

Frequently Asked Questions

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What is LabCentral, LabCentral 610, and The LabCentral Learning Lab?

LabCentral is a first-of-its-kind shared laboratory workspace designed as a launchpad for high-potential life-sciences and biotech startups in the heart of the Kendall Square, Cambridge, biotech innovation hub. LabCentral offers a supportive and nurturing environment designed to inspire interaction and collaboration as startups work side by side on some of the most exciting potential breakthroughs in diagnostics and therapeutics — across the spectrum of diseases.

We provide everything that startups need to begin laboratory operations immediately following move-in and propel their science forward faster and more cost-efficiently. This includes first-class, fully permitted shared lab and office space, facility and administrative support, skilled laboratory personnel, targeted programming, a domain-relevant expert speaker series, social and networking opportunities — as well as the other vital services and support that startups need to perform the critical research necessary to transition into commercial-stage enterprises that improve human health.

Since the beginning, we have been in a constant dialog with our residents, sponsors, and the larger biotech stakeholder community to adjust, adapt, and fine-tune our model and service offerings to meet current and future needs.

We opened our doors with our initial staff and a handful of startups in our 700 Main Street location for a “soft opening” in November 2013. Then, we had room for about 30 early-stage companies and 125 scientists and entrepreneurs. We already had a waiting list by our “official opening” and ribbon cutting the following April, during which the governor announced a new capital grant for us to grow. And by August 2017, we did just that. We more than doubled the capacity for startups at that original LabCentral site, expanding to fill the entire 150,000 square feet of our historic-landmark building.

Our model has helped resident startups meet their scientific milestones quickly and efficiently; they’ve thrived and added staff – often citing LabCentral’s support and coworking model as a key factor. In fact, many are so successful that they’ve grown too large to fit at our original 700 Main Street site. Thus, the idea for expansion site was born.

LabCentral 610

In December 2017, we opened LabCentral 610. Generously supported by Pfizer Inc. Our 33,000-square-foot facility is on the third floor of Pfizer’s Kendall Square Worldwide Research and Development building across a shared driveway from our original site. It has room for six early- to mid-stage companies “graduating” from or outgrowing the current LabCentral space, as well as other startups interested in securing space in the thriving bioscience Kendall Square neighborhood. Eligible startups include those with high-impact science, excellent execution, and significant prospects for achieving scientific and business success whose space needs exceed current LabCentral offerings.

Capacity

Today, at 700 and 610 Main Street, we have capacity to serve approximately 450 scientists and entrepreneurs in about 70 companies across our two-building campus.

The LabCentral Learning Lab

Thanks to the generous support of New England BioLabs (NEB), we opened the new community-oriented STEM facility in the fall of 2017 as part of our major expansion in our historic 700 Main Street location. The Learning Lab comprises 1,270 square feet of laboratory and adjoining classroom space. Our goal is to work with academic and community partners to create a new kind of educational experience in the heart of innovation in Kendall Square. This lab will serve as a community hub, forging lasting connections, and inspiring tomorrow’s innovators. At scale, programming will advance thousands of students and teachers into the future of science. The facility has also become the new home of BioBuilder, a STEM education program that capitalizes on the excitement found through experiential learning. What started in the Department of Biological Engineering at MIT with a handful of local high school teachers receiving training modules in synthetic biology has grown into a recognized name in the field of STEM education worldwide. The BioBuilder curriculum is now taught in almost every state in the U.S. and in more than 30 countries around the world. BioBuilder has also been an active collaborator, working closely with the LabCentral team as it developed the concept for the Learning Lab. NEB and LabCentral are looking forward to hosting many of the BioBuilder core programs, as well as other STEM programs and community groups in this exciting new space.

What are LabCentral key statistics? 2014-2017

Companies served; average length of stay (through May 2018)	60+ / ~18 mos
Companies “graduated,” moving into spaces of their own	38
Monies raised in venture capital, grants, and other sources to further research and commercialization goals *excluding a 2014 IPO. As per our requirements, no company had raised more than \$7.5 million before being accepted to LabCentral	>\$2 billion*
New direct jobs created to fuel the US economy Estimates are there are as many as five indirect jobs created for each direct job created	1,197
Patents filed / patents granted	392 / 69

How is LabCentral financed?

A private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) institution, LabCentral was funded originally in part by a \$5 million capital grant from the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC), with support from its real-estate partner, MIT. A second \$5 million capital grant from the MLSC funded our 2017 expansion. Other founding sponsors in addition to MLSC include Johnson & Johnson Innovation | JLABS, Roche, and Triumvirate Environmental. Pfizer provides support for LabCentral 610. We have leveraged the original MLSC funding to bring in more than \$25 million in additional donations of cash, state-of-the-art equipment, and in-kind services. New England Biolabs, Inc. is the primary sponsor of the LabCentral Learning Lab.