



**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

USCIS Develops Tools to Help Foreign Entrepreneurs Create and Grow Businesses in the United States

Director Mayorkas unveils online entrepreneur resource center at MIT

WASHINGTON - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Director Alejandro Mayorkas marked a significant milestone for the USCIS Entrepreneurs in Residence (EIR) initiative by launching an online resource center today at the Martin Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship in Cambridge, Mass. The resource center, [Entrepreneur Pathways](#), provides entrepreneurs who seek to start a business in the United States an intuitive way to navigate the immigration process.

"Through our innovative Entrepreneurs in Residence initiative, we are working to realize our current immigration system's full potential to attract and retain startup enterprises that promote innovation and spur job creation in America," said [Director Alejandro Mayorkas](#). "The first phase has already led to unique improvements in our programs and enabled us to better serve immigrant entrepreneurs."

Launched earlier this year at an [Information Summit](#) in Silicon Valley, the [EIR initiative](#) draws on industry expertise to strengthen USCIS policies and practices critical to American economic growth. The team comprised startup business experts and USCIS immigration experts working collaboratively over a short period of time to streamline pathways for a range of existing nonimmigrant visa categories often used by entrepreneurs.

"This initiative is so innovative and progressive. It's all about finding pragmatic solutions," said EIR team member and Vice President of Strategic and Community Development and Chief Ecosystem Builder at SoftLayer Technologies Paul Ford. "USCIS's officers and leadership clearly want to deliver quality services to people who want to invest, work and live in the United States. They have embraced our input and did something with it."

In addition to creating *Entrepreneur Pathways*, the EIR team:

- Developed and deployed a training workshop for USCIS employment-based immigration officers that focuses on startup businesses and the environment for early-stage innovations;
- Trained a team of specialized immigration officers to handle entrepreneur and startup cases;
- Modified Request for Evidence templates for certain nonimmigrant visa categories to incorporate new types of relevant evidence into the adjudicative process; and
- Developed a plan for quarterly engagements with the entrepreneurial community to ensure that

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USCIS stays current with industry practices.

To sustain the momentum and build on the team's accomplishments, USCIS extended the EIR project through April 2013. Among other things, the team will expand its focus to immigrant visa pathways that may enable foreign entrepreneurs to start a business in the United States within current immigration law.

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