

# THE RESEARCH YARD—PHASE II: REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FROM EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO LEASE AND OPERATE AN APPLIED RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITY WITHIN THE BROOKLYN NAVY YARD



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Read below to learn about a unique opportunity for an educational institution to operate a new applied research facility, supported with nearly \$6 million of landlord funding, in a dynamic advanced manufacturing campus in the heart of New York City—Phase II of the Research Yard at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

This document describes what the Research Yard is, why its setting at the Brooklyn Navy Yard is so compelling, and a process for your educational institution to apply to plant your flag in Brooklyn, work to solve urgent challenges, and innovate critical technology.

The Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation (“BNYDC”) seeks expressions of interest, as part of a two-stage procurement process, from “Qualified Educational Institutions” (as hereafter defined) to: (1). Lease Suite 702 (20,000 SF) in Building 3 in the Brooklyn Navy Yard (“Leased Premises” or “Phase 2 Premises”) and (2). Operate “Phase II” of the Research Yard (“TRY” or the “Research Yard”).

Phase II of the Research Yard offers a compelling opportunity to establish an applied research and educational facility in the Brooklyn Navy Yard (“BNY” or “the Yard”)—an urban manufacturing campus with numerous assets that can be leveraged to drive innovation.

Further details about Phase II of the Research Yard and information regarding Phase I of the Research Yard, including the involvement of existing Research Yard partners, the Pratt Institute (“Pratt”) and the New York City College of Technology (“City Tech”), are provided below.

The Yard’s value proposition, further described below, includes a rich ecosystem of companies in a variety of advanced industries, a nationally recognized critical tech incubator, and a successful hardware piloting program. The Yard is surrounded by the metropolitan area with the largest number of people with a bachelor’s degree or greater educational attainment in the U.S.; our home along the Brooklyn waterfront is easily accessible from Manhattan and beyond.

In addition, subject to further conditions described herein, BNYDC will spend up to approximately \$5.9 million of New York City capital funding to build out Phase II.

To select an educational institution that will be the best fit to operate Phase II of the Research Yard, we are structuring this solicitation into two stages.

The first (RFEI) stage of this solicitation (“Stage One”), as further detailed below, seeks to identify Qualified Educational Institutions (“QEI’s”) who are interested in operating Phase II of the Research Yard and to provide them with an opportunity to articulate their vision and proposed uses and programming. Responses to the RFEI are intended to be more conceptual than responses to the Stage 2 RFP, touching largely upon your institution’s background and your vision for what you would seek to do—see below.

BNYDC will review the responses to the RFEI stage of the solicitation. Based on these responses, we will issue the subsequent RFP portion of the solicitation (the “Stage Two RFP”). The Stage Two RFP will require more detailed information about the proposed usage and Phase II program, buildout elements to accommodate that design, deal terms (including rent), areas of collaboration with Pratt and Citytech, etc. The Stage 2 RFP will also include a draft lease for the Phase 2 Premises.

It is BNYDC’s plan to issue the Stage 2 RFP within approximately 60-90 days of the receipt of the Stage One RFEI responses. If BNYDC selects a winning QEI respondent to the Stage 2 RFP, it is BNYDC’s intention to promptly enter into a lease with such winning QEI respondent for the Phase 2 Premises.

Please note that while responding to the Phase One RFEI is not a condition to being able to respond to the Stage Two RFP, BNYDC strongly encourages any QEI’s that may be interested in leasing the Phase 2 Premises to respond to the Stage One RFEI. Responding to the Phase One RFEI will provide QEI’s with an early opportunity to provide BNYDC with information about themselves, their vision, and their proposed uses for the Phase 2 Premises. Information received through the Stage 1 RFEI process will also inform BNYDC’s preparation of the Stage 2 RFP document.

The Research Yard is intended to be a place at the Brooklyn Navy Yard where entrepreneurs, students and faculty come together to give each other feedback and support, use specialized facilities and equipment, and explore other synergies to advance applied research related to the design and development of products that can be commercialized to improve the lives of people who live in urban areas, in New York City and beyond. To do this, the Research Yard will be a place where faculty and experts convene: entrepreneurs iterating early-stage products, students that want to gain experience in relevant research fields and emerging industrial technology, and the wider tenant ecosystem of diverse manufacturers, makers, and producers at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The Research Yard is the latest evolution in the vital mission carried out by BNYDC.

BNYDC is the non-profit landlord that manages, maintains and develops the Brooklyn Navy Yard, an industrial campus on the Brooklyn waterfront consisting of approximately 80 buildings spread across 300 acres. The Yard is owned by the City of New York: BNYDC leases BNY from the City under a master lease, and it manages BNY under a master operating agreement, also with the City of New York. BNY is home to a community of over 550 industrial, office, and retail businesses, ranging from legacy industries to advanced manufacturing. Currently, about 13,000 people work onsite in over 6.3M SF of space under roof.

Formed as a mission-driven economic development organization, BNYDC's mission is to fuel New York City's economic vitality by growing the city's urban manufacturing sector through nurturing entrepreneurship and small-to-medium enterprises. BNYDC translates this growth into creating and preserving quality jobs and connecting the local community to economic opportunity and resources within the Yard. In addition, BNYDC has long operated the Albert C. Wiltshire Employment Center, an award-winning workforce development organization that recruits and connects people from our surrounding communities to job opportunities with tenant businesses, as well as operating robust college internship and adult on-site training programs aligned to careers within our campus. The Brooklyn STEAM Center, an innovative NYC public high school that offers students hands-on training in five career pathways in partnership with BNY tenants, opened at Building 77 at the Yard in 2019. Finally, BNYDC has supported the development of multiple onsite accelerators and incubators, including NYU Tandon @ The Yard, and Newlab.

These ongoing, transformative initiatives speak to BNYDC's efforts to drive impactful and inclusive economic development for the benefit of our surrounding community.

Building on this work, in 2023, the Pratt Institute (“Pratt”), in collaboration with BNYDC, opened the first phase of TRY (“Phase I”) in Suite 701 in Building 3 at BNY. Pratt has a lease from BNYDC for Suite 701 (the Phase 1 Premises”). This roughly 21,000 SF facility brings together, in one location, the following Pratt-affiliated accelerators and centers:

- Pratt Center for Community Development
- Center for Climate Adaptation
- Spatial Analysis and Visualization Initiative Center
- Center for Art, Design and Community Engagement
- Design Clinic
- Pratt Creative Exchange
- STEAMplant
- Future of Jewelry
- Environmental Exploration Lab
- Co-Housing Research Center
- Laboratory for Integrated Archaeological Visualization and Heritage

Phase I’s facilities, which are available for Pratt students, include:

- Conference rooms and open office areas
- Galleries
- Robotics equipment and workspaces
- Clean fab lab: Digital fabrication workshop (3D printing, laser cutting, etc.)
- Dirty fab lab: Fabrication workshop with dust collection system (woodworking and metalwork equipment)

To realize the project's full potential, BNYDC, in collaboration with Pratt and City Tech, now seeks to develop Phase II of the Research Yard to create further opportunities for entrepreneurs, students and faculty to collaborate and explore synergies that will drive new, innovative research and products, and spur entrepreneurial activity. In this collaborative framework, BNYDC would, in addition to its traditional landlord activities, also work with the other institutions in developing and guiding strategy for The Research Yard as well as facilitating connectivity with the rest of the Brooklyn Navy Yard ecosystem including workforce and talent programs, other incubators, and businesses.

It is BNYDC's expectation that the selected QEI will provide access to Phase II of the Research Yard for CityTech students and faculty, with the extent and manner of access to be determined with Pratt and the selected QEI.

The Phase 2 Premises (20,000 SF) adjoins the Phase 1 Premises. There will be a demising wall with a door between the two premises that can be shut and locked; however, the vision is for the QEI that leases the Phase 2 Premises to work together with Pratt so that the premises can be functionally connected, with students, faculty, and entrepreneurs having access to the entirety of TRY. The plan of the floor, including the Phase I and II TRY Premises, is attached as Exhibit A.

Phase II will be leased and operated by a QEI, which meets the following criteria:

- Accredited by a reputable, recognized domestic or international accrediting organization. Operates undergraduate and/or graduate-level studies in fields including, but not limited to: engineering, computer science, artificial intelligence, robotics, GIS (Geographic Information Systems), architecture, urban design, urban planning, product design, product fabrication, and entrepreneurship, etc.
- Demonstrated experience as a leader in applied research.
- Demonstrated experience and expertise in technology transfer, commercialization, and/or research/innovation partnerships with the private sector in the above-mentioned areas.

Phase II must be focused, in terms of programming, facilities, and operations, on applied research and learning around innovative and sustainable solutions to pressing problems faced by people living in cities, and supporting the commercialization pathway of viable products and solutions.

Areas of applied research to be undertaken in Phase II could include:

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation, e.g., proptech, carbon capture, building management systems, data collection and analysis
- Development of sustainable products
- Climate resiliency
- Micromobility
- Quantum computing
- Smart cities
- Circular economy
- Artificial Intelligence

The QEI that operates Phase II will be able to leverage the unique community, setting and assets of the Brooklyn Navy Yard. This value proposition includes:

- **Access to the BNY tenant community.** BNY is home to 550 tenants, where over 13,000 people work. These businesses include medtech, proptech, nanotech, artists and other creatives, maritime, film and media production, robotics, quantum computing, life sciences, and micromobility, among others. Our community provides a rich pool of potential advisors, test cases, and talent.
- **Yard Labs, BNY's piloting program.** Designed to accelerate the commercialization of emerging technologies that improve the lives of people who live in cities, Yard Labs offers a unique 300-acre testbed—the Navy Yard. It gives companies a path to market validation with opportunities for data collection, user feedback, strategic partnerships, and more. Yard Labs has welcomed companies developing products in fields including decarbonization, electric vehicles, proptech, carbon reduction/capture, energy storage/development, resiliency, climate change adaptation, micromobility, efficient transport solutions, and digital connectivity. The Yard offers a diverse set of environments for piloting, including private streets, waterfront, and building stock ranging from legacy industrial buildings to state-of-the-art Class A office space.
- **Newlab, a leading critical tech incubator.** Many advanced manufacturers at the Yard are current or previous members of Newlab, a tenant at the Yard that is an incubator and accelerator for development of cutting-edge hardware in various frontier fields. Note that Newlab selects members that are further along in the product development process than companies envisioned for use of Phase II—many Newlab members already have a minimum viable product, for instance. As such, Newlab leadership, its members, and its past members that have gone on to lease space in the Yard offer a rich pool of potential subject matter experts and thought partners.
- **Phase I / Pratt Institute.** The first phase of TRY, which has operated since 2023, is adjacent to the Phase II premises. It offers great potential, subject to further discussion with Pratt, for collaboration on research, sharing of information, development of IP, and sharing of facilities.
- **Navy Yard location.** BNY is located across the East River from Manhattan, at the intersection of the Brooklyn neighborhoods of DUMBO, Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, and Williamsburg. It is accessible by ferry, bike, and our BNY-operated shuttle system, which runs every eight minutes during rush hours, and connects to 15 NYC subway lines. We are centrally-located in New York City; among other things, NYC offers the largest, most educated workforce in the U.S., and is also home to the second-largest tech sector and venture capital presence in the country.



Smith-Miller + Hawkinson Architects, an architecture firm previously retained by BNYDC, completed a full design development set for Phase II in 2022. In general, BNYDC’s point of view is that this design aligns with a well-executed expansion of Phase I, and reflects BNYDC’s programmatic goals for TRY. However, BNYDC would consider changes to the fabrication and lab spaces included in the design based on feedback from a selected QEI. The fabrication and lab spaces specified in the DD drawings for Phase II include:

- CNC router room and booth: Includes CNC router and associated support systems
- “Open Lab,” “Clean Fab Lab” and “Digital Fabrication Workshop”: include laser engraver/cutter, 3D printer, and more
- Modular Lab
- Computational Lab: Includes desktop computers, wide-format printer, and a tech & design demonstration lab
- Robotics Lab: Includes self-driving car and autonomous vehicle research studios, robotic manipulators, collaborative robots (cobots), vehicle robots, etc.
- Mechanical Lab: Includes 3D printer, microscope, vacuum oven, UV lamp, etc.

BNYDC, as Landlord, will deliver the Phase II Premises with the following work completed (“Landlord Scope”):

- Selective demolition throughout to prepare for construction
- General construction: demising walls for internal subdivisions, carpentry, interior glazing, wood and hollow metal doors and hardware
- Painting of walls (including new partition walls) and ceilings throughout
- Flooring: patching, sealing, polishing, and selective painting of concrete floor throughout
- Fire alarm and sprinkler: Fully-functional integrated system tied into building infrastructure
- Electrical: draw power from panel and distribute to outlets, with adequate load for running equipment, throughout space
- Mechanical: install new HVAC system including air-handling units, ductwork, exterior louvers, and controls throughout
- Plumbing: water and drainage connections and utility sinks
- Lighting: Furnish and install lighting fixtures throughout

The design and construction of the Landlord Scope will be funded by New York City Capital Budget sources not to exceed roughly \$5.9 million.

Approximate timeline for Landlord Scope once a lease with a Phase II tenant (“Tenant”) is signed (please note this timeline is highly preliminary and is subject to change depending on various factors):

- Month 0: Lease signed
- Month ~6: Complete construction drawings (timeline will vary depending on the extent of design changes necessary to accommodate Tenant’s program)
- Month 12: Obtain Certificate to Proceed from New York City Office of Management and Budget and New York City’s Comptroller’s registration, the two approvals necessary to draw down NYC Capital Budget funds; Landlord signs contract with GC
- Month 24-36: Complete Landlord Scope (again, timing will vary depending on extent of Landlord scope)

The Tenant will be responsible for purchasing and installing all equipment, machinery, FF&E, and AV/IT systems for the space; the Tenant will also be responsible for ongoing utility costs associated with usage of the space.

A QEI responding to this RFEI (“Respondent”) must include the following in their Expression of Interest (“Submission”):

1. Brief description of Respondent, including representation that Respondent is a QEI (based on criteria herein), and other relevant information regarding the QEI, such as location(s), programs of study offered, current enrollment, and description of affiliated/parent institutions if applicable.
2. High-level proposed program for Phase II of TRY:
  - a. Fields of applied research, bearing in mind that applied research, as noted above, is defined for purposes herein as early-stage research seeking to commercialize technology intended to ultimately improve the lives of people who live in urban places.
  - b. Possible major build-out components required to support proposed program, e.g., clean room, CNC router, dry lab, wet lab, 3D-printer, etc.
  - c. Relevant departments/institutions at QEI that will facilitate programming for Phase II of TRY
3. Potential areas of collaboration with Pratt and City Tech
4. Potential areas of collaboration with BNYDC and BNY tenants

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**Additional notes:**

1. While BNYDC does not seek to negotiate the economics of the Lease in the RFEI stage of the Procurement, Respondents should take note that BNYDC intends to charge an annual Base Rent for Phase II of TRY of at least \$15 PSF, as well as pro rata charges for insurance and trash carting, and utility charges, among others. Finally, note that BNYDC anticipates the Lease will have a roughly 10-year term, commencing upon substantial completion of Landlord Work.
2. In addition to its traditional activities as Landlord (e.g., collecting rent), BNYDC would also work with the selected QEI, Pratt, and Citytech in developing and guiding overall strategy for The Research Yard, as well as facilitating connections with the rest of the Brooklyn Navy Yard ecosystem including workforce and talent programs, other entrepreneurial studios/incubators, and Yard businesses.

**Further notes:**

- Attending a site visit or webinar is not mandatory but encouraged.
- If you wish to join a site visit, you must email [tryphasetwo@bnydc.org](mailto:tryphasetwo@bnydc.org) at least one business day prior to the site visit you wish to join.
- Questions must be submitted by email to [tryphasetwo@bnydc.org](mailto:tryphasetwo@bnydc.org).
- All questions submitted, as well as all answers, will be shared with all individuals who have either joined a site visit, submitted a question, or emailed [tryphasetwo@bnydc.org](mailto:tryphasetwo@bnydc.org) that they intend to respond, as long as they have provided an email address.
- Expressions of Interest must include all elements noted herein, and must be submitted to [tryphasetwo@bnydc.org](mailto:tryphasetwo@bnydc.org) in pdf format.

**Timeline (all times listed are U.S. EST):**

- RFEI issued: 4/10/2025
- Site visits, Phase II premises: (1). 11:30 AM, 4/23/2025 and (2). 2:30 PM, 4/30/2025
- Webinar via Zoom: 10:30 AM, 5/1/2025
- Deadline for questions regarding this RFEI: Received by 5 PM, 5/8/2025
- BNYDC to answer questions by: 5 PM, 5/19/2025
- Expressions of Interest must be submitted by: 5 PM, 6/12/2025
- BNYDC anticipates issuing the Stage Two RFP by early fall 2025.

1. This RFEI is informational only and BNYDC will not award any lease or contract for the Phase II Premises through this RFEI.
2. Incurring Costs: BNYDC is not liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFEI.
3. Modifications: Respondents may be asked to make revisions, additions, or deletions to their Submissions as may be required by BNYDC.
4. Reserved Rights: All submission material becomes the property of BNYDC and BNYDC reserves the right at its sole discretion to:
  - i) Reject any and all Submissions received in response to this RFEI at any time;
  - ii) Decide not to issue the Stage Two RFP;
  - iii) Change the structure of the procurement if such is in the interest of BNYDC;
  - iv) Extend the time for Submissions after notification to all prospective Respondents;
  - v) Terminate or modify the RFEI process at any time and reissue; and
  - vi) Take any action deemed in the best interest of the City and/or BNYDC.
5. Information: Any information which may have been released verbally or in writing prior to the issuance of the RFEI shall be deemed preliminary in nature.











