dramatically minimizing resources, time, labor, and human error.

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STARTLAND NEWS
1712 Main St.
Suite 303
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news@startlandnews.com

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