



All systems 'Go' for Discovery Partners Institute

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CHICAGO – Flanked by members of the Illinois General Assembly and leaders from the University of Illinois System, Gov. Bruce Rauner today revealed key advancements in the plan to turn Illinois into the "next coast" for technology and enterprise creation. The progress report was occasioned by news earlier this month that the project was appropriated \$500 million by the State of Illinois.

The anchor project in the plan is the [Discovery Partners Institute \(DPI\)](#), an innovation center led by the U of I System intended to be located within [The 78](#), Related Midwest's 62-acre planned development in downtown Chicago. Bordered by the South Loop, Chinatown, Bronzeville and Pilsen, DPI will be the centerpiece of the Illinois Innovation Network (IIN), a system of research centers across the state tailored to meet the needs of individual regions and lift their economies.

Since the initiatives were announced last fall, the [U of I System](#) has been working on implementation plans that will be ready later this year, including a construction timetable and other details. The U of I System has also continued to build its network of collaborative partnerships, adding its first corporate partner and the first academic partner from overseas.

"With state secured funding, all systems are 'go' for DPI," said Rauner. "It can now get to work on world-changing ideas that investors will put money behind to create Illinois-based businesses and jobs. The state's initial investment will be matched several times over by private sources of capital that form around our innovations. The end result will be an economic engine for Illinois and the Midwest that surpasses Silicon Valley."

"Chicago is on the cutting edge of innovative research and development, and the Discovery Partners Institute will take our city to the next level," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "For researchers, students and businesses looking over the horizon to what's next in discovery and innovation, Chicago is the future."

"At the helm of innovation and development, The 78 is the perfect home for the Discovery Partners Institute," said Curt Bailey, President of Related Midwest. "The 78 is a blank canvas in the heart of the city that will allow the University of Illinois System to create a global technology-based research institute downtown to attract and meet the demands of next-generation leaders. We look forward to working with DPI to create a transformative neighborhood with unique office space that will be home to industry leading companies, unapparelled transportation options, an accessible riverwalk, and resident and retail options that will drive economic growth for the entire city."

During the news conference, U of I System President Tim Killeen announced that the system has opened an office on Wacker Drive in downtown Chicago and plans to expand current DPI operating space to more than 20,000 square feet. The system is providing \$6 million over the next four years to support start-up efforts.

Killeen also said the system has agreements with the first corporate partner for DPI and its first international academic partner. The corporate agreement with Peoria-based [OSF HealthCare](#) will build on its existing relationship with the Innovation Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago. OSF is sponsoring an interdisciplinary course for DPI that will work toward creating connected, precision-guided healthcare delivery for the State of Illinois.

The partnership with [Tel Aviv University](#) is set to begin next month with a series of workshops in Chicago intended to connect Israeli and American entrepreneurs to accelerate research and, ultimately, enterprise creation. The academic agreement is DPI's third, adding to inaugural partnerships with the University of Chicago and Northwestern University that were announced last fall.

"Israel is a global leader in innovation, technology, research and education as Gov. Rauner and President Killeen saw on their professional visit to our country last year," said Aviv Ezra, Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest. "Israel, thus, is a natural partner for the DPI. We are proud that Tel Aviv University is collaborating, and we are honored to be a part of such a groundbreaking project."

The U of I System is currently developing similar academic partnerships with the largest university in Latin America, the National Autonomous University of Mexico, and Mexico's leading private university, Tech de Monterrey.

"This is just the start," Killeen said. "In the years ahead, we will connect academic research centers at other universities and share intellectual power with business partners who can turn ideas into job-creating enterprises that will lift communities across the state."

According to Killeen, DPI will be home to hundreds of world-class researchers and top faculty from across the U of I System. They will work with thousands of students every year, with countless businesses large and small, and with entrepreneurs and investors to spur enterprise creation in Illinois.

"Illinois has long served as the nation's leading transportation hub, moving goods and people across the country and around the world," said Senate President John Cullerton (D-Chicago). "The Discovery Partners Institute seizes on that brand of leadership and will similarly push Illinois to the global forefront in moving ideas and innovation."

"This investment will benefit every region of our great state," said Senate Republican Leader Bill Brady (R-Bloomington). "I want to commend the Governor for his leadership on this important issue, and I look forward to working with all parties to ensure this project's success."

"The University of Illinois school system is one of our state's greatest assets," said House Republican Leader Jim Durkin (R-Western Springs). "And the Discovery Partners Institute will be the lead effort in innovation opportunities that will boost economic growth in Illinois."