

PURDUE RESEARCH PARK

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Purdue Research Park to add 60,000 square feet of incubator space

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. - Construction to double the size of the [Purdue Research Park's](#) flagship business incubator facility will begin this spring.

The Purdue Research Foundation, which administers the research park, has selected the Indianapolis firm of [Shiel Sexton](#) to manage construction of a 60,000-square-foot addition to the existing Purdue Technology Center, located at 3000 Kent Ave.



exterior Technology Center
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"We're doubling the size of what already is considered the largest university-affiliated technology incubator in the country," said Joseph Hornett, the foundation's senior vice president and treasurer. "Expanding this incubator validates our economic development efforts and prepares the way for company growth and job creation in the high-tech sector."

The Purdue Technology Center is the largest building in a complex consisting of three incubators and two "graduation" facilities, the latter offering lease options to startup companies once they've outgrown their incubator space.

The expansion will involve a new wing addition to the north end of the building.

"Believing that our efforts to grow companies would be successful, we always intended to build out the Purdue Technology Center," said Greg Deason, the foundation's director of park development. "The

facade on the north end of the building is designed to be easily removed so that we can extend the structure."

The new wing's anchor tenant will be [Endocyte Inc.](#), a Purdue Research Park life sciences venture developing Purdue University-licensed cancer detection and treatment technologies.

Founded in 1996, Endocyte is named after endocytosis, or the process by which a cell binds material into its interior. Endocyte's chief science officer Philip S. Low is also the Purdue professor who led a research team to the realization that many types of cancer cells have a great affinity for folate - a form of water-soluble B vitamin - because they need the nutrient in order to grow and divide. In fact, cancer cells have evolved a mechanism to capture folate more effectively than normal cells. Making use of this selectivity, researchers have developed a way to trick cancer cells into attracting and even ingesting anticancer agents that are attached to folate molecules. As a result, these chemotherapeutic agents can be delivered more specifically to cancer cells while leaving the surrounding normal tissue.

"With the company located nearby in the research park, I can actively participate in fine-tuning the therapy for human use - something I had not thought possible," said Low, who remains Purdue's J.F. Foster Distinguished Professor of Chemistry.

Endocyte attracted \$15 million in investment last year, by far the largest of all Indiana-based venture capital deals.

"The scientists at Endocyte need more room to work as they develop revolutionary ways to deliver drugs directly into cancer cells," Deason said. "Now, rather than spending the venture capital it secured last year on expensive facilities, it can spend it on research and FDA-regulated human clinical trials."

Endocyte is expected to occupy approximately 15,000 square feet of space that will be equipped with state-of-the-art wet labs and offices. In addition, the company will have access to all of the park's incubator amenities, including business consulting, human resources, marketing and public relations.

"Besides having the potential to be the next Eli Lilly and Co. for Indiana, Endocyte is part of the Purdue family," Hornett said. "So we're going to help provide the company with what it really needs - a smooth transition into this next, crucial growth phase."

The move into the incubator is viewed as a temporary one for Endocyte. However, state-of-the-art labs created for Endocyte, which will be left behind when the company vacates the space in three to five years, can further enhance Indiana's life science corridor, said Charles E. Schalliol, president and chief executive officer of [BioCrossroads](#), a public-private collaboration that supports Central Indiana's life science network.

"Good ideas need room to grow," Schalliol said. "The Purdue Research Park is a critical piece of the 'innovation infrastructure' that's necessary to grow the next generation of life sciences companies. This expansion is great news and cements central Indiana and Purdue as an emerging hot spot for bio-entrepreneurship."

Purdue Research Park is Indiana's first Certified Technology Park. In the past two years, the park has launched 23 technology startup companies. The more than 100 companies in the park employ more than 2,500 people.

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