Guide to the Stanford New York City Proposal SC1109

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Biographical / Historical
In December, 2010 New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced that the city would pursue the possibility of attracting a world-class university to create a research and graduate teaching center focused on applied science and technology. Stanford accepted the invitation from the New York City Economic Development Corp. (NYCEDC) to explore the opportunity. President Hennessy stated: "Stanford has served as an intellectual incubator for the emergence of the Silicon Valley and has the potential to do so again. The opportunity presented by the city of New York is one that Stanford should at least explore. The concept as laid out by New York plays to many of our strengths, particularly the innovative and entrepreneurial spirit that characterizes this university."

Eighteen other American and international institutions joined a small team from Stanford at an information session in New York Feb. 8 and 9. They met with city officials to learn more about the project and its goals.

An initial concept was formulated to be a center focused on information technology, with a first phase of 25 faculty, 125 doctoral students and 250 or more master's degree students. The faculty would initially come primarily from the School of Engineering and the Graduate School of Business, including experts in areas such as information technology, innovation and entrepreneurship. Stanford would use advances in technology as well as its long experience in distance education to allow East Coast and West Coast locations to share courses and support cross-country research collaborations.

On March 17, 2011 Stanford University formally submitted a tentative proposal to the city of New York to build a campus for applied science research and graduate education on Roosevelt Island, with the intent that the campus would serve as a hub for innovation and economic growth.

The Stanford proposal, submitted in response to a New York City request for expressions of interest, outlines a high-technology campus that could be constructed in phases over 25 years to provide graduate degree-granting programs for students in engineering, computer science and business.

Under an aggressive timeline, the university proposed starting construction on the first phase in 2013 and enrolling 440 master's and PhD students by the fall of 2015. Over time, Stanford envisioned the possibility of as many 2,200 graduate students and 100 faculty members at a New York City location.

Stanford was joined by 26 other institutions in submitting expressions of interest to the New York City Economic Development Corporation. Others who submitted proposals included Cornell, Columbia, Purdue and the University of Chicago.

The proposed Stanford New York campus would draw from various schools, centers and programs, including the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design, the Stanford Graduate School of Business and the Stanford Technology Ventures Program. The proposal also relies upon very close integration with the California campus, and the use of distance education and telepresence systems to connect students, faculty and researchers at the two locations.

Of four possible locations put forth by the city of New York, Stanford has used the Roosevelt Island site as a model for its proposal. The land is located in the middle of the East River between Manhattan and Queens. Facilities to be constructed on the site would have included academic and research space, as well as housing for students and faculty members. Funds for capital costs were be expected to come from a combination of philanthropy, New York City and Stanford University.
In September Stanford created a new website - Stanford in New York City - that describes why the university is well positioned to create a state-of-the-art engineering and applied sciences campus in New York City.

“Stanford, with its culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, offers New York City a partner experienced in offering world-class education and research, transferring innovation to the marketplace, attracting the best faculty and students worldwide and graduating successful business leaders,” the university says on the website.

The site features a fact sheet on Stanford's preliminary proposal; a one-hour video of President John Hennessy’s presentation to the Academic Council on the proposal, followed by a panel discussion and a Q&A; a list of companies that faculty and alumni have helped create; and a list of some of the technologies whose origins can be traced to basic research at Stanford, including modern web-search algorithms, digital sound synthesis and genome sequencing.

“By leveraging Stanford’s formidable strengths in engineering and computer science, the Stanford Applied Science and Engineering campus in New York City will drive technology development and innovation; attract world-class engineers, scientists, entrepreneurs and investors; and generate dozens of new companies and thousands of new jobs,” the university says in a fact sheet.

On October 28th Stanford submitted its proposal to partner with New York City to build StanfordNYC, a world-class applied sciences and engineering campus that is expected to attract new talent to the university and to become a new hub of technological innovation and entrepreneurship in the United States.

Stanford’s response to the New York City Economic Development Corporation's request for proposals called for the 30-year development of a $2.5 billion, 1.9 million-square-foot campus on Roosevelt Island, focusing on graduate-level teaching and research in engineering, technology and entrepreneurship, with an emphasis on transferring discoveries to the marketplace.

The new campus would have provided opportunities for the university to expand its faculty on the East Coast and to develop new research collaborations with New York industries, and the possibility of Stanford undergraduates being able to spend one or more quarters studying in New York.

“StanfordNYC will bring Stanford’s unparalleled track record in research, innovation and entrepreneurship to New York City, the world’s capital of finance, arts and culture,” Stanford President John Hennessy wrote in the submission letter to New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

The New York City campus was expected to house more than 200 faculty members and more than 2,000 students when completed. The StanfordNYC academic program was designed to replicate the innovation-inspiring, job creating, entrepreneurial culture that has been the hallmark of Stanford’s foundational relationship with Silicon Valley that has spawned thousands of companies, including Google, Cisco, Sun Microsystems and Hewlett-Packard.

Stanford would have committed an initial $200 million toward StanfordNYC that would include a combination of startup costs and an initial endowment to support research on the campus.

An accelerated launch of the campus was planned for 2013 in partnership with City College of New York, where Stanford would locate its academic program while the new campus is built. In addition, joint programs would be developed by CCNY and Stanford in undergraduate entrepreneurship education and to allow undergraduate students at CCNY to pursue graduate degrees at StanfordNYC. Stanford also anticipated additional partnerships with New York-area institutions and outreach to local K-12 schools as part of a robust community engagement program.

A faculty committee worked over the summer months to design an academic program for StanfordNYC that draws from Stanford’s top-ranked programs in engineering, computer science, entrepreneurship, business and technology management. One initial emphasis was be on research and education related to New York’s dominant industries of finance and media. Stanford's School of Engineering and Graduate School of Business, as well as its Hasso Plattner Institute of Design and Stanford Technology Ventures Program, would be located at StanfordNYC and be seamlessly integrated with the California campus through the use of telepresence technology and online education.

“We can create a community of scholars in an entirely new environment, generating the next wave of ideas and breakthroughs. Innovation happens when you are challenged by new problems, and look at solutions from new perspectives,” said Jim Plummer, dean of Stanford's School of Engineering.

Silicon Valley venture capitalists indicated that they would follow Stanford to New York City.

“It is no accident – U.S. venture capital plus Stanford tech/business entrepreneurship has helped transform the world economy,” said John Doerr and Mary Meeker of Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, who sent a letter in support of the StanfordNYC proposal. “If NYC selects Stanford as its partner for the next great tech/business innovation center, it should help turbocharge an already growing center of innovation which is helping extend our country’s leadership in technology.”

StanfordNYC would occupy an iconic, state-of-the-art, environmentally sustainable campus on 10 acres on Roosevelt Island, expected to open in 2016. Of four possible locations put forth by the city, Stanford selected Roosevelt Island, on the East
The proposal is in response to Mayor Bloomberg’s call in late July for specific plans for an applied sciences facility in New York City. The city is putting forward up to $100 million to the successful institution as well as access to city-owned land. Stanford was one of 27 institutions that responded with an expression of interest last March, and spent three months since the city issued the RFP developing its detailed plans. Stanford’s 600-page submission includes detailed academic, financial, design and legal documents. The proposal was approved by the Stanford University Board of Trustees at their October meeting and was reviewed and discussed in the Faculty Senate on Oct. 13.

On October 31, New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg announced that the city received seven qualifying responses to Applied Sciences NYC, its initiative to build or expand a state-of-the-art engineering and applied sciences campus in the city. Bloomberg said that the city, along with an advisory committee, would evaluate the proposals over the next several weeks, with a decision expected in January. (Earlier, the city said it would make a decision in December.)

The institutions that submitted proposals were:

- Amity University (India)
- Carnegie Mellon University and Steiner Studios
- Columbia University
- Cornell University and Technion-Israel Institute of Technology
- New York University, with the University of Toronto, the University of Warwick (England), the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, the City University of New York and Carnegie Mellon University
- New York Genome Center, with the Mount Sinai School of Medicine; The Rockefeller University and the State University of New York at Stony Brook
- Stanford University
- The City College of New York
- The City University of New York

- Technion-Israel Institute of Technology
- New York University, with the University of Toronto, the University of Warwick (England), the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, the City University of New York and Carnegie Mellon University
- New York Genome Center, with the Mount Sinai School of Medicine; The Rockefeller University and the State University of New York at Stony Brook
- Stanford University
- The City College of New York
- The City University of New York

The trustees were briefed on the status of the negotiations and indicated that they were not comfortable with the city’s requests and asked us to continue negotiating. Negotiations continued for several more days, and it was concluded that Stanford could not reach an agreement with the city that would assure that a Stanford campus in NYC could be successful. A final decision was made after President Hennessy spoke to Deputy Mayor Bob Steel and Mayor Michael Bloomberg on the morning of Dec. 16.

In preparing the proposal, responding to questions and through the negotiations, the university spent about $3 million on the proposal, primarily for outside consultants and architects. This was required for the due diligence to fully respond to an extensive RFP for a project that ultimately could have cost $2.5 billion over several decades. The NYC RFP required all competing institutions to turn in completed plans, including architectural renderings, as well as numerous legal documents that required the assistance of New York land use and real estate attorneys and experts, as well as labor experts. Much of Stanford’s proposal was also developed in-house, with considerable input on the academic program coming from faculty.
In the end the StanfordNYC team said that it was worth the effort. "We received tremendously positive visibility over the course of almost a year throughout the East Coast. It was gratifying to see the welcome that we received in NYC, not just by the tech industry, but also by the public. There was genuine excitement at the potential for Stanford in New York. The people of New York now have an increased appreciation of the excellence of Stanford, both academically and in terms of our contributions to technology and our ability to generate job growth. Here in California, our participation in this NYC effort was in keeping with our reputation for exploring bold ideas. As is well known in Silicon Valley, not all great ideas work out, but that does not mean it is a mistake to pursue them. Stanford engaged in this selection process because of the project’s great promise, and withdrew when it became apparent to us that this would not be an achievable undertaking for the university."

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