

MEMORANDUM

To: Purdue University Board of Trustees

From: Dan DeLaurentis, Executive Vice President for Research

Date: July 07, 2026

Subject: Approval to Transition two Purdue Discovery Park District Institutes to new Initiatives

Purpose

To request approval from the Purdue University Board of Trustees to transition two Discovery Park District research institutes into streamlined, initiative-based structures:

- **Purdue Institute for Integrative Neuroscience (PIIN)** will transition into the **Translational Neurocircuitry Initiative (TNI)**.
- **Purdue Institute for Inflammation, Immunology, and Infectious Disease (PI4D)** will transition into the **Biomolecular Design Initiative (BDI)**.

The rationale for this proposal is described in more detail in the attached memorandum from Dr. Rao S. Govindaraju, Vice President for Discovery Park Institutes and Centers. Purdue policy C-6 (Centers and Institutes) requires that a dissolution of a University-level institute of this type be approved by the same authority that endorsed its establishment in the first place. In this case, the Board effectively ratified the creation of these two institutes at the time of naming their inaugural directors in 2017.

Although the current proposal does not technically involve a “dissolution” but rather a reorganization of the two institutes in question, we interpret policy C-6 to require action by the Board to transition them to “initiative” status. As described in Dr. Govindaraju’s memo, and as reiterated below, this measure does not alter the core mission or commitments of either institute.

Background

- **Past Achievements:** Both institutes have driven significant academic and commercial success. PIIN built a campus-wide neuroscience community involving over 160 faculty across 30 departments and six colleges. PI4D expanded Purdue’s NIH-supported research portfolio and generated approximately 480 approved patents.
- **Strategic Realignment:** Moving to agile initiative structures provides a sharper thematic focus. TNI will advance research on neural circuits and human health applications. BDI will focus on the intersection of biology, engineering, computation, and medicine. Core missions and commitments will remain unchanged.
- **Funding and Sustainability Timeline:** The Office of Research and the Discovery Park District Institutes will provide three years of phased central funding (July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029) to help both initiatives transition to self-sustaining operations.
 - **TNI Support:** ~\$230,000 in FY27 (includes 25% director academic-year effort and three weeks of summer salary). Central funding will decrease by roughly 50% each year for FY28 and FY29.

- **BDI Support:** ~\$300,000 in FY27 (includes 25% director academic-year effort and three weeks of summer salary). Central funding will decrease by roughly 50% each year for FY28 and FY29.

Requested Action

I respectfully request that the Board of Trustees approve the structural transition and associated funding plan for both institutes, effective July 1, 2026.



Dan DeLaurentis
Executive Vice President for Research

To: Dan DeLaurentis, Executive Vice President for Research, Office of Research

From: Rao S. Govindaraju, Vice President, Discovery Park District Institutes and Centers

Date: July 2, 2026

Re: Request for transitioning Purdue Institute for Integrative Neuroscience (PIIN) to Translational Neurocircuitry Initiative, and Purdue Institute for Inflammation, Immunology, and Infectious Disease (PI4D) to and Biomolecular Design Initiative, respectively.

Dear EVPR DeLaurentis,

On behalf of Discovery Park District Institutes and Centers (DPDI&C), I am writing to formally request transitioning of:

- (i) Purdue Institute for Integrative Neuroscience (PIIN) to Translational Neurocircuitry Initiative (TNI), and
- (ii) Purdue Institute for Inflammation, Immunology, and Infectious Disease (PI4D) to Biomolecular Design Initiative (BDI).

Background information and impacts are shared below along with the rationale for the request.

Background and Impacts

Over the years, both PIIN and PI4D have advanced innovative research in critical life and health sciences areas for the benefit of society. Spanning thirty departments across six colleges, Purdue's neuroscience enterprise includes more than one hundred and sixty faculty engaged in ongoing neuroscience-related research and scholarship. This deep pool of expertise and talent has positioned Purdue as a leader in key research areas within the broad field of neuroscience. Similarly, PI4D has helped secure a substantial increase in NIH funding for Purdue faculty, and PI4D-affiliated faculty have successfully produced about 480 approved patents, demonstrating the institute's strong record of research translation and innovation.

Rationale for Changes

As Purdue University blazes new trails in research aligned with emerging strategic opportunities, these institutes will benefit from evolving into more agile and focused initiatives capable of pursuing the next giant leap while enabling clearer branding, strategic prioritization, and recognition of themes that show the most promise for societal benefit. These transitions reflect an evolution in how Purdue supports interdisciplinary work, with a strategic move towards a more distributed and collaborative approach in these areas.

Thus, TNI will focus on understanding how neural circuits fail in central nervous system disorders, accelerating the development of new drugs and devices that reduce healthcare costs and improve quality of life for millions. Purdue researchers are uniquely positioned to address this massive challenge because we have experts in neurocircuitry who work across different scales, along with biologists and engineers with tools for advanced imaging and electrophysiological technologies. There is also unique expertise in disease models and in AI for processing large

datasets. This initiative can have a tremendous impact on the unmet need for Parkinson's and Alzheimer's patients, with potential benefits extending to similar neurological conditions such as autism.

As in biology, evolution drives the advancement of more adapted organisms, and PI4D will transition to BDI focusing on connecting faculty from the diverse life and physical sciences, computing/AI, engineering, liberal arts, and business fields. Basic discovery will remain the cornerstone, with an added translational component of designing new molecules using cutting-edge technologies. These molecules will be novel/proprietary and will have scientific and commercial applications.

These changes will better reflect the future focus of Purdue efforts while aligning more meaningfully with the Campus One Health Initiative.

Operational Aspects

These new initiatives will retain their respective directors – namely Chris Rochet for TNI and Richard Kuhn for BDI. These new initiatives will continue to be a part of the DPDI&C family and will appear in DPDI&C web pages, presentations, and printed materials.

As PIIN and PI4D were established with approval by the Purdue Board of Trustees, the transitions to TNI and BDI, respectively, will also need to be ratified by the BOT. In order to move onto the new structure as expeditiously as possible, we hope this can occur at the August 7 BOT meeting.

Your support is being sought in seeking approval for the transitioning of these institutes to initiatives within DPDI&C.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Rao S. Govindaraju

Vice President, Discovery Park District Institutes and Centers