

News Release

For immediate release

International Big Data Partnership to Drive Data Science Innovation in the Great Lakes Region

Urbana, IL and Toronto, ON – The Midwest Big Data Hub and the Council of the Great Lakes Region are pleased to announce a cooperation agreement that will drive innovative solutions for international cross-domain data science challenges. The partnership will help establish the foundation of a powerful advanced computing and public policy platform in the Great Lakes Region, called Great Lakes 4.0, which will be led by the Council and seeks to position the Great Lakes Region as a world leader in the data-enabled digital economy.

The Midwest Big Data Hub and the Council are poised to cooperate on multiple interrelated cross-border and cross-domain big data challenges, including in the areas of agri-food, transportation and logistics, and advanced materials and manufacturing. Addressing data science and governance issues, as well as education, training, and workforce development in these and other areas is critical to continued economic development within the region.

Once launched, Great Lakes 4.0 will enable formation of unique, cost-effective, and collaborative partnerships between industry, academia, government, and non-profits. Their focus will be to accelerate the development of breakthrough ideas and technologies using world-class capabilities in data science, predictive analytics and high performance computing.

In the digital economy, vast amounts of data are being created due to increasingly sophisticated interfaces and interactions between connected systems, pervasive computing devices, and the Internet. The business and strategic value of this data and emerging service platforms is considerable in today's connected economy. But understanding its importance and innovation potential can take time and significant investment by industry and government agencies. New data management protocols and standards will also be required to fully mine its value.

The Great Lakes Region, spanning eight states and two Canadian provinces, is North America's economic engine and accounts for 30% of combined U.S. and Canadian economic activity and employment. With economic output valued at USD\$6.0 trillion in 2016, if it were a country, the Region would represent the third largest economy in the world. It is undergoing an important economic transformation and revival, aided by a high skilled workforce, best-in-class academic institutions, and a large, innovative industrial base.

Quotes

“The ability to link data and extract hidden insights and value at faster and faster speeds is critical, not only for business and industry operating in the fourth industrial revolution and the digital economy, but also for governments and academia who are tackling our biggest global challenges, from climate change and food production, to energy use and transportation. The Great Lakes, which is quickly emerging as a global leader in data science, deep analytics and cognitive computing, can produce and commercialize the solutions, providing we can fully connect and harness our innovation strengths and assets. Great Lakes 4.0 is the answer!”

Mark Fisher, President and CEO, Council of the Great Lakes Region

“The value of big data transcends industry segments and geographic boundaries. Deriving value from data requires creative partnerships that overcome socio-technical barriers and create new approaches to data sharing, governance, and cross-domain solutions that drive innovation. As a catalyst for economic and workforce development in the Great Lakes region, we are excited to add the Council as a strategic partner in the growing big data ecosystem.”

Melissa Cragin, Executive Director, Midwest Big Data Hub

About the Council of the Great Lakes Region

The Council is a binational nonprofit organization that is dedicated to deepening the United States-Canada relationship in the Great Lakes Region. Its focus is on creating a stronger, more dynamic culture of collaboration in harnessing the region’s economic strengths and assets, improving the well-being and prosperity of the Region’s citizens, and protecting the Great Lakes for future generations. It achieves this mandate by conducting evidence-based policy research, connecting diverse perspectives, and acting as a strong voice for the Region’s varied economic, social and environmental interests.

Website: <https://councilgreatlakesregion.org>

About the Midwest Big Data Hub

The Midwest Big Data Hub (MBDH) is one of four regional Big Data (BD) Innovation Hubs launched in 2015 with support from the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF award # 1550320). Based at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, the MBDH has four “satellite” sites at Indiana University, Iowa State University, the University of Michigan, and the University of North Dakota, and a growing network of academic, industry, and non-



governmental partners. The MBDH serves twelve states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

The BD Innovation Hubs are intended to strengthen the data ecosystem, and develop effective networks of experts, organizations, projects and resources to address scientific and social issues of regional, national, and international interest.

The Midwest Big Data Hub incubates collaborative partnerships among industry, academic, government, and non-governmental organizations to drive economic development and capacity-building for data science practices, policies, standards, and applications. Our outreach and program efforts are focused in thematic and priority areas identified by our regional stakeholders, including: Agriculture-Food-Energy-Water (FEW); Smart and Resilient Communities; Transportation and Mobility; Advanced Materials and Manufacturing; and Health and Biomedicine. The MBDH is also leading regional and national efforts to develop capacity and expertise in Data Science education, training, and workforce development.

Website: <http://midwestbigdatahub.org>

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