

University of Chicago statement on Fermilab:

The University of Chicago (UChicago) and its partners in Fermi Forward Discovery Group, LLC, are committed to advancing Fermilab's role as the nation's High Energy Physics Laboratory. UChicago, in partnership with Universities Research Association, has helped manage Fermilab since 2007 during a time of significant advances, and we look forward to the remarkable scientific opportunities ahead.

In recent years, Fermilab has advanced key initiatives like design and excavation activities to support the LBNF-DUNE project, one of the largest projects in the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Science; moving forward the Proton Improvement Plan-II (PIP-II) project to enhance the lab's accelerator complex; and advancing into new cutting-edge scientific fields like artificial intelligence and quantum computing. LBNF-DUNE in particular is an unprecedented and complex international project, which has included the successful excavation of a large cavern for experiments a mile underground in a former South Dakota gold mine. We appreciate the strong support from DOE and Congress, from the scientific community and from the communities near Fermilab and in South Dakota that many of Fermilab's team of dedicated and talented employees call home.

Fermilab's ambitious work has come with challenges, underscoring the need to strengthen the lab's operations. FermiForward, which became Fermilab's new management-and-operations contractor on January 1, 2025, represents a new approach that brings together the best parts of Fermilab with two new industry partners — Amentum and Longenecker & Associates — who bring broad operational expertise. They are working closely with the lab to assess and build upon Fermilab's operations, including in the areas of safety and management of large-scale projects. Also in January, University of Chicago President Paul Alivisatos announced Dr. Young-Kee Kim as the interim director of Fermilab, bringing her deep experience in experimental particle and accelerator physics as a Professor of Physics at UChicago and deputy director of Fermilab from 2006 to 2013. A search is underway for the next permanent director.

We have listened closely to the concerns that some colleagues and friends in the Fermilab community have raised, rooted in their passionate support of Fermilab's distinctive scientific mission. We take the U.S. Department of Energy's Performance Evaluation & Management Plan scorecard extremely seriously. Fermilab leadership is working with the new FermiForward team to ensure that the valued workforce at Fermilab can contribute to efforts to strengthen and enhance lab operations. The FermiForward team and the broader Fermilab community will continue working to enable transformational science in support of the U.S. Department of Energy and the nation.