



**New Jersey Economic Development Authority**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ("RFI")**

**2024-RFI-207**

**for**

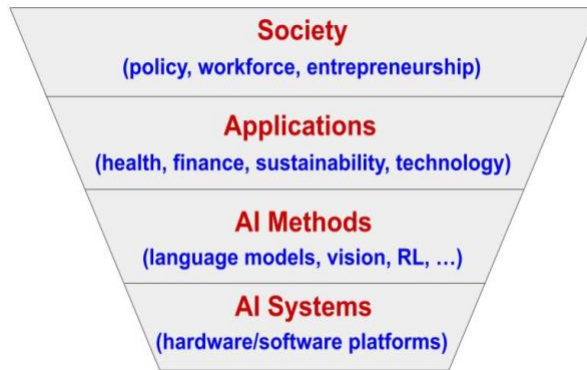
## **Artificial Intelligence Hub**

### **1. INTENT/SUMMARY OF SCOPE**

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority ("Authority"), an independent Authority of the State of New Jersey, is seeking information and ideas from qualified entities ("Respondents") in the creation of a transformational artificial intelligence innovation hub ("AI hub") to promote and integrate various applications of artificial intelligence ("AI").

This Request for Information (RFI) is issued by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority ("Authority", "NJEDA") and Princeton university ("Princeton") this RFI seeks to collect input around best practices and operational insights surrounding the AI hub, and further seeks to garner specific interest for engagement in the AI hub by respondents. The NJEDA and Princeton are interested in receiving comments, questions, recommendations, facts, information, ideas, and responses that will help the parties better understand the scope and characteristics of the Artificial Intelligence Hub in response to Executive Order 346 and the overall AI opportunity.

Artificial intelligence ("AI") is transforming nearly every industry sector, academic discipline, and human endeavor, through powerful techniques for turning massive amounts of raw data into new knowledge, deeper insights, and better decisions. New Jersey has the potential to become the east coast hub for AI innovation given its assets in research and development, educational and training pipelines, and location. To enhance New Jersey's status as a flagship for AI, NJ Governor Murphy and Princeton University President Christopher Eisgruber announced on December 18, 2023, that the State of New Jersey and Princeton University are collaborating to launch a transformational artificial intelligence innovation hub ("AI hub"). The AI hub will initially concentrate on four focal areas:



1. **Society:** Advance the study of and development of policy surrounding the ethical implementation of AI and its societal impacts (e.g., consumer/business protection, ethics, regulation, entrepreneurship, and workforce development).
2. **Applications:** Create infrastructure that allows industry and other stakeholders to apply AI, especially in the key economic sectors of pharma-med tech, finance, technology, clean energy, and advanced manufacturing.
3. **AI Methods:** Providing AI technical support through development of large language models, computer vision pipelines, as well as software applications via wide collaboration between industry and academia.
4. **AI Systems:** Support hardware and software design, innovation, computing architecture construction and underlying semiconductor innovation to support AI advances.

The AI hub seeks to:

- Establish central New Jersey as a leading national base for AI innovation
- Develop a vertically integrated institute spanning all levels of AI innovation
- Leverage close partnerships among academia, industry, and government
- Promote rapid and responsible development of the field
- Drive job growth and regional economic and workforce development
- Expand the central New Jersey innovation ecosystem, including by seeding the formation of new start-ups while providing the tools to enable existing industries and academic researchers to capitalize on the AI revolution
- Guide government and public entities on AI implementation
- Further Princeton University's teaching and research mission, and enhance the educational experience of the University's students

The State of New Jersey and Princeton University envision an integrated hub of AI activity that leverages Princeton's and the region's strengths, while also drawing on and amplifying other strengths in the central New Jersey region, including:

- industrial assets in the medical, financial, energy, and engineering sectors
- national labs, such as Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory (PPPL) and the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratories (GFDL), that can leverage AI to enhance their research on sustainability (e.g., fusion energy and climate modeling)

- a strong system of regional colleges and universities, including two-year community colleges and vocational schools, that contribute to the local workforce
- a growing regional innovation ecosystem of start-up companies, established firms (e.g., Google DeepMind Princeton), and startup accelerators (e.g., Helix and HAX), as well as proximity to a wide range of NYC and Philadelphia-based companies and assets.

We anticipate that this AI hub will house AI researchers, start-up companies, and other collaborators in dedicated space. We are exploring the potential for various approaches to fully integrating stakeholders to ensure success. This AI hub will also leverage the University's convening power to regularly bring together national and state leaders on AI to discuss all the top issues of the day.

To engage potential partners and build collaborative relationships in the AI hub, the NJ Economic Development Authority (the "NJEDA" or "Authority") and Princeton University are issuing a Request for Information ("RFI") for involvement in the AI hub. This RFI seeks to collect input around best practices and operational insights surrounding the AI hub, and further seeks to garner specific interest for engagement in the AI hub by respondents.

The NJEDA and Princeton University are interested in receiving input that will help identify potential partners and highlight how respondents could assist with catalyzing a hub for AI activity in New Jersey. The NJEDA and Princeton also seek responses that identify specific sites, financial contributions, and other resources (e.g., staffing, programmatic resources, computing resources, other in-kind supports, etc.) that the respondent may contribute to the development and operations of the AI hub.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority serves as the State's principal agency for driving economic growth. The Authority is committed to making New Jersey a national model for inclusive and sustainable economic development by focusing on key strategies to help build strong and dynamic communities, create good jobs for New Jersey residents and provide pathways to a stronger and fairer economy. Through partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders, the Authority creates and implements initiatives to enhance the economic vitality and quality of life in the State and strengthen New Jersey's long-term economic competitiveness.

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Governor Murphy's economic development strategic plan, "The State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey" specifically highlights investing in emerging innovative industries as critical to the State's economic development strategy. New Jersey will take a proactive,

targeted approach to support innovative, resilient growth industries that provide living wages for New Jersey residents. A stronger and fairer New Jersey economy will prioritize innovation sectors that best support New Jersey's long-term economic future. Recognizing the significant opportunity that exists around the development of AI, on October 10th, 2023, Governor Murphy authorized Executive Order 346, establishing the state's Artificial Intelligence Task Force, "responsible for studying emerging artificial intelligence technologies in order to issue findings on the potential impacts of these technologies on society and offer recommendations to identify government actions."

The subsequent Task Force has convened several professionals across the State of New Jersey, with groups focused on determining next steps regarding:

- Security, safety, technology, and privacy considerations
- Workforce training and jobs of the future for the public sector
- AI equity and literacy
- Making New Jersey a hub for AI innovation

Additionally, on November 20th, 2023, the Governor's office unveiled a policy guide for use of generative AI by state employees. This policy emphasis was the first offering in what is slated to be extensive training available to state workers, aimed at enhancing equity and service to all New Jerseyans.

Throughout this process, the capacity and expertise of Princeton University as a transformational agent in relation to the burgeoning field of AI became apparent. Princeton University, has had a strong presence in computer science and innovation for years through its academic departments and research initiatives, dating back to Alan Turing, who many consider the father of computer science and who earned his Ph.D. at Princeton in 1938. Today, three main strengths come together to support AI innovation at the University:

- Foundational strengths – Princeton's researchers push the limits of AI methods to make them faster, more accurate, and more explainable.
- Interdisciplinary strengths – Princeton's researchers collaborate across disciplinary and departmental lines to apply AI to advance discovery in a wide range of disciplines all over campus.
- Service to society – faculty and researchers are addressing the societal challenges that AI can help us tackle and the new challenges that AI itself is introducing.

In addition to Princeton's strong academic focus on computer science and machine learning, the University has launched a myriad of AI initiatives in areas such as large language models (Princeton Language and Intelligence), precision health (Princeton Precision Health), community outreach and workforce development (AI4ALL), policy (Center for Information Technology Policy; School of Public and International Affairs), and engineering (School of Engineering and Applied Science). Princeton faculty and researchers have also launched several AI-related start-ups.

Accordingly, the Princeton University Trustees found in the latest strategic framework that "[g]oing forward, Princeton can lead in creating and understanding large-scale AI models and applying them to the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and engineering. The University can also play a crucial role in creating scalable shared platforms for collecting and analyzing data about our

increasingly information-driven world.” As further stated in the University’s strategic framework, “it is important for research and education in AI to remain broadly and easily accessible in the public sphere so as to enable greater technological advances, applications across a range of academic disciplines, thoughtful consideration of societal implications, and the education of future leaders. Princeton has a unique capacity to meet this challenge.”

The announcement of the AI hub, coupled with the prior creation of the AI Taskforce, issuance of executive orders, appointment of Beth Noveck as New Jersey’s first-ever Chief AI Strategist, and Princeton University’s extensive focus on AI, highlight the incredible opportunity that exists around artificial intelligence in the state of New Jersey. Given the projected exponential growth in the AI space over the next decade and its immense capacity for business acceleration and innovation, the NJEDA intends to support these efforts through collaboration in the AI hub as well as potential incentives and policies to attract and support interested parties.

### **3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (If applicable)**

The RFI is seeking responses from all interested stakeholders. Specifically, this RFI welcomes input from organizations, coalitions, and individuals including:

- AI software developers
- AI Hardware service supporters
- Data analysis, data extrapolation firms with processes focused on AI utilization
- Entities interested in AI training and development
- Firms focused on consumer protection, privacy, and intellectual property
- Higher education academic institutions and AI researchers
- Technology workforce providers
- Private entities with documented AI utilization
- Private entities with AI utilization aspirations
- Technology workforce providers
- Workforce development and community outreach professionals
- Firms in medical, financial, life sciences, and engineering sectors
- Firms with urban planning and/or economic development expertise

Respondents do not need to be located within the State of New Jersey to provide a response.

### **4. RFI RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

Please answer all questions that are relevant to you or your organization, to the best of your ability. Answers to these questions are understood to be preliminary and non-binding. Applicants are free to structure responses as necessary to increase clarity and efficiency of responses.

Please provide information on your name, title, organization, contact information, organization web address, and your capacity and qualifications within the artificial intelligence industry.

### **A. New Jersey as an AI leader**

1. How can we position the state for leadership in AI? Please provide specific recommendations that will allow the state and region to take a differentiated leadership role.
2. What unique opportunities do you think New Jersey should consider as part of this AI Hub development relative to research, talent, and commercialization?
3. What assets can you contribute to driving NJ into an AI leader? Please be specific on how you would hope to develop these assets as a part of the AI hub.
4. Who are the 3-5 AI stakeholders (other than yourself/your organization) the State of New Jersey should be aware of? What type of innovations/programs are they working on? Why should the state be aware of them?

### **B. AI Hub support and engagement**

1. How might the AI hub best advance the goals of your organization or larger sector?
2. What resources or enhancements would help amplify the impact of the AI hub (e.g., investment, research capacity, higher education, workforce/lifestyle supports)?
3. How would you envision your role in advancing AI innovation in New Jersey as part of the AI hub? Would you seek to provide sponsorship, tenancy, data, or other contributions to the AI hub?
4. Would you seek to participate as an angel investor or provide venture capital to hub-related businesses?
5. Would your organization seek to engage in other roles such as mentoring entrepreneurs and early-stage founders or providing supports to diverse business enterprises?
6. Given the location requirements, would you be interested in donating or subsidizing the cost of space to support the AI hub (e.g., co-working, conference, offices, events, labs, etc.)?
7. How would your organization or institution contribute to the educational or research efforts of the AI hub?
8. How would your organization's involvement in the AI hub support or complement Princeton University's mission of education, research, and service to humanity?

### **C. AI workforce supports**

1. Regarding workforce development, would you seek to train/educate on AI related topics, teach specialized skills, develop new education/university programs, provide internships, and/or provide new or non-traditional apprenticeships?
2. How would you envision your organization playing another role in advancing education and inclusive workforce development for AI-related topics?
3. What suggestions do you have for building an AI workforce? What role should community colleges play?
4. Are there additional comments you wish to share that do not directly respond to one of the above questions?

5. **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS** (From Respondents to the EDA and Princeton University)

All questions concerning this RFI must be submitted in writing no later than 11:59 PM EST, on Friday, April 19th via e-mail to: [AIHub@njeda.gov](mailto:AIHub@njeda.gov).

The subject line of the e-mail should state: "QUESTIONS-2024 RFI-#207 AI Hub."

**IT IS THE RESPONDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK THIS URL REGULARLY FOR UPDATES.**

6. **RESPONSE DETAILS** (Info Provided to Respondents Regarding Document Submission)

All RFI responses must be submitted in writing no later than 11:59 PM EDT, on Friday May 31st via e-mail to: [AIHub@njeda.gov](mailto:AIHub@njeda.gov).

The subject line of the e-mail should state: "RFI response - AI Hub."

7. **FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS** (from EDA) / **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Respondents may be asked to provide additional information to allow the Authority and Princeton to better understand the responses or services available.

8. **PROPRIETARY AND/OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

The Authority and Princeton University reserve the right to copy any information provided by the Respondents. The Authority and Princeton University reserve the right to use ideas that are provided by Respondents, applicants, stakeholders, or vendors. By submitting a Response, the submitter represents that such copying or use of information will not violate any copyrights, licenses, or other agreements with respect to information submitted or product solutions demonstrated, if applicable. Responses must clearly be marked for any information the Respondent deems Proprietary and/or Confidential.

9. **DISCLAIMER / NO OBLIGATION**

This RFI is not a request for qualification/proposal. It may or may not result in further action. This RFI is issued solely as a means of gathering information regarding Princeton and the Authority's desire to understand the types of products and level of service available in the market to meet the Authority's needs. Interested parties responding to this RFI do so at their own expense. There will be no monetary compensation from the issuers for the time and effort spent in preparing the response to this RFI. All expenses incurred are the sole responsibility of the Respondent.

Should the issuers decide to move forward and issue an RFQ/P or announce a program/product related to this RFI, Respondents need not have submitted a response to this RFI to be eligible to respond to the RFQ/P. Should an RFQ/P be issued, responding to this RFI will not affect scoring or consideration for that process.

The issuers are under no obligation to contact Respondents to this RFI.

#### **10. NEW JERSEY OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT**

Respondents should be aware that responses to this RFI are subject to the “New Jersey Open Public Records Act” (N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq.), as amended and including all applicable regulations and policies and applicable case law, including the New Jersey Right-to-Know law. All information submitted in response to the RFI is considered public information, notwithstanding any disclaimers to the contrary, except as may be exempted from public disclosure by OPRA and the common law.

Any proprietary and/or confidential information submitted in response to this RFI will be redacted by the Authority. A person or entity submitting a response to this RFI may designate specific information as not subject to disclosure pursuant to the exceptions to OPRA found at N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1, when such person or entity has a good faith legal and/or factual basis for such assertion (i.e. information that may be included in another ongoing public procurement or solicitation). The Authority reserves the right to make the determination as to what is proprietary or confidential and will advise the person or entity accordingly. The Authority will not honor any attempt to designate the entirety of a submission as proprietary, confidential and/or to claim copyright protection for the entire proposal. In the event of any challenge to the Respondent’s assertion of confidentiality with which the Authority does not concur, the Respondent shall be solely responsible for defending its designation.