About DPI

The Discovery Partners Institute (DPI) empowers people to jumpstart their tech careers or companies in Chicago. Led by the University of Illinois System in partnership with top regional and global research institutions, DPI does three things centered around economic development:

- **Talent development for high-demand tech jobs**
- **Applied research and development**
- **Strengthening the city’s tech ecosystem**

We are in a global war for the best and the brightest. DPI is the state’s offensive. It represents an unprecedented collaboration to band together to develop, attract, and retain talent—and advance transformative R&D.

With $235M in state investment and a new urban innovation district in development, DPI has the resources to attract, develop and leverage the most ambitious people and companies the region has to offer—and keep them here.

Tech Talent Development

DPI will help retain the students we’ve educated, make our current workforce more skilled, diversify our tech talent pipeline, and entice tech employers to put their most attractive, high-paying jobs in Illinois. We know that this will require a systemic approach to talent development.

We will deliver transformative scale and connectivity across a learner’s journey from high school to a successful career in tech—with an intentional focus on underrepresented and underserved populations. DPI’s talent programs at scale have sizable key goals that include:

- **K-12**
  - Improving K-12 and community college pathways in computer and data science—supporting programs for both students and teachers
- **College**
  - Immersion programs for undergrad and graduate students that connect them with experiential learning relevant to employers
- **Career**
  - Upskilling and workforce development for in-demand jobs in computing and data analytics
- **Diversity**
  - Developing specific programs to help under-served and under-represented groups step into high demand tech jobs
DPI activities are underway at 200 S. Wacker in Chicago’s Loop, which offers classrooms, conference rooms, and initial partnership development.

DPI will open a 261,000 square foot space in Chicago’s South Loop. This space will anchor an innovation district, known as The 78, in partnership with Related Midwest.

By 2029 and beyond, DPI will be an economic engine and global research powerhouse, adding $200M+ in new R&D every year, dozens of start-ups, and corporate innovation centers. It will prepare 7,000 students primed for tech jobs in Illinois annually, with 3,000 individuals from underrepresented backgrounds entering the tech workforce.