Welcome to Illinois

People come to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for outstanding career opportunities. They stay here because they find a community that makes it easy to balance work with family, and achievement with satisfaction.

A world-class research institution founded in 1867, the University of Illinois is one of the original 37 public land-grant universities. Today, Illinois stands as the state’s flagship public university and is ranked annually among the top public universities in the country. Our campus consists of nearly 300 main buildings across 1,400 acres, housing 15 degree-granting colleges and instructional units. Our high-quality academic programs, excellent faculty, high-achieving students, and outstanding facilities have earned Illinois the reputation as an institution of international stature.

Diversity is central to this success. Students and faculty come to Illinois from all 50 states and 120 countries, creating a vibrant campus and surrounding community that is rich in diverse perspectives and culture.
A Community of Scholars

This is a place where research connections happen not only in the field or the lab, but also at the dinner table.

Faculty and staff form lifelong relationships at Illinois. Colleagues become friends, research partners might be neighbors, and casual conversations blossom into productive collaborations.

Like many universities, our campus is home to a wide range of exceptional research and scholarship. What truly sets us apart is a collaborative environment that leads to groundbreaking discovery, innovation, and partnerships that invite new ways of thinking and working.

We count 23 Nobel Laureates, 21 Pulitzer Prize winners, six MacArthur Fellows, and 18 National Medal of Science recipients among our faculty and alumni. This is a place where important work happens. It’s a community where professional goals and personal life come together.
True Interdisciplinary Spirit

Interdisciplinary discovery is a topic of conversation at every university today. At Illinois, it isn’t just talk—it’s a way of life. We’re home to numerous research centers, multidisciplinary research efforts, and advanced laboratories.

Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology, founded on the promise that reducing traditional barriers between disciplines can yield greater research advances, provides collaborative space for more than 1,500 researchers from 43 departments, from engineering to social sciences.

At the Institute for Genomic Biology, experts in life sciences, social sciences, engineering, law, and business pursue collaborative research that leads to advances in health, agriculture, and the environment.

The Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities supports interdisciplinary study in the humanities, arts, and social sciences—work that leads to a deeper understanding of people, societies, and events.

At the National Center for Supercomputing Applications, scientists and engineers across the country use the computing power of Blue Waters, one of the world’s most powerful supercomputers, to tackle a wide range of challenges, from predicting the behavior of complex biological systems to simulating the evolution of the cosmos.

And these are just a few of the interdisciplinary opportunities at Illinois that drive innovation on campus and beyond.
A Culture of Innovation

The work we do at Illinois has real and lasting impact. As a land-grant university, we hold the expectation that our faculty, staff, and students will improve the future of our society—and we have the resources to deliver.

Our network of relationships with major corporations such as Boeing, Intel, Caterpillar, Yahoo!, and others results in thousands of grants and awards, and we’ve consistently been the top university recipient of National Science Foundation funding. In total, more than $740 million of external funding each year is invested in Illinois faculty and the work they do.

On campus, the Campus Research Board allocates over $2.5 million a year in programs that enhance faculty scholarship. The Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities supports fellowships, symposia, release-time awards, and reading groups.

The university also offers many programs and services that assist faculty entrepreneurs to bring their work to the public sector. Providing in-house technology protection and commercialization services, the Office of Technology Management transfers intellectual property into practical use to benefit the public as quickly and effectively as possible. Our Research Park, named one of 12 Business Incubators Changing the World in 2014 (Forbes), continues to bring technology from the laboratory to economically viable business activities.

Illinois is also embarking on two major initiatives that will foster innovation and educate future leaders. The forthcoming Illinois Design Center will be the hub of our campuswide network of design thinking, making, and learning, where students and faculty will develop prototypes, test ideas, and collaborate to solve the future’s grand challenges. The Carle Illinois College of Medicine will be the nation’s first college of medicine specifically designed at the intersection of engineering and medicine, training physician innovators who will be uniquely equipped to transform healthcare.
A Tradition of Culture and Arts

The University of Illinois is rich in cultural resources, including a leading performance arts facility and the state’s second largest fine arts museum.

A cornerstone for arts in the community, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts hosts 300 events each season, featuring artists such as Audra McDonald, Buddy Guy, Mark Morris Dance Group, London Symphony Orchestra, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, and Joshua Bell. Ellnora | The Guitar Festival is held every two years and draws over 12,000 to its three-day lineup. Krannert Uncorked, a weekly event, welcomes community members for music, conversation, and wine.

Krannert Art Museum and Kinkead Pavilion houses a collection of more than 10,000 works of art and also hosts outstanding temporary exhibitions, artists’ lectures, music and dance performances, and film screenings. A visit to Spurlock Museum reveals a repository of world history and culture, featuring five galleries with exhibits from all corners of the world.

Allerton Park and Retreat Center, located 30 miles from campus, is a cultural and historical asset to the university. The 1,500-acre landmark features over 100 ornaments and sculptures and is home to a popular concert series each summer.
A Commitment to Wellness

At Illinois, wellness matters. Our campus and community foster work-life balance with easy access to resources for healthy living.

The university has a long history of supporting faculty in their personal and family lives. Our Dual Career Academic Couples hiring program, Tenure Code Rollback policy, and modified teaching duties for faculty members with a new child are signature features of our commitment to faculty well-being.

For staying active, campus offers 500,000 square feet of state-of-the-art recreation facilities, and Champaign-Urbana has more than 80 local parks. In just a short drive, you can visit three major forest preserves in Champaign County for swimming, boating, fishing, hiking, camping, and cross-country skiing. The annual Illinois Marathon, a highlight on the Midwest’s running circuit, welcomes thousands of participants each spring.

In an area surrounded by local farms, you’ll also have access to fresh produce, meat, and dairy year-round. Be sure to make a trip to the Champaign Farmers’ Market and the Urbana Market at the Square.
With growing communities and lively downtowns, you’ll have things to do in Champaign-Urbana. Discover upscale restaurants, art galleries, boutiques, locally owned retail stores, vibrant nightlife, and sports and entertainment venues.

With 19 intercollegiate sports programs, the university offers the excitement of men’s and women’s Big Ten athletics throughout the year.

Champaign-Urbana also has a thriving music scene—from intimate venues with local artists to big-name acts at State Farm Center. In downtown Champaign, Friday Night Live brings artists and musicians to the streets each summer weekend. Urbana offers free summer concerts by local musicians at Neighborhood Nights and Folk and Roots Fridays. The Pygmalion Festival, held each fall, is a multi-day alternative music event, also featuring a celebration of tech, literature, and handmade goods.

The twin cities host even more festivals and fairs, including the Taste of Champaign-Urbana, Sweetcorn Festival, Uncork Urbana, and the Blues, Brews & BBQ Festival. EbertFest, created by the late film critic and Illinois alumnus Roger Ebert, brings directors, actors, and movie lovers together for a four-day film festival each spring.
Award-Winning Schools

In Champaign-Urbana and the surrounding counties, your family will find resource-rich learning environments that support children’s development and prepare all types of learners to excel beyond high school.

Families have access to a variety of quality child care programs, pre-kindergarten through secondary education schools, and extended, after-school, and summer camp programs.

As part of its public engagement mission, faculty and staff at Illinois are heavily involved in many of these local programs and schools through their research, teaching, professional development, and service. Illinois students also volunteer for many of the programs and schools—keeping the university integrally linked to the community.

University-Affiliated Programs

The university supports several programs that help fulfill its teaching, research, and service missions. A few of these are described below:

- Child Care Resource Service assists families seeking child care services in the area.
- Child Development Laboratory is an accredited, inclusive early care program serving infants as young as six weeks old through preschool.
- University Primary School offers an alternative school experience for children from preschool through fifth grade.
- University Laboratory High School is a selective admission public high school operated by the university.

In addition, several departments, units, and colleges offer enrichment programs and summer camps for all ages and abilities, including art, music, dance, speech and communication, foreign language, 4-H, STEM, and sports.

Public Schools

Each year, the public school districts in Champaign (Unit #4), Urbana (USD #116), and the surrounding communities serve over 25,000 students of all abilities, from pre-k through secondary school level. The federally supported Head Start program is also available for qualifying families with infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children.

More than 100 different languages are represented from the children and families served, who come from countries from all over the world.

Each school district offers a variety of programs in the communities surrounding the university. Specialized programs are available to meet the needs of gifted children and students with disabilities.

Families can avail themselves of award-winning, innovative program offerings such as STEM, dual-language, International Baccalaureate®, the arts, and many more. Over 100 Advanced Placement® courses, including AP® Computer Science, in addition to dual-credit courses offered on campus, are offered through the school districts. On-site College & Career Centers at the high schools feature a dedicated counselor to assist students in career planning and the college application process.

Independent, Private, and Parochial Schools and Early Care Programs

Central Illinois boasts of several private, independent, and parochial K-12 schools and early care programs for families seeking alternative childcare and learning environments.

Park Districts and Other Community-Based Organizations

After-school and summer camps for children of all ages are available through the Champaign and Urbana Park Districts, the Stephens Family YMCA, and other community groups and organizations. Families can easily find programs that best match their children’s skills, interests, and needs.
People say Champaign-Urbana is the best of many worlds, offering the charm and affordability of smaller communities in two of the most cosmopolitan cities in the state. Our world-class research university, internationally diverse population, exciting entertainment scene, and strong technology base make this a destination for all types of professionals. Easy commutes, a designated bike-friendly community, and an award-winning mass transit system (free with campus ID) make it quick to get from here to there. And in three hours or less, you could be in Chicago, St. Louis, or Indianapolis. Or choose to venture along a different path and enjoy national treasures like Shawnee National Forest in Harrisburg, Illinois, or historic Abraham Lincoln sites in Springfield. Champaign offers daily rail, bus, and air travel so you can be on your way to almost anywhere. That's why people thrive at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign—we are a vibrant community with global connections.