

# VIRGINIA TECH INNOVATION CAMPUS IN ALEXANDRIA HELPS ATTRACT AMAZON TO WASHINGTON, D.C., REGION

THE PROJECT IS TRANSFORMATIONAL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN VIRGINIA AND CREATES A HIGH-TECH TALENT PIPELINE OF GRADUATE STUDENTS FOR THE ENTIRE D.C. REGION.



Nov. 13, 2018 — Virginia Tech is making a historic commitment to build a revolutionary 1 million-square-foot, technology-focused campus in Alexandria — envisioned as a \$1 billion project that is part of a comprehensive higher-education package that was cited as a key reason Amazon selected Virginia for a new headquarters site.

Amazon's HQ2 and the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus will locate in National Landing, a newly branded neighborhood that encompasses parts of Pentagon City and Crystal City in Arlington and Potomac Yard in Alexandria. Specifically, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria partnered to present Amazon a 150-acre site in Crystal City that is a mixture of existing vacant buildings and developable land. Virginia Tech's new campus will be located less than two miles away on U.S. Route 1 in Alexandria.

The Virginia Tech Innovation Campus, which includes state support, will spark discoveries and help fill the immense demand for high-tech talent in the greater Washington, D.C., metro area and beyond.

More than 200 localities across the country competed to win Amazon's HQ2 and its estimated 50,000 jobs — a competition that ended today when the company announced its plans.

Virginia Tech President Tim Sands and his leadership

team worked for more than a year with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and other state officials to develop plans for the Innovation Campus.

"This is a watershed moment for Virginia Tech and a great day for the commonwealth that we are committed to serve. As a land-grant research institution, we knew we needed to claim our role of driving economic development in Virginia," said university President Tim Sands. "Our new Innovation Campus will be the global center of technology excellence and talent production — where highly skilled students, world-class faculty, smart ideas, and forward-thinking companies will meet to propel the commonwealth and the region forward."

Virginia Tech is widely known for its long-standing excellence in computer science, engineering, data analytics, and technology. The university ranks No. 8 in the nation for engineering research expenditures, according to the National Science Foundation Higher Education Research and Development Survey, and the College of Engineering No. 13 for its undergraduate program, according to U.S. News & World Report's 2019 rankings.

"Today is a historic day for the commonwealth," said U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA). "The Innovation Campus will transform Virginia's high-tech economy while also providing a pipeline of talent to industry all over Virginia, including Amazon. Once fully launched, it will benefit educational institutions and regions across the commonwealth."

Virginia Tech has entered into a memorandum of understanding with Stonebridge Associates Inc. and the City of Alexandria to expedite construction. The Innovation Campus will be located on land owned by investment firm Blackstone Group LP's real estate fund. The land, commonly referred to as Oakville

Triangle, will be developed by Stonebridge.

The first 100 master's degree students will enroll next year in temporary space, with the campus hosting a total of 500 master's degree students within five years and, at scale, enrolling 750 master's degree candidates and training hundreds of doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows.

The project will greatly increase Virginia Tech's already strong existing footprint in Northern Virginia. Approximately 60,000 alumni live in the region, and Virginia Tech maintains seven facilities with operations in Old Town Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, Leesburg, Manassas, and Middleburg.

Graduate degree programs and research opportunities at the new campus will focus on computer sciences and software engineering, while offering specializations in high-demand areas, including data sciences; analytics and collective decisions; security and the internet of things; and technology and policy. The campus will include a mix of academic, research, and innovation space, as well as areas for housing, industry partners, and, perhaps most importantly, collaboration.

The university and the state both committed to provide \$250 million to seed the project. The funding model requires private philanthropy, industry partnerships, and the creation of other revenue streams by leveraging the innovative shared spaces of the campus plan.

"We in Alexandria could not be more excited and proud for Amazon to call National Landing home," said Mayor Allison Silberberg. "We are thrilled to be able to partner with Virginia Tech as they deliver a world-class innovation campus in Alexandria's portion of National Landing."

Steve Mollenkopf, chief executive officer of Qualcomm Inc., said the Innovation Campus is a natural extension of Virginia Tech's proven record in STEM education. "There is a critical need to increase Virginia's pipeline of STEM graduates.

With a world-class faculty, deep connections to the business community, and strong relationships with K-12, Virginia Tech is uniquely positioned to lead the commonwealth's efforts." Three years ago, Qualcomm and Virginia Tech partnered to open the Thinkabit Lab in Falls Church. Since opening, it has welcomed more than 5,300 students and teachers, primarily from underrepresented communities in the D.C. area, to wire, program, and craft their own unique inventions.

David J. Skorton, secretary of the Smithsonian and former president of Cornell University and an architect of Cornell Tech in New York City, said the positive benefits of the new campus will extend far beyond Alexandria and the Amazon project, comparing it in purpose and scope to Cornell Tech.

"I've seen firsthand how Cornell Tech reinvented graduate tech education for the digital age and is further energizing the startup culture in New York City," he said. "I'm thrilled Virginia Tech's leaders have stepped up to create a similar innovation hub. This move is exciting for the region and the right thing for Virginia's land-grant university to lead."

Lynne Doughtie, chairman and CEO of KPMG, a global network of professional firms, cited the Innovation Campus as an example of how higher education drives economic development by bringing the public sector and private sectors together to solve the critical problem of creating a high-tech jobs pipeline.

"This new campus will produce graduates who are immediately ready to become business leaders," she said. "Partnerships between industry leaders and cutting-edge researchers are vital to success in a knowledge-driven economy. With this bold idea, Virginia Tech is stepping forward to help transform the technology economy."

Learn more about the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus online at [vt.edu/innovationcampus](http://vt.edu/innovationcampus).

Watch the livestream at [vt.edu/innovationcampus](http://vt.edu/innovationcampus) of today's 3:30 p.m. news conference in Alexandria to introduce the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus.