

Federal, State, Pittsburgh partners to build commercial, shared, classified secure innovation center in RIDC's Mill 19

Important milestone for Pennsylvania's defense innovation ecosystem

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Through a partnership of the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU)'s Bridge Program, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Regional Industrial Development Corporation ([RIDC](#)), Parallax Advanced Research, and Fort Pitt Secure, we are establishing a commercial, shared, classified facility in RIDC's Mill 19 at

Hazelwood Green. As a result, this strategic development will enable tech companies to conduct secure collaboration with the government, provide classified capabilities currently unavailable in the area, create new economic opportunities for Pennsylvania, and ultimately strengthen our nation's defense industrial base.



RIDC's Mill 19 at Hazelwood Green

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Rick Siger, Secretary, PA Dept of Community and Economic Development

This new 11,000-square foot multi-level security facility will include a Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF) and will provide its tenants' workspaces with access to classified government information, conference room capability with secure video teleconferencing, and an auditorium that can seat 120. More importantly, it will provide the secure environment required for government, industry, and academia to work together on some of the nation's most complex national security challenges.

For too long, many innovative companies and research organizations have lacked access to the secure infrastructure needed to participate in classified defense

programs. This facility helps remove that barrier by providing a trusted environment where

emerging technologies can be evaluated, integrated, and transitioned to operational use.

“At present, there are no available operational shared secure facilities in the area where companies can communicate and share information with the government in connection with products designed for national security purposes,” said RIDC President Donald F. Smith, Jr. “This facility will be a tremendous economic development tool, as well as a key asset for our defense economy ecosystem.”

The total cost of construction is expected to be approximately \$10 million, with funding coming from DIU, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and RIDC. The initial construction effort is expected to support more than 40 direct full-time equivalent jobs. While those construction jobs are significant, they are only the beginning of the economic impact.

“DIU is excited to collaborate with our Mission Partners, the State, and Industry to expand classified access in the Pittsburgh region. This expanded access will accelerate our ability to adopt best-in-class technology from the region’s innovators, directly supporting our mission to deliver cutting-edge capabilities to the warfighter faster,” said Sarah Pearson, Head of DIU’s newly formed Bridge Program. The DIU Bridge Program aims to reduce the barriers of entry to the DOW for industry partners, enabling faster deployment of critical technologies to our Warfighters by focusing on reforms to classified infrastructure, cybersecurity accreditation, and testing and evaluation access.

“Pennsylvania has always been a national leader in discovery and innovation, and this new facility at Hazelwood Green will further strengthen Pittsburgh’s capacity to attract and retain world class companies,” said Department of Community and Economic Development Secretary Rick Siger. “This commercial, shared, classified facility will play an important role in growing the region’s defense industrial base, and we look forward to partnering with RIDC, Parallax Advanced Research, and Fort Pitt Secure to support this effort.”

Currently, there are (17) organizations and companies in the southwestern Pennsylvania tech ecosystem already committed to being future tenants/users of this new secure facility. Future tenants include Blade Diagnostics Corporation, HAMR Industries, Near Earth Autonomy, Aalyria, Certu Systems, Gray Swan AI, Lovelace AI, the University of Pittsburgh’s Center for Military Medicine Research, the Advanced Robotics for Manufacturing Institute, and both Active and Reserve Component military units in the Pittsburgh metro area. The list of future tenants continues to grow.

The real story is what happens after the doors open. Pennsylvania startups, small businesses, established manufacturers, research universities, and government partners will have a secure place to collaborate, compete for classified contracts, develop new capabilities, and accelerate technology transition for the warfighter.

This is more than a classified facility. It is enabling infrastructure that will serve as an anchor

facility which brings together government, academia, industry, and investors to solve the hardest national security problems, accelerate capability delivery to the warfighter, strengthen the local defense ecosystem, and grow Pennsylvania's defense economy for years to come.

RIDC and Parallax are grateful to our partners at the federal and state levels, including the DIU, Senators McCormick and Fetterman, and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. Dennis Andersh, President and CEO from Parallax concludes, "Together, we are building not only secure infrastructure, but a secure innovation ecosystem that will serve the nation."

About Parallax Advanced Research and the Ohio Aerospace Institute

Parallax Advanced Research is a research institute that tackles global challenges through strategic partnerships with government, industry, and academia. It accelerates innovation, addresses critical global issues, and develops groundbreaking ideas with its partners. With offices in Ohio and Virginia, Parallax aims to deliver new solutions and speed them to market. In 2023, Parallax and the Ohio Aerospace Institute formed a collaborative affiliation to drive innovation and technological advancements in Ohio and for the nation. The Ohio Aerospace Institute plays a pivotal role in advancing the aerospace industry in Ohio and the nation by fostering collaborations between universities, aerospace industries, and government organizations, and managing aerospace research, education, and workforce development projects.

About RIDC

The Regional Industrial Development Corporation of Southwestern PA catalyzes and supports economic growth and high-quality job creation through real estate development, policy advocacy, and finance of projects that advance the public interest. A not-for-profit entity, RIDC's nearly 8 million square feet of property, in 16 industrial and innovation parks, is currently home to 124 companies that support over 9,000 jobs. More information is available at [ridc.org](https://www.ridc.org).

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