



IU to play key role in NSF-funded Midwest Big Data Hub regional project

Data scientists to help lead Midwest Big Data Hub, investigate pressing issues facing our world

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Indiana University is joining four other universities in the region to lead the Midwest Big Data Hub, contributing its unique expertise in network and data sciences to a "big data brain trust" backed by a three-year, \$1.5 million National Science Foundation (NSF) grant.

IU will partner with the University of Illinois, the University of Michigan, the University of North Dakota and Iowa State University to lead a flexible regional network, which will focus on tackling specific themes of importance to the Midwest by establishing

partnerships between universities, industry, government agencies and nonprofit organizations.

The collaborative effort, called SEEDCorn (Sustainable Enabling Environment for Data Collaboration), is led by the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Ed Seidel, director of the National Center for Supercomputing Applications and Founder Professor in the University of Illinois physics department, is principal investigator for the Midwest Big Data Hub. A full-time executive director will be based at Illinois and part-time staff will be based at other campuses.

Beth Plale, IU School of Informatics and Computing professor and director of the Data to Insight Center, is co-principal investigator for the Midwest Big Data Hub and a member of its steering committee. IU's effort also involves Bernice Pescosolido, Indiana University Network Institute (IUNI) director and IU distinguished professor of sociology, and Rob Quick, IU Pervasive Technology Institute, manager of distributed operational support and engineering.

"IU is pleased to take part in this regional endeavor to harness the power of big data to investigate some of the most pressing issues facing our world — and the state of Indiana: water security, data science, smart cities, network science, transportation and patient care," Plale said. "The involvement of diverse, well-respected stakeholders demonstrates a willingness to cooperate for the greater good of the Midwest, and IU certainly wants to use its strengths to continue forging a new path in multi-sector partnerships around big data."

"The Big Data Hubs program represents a unique approach to improving the impact of data science by establishing partnerships among like-minded stakeholders," said Jim Kurose, head of NSF's Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering. "In doing so, it enables teams of data science researchers to come together with domain experts, with cities and municipalities, and with anchor institutions to establish and grow collaborations that will accelerate progress in a wide range of science and education domains with the potential for great societal benefit."

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The **NSF's announcement of a \$5 million award to establish four regional data hubs** nationwide was made Monday, involving all 50 states and totaling 281 organizations—from universities and cities to foundations and Fortune 500 companies.

"The aggregation of data and its transformation to meaning will have yet unforeseen impacts on our lives," said Brad Wheeler, IU vice president for information technology and interim dean of the IU School of Informatics and Computing. "IU's leading researchers and highly advanced information technology position us well to lead with other great universities the frontiers of big data for science and education."

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