GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Institute for Technology and Civic Leadership

Fostering Technological Stewardship, Innovative Leadership, and Thoughtful Public Discourse for a Democratic Society

FOUNDING CHARTER

Vision

Rapid technological changes mean that the citizens of tomorrow will not only need the historical, ethical, and constitutional knowledge that earlier generations required; they will also need the judgment to govern technologies that evolve at exponential speed, technologies powerful enough to destabilize the very system civic education aims to protect. The complex nature of the future of civic engagement requires a whole-of-institute approach that has thus far been absent in civic education.

The Institute for Technology and Civic Leadership at Georgia Tech will be a pioneering academic and public-facing unit that prepares students to lead in a democratic society and solve the complex technological and social challenges of our time. Grounded in Georgia Tech's mission to "develop leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition" and the foundational principles of the American republic, the Institute will combine transformative teaching on ethics, American history, Western civilization, and constitutional law, multi-stakeholder engagement, and bipartisan dialogue to develop and support civic-minded technological leaders and policy-aware innovators—equipping them to lead in a pluralistic constitutional republic and an interconnected, innovation-driven world.

The Institute reaffirms Georgia Tech as a space for the free exchange of ideas, mutual learning, including meaningful engagement with foundational texts and seminal works, and common ground discovery. Its work will be informed by a commitment to open debate, scientific inquiry, an evidence-based approach to addressing complex issues, and civic responsibility.

Grounded in the ideals of the American founding, this effort is guided by six core principles:

1. Intellectual integrity
2. Diversity of perspectives
3. Civil dialogue and responsible civic engagement
4. Collaborative problem solving
5. Civic-minded and ethical technological practice
6. Non-partisan societal engagement

At the core of the Institute are two integrated components:

- An innovation, technology, policy, and business center – a nonpartisan, multi-stakeholder solutions accelerator and think tank
- An academic and leadership development program – dedicated to exploring issues impacting technology and innovation, Western civilization, leadership, ethics, and the conditions that sustain a democratic society, through interdisciplinary curricula and immersive experiences for Georgia Tech students

This vision is already taking shape. In the spring of 2026, Georgia Tech formally launched the Institute for Technology and Civic Leadership. The inaugural Perspectives on Technology and Civic Leadership Symposium convened world-renowned scholars alongside Georgia Tech faculty, staff, and students to discuss how higher education can help revitalize civics in the United States

and prepare future leaders—from across disciplines—to fully participate in civic life. The Institute now moves from concept to implementation, with an energized community working to build a new model of civic leadership for a technological age.

Rationale

Technological disruption is reshaping every aspect of modern life—from national security and economic competitiveness to public health, environmental sustainability, and social cohesion. Yet our public and private institutions, leadership capacity, and public discourse often fail to keep pace with these changes. Georgia Tech is uniquely positioned to bridge this gap with a new model of civic leadership education that combines foundational civics training with an understanding of the technological disruptions and innovations that will dominate future generations.

Georgia Tech's new technology-enriched civic education model begins with a strong foundation in Western civilization, American history, constitutional republicanism, ethics, and civic discourse. In addition to that core, the Institute recognizes that future leaders will tackle new social problems rooted in today's rapid technological change. By embedding a technological focus in traditional civic education, the Institute's graduates will be prepared to contribute to the continued protection of civic life, even as technological change accelerates.

A technology-focused civic education model will allow the Institute to reach Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) students who may have been missing in earlier models of civic education. The future of our constitutional republic depends on engaging engineers and computer scientists with the skills and knowledge necessary to fully contribute to public life. The Institute's innovative approach will ensure that all graduates are prepared to lead, limiting the incivility and polarization of today and protecting our political system in a rapidly advancing technological world.

As one of the world's premier STEM research universities, with a history of collaboration across government and industry, Georgia Tech can pioneer a new model for educating responsible civic leaders and informing decision-making in the age of AI, cybersecurity, space exploration, and beyond.

Strategic Pillars

The Institute is built around two mutually reinforcing pillars that together create enduring academic, policy, and public impact.

Pillar 1: The Innovation, Technology, Policy, and Business Center
• Convene bipartisan and cross-sector leaders around key technological questions with high-stakes policy and business implications.
• Publish a regular "Policy and Business Outlook for Technology and AI" report to equip policymakers, business leaders, and all citizens with timely insights on emerging technologies, legislation, and regulation.

- Leverage Georgia Tech's data modeling, simulation, and systems expertise for real-time decision-support tools, open-access datasets, and dashboards on technological adoption, policy developments and governance issues.
- Offer a hands-on "Technology, AI, and Policy Bootcamp" to train policymakers, nonprofit and civic leaders, and citizens.
- Host fellows, conferences, publications, and events to enable national and global dialogue.
- Engage with federal stakeholders through a presence in Washington, D.C. and deepen engagements with local citizens and entities across Georgia.
- Operate as a solutions-focused, non-advocacy think tank that amplifies Georgia Tech's expertise and impact through societal engagement as a non-partisan, honest-broker.

Pillar 2: Technology, Leadership, and Civic Thought in Undergraduate Education

- Develop interdisciplinary courses and credentials in Technology Leadership and Society, open to all majors.
- Spearhead student-focused courses and programming centered on foundational documents, Western civilization, American history, ethics and enduring debates about economic, social, and political life.
- Offer technology leadership, Western civilization, deliberative discourse, and ethics education to students in engineering, computing, business, and science majors.
- Offer programming that prepares students to collaborate across ideological divides, fostering discourse, deliberation, and collaboration.
- Convene high-profile national and international dialogues that model rigorous debate across differences.
- Host speaker series, debates, and forums open to the public.
- Serve as a hub for civic leadership education for the University System of Georgia, with deliberative discourse and civics training for student leaders statewide.
- Explore summer academies and K-12 teacher training programs to expand civic education across Georgia and beyond.

Institutional Structure and Funding

The Institute will be a permanent interdisciplinary academic, research, and public engagement unit that is uniquely independent in its operational function. The institute shall not be housed within or subordinate to an existing college, school, or department. The Institute shall enable collaboration across all colleges, the Georgia Tech Research Institute, and the Enterprise Innovation Institute.

The Institute shall have an external board of leaders, executives, and scholars selected by the President of Georgia Tech. Each member of the external advisory group shall be committed to the mission of the Institute, which is to educate students in the principles, institutions, responsibilities,

and civic virtues of the American Constitutional Republic, including studying founding documents and texts central to the American experience and the intellectual and institutional traditions of Western civilization and applying those principles to the technological issues of our day to seek to ensure that our technology does not exceed our humanity. This is core to Georgia Tech's mission to prepare leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition.

The President of Georgia Tech, with the advice and counsel of the Institute's external advisory board, shall select the Executive Director of the Institute who shall report directly to the President or Provost of Georgia Tech. The Executive Director shall hire faculty for the Institute, in accordance with all Board of Regents and Georgia Tech policies, procedures and standards, who are committed to the Institute's mission. The Executive Director shall receive input from an internal advisory board of faculty from across Georgia Tech who will aid in program implementation and make nonbinding recommendations.

The President of Georgia Tech and the Executive Director of the Institute shall report on at least an annual basis regarding the progress, programming, and initiatives of the Institute to the Chancellor, the Academic Affairs Committee, and the Board of Regents. The Institute shall remain subject to applicable Board of Regents policy and to the authority of the President, Chancellor, Academic Affairs Committee, and Board of Regents, including required approval processes for academic programs and material changes to the Institute's mission, name, structure, or governance.

The Institute's funding will include:

- A transformative lead gift to endow the Institute and establish its physical and programmatic infrastructure.
- Named funds for endowed faculty, guest lectures, executive leadership, teaching fellows, public programming, and D.C. operations.
- State funds and tuition revenue to support annual operations and strategic partnerships with philanthropic, civic, and industry leaders.

Why Georgia Tech, Why Now

Georgia Tech's scale, disciplinary breadth, STEM focus, and mission-driven identity make it the ideal home for this Institute—one that teaches engineers, scientists, designers, and policy leaders not only how to build the future, but how to steward it responsibly in a constitutional republic.

In a moment of rising polarization, technological disruption, and global competition, Georgia Tech can lead in shaping not just the next generation of innovators—but the next generation of principled, civically grounded leaders.

The Institute is not an abstract idea. With a successful inaugural symposium, initial state investment, and strong institutional backing, the Institute is moving rapidly from launch to implementation. The work is already underway.