



# US-Polish Trade Council Newsletter

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## In This Issue

[The U.S.-Poland  
Innovation Program  
\(PLUS-IP\)](#)

[The USPTC Open Day](#)

[Polish-Californian  
Collaboration to  
Advance Stem Cell  
Research toward  
Cures](#)

[Polish-American  
Conference:  
"Research  
Opportunities and  
Challenges" at  
Stanford University](#)

[US-Poland  
Innovation HUB-GO  
GLOBAL Fourth  
Edition](#)

[Lubusz  
Entrepreneurs on an  
Economic Mission to  
Silicon Valley](#)

[Training Sessions for  
Representatives of  
Bialystok Science  
and Technology Park  
at Stanford  
University](#)

[University of  
Information  
Technology and  
Management in  
Rzeszów](#)

[Inaugurates its  
Cooperation with  
Silicon Valley](#)

## Quick Links

[Our Website](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

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Dear USPTC Member,

During the Holiday Season, more than ever, we extend to our friends and partners our appreciation for their unwavering support and energetic involvement in USPTC's work. We wish you peace, prosperity, and happiness throughout this special time and look forward to more exciting collaborations in the New Year!



With warmest thanks and best wishes,

The USPTC Team

**The U.S.-Poland Innovation Program (PLUS-IP) - a  
collaboration platform between Polish and American  
governments, academic institutions and businesses**

The US-Polish Trade Council (USPTC) was pleased to join the first-ever U.S.-Poland Innovation Program and Council (PLUS-IP) launched on November 17 in Los Angeles, California. PLUS-IP is a collaborative initiative between the U.S. Department of State and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of

Poland. The U.S. Department of State invited USPTC Chairman Piotr Moncarz, Consulting Professor at Stanford University, to participate in building the structures of this significant bilateral cooperation.

The PULS-IP program aims to increase the links between Polish and U.S. academic communities, industries, high-tech companies and governments, and to foster innovation and cooperation on joint venture, research, and development projects, specifically in the sectors of defense, energy, health, science, and technology. To strengthen Poland's innovation ecosystem through PLUS-IP, Poland's National Center for Research and Development plans to establish several 10-year venture capital funds by providing 50-55 percent of each fund's initial capital in order to finance identified projects.

### **The USPTC Open Day**

On November 18, USPTC hosted an inaugural Open Day at its new offices in Palo Alto. The event offered an opportunity for Silicon Valley professionals to network informally with Polish companies affiliated with the US-Poland Innovation HUB and the economic mission organized by the Lubuskie Employers Organization in cooperation with USPTC.

Piotr Moncarz welcomed the event's approximately 120 guests and presented a brief overview of USPTC's mission and recent activities before turning over the stage to Stan Lewandowski, USPTC and Polish Network member, who introduced event speakers Bozena Lubinska-Kasprzak, the president of the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development; USPTC president Jerzy Orkiszewski; Polish Network founder Konrad Grotowski; and Grzegorz Zoledziewski, representing the economic mission of the Lubuskie Employers Organization. Subsequently, several companies, including Poleng, Open Innovation, Spray Networks, InsBird, AMB Software, Astec, and Cinkciarz.pl, presented their elevator pitches to the attendees including prospective investors and business partners.

### **US-Polish Trade Council initiated Polish-Californian Collaboration to Advance Stem Cell Research toward Cures**

On November 19, the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), California's state stem cell agency, and the Medical University of Warsaw (MUW), a Polish state university, signed a collaboration agreement on joint Polish-Californian initiatives to advance stem cell research. The event, which took place at CIRM's headquarters in San Francisco, was attended by CIRM leadership, Polish dignitaries including Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Katarzyna Kacperczyk, and Polish National Center for Research and Development Director Krzysztof Kurzydowski.

USPTC was instrumental in forging the agreement, having presented the idea to the leadership of CIRM and to the rector of MUW, Dr. Marek Krawczyk, after a period of collaboration with the father of the legislative basis for CIRM, Mr. Robert Klein. As the agreement became effective, Piotr Moncarz stated: "We are committed to supporting Polish researchers to work with California scientists and businesses to further boost Poland's profile as an innovative and accelerating center for scientific research."

For details, see the [CIRM press release](#).

### **Bringing Innovative Poland to California. Polish-American Conference: "Research Opportunities and Challenges" at Stanford University**

USPTC was an essential strategic partner in organizing the program of **US-Poland Innovation Week (USPIW)** at Stanford University. USPIW included a series of conferences, debates, meetings and networking events held in Los Angeles, Silicon Valley, San Francisco, the University of California, Berkeley, and Stanford University from November 16 to 21. A Polish delegation comprised more than 150 Polish companies, 50 Polish government delegates, and numerous leaders from academia and industry joined the program under the leadership of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On November 20, the Precourt Energy Efficiency Center of Stanford University, with the support of USPTC, hosted "Polish American Conference: **Research Opportunities and Challenges.**" Over 300 Polish and American academic and business leaders gathered to exchange ideas and discussed opportunities from joint research to joint investments. The Stanford University event agenda focused on energy and biomedicine, with significant attention paid to financing models and cooperation and exchange.

In the opening session of the conference, Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Kacperczyk emphasized the importance of meeting Poland's anticipated increase in energy demand with innovative and environmentally friendly solutions as well as the need to guarantee Poland's energy security.

Polish Deputy Minister of Science and Higher Education Włodzisław Duch noted that some of the funds received by the Ministry from the European Union could be utilized in support of collaboration between American and Polish scientists. Identifying matching sources for such funds would create a momentum in

investment and cooperation between Polish and U.S. innovators.

In the session on Opportunities and Challenges for Institutional Structures for Interdisciplinary Research, Polish and U.S.-based attendees discussed steps to facilitate the cooperation between experts from different disciplines. In the real world, panelists noted, problems are interdisciplinary; in order to solve them experts from different disciplines must learn to communicate with one another more effectively.

During the Energy Sector Investment session, participants acknowledged that a majority of the investments in this industry consist of large projects requiring very long-term commitments.

The conference also included presentations by graduates from the Top500 Innovators Program, who reported on their accomplishments since their completion of the Program. Top500, an initiative of Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education, executed as a nine-week course at Stanford University and University of California, Berkeley, was launched to provide the participants with skills needed to manage cooperative research projects and bring high-technology products to the market. The initiative's goal is to improve quality of innovation leadership in Poland.

The Stanford University program for USPIW culminated with a panel discussion on "Women in Business & Innovation: A Global Perspective" featuring the following outstanding women leaders: Gloria Duffy, President of the Commonwealth of California; Polish Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Katarzyna Kacperczyk; Padmasree Warrior, Chief Technology & Strategy Officer of Cisco Systems; Susan Wojcicki, the CEO of YouTube and Vice-President of Google. The panel was moderated by international journalist and Visiting Stanford Lecturer Janine Zacharia.

The conference was an important step in developing working relationships between participants from Polish and American government, academic, technology, and investment circles. By increasing awareness of relevant developments and accomplishments on both Polish and American sides, these relationships will lead to mutually beneficial joint endeavors.

### **US-Poland Innovation HUB-Go Global Fourth Edition**

The first stage of the Fourth Edition of the US-Poland Innovation HUB (Innovation HUB) program took place in September 2014 in Warsaw. Seven Polish companies, including Poleng, Open Innovation, Nova Tracking, PiLAB, TechSurfing, Algolytics and Customer Friendly, participated in the intensive multiday workshop sessions.

Two companies, Poleng and Open Innovation, completed the second stage of the Innovation HUB program earlier this month, travelling to Silicon Valley to explore and expand their opportunities and growth potential. Poleng's cofounder, Krzysztof Jassem, and its CEO, Dariusz Pudlik, joined Wojtek Gawlik and Aleksander Malaszkiwicz of Open Innovation for several weeks of interactive workshops, presentations, pitching and brainstorming sessions. Both Polish companies also attended a series of individual meetings with recognized and experienced business experts, strategic partners, and investors based in Silicon Valley. During these meetings, Poleng and Open Innovation were able to gain exposure to and establish relationships with Silicon Valley startup and academia communities, network with successful corporate and business professionals, and gain insight into the venture capital ecosystem.

The Innovation HUB anticipates further cooperation with many Polish companies with the prospective expansion into the global market through the U.S. market.

**Testimonial from prof. Krzysztof Jassem, cofounder of POLENG, multi-year winner of the World Championship title in bridge.**

*"[USPTC] prepare[s]*

During a 4-day workshop in Warsaw they made us think like American entrepreneurs: put your ideas clearly and concisely, otherwise you are not listened to.

*They make you feel at home*

They ask you to feel at home and you do feel at home. The USPTC office in Palo Alto, Silicon Valley, has all the facilities you need: from coffee machine, through your private workplace, to a convenient conference room.

*They organize*

They managed to fill every hour of our 2-week stay in Silicon Valley. We listened to people, talked to people, networked and partied. We were not allowed to do one thing: to waste time.

*They make Polish entrepreneurs ready for America!"*

**Testimonial from Wojtek Gawlik and Aleksander Malaszkiwicz, CEO and CTO of Open Innovation, respectively.**

"We would like to thank wholeheartedly US-Polish Trade Council (USPTC) for the most amazing 6 weeks of our professional lives. Your knowledge, support and connections were of great value and made a significant blueprint on our business. How did it all happen?

#### *Initial Training - Cold Shower*

We have started thinking the Silicon Valley way. It turned out that just the great product is not enough. Our development quickly began. It wasn't the easiest process but it was essential so we could be better positioned for the expansion into the U.S. market.

#### *Touching Down in Pivot Valley*

With all interactions that we have received and created while we were in Palo Alto, our business model and strategy were rearranged a couple of times. There were a lot of great people to whom we had talked to, naming just a few: Mark Iwanowski, Krzysztof Kujawa, Stan Lewandowski, Sara Rauchwerger and Soody Tronson. Feedback, advice and leads from each of them were of great value. Eventually, we hope, we will benefit from most of those contacts in near or more distant future.

#### *Polish Spirit*

Polish people are known for their great hospitality. That doesn't exclude people from USPTC. The one person that gave us most of her heart was Ela Kozera. An amazing woman who is a great organizer, listener and advisor. Because of our day-to-day contact with her, we could make much more from our business trip.

#### *Follow-Up*

The last but for us the most important aspect of our relation with USPTC is that our relationship didn't stop as we entered the plane heading home. We are having a good contact and further support from them even after our departure. We are thrilled to come back to the U.S. in order to establish our company there and continue this cooperation. Eventually, it would be our best privilege to support them in their mission of helping Polish companies become global because their attitude is viral."

### **Lubusz Entrepreneurs on an Economic Mission to Silicon Valley**

USPTC, as a nonprofit organization with years of experience in bridging Polish-American relations and promotion of Polish high technology, science institutions and corporations in California, partnered with the Lubuskie Employers' Organization (OPZL) in organizing an economic mission to the United States for nine

Lubusz companies active in the IT sector: Akson Electro, AMB Software, ASTEC, Cinkciarz.pl, Konfrontuj, Opero, Petra IT Solutions, Sinersio Data Center, and StreamSoft. The mission visited the United States, including Silicon Valley, in November.

USPTC provided organizational and technical support as well as a distinctive program of events for the mission. During meetings with representatives of startup companies and of American business partners and investors based in Silicon Valley, Polish companies learned about the Silicon Valley's scientific and business environments. They also had the opportunity to make presentations to Silicon Valley's investors and strategic partners. The most impressive examples of technology and academic transfers were seen during the tours of Google, Oracle, and Stanford University. The program of this unique mission included also the trip to Techweek Los Angeles, the nation's leading technology conference where the next wave of technology and innovation was displayed.

### **Training sessions for the representatives of Bialystok Science and Technology Park at Stanford University**

Also in November, representatives of Bialystok Science and Technology Park—all of them graduates from the TOP500 Innovators Program—visited Silicon Valley to gain additional skills in the field of innovation, technology transfer, cooperation, and academic entrepreneurship. USPTC was a key partner of the Stanford University Center for Professional Development in organizing this essential program.

The training sessions were held at Stanford University, where the participants could gain deeper knowledge in the area of investment processes and cooperation with investors, due diligence of companies, managing the technology transfer processes, valuation of objects of intellectual property rights in technology projects, and the valuation process of a typical company. The workshop also illuminated the Stanford model of knowledge transfer and commercialization and introduced participants to the functioning of the D-school, a space of collaboration between Stanford University and the Hasso Plattner Institute at Potsdam University in Germany and a global leader in the teaching methodology of design thinking used to foster innovation.

The knowledge gained at Stanford University will assist the leaders of the Bialystok Science and Technology Park in implementing best practices for effective technology transfer model to their technology transfer department. It was great to have you back, Top500s!

## **University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszów Inaugurates its Cooperation with Silicon Valley**

On December 10, the University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszów (UITM) entered into a partnership agreement with USPTC. This agreement is the first step in the pursued by UITM of cooperation with Silicon Valley on knowledge transfer on science-business relationship.

"The aim is a daily cooperation with Silicon Valley. Stanford is very interested in Poland. We work in a team of professionals who influence American colleagues with enthusiasm for Poland. Young Polish companies ready to enter the U.S. market may come to USPTC to get professional support." encourages prof. Piotr Moncarz.

"We want to create a platform for collaboration between the research and business, stimulate the exchange of information and initiate joint projects among UITM, USPTC and entrepreneurs investing in new technologies." explains dr. Marta Czyzewska, director of the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at UITM.

The objective of this Agreement is also to enhance the potential of UITM in providing services for companies in the field of innovation, R&D, and in product commercialization. It is about creating more valuable conditions for development of innovative entrepreneurship and offering an academic mentoring by experts from Silicon Valley.