



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 30, 2014

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES THINKCHICAGO: LOLLAPALOOZA 2015

125 of the Nation's Top Technology and Engineering Students in Chicago To Learn About Chicago's Growing Technology Industry and Vibrant Urban Culture

Mayor Emanuel announced today the launch of ThinkChicago: Lollapalooza 2015, a three-day event that will introduce the city's fast-growing technology industry and one of the country's most popular musical festivals to 125 of the nation's top technology and computer science students from across the country. This year, ThinkChicago received approximately 900 applications spanning 11 states and 28 universities. This summer's program will be the seventh installment of the successful ThinkChicago program established by Mayor Emanuel in 2011 and the third annual program held during Lollapalooza. ThinkChicago: Lollapalooza is organized by the Mayor's Office, World Business Chicago, University of Illinois, Chicago Ideas Week, 1871, and Lollapalooza.

"Ensuring that the next generation of entrepreneurs and business leaders decide to live and work in Chicago is critical to the continued growth of our technology industry and our economy," said Mayor Emanuel. "ThinkChicago: Lollapalooza places Chicago top of mind for these students who will be driving technology innovation into the future."

The students selected this year come from a variety of engineering and computer science backgrounds. Applicants were selected based on academic excellence and demonstrated commitment to technology and innovation. Of the 125 students accepted into the program, 34 percent are computer science, 21 percent engineering, 17 percent business/information technology, 11 percent design, 7 percent social sciences, 5 percent mathematics, and 5 percent economics and natural sciences majors.

"From early stage startups to Fortune 500 companies, Chicago's technology ecosystem is thriving. It's essential we continue this momentum by attracting talent from across the country," said World Business Chicago President & CEO Jeff Malehorn. "By inviting students of engineering, innovation, and entrepreneurship to explore the city and its tech community through ThinkChicago, we are building our talent base to accommodate a robust tech

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

economy for the future."

World Business Chicago and ThinkChicago are also partnering with LinkedIn to identify ways in which students can best develop the skills needed for the most in-demand jobs, and to help the City of Chicago maximize attraction and retention of a talented workforce. Results of this data-driven project will be announced during ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week 2015.

"ThinkChicago provides a window into Chicago's growing tech scene that ultimately will become a highway to the city for the best and brightest graduates from our three campuses and other top universities across the country," said University of Illinois President Timothy Killeen.

This summer's program will serve as the seventh installment of the Mayor's successful ThinkChicago program and third annual program held during Lollapalooza. University students will attend a variety of events, including:

- Keynote talks by Deputy Mayor Steve Koch, Harper Reed (CTO Obama 2012, former CTO Threadless) and Sunny Williams (Founder, TinyDocs)
- Panel discussion with: Terry Howerton (CEO, TechNexus Venture Collaborative), Esther Joy King (Director of Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Technology, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity), Jimmy Odom (Founder and CEO, WeDeliver), Tom Schenk, Jr. (Chief Data Officer, City of Chicago), and Craig Vodnik (Founder and VP Operations, cleverbridge)
- Break-out sessions with: Sharon Bautista (Senior UX Strategist, One North Interactive), Mike McGee (Co-Founder, The Starter League), Charles Adler (Founder, Kickstarter), Adam McElhinney (Director of Data Science, Uptake), and Andrew Sieja (CEO and Founder, kCura)
- An architectural boat tour with Chicago tech leaders
- Company showcase featuring leadership and engineers from more than 20 Chicago tech companies
- All 3 days of the Lollapalooza 2014 music festival, plus a walkthrough of the artist compound and production areas and a Q&A session with Lollapalooza producers.

New to the program this year is the ThinkChicago Civic Tech Challenge, a pitch competition among ThinkChicago participants to propose ways in which the City of Chicago can use technology to encourage civic engagement among its constituents. Proposals may address increasing volunteer and service involvement among residents, how to better connect community members with services, new City e-services, or how to catalyze the thousands of Lollapalooza attendees for social good and civic engagement. The winning proposal will receive VIP passes for Lollapalooza 2016 and automatic acceptance to ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week 2015.

"ThinkChicago highlights Chicago's role as a technological and entrepreneurial powerhouse, and draws graduates to our city to launch their careers in technology and beyond," said Chicago Ideas Founder and Co-Chairman Brad Keywell. "We're proud to partner with the City of Chicago, the University of Illinois, World Business Chicago and 1871 to bring our nation's most talented students to our city."

Additionally, this year ThinkChicago will host an alumni engagement session, where past program attendees working or attending school in Chicago will participate in a planning session with ThinkChicago organizers to discuss ways to improve the ThinkChicago platform, better engage ThinkChicago alumni moving forward, and develop a ThinkChicago community for ongoing student alumni engagement.

"ThinkChicago is a unique opportunity for students to explore Chicago's technology and entrepreneurial communities," said 1871 CEO Howard A. Tullman. "Through programs like ThinkChicago, 1871 works to attract and retain top tech talent to create and develop innovative businesses throughout the city. We look forward to welcoming the ThinkChicago participants to 1871 and continuing to showcase Chicago's entrepreneurial ecosystem." In 2014, Lollapalooza was responsible for generating more than \$143 million in economic activity locally and \$61 million in labor income. Lollapalooza operations and attendee expenditure inside and outside the festival were responsible for more than 1,451 full-time equivalent jobs locally. For more information, visit www.lollapalooza.com.

#