



Over \$1B in research annually fuels innovation in Pittsburgh region, site of upcoming White House Frontiers Conference

- *History of successful innovation and cross-sector collaboration -- industries, universities, communities, philanthropy, arts & culture – key to region’s success*
 - *Hundreds of innovators to gather in Pittsburgh this week*

(PITTSBURGH – October 11, 2016) – When innovators from around the nation and the world gather in Pittsburgh later this week for the first-ever White House Frontiers Conference – they’ll be in the right place – a place that combines smart people, two centuries of experience on the forefront of innovation, and an unrelenting commitment to collaboration – as its ingredients for success.

“We’re thrilled to once again host President Obama, this time as he brings the first-ever White House Frontiers Conference to Pittsburgh. We look forward to seeing even more innovators joining the thousands of researchers, engineers, technologists, faculty and students who call our region home who are already working on the frontiers of 21st century innovation. We have a long history of collaboration on issues of every size; it’s that approach that has heralded our successes, and that has made innovation such an integral part of our region’s DNA,” said Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, a hydraulic engineer and entrepreneur with a degree from Carnegie Mellon University.

The conference is co-hosted by Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) and the University of Pittsburgh, two major research universities located side-by-side in Pittsburgh’s Oakland neighborhood and surrounded by healthcare research centers and an ecosystem that helps researchers commercialize innovations and scale start-ups into businesses. Here are five recent examples of innovation with Pittsburgh ties:

- [Uber’s new riverfront testing facility](#) for autonomous vehicles is just a few miles from the campuses.
- [Duolingo](#), a free, science-based language education platform that gamifies learning experiences offers over 40 language courses to 100M+ users worldwide.
- [The Manchester Bidwell Corporation](#), located in Pittsburgh, is a national nonprofit model for arts education, apprenticeship training, and out-of-school learning.
- [GigaPan](#), combines photography and robotics to create high definition 3D panoramas, changing the possibilities of artistic production.
- [The Tower at PNC Plaza](#), located in Downtown Pittsburgh, incorporates state-of-the-art green technology, and was designed to exceed LEED Platinum certification and be the greenest office tower in the world.

“Pittsburgh really is the full package for innovation,” says Ilana Diamond, former CEO of a consumer electronics company, serial entrepreneur, and now managing director of AlphaLab Gear, a nationally-

ranked hardware accelerator based in Pittsburgh. “We not only know how to invent the next big thing, we know how to scale it and take innovation to market. That’s what takes a smart idea out of the lab and gets it into everyday life.”

In any given year, over \$1 billion in research funding flows to universities and research institutions in the Pittsburgh region according to an analysis by the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, a regional economic development and leadership organization.

The region is also among the smartest places in the country. Pittsburgh ranks in the Top 3 nationally for young professionals with advanced degrees, only Washington, D.C. and Boston have more.

It’s not just research funding that fuels innovation in Pittsburgh. Venture capitalists know Pittsburgh – it’s one of the most active cities for VC investment.

In the past 5 years, almost \$1.7 billion in private funding has been raised by nearly 300 Pittsburgh companies representing diverse technology sectors. More than half of venture capital deals are in IT sectors such as enterprise software, electronics and robotics, with life sciences making up another 23 percent covering medical devices, healthcare IT, drug development and others. In a 2015 comparison of venture investments in the country’s 40 largest metros, Pittsburgh ranked 18th in venture capital investment dollars per capita and 5th in deals per million residents.

Corporate investment in innovation is also happening. Over the past five years, Apple, Bosch International, Google and Uber have expanded research centers in Pittsburgh. General Electric and Alcoa are investing in research in additive manufacturing (3D printing). Shell has committed to building a multi-billion dollar world class ethane cracker, the largest industrial investment in the region in a generation.

Innovation here isn’t limited to labs and workplaces, Pittsburgh pioneered urban revitalization through the establishment of the first urban redevelopment authority in the 1940s and in its commitment to neighborhood-based development through community development corporations.

More recently, the city has been a laboratory for new approaches to transportation and traffic congestion management working in partnership with the Traffic21 and Metro21 Initiatives at CMU, the Western Pennsylvania Regional Data Center formed by the City, Allegheny County and the University of Pittsburgh, and other entities.

“Innovation here extends to our communities and our government as well. We have what it takes to improve the lives of everyday Pittsburghers by building smarter transit corridors and connections, bridging the digital divide and building greater equity in our neighborhoods, realizing the value of new energy opportunities, and reaching those impacted by displacement or isolation,” said City of Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto.

Pittsburgh’s also blessed with plentiful “social venture capital,” a legacy from an earlier generation of successful innovators. Andrew Carnegie, who founded U.S. Steel, also laid the groundwork for modern philanthropy with his commitment to spend his fortune to improve the community; other early industrial leaders soon followed suit.

“We’re fortunate to have an unmatched concentration of foundations compared to other regions around the country – that invest over \$300 million a year into this region. Our foundations have really

made Pittsburgh a laboratory for innovation of all kinds,” said Bill Flanagan, chief corporate relations officer for the Allegheny Conference on Community Development.

Innovation extends beyond workplaces and labs to education, arts and culture. The Andy Warhol Museum, devoted to the work of the Pittsburgh native, is encouraging every visitor to ‘please touch the art’ by experimenting with tactile interpretations of his work using technologies like CNC routing and 3D printing.

“We’re not only a great place to innovate, we’re a great place to visit and to put down roots. We have arts and culture, a nationally recognized food scene, a highly affordable cost of living and we’re on the radar as a top place for ‘techies’ to live,” said Craig Davis, CEO of Visit Pittsburgh.

Pittsburgh is an affordable place for innovators starting out or looking for a place to grow. The cost of housing in the region is: 51% lower than New York (Manhattan) and Boston; 70% lower than San Francisco and 61% lower than San Jose (CA).

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For more information, contact:

Allegheny County

Amie M. Downs

412-350-3711 office

412-327-3700 cell

Amie.Downs@AlleghenyCounty.us

Allegheny Conference on Community Development

Philip Cynar

412-281-4783 ext. 4573

pcynar@alleghenyconference.org

AlphaLab Gear and Innovation Works

Terri Glueck

412-894-9514 direct

412-818-8191 mobile

tglueck@innovationworks.org

City of Pittsburgh

Katie O’Malley

(412) 925-1990 office

katie.omalley@pittsburghpa.gov

Visit Pittsburgh

Tom Loftus

412-325-0294

tom.loftus@visitpittsburgh.com