Toyota AI Ventures Adds Principal to Source Investment Opportunities

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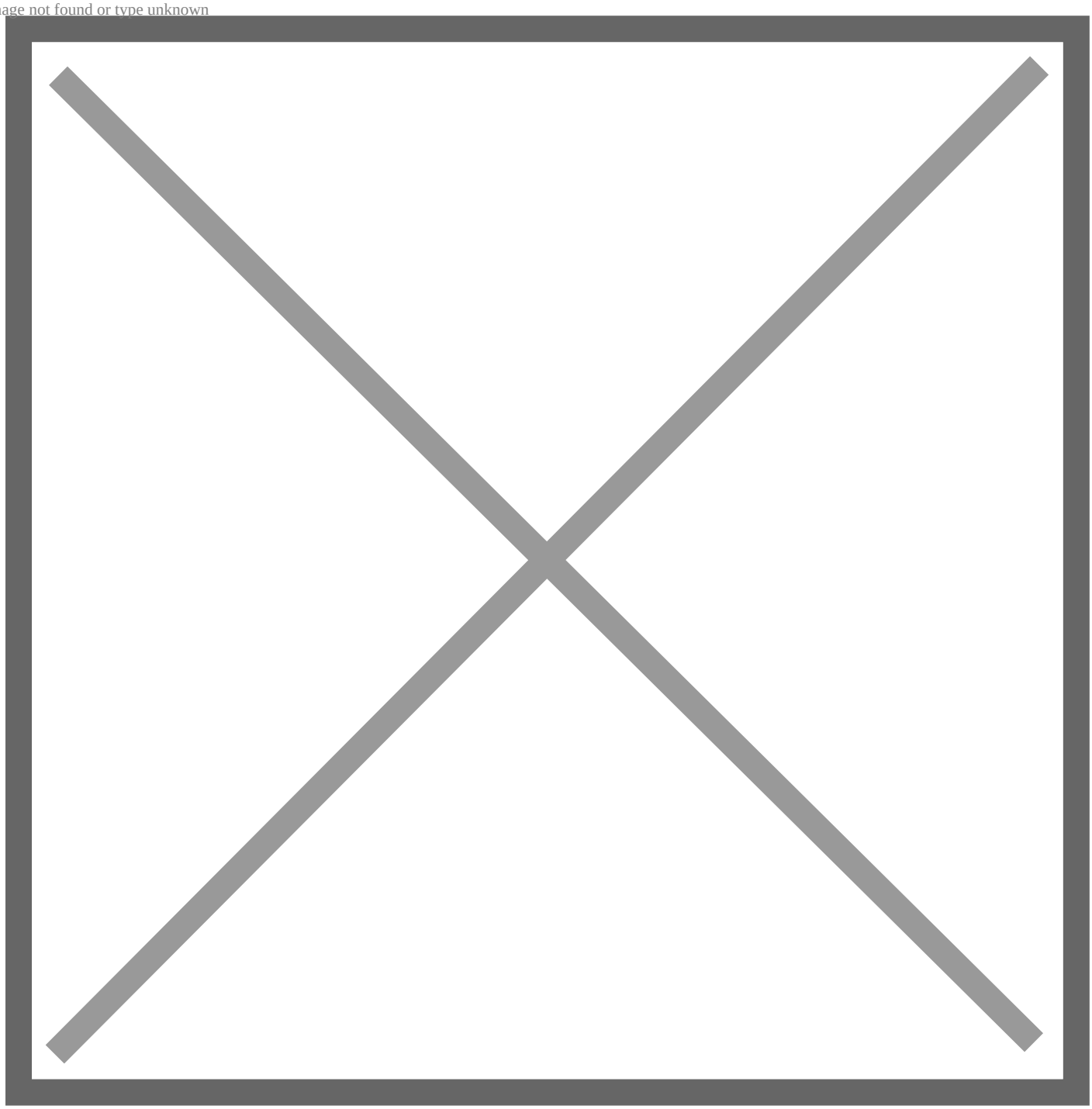

LOS ALTOS, Calif., Dec. 13, 2017 – Toyota AI Ventures, a Silicon Valley-based venture capital subsidiary of Toyota Research Institute (TRI), announced today that Jill Ford will join the firm as a principal. Ford, who previously served as head of innovation and entrepreneurship for the City of Detroit, will utilize her expertise as an entrepreneur, investor and corporate business development executive to source new investment opportunities. She will also work closely with the firm's existing portfolio companies to support their growth and success.

“We are thrilled to have Jill join the Toyota AI Ventures team,” said Jim Adler, managing director of Toyota AI Ventures. “She has an eye for talent and a strong understanding of what it takes to win that’s rooted in her diverse experience as an investor, business executive and innovator.”

“The mission of the Toyota AI Ventures fund immediately resonated with me," said Ford. “I’m excited to be a part of a team that will improve the quality of life through enabling entrepreneurs and innovation.”

Since its launch in July 2017, the Toyota AI Ventures $100 million fund has focused on cutting-edge startups in the areas of autonomous mobility, robotics, data and cloud. It has executed several strategic hires and investments as part of a mission to invest in entrepreneurs from around the world who share TRI's commitment to improving the quality of human life through artificial intelligence.

Toyota AI Ventures has rapidly expanded its investment portfolio, recently adding two companies. Connected Signals is a Eugene, Oregon-based connected vehicle data analytics startup that provides predictive, real-time traffic signal information using existing infrastructure. Realtime Robotics, a Boston, Massachusetts-based company, develops a proprietary, special-purpose processor that allows robotic systems to instantly react to their environments, and compute how and where to move as their situation is changing. These startups join the firm's three previously announced investments in Intuition Robotics, Nauto, and SLAMcore, and additional investments will be announced soon.