

GIST presents vision of 'Integration and Innovation' for the era of the Integrated Jeonnam-Gwangju Special City

- "GIST 'Integration and Innovation' Forum" to be held on Friday, the 26th... Sharing a vision for a science and technology innovation ecosystem connecting talent, technology, and industry in the era of AI transformation and super-regional integration
- GIST Startup Innovation Strategy Center officially launched... Full-scale establishment of a science and technology innovation ecosystem centered on AI semiconductors and deep tech startups begins



▲ Participants of the "GIST 'Integration and Innovation' Forum" are taking a group photo.

The Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology (GIST, President Kichul Lim) announced that the "GIST 'Integration and Innovation' Forum" was successfully held on June 26 (Fri) at the Multi-purpose Hall on the 1st floor of Oryong Hall at GIST.



▲ *GIST President Kichul Lim delivers a welcoming address.*

This forum was organized to explore regional growth strategies and plans for creating a science and technology-based innovation ecosystem in preparation for the era of the Jeonnam-Gwangju Integrated Special City, in light of the era of AI Transformation (AX) and super-regional integration. Approximately 100 people attended, including GIST members and officials from industry, academia, research institutes, and government.

The event proceeded with the opening ceremony of the GIST Startup Innovation Strategy Center, followed by the main event of the 'Integration and Innovation' forum, which featured thematic presentations and a grand talk.

In April of this year, GIST expanded and reorganized its existing Science and Technology Innovation Group into the Startup Innovation Strategy Center, and this month appointed Jae Gwan Kim (Professor of Biomedical Engineering) as the first director. The GIST Startup Innovation Promotion Agency announced its full-scale operation through the opening ceremony held on this day.

At the opening ceremony, the first director, Jae Gwan Kim, reported on the progress of the launch of the Startup Innovation Strategy Center. Following this, an opening video announcing the official launch of the agency was screened, and a business agreement was signed with the Industry-Academic Cooperation Foundation of Chonnam

National University and the Value Creation Foundation of the Korea Institute of Energy and Technology (KENTECH) to promote regional innovation and the activation of technology startups and commercialization.

The Startup Innovation Strategy Center is a dedicated organization providing integrated support for the commercialization of research results, technology startups, investment linkages, and industry-academia cooperation. It plans to establish a full-cycle support system that enables excellent technologies generated in laboratories to lead to startups, investment, and corporate growth, and to promote the revitalization of the deep tech startup ecosystem in Gwangju and Jeonnam.



▲ Attendees of the opening ceremony of the GIST Startup Innovation Strategy Center are posing for a commemorative photo. (From left) Vice President for Public Affairs Yonghwa Chung; GIST Startup Innovation Strategy Center Director Jae Gwan Kim; National Assembly Representative Inchul Cho; GIST President Kichul Lim; National Assembly Representative Moonyoung Lim;; and GIST Foundation Chairperson Eunmo Choi.

Min Hyung-bae, Mayor-elect of the Integrated Jeonnam-Gwangju Special City, stated in a video congratulatory message, “The integration pursued by the Integrated Jeonnam-Gwangju Special City is not merely about merging administrative districts, but a challenge to create a new growth axis for the southern region of Korea by connecting industry with talent, and research with businesses.” He added, “I look forward to GIST playing a central role in the integrated era as a core innovation platform leading future strategic industries such as AI, semiconductors, bio, and energy.”

Following this, National Assembly Representatives Inchul Cho (Gwangju Seo-gu Gap) and Moonyoung Lim (Gwangju Gwangsan-gu Eul), who attended the event in person, expressed their expectations for GIST's role in regional innovation and future growth strategies through their congratulatory remarks.

Representative Inchul Cho said, "It is important to create an innovation ecosystem where young people do not leave the region but can settle in Gwangju through entrepreneurship or employment." He continued, "I hope GIST becomes a cradle of innovation that nurtures local talent and plays a central role in making Gwangju a place where young people return."

Representative Moonyoung Lim stated, "The launch of the GIST Startup Innovation Strategy Center and the establishment of the Jeonnam-Gwangju Integrated Special City are meaningful beginnings for creating new innovations." He added, "Just as the theme of this forum is 'Integration and Innovation,' I hope that Gwangju and Jeonnam will become the center for creating a new model of national growth in the AI era."

The forum that followed featured presentations on regional innovation and future growth strategies under the themes of: the engine of economic growth, the map of future industries, the coordinates of an innovative nation, and the spirit and philosophy of the times.

GIST Startup Innovation Strategy Center Director Jae Gwan Kim, predicted that Gwangju and Jeonnam could grow into a global deep-tech startup hub based on strategic industries such as AI, semiconductors, and energy, as well as research capabilities. He emphasized the need to establish an innovation ecosystem where R&D, technology commercialization, startups, and investment are organically interconnected.

Kangwook Kim, Dean of the College of Information and Computing, defined AI semiconductors as a core infrastructure that will determine future industrial competitiveness and proposed that Gwangju and Jeonnam should emerge as a full-cycle AI semiconductor hub encompassing everything from design to demonstration.

Following this, Kihong Park, Director of the 4-Polar 3-Special Science and Technology Innovation Project Group (Professor of Environmental and Energy Engineering), suggested a direction to expand joint R&D and super-regional cooperation in the Honam region, moving beyond a research and development system centered on the Seoul metropolitan area. Meanwhile, Jae-won Kwak, Special Professor at the Graduate

School of AI Policy and Strategy, introduced a vision for transitioning from a human-centered 'Anthropocene' to a 'Symbiocene,' where humans, AI, and the Earth coexist and live in symbiosis.



▲ The Grand Talk of the "GIST 'Integration and Innovation' Forum" is underway. Under the theme "The Wave of Integration: GIST's Bold Advance Beyond Regional Limitations," the roles of regional innovation and science and technology were discussed. (From left) Kanghun Ahn, Professor at GIST School of Humanities and Social Sciences; Ju-sang Yeo, CEO of GIST Holdings; Jeong-hoe Bae, CEO of Hyuk New Management Co., Ltd.; Yun-cheol Lim, CEO of Technology & Value Co., Ltd.; GIST Vice President for Public Affairs Yonghwa Chung; GIST Startup Innovation Strategy Center Director Jae Gwan Kim (Professor of Biomedical Engineering); Kangwook Kim, Dean of the GIST College of Information and Computing; Kihong Park, Director of the 4-Polar 3-Special Science and Technology Innovation Project (Professor of Environmental and Energy Engineering); and Jae-won Kwak, Distinguished Professor at the Graduate School of AI Policy & Strategy.

The "Grand Talk," the final session of the forum, was chaired by Vice President for Public Affairs Yonghwa Chung and proceeded under the theme "The Wave of Integration: GIST's Bold Advance Beyond Regional Limitations."

The discussion featured speakers who delivered the keynote presentations, along with Yun-cheol Lim, CEO of Technology & Value Co., Ltd.; Jeong-hoe Bae, CEO of Innovation Kyungyoung Co., Ltd.; Ju-sang Yeo, CEO of GIST Holdings; and Kanghun Ahn, Professor at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, who shared their views on regional innovation strategies and the role of science and technology.

The participants agreed on the need to establish a virtuous cycle where excellent regional research achievements lead to technology commercialization, startups, and industrial growth, and to foster a sustainable innovation ecosystem by strengthening cooperation among universities, companies, and research institutions.

Furthermore, key tasks for strengthening regional competitiveness were presented to respond to the transition to AI and changes in industrial structure, including: fostering future talent; revitalizing region-based technology startups; and achieving the harmonious development of science and technology alongside humanities and social values.

President Kichul Lim stated, "In the era of AI transformation and super-regional integration, a regional innovation ecosystem where talent and technology gather and grow determines national competitiveness." He added, "GIST will build an innovation ecosystem connecting research, startups, and industry centered on the Innovation and Startup Promotion Agency, and as a core platform supporting the growth of future strategic industries such as AI, semiconductors, and energy, we will take the lead in helping Gwangju and Jeonnam leap forward as the center of Korea's future growth."