

State Celebrates U.S. Regional Tech Hub Designation

Written by GOV Press Wisconsin

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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/biohealth-technology-s460.jpg>



Designation confirms Wisconsin's lead in field of biohealth technology, clears the way for state to compete for up to \$75 million in federal investments.

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers, U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) celebrated President Joe Biden today recognizing Wisconsin's leadership in the field of personalized medicine and biohealth technology by designating the state as a Regional Technology Hub (RTH).

The Regional Technology Hub (RTH) designation from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) clears the way for Wisconsin to compete for up to \$75 million in funding under the federal CHIPS and Science Act of 2022. EDA announced it is also awarding Wisconsin a \$350,000 strategic development grant as part of the designation.



“Wisconsin’s designation as a Regional Tech Hub is a testament to the strength of our state’s biohealth and personalized medicine industry,” said Gov. Evers. “As this sector continues to grow, it will mean more high-paying jobs and economic growth for our state, as well as

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innovations that will transform the future of medical care for people in Wisconsin and around the world.”



“Wisconsin has a long and proud tradition of innovation, and bringing a Tech Hub to Wisconsin will help us continue that legacy into the future. With world-class research institutions, a strong pipeline of talent, and cutting-edge Made in Wisconsin manufacturing, our state is well positioned to drive innovation in biohealth and personalized medicine, pioneering technologies that have the potential to improve access to affordable care, better diagnose and treat patients, and save lives,” said Senator Baldwin. “I am proud to have helped create and support the Tech Hub program and know that bringing one to Wisconsin will create more opportunities for our businesses and workers. I am committed to continuing to work with our consortium partners to make this reality, strengthening Wisconsin’s competitive edge in an industry that will only grow in the future.”



Earlier this year, 15 public and private partners in the field of biohealth technology and personalized medicine formed the Wisconsin Biohealth Tech Hub Consortium to increase collaboration and to seek the RTH designation. Consortium members include the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), the University of Wisconsin System Administration, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, GE HealthCare, Rockwell Automation, Exact Sciences Corporation, BioForward Wisconsin, Employ Milwaukee, Accuray, Plexus, WRTS Big Step, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Madison Area Technical College, the Madison Regional Economic Partnership (MadREP), and Milwaukee7.

The consortium brings together educational institutions, biohealth companies, precision

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manufacturers, investors, and other key players, primarily in Dane, Waukesha, and Milwaukee counties, with the potential to expand opportunities throughout Wisconsin.

In its application for the RTH designation, the consortium noted that the recognition and support from EDA would enable stakeholders to scale up operations to a global level by providing shared data and systems to drive innovation; aligning and scaling the supply chain and manufacturing sector; improving access to capital to start and grow businesses; increasing lab space and expanding opportunities for worker housing and transportation; and ensuring that people across Wisconsin, including rural and traditionally underserved communities, can share in the benefits of this new sector.



As Wisconsin's biohealth sector grows, it will contribute to a "good jobs" economy by allowing employers to develop, hire, and retain a skilled, diverse workforce in jobs with benefits and upward mobility. By increasing their collaboration, consortium members will be able to better forecast demand for jobs, careers, targeted credentials, and skills; allow businesses to implement skill-based hiring and career advancement; and develop an employer-driven regional workforce strategy to grow and train Wisconsin's biohealth workforce according to current and future projected needs.

The expanded resources associated with the RTH designation are also expected to improve medical care for patients, including those in traditionally underserved communities, by establishing a Patient Advisory Group to give feedback to researchers and industry leaders. This critical feedback is often too costly for companies and researchers to access but will ensure that real patient needs guide the Hub's direction. Additionally, consortium members will be better able to collaborate on technology development to advance new clinical care pathways, such as new ways to treat specific cancers.

"The combination of the consortium and the regional tech hub designation enables many of the key stakeholders in this vibrant field to research, think, and plan collectively instead of working through challenges on their own," said Aaron Olver, chair of the Wisconsin Biohealth Tech Hub Consortium. "By working together, we can speed up innovation, share resources and knowledge, and advance promising treatments to improve patients' lives."

Much of the consortium's efforts will be focused on personalized medicine, which combines genomic innovation, advanced imaging technologies, big data analytics, artificial intelligence

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computing, population health trends, and bioscience breakthroughs, with treatments carefully calibrated to a patient's specific medical needs. It has the potential to transform medical care so patients can heal faster with less need for long-term chronic care, experience fewer side effects, and access healthcare more easily and equitably. On a broader scale, personalized medicine may be able to reduce healthcare costs by emphasizing preventive and proactive care, cutting diagnostic errors, and limiting both the health and economic impacts of rare diseases.

"The Regional Tech Hub designation confirms what we already know about Wisconsin: when it comes to bringing together the best in research and development, cutting-edge manufacturing, highly skilled and educated workers, and a commitment to relentless improvement, no state is better prepared to lead the way, said Missy Hughes, secretary and CEO of WEDC. "This is a huge win in creating an economy for all, where everyone has the opportunity to live healthy, prosperous lives."