IBM and Columbia University Launch Two Accelerator Programs for Blockchain Startups

Programs combine research and enterprise network expertise to help early-stage and later-stage companies build and scale blockchain businesses

New York City - 19 November 2018: IBM (NYSE: IBM) and Columbia University today announced two new accelerator programs to build and scale the next generation of blockchain innovation. As key components of the Columbia-IBM Center for Blockchain and Data Transparency, the accelerators will offer entrepreneurs and blockchain network founders around the world access to the expertise and resources they need to establish blockchain networks.

The programs will each support ten startups that are working to build out blockchain businesses and developing enterprise blockchain networks. As part of each program, participants will explore best practices for building a blockchain network with technical, academic and business mentors from IBM and Columbia. They will have access to agile design workshops from IBM, an experienced network of business and technical support, connections to the Columbia research community and student talent pools, business value design assistance and access to IBM Cloud technology through the program.

The goal of these programs is to help network founders develop their ideas into sustainable and scalable companies offering blockchain solutions. For those already further along in their journey, the programs are designed to help them achieve scale and build successful business networks. As blockchain technology continues to grow in popularity, its value is tied to the strength of the networks that use it. By helping companies build scalable solutions, the programs can foster meaningful enterprise blockchain adoption and drive business efficiencies across industries.

"The possibilities presented by blockchain technology are seemingly endless, and we are seeing strong dedication by technical talent to build game-changing applications," said David Post, Managing Director, IBM Blockchain Accelerator. "What is also needed to truly bring about this sea change is the right technology and expertise which is why IBM is working with Columbia to help give these early- and mid-stage founders a way to build enterprise-grade networks that can move blockchain innovation forward."

The IBM Blockchain Accelerator is designed for later-stage growth companies globally and focused on building out an enterprise business network and client base for their blockchain application. This will take

place over approximately eight weeks with a mixture of in-person modules in New York and San Francisco, in combination with virtual programming, to ensure that founders can participate while devoting time and energy to scaling their businesses.

The Columbia Blockchain Launch Accelerator is designed for pre-seed, idea-stage companies with a Columbia or other recognized New York City-based University affiliation. This will take place on-site in New York City for approximately eight weeks, where founders will receive tools and training on how to build a blockchain startup. This is the sixth accelerator program hosted by Columbia that focuses on pre-seed founders.

"Columbia University has successfully launched several technology accelerators in New York City, but this our first in partnership with a corporation that is a clear industry leader in the field," said Satish Rao, Executive Director, Columbia Blockchain Launch Accelerator. "Early- and late-stage teams will undoubtedly benefit from IBM's technology resources, expertise and established network coupled with Columbia's ground-breaking research and talent in blockchain and data transparency, all while benefiting from rapidly growing NYC blockchain communities."

Both programs will give companies access to technology and services valued at approximately $400K per company. Nominations for the IBM Blockchain Accelerator are now open. Applications for Launch will open in January 2019. IBM and Columbia do not take equity nor charge a fee for participating in either of these programs.

About IBM Blockchain

IBM is recognized as the leading enterprise blockchain provider. The company's research, technical and business experts have broken barriers in transaction processing speeds, developed the most advanced cryptography to secure transactions, and are contributing millions of lines of open source code to advance blockchain for businesses. IBM is the leader in open-source blockchain solutions built for the enterprise. Since 2016, IBM has worked with hundreds of clients across financial services, supply chain, government, retail, digital rights management and healthcare to implement blockchain applications, and operates a number of networks running live and in production. The cloud-based IBM Blockchain Platform delivers the end-to-end capabilities that clients need to quickly activate and successfully develop, operate, govern and secure their own business networks. IBM is an early member of Hyperledger, an open source collaborative effort

created to advance cross-industry blockchain technologies. For more information about IBM Blockchain, visit https://www.ibm.com/blockchain/ or follow us on Twitter at @ibmblockchain.

About Columbia University

Among the world's leading research universities, Columbia University in the City of New York continuously seeks to advance the frontiers of scholarship and foster a campus community deeply engaged in the complex issues of our time through teaching, research, patient care and public service. The University is comprised of 16 undergraduate, graduate and professional schools, and four affiliated colleges and seminaries in Manhattan, and a wide array of research institutes and global centers around the world. More than 40,000 students, award-winning faculty and professional staff define the University's underlying values and commitment to pursuing new knowledge and educating informed, engaged citizens. Founded in 1754 as King's College, Columbia is the fifth oldest institution of higher learning in the United States. www.columbia.edu

Columbia University supports entrepreneurship with a proven record of launching venture-backed startups, including more than 200 companies based on Columbia's intellectual property and eight technology lab-to-market accelerators operated by Columbia Technology Ventures**.** The Data Science Institute and Columbia Engineering are joint partners in the Center for Blockchain and Data Transparency, which, in addition to its research and education mission, supports innovation through its accelerator programs.

Hannah Slocum
IBM Communications
hslocum@us.ibm.com