

Duckworth, Durbin, Pritzker Announce Two Illinois Programs Selected As ESA Tech Hub Designees

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WASHINGTON D.C. – U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Dick Durbin (D-IL), along with Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, today announced two Illinois programs were selected by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) as part of the 31 inaugural Tech Hubs, selections in regions across the country primed for growth in innovation and job creation. The Chicago Quantum Exchange's The Bloch: End-to-end Quantum Solutions at Scale and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's

Central Illinois Fermentation and Agriculture Biomanufacturing (iFAB) Hub were selected and are now eligible to apply for the next phase of the Tech Hubs Program, which will invest between \$50-\$75 million in each of 5-10 Designated Hubs. Duckworth, Durbin and Pritzker championed these applications, advocating fiercely for their selection.

“Illinois is already a hub of agriculture, manufacturing, transportation and technology, making our state ideally positioned for these Tech Hub designations and, with them, greater innovation, investment and job creation,” Duckworth said. “Coordination across all levels of government is key to maximizing these generational investments, and I’m proud to have worked closely with Senator Durbin and Governor Pritzker to successfully advocate for our state to win these Hubs. I was proud to help pass the *CHIPS and Science Act* last year, but today I’m thrilled Illinois is making it clear that we are ready to compete and have the projects and innovation ready to compete for the law’s new investments right here to bring our state, nation and world into the future.”

“It’s welcome news that two Illinois proposals—one in quantum and one in advanced biomanufacturing—have been designated as Regional Tech Hubs,” Durbin said. “Thanks to the *CHIPS and Science Act* that we passed last year and President Biden’s leadership, the Tech Hubs program is investing in America, creating good paying jobs, and driving innovation. As a national leader in both quantum and biomanufacturing, Illinois is well-equipped to look beyond existing technologies to capture the next generation of economic opportunities. I look forward to seeing Illinois’ Tech Hubs lead the way in these transformative fields.”

“Home to world-class institutions and first-rate research centers, Illinois is transforming technology, biomanufacturing, and innovation at every turn,” said Pritzker. “I couldn’t be prouder that the Biden Administration has selected The Chicago Quantum Exchange’s the Bloch and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign’s iFAB Hub as two of just thirty-one inaugural tech hubs—opening the door for even more investment, advancement, and discovery. There’s no doubt that the rest of the nation have caught on to our great state’s status as an innovation powerhouse—and our future couldn’t be brighter.”

“The Chicago region is a major player driving US leadership in quantum, in part because of the deep partnerships we have fostered among leading research institutions and industry partners — and in part because of strong federal and state government support,” said David Awschalom, the University of Chicago’s Liew Family Professor of Molecular Engineering and the director of the [Chicago Quantum Exchange](#) (CQE), an intellectual hub founded in 2017. “This designation speaks not only to our promising

future but to the collaborative, cross-sector work we are already doing to advance research, build a future quantum workforce, and drive the quantum economy, efforts that have been catalyzed by the CQE and its members and partners.”

“This official designation by the EDA reinforces the region’s position as a national leader in quantum technologies and will bolster our efforts to build an inclusive workforce, drive the quantum economy, and help bring transformative technologies to market,” said Kate Timmerman, CEO of the Chicago Quantum Exchange. “We especially appreciate that this funding is aimed at building equitable economies that serve all communities.”

“As one of America’s leading research universities, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign solves problems and helps to power our nation’s economy,” said Robert J. Jones, Chancellor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. “These Tech Hub designations in Illinois unite our strengths with our academic, industrial, community, and government partners to imagine a bright future for communities across the region.”

“The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is a natural home to a TechHub focused on bioprocessing and biofermentation,” said Dr. Beth Conerty, PI of the Illinois Fermentation Agriculture Bioprocessing (iFAB) Tech Hub proposal. “It will capitalize on the state’s foundational investments in the Integrated Bioprocessing Research Laboratory (IBRL) to advance innovation, and will strengthen partnerships that create highly skilled workers and opportunities for our communities and our region.”

“With the right investments and collaborative focus, Illinois and Chicago are poised to lead us forward in critical technology areas like quantum computing and advanced bioprocessing,” said Jenny Scanlon, CEO of UL Solutions and Vice Chair of Innovate Illinois. “We are honored to have been recognized by the US Commerce Department with two EDA Tech Hubs and are eager to roll up our sleeves to make these hubs the innovation beacons our region and country need to compete in the global marketplace.”

“This is a great moment for Team Illinois. The Innovate Illinois coalition, with great support from our federal delegation, believes strongly that our State has the bold vision, the collaborative approach and the diverse talent to lead our country forward in critical areas like quantum and bioprocessing,” said P33 CEO Brad Henderson.

The Tech Hubs program was authorized by the *CHIPS and Science Act* and will directly invest in high-potential regions across the country in an effort to transform them into globally competitive innovation centers. The 31 Tech Hubs were selected from 198 applications from regional consortia that include industry, academia, state and local governments, economic development organizations, and labor and workforce partners.

Led by the Chicago Quantum Exchange, The Bloch will work to accelerate the regional adoption of quantum information science and technology (QIST) by building a framework that can then be used across a variety of industries. The Bloch has the potential to generate an estimated \$8.7 billion in annual economic output and create up to 8,000 high paying jobs by 2035. The State of Illinois has pledged their commitment as a consortium member of this application and has already committed \$200 million to build research infrastructure in Illinois.

The Illinois Fermentation and Agriculture Biomanufacturing Tech Hub (iFAB) is led by the Integrated Bioprocessing Research Laboratory (IBRL) at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in partnership with Archer Daniels Midland Company, Primient and Clarkson Grain Company. This visionary proposal seeks to revolutionize synthetic biology and fermentation processing, driving economic growth and fostering innovation for a sustainable future. Biomanufacturing converts crops like corn and soybeans into a wide range of high-value commodities, creating more market stability and growth in bio-based businesses. The State of Illinois has pledged their commitment as consortium member of this application and looks to build on the \$42 million they already invested to help create IBRL in 2018.