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# BIRD makes matches for Israeli tech and US business

The Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation searches out promising technology and brings it to the attention of American companies

By DAVID SHAMAH | June 20, 2013, 6:01 am |

Some of the biggest companies in the US are joining with Israeli start-ups and veteran companies on a variety of new tech projects, to be funded partially by grants from the BIRD Foundation. Established in 1977, the Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation is one of the veteran American-Israeli business cooperation groups, and over the years has provided funding to jump-start hundreds of projects in dozens of areas, from agriculture to pharmaceuticals to information technology to water technology to cyber defense.

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All those technologies, and more, are represented in the latest round of companies chosen by BIRD for investment at its latest directors' meeting. BIRD will provide \$10.95 million in investments for the fourteen selected projects. Each project involves a relatively young Israeli start-up (but with a technology or product that is ready for the market) and a mid-sized or large US company.

One of those companies is Whirlpool, maker of washing machines and refrigerators, which has found in Israel's Hanita Coatings an ideal partner to work on next generation refrigerator insulation technology. Hanita Coatings specializes in the development and conversion of coated, laminated and metallized films for a range of industrial and commercial applications. The company specializes in developing window film to keep heat and glare out, and now, together with Whirlpool, Hanita will be developing insulation materials for refrigerator doors based on vacuum insulation technology (based on newly developed microporous materials).

Hanita Coatings, based in Kibbutz Hanita in northern Israel, is one of the "veterans," now in business for some 30 years. A much newer Israeli company called Curapipe will be teaming up with Milliken, the US company that develops products as diverse as specialty chemicals, carpets, and clothing. Curapipe has developed technology which significantly cuts the costs of repairing buried pipes and water mains automatically, using a special chemical process. Milliken is interested in Curapipe to advance its "zero waste" environmental policy, ensuring that all resources it works with are preserved or recycled.

On the cybersecurity front, Israeli company Accells Technologies will be working with US-based 41st Parameter on its mobile authentication and device detection technology. Using Accells app, smartphone users can use their device to access secure services and databases that are normally closed to mobile devices. The system identifies both the user and the device, ensuring that the person using it is the one with the rights to access the secure data. 41st Parameter is a large online fraud prevention company, leading BIRD to "make the match" between the two companies.

That, essentially, is what BIRD does: search out promising Israeli technologies, expose them to potential US partners, and then supply assistance to get the project going (up to a third of the total projected cost). Once the right partner is found, BIRD will fund projects — thereby boosting not only specific projects and technologies, but helping to further cement the relationship between the

United States and Israel, as well as making a significant contribution to the lives of people affected by the technology in both countries and beyond.

Speaking after the projects were approved, BIRD Director Dr. Eitan Yudilevich said that the projects represented an excellent cross section of Israeli technology that will bring benefit to the US and the world. "There are still a lot of great ideas out there," Yudilevich said. "BIRD's mission is and has been for more than 30 years to support US-Israeli industrial cooperation, and we intend to be around for another 30 years."

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