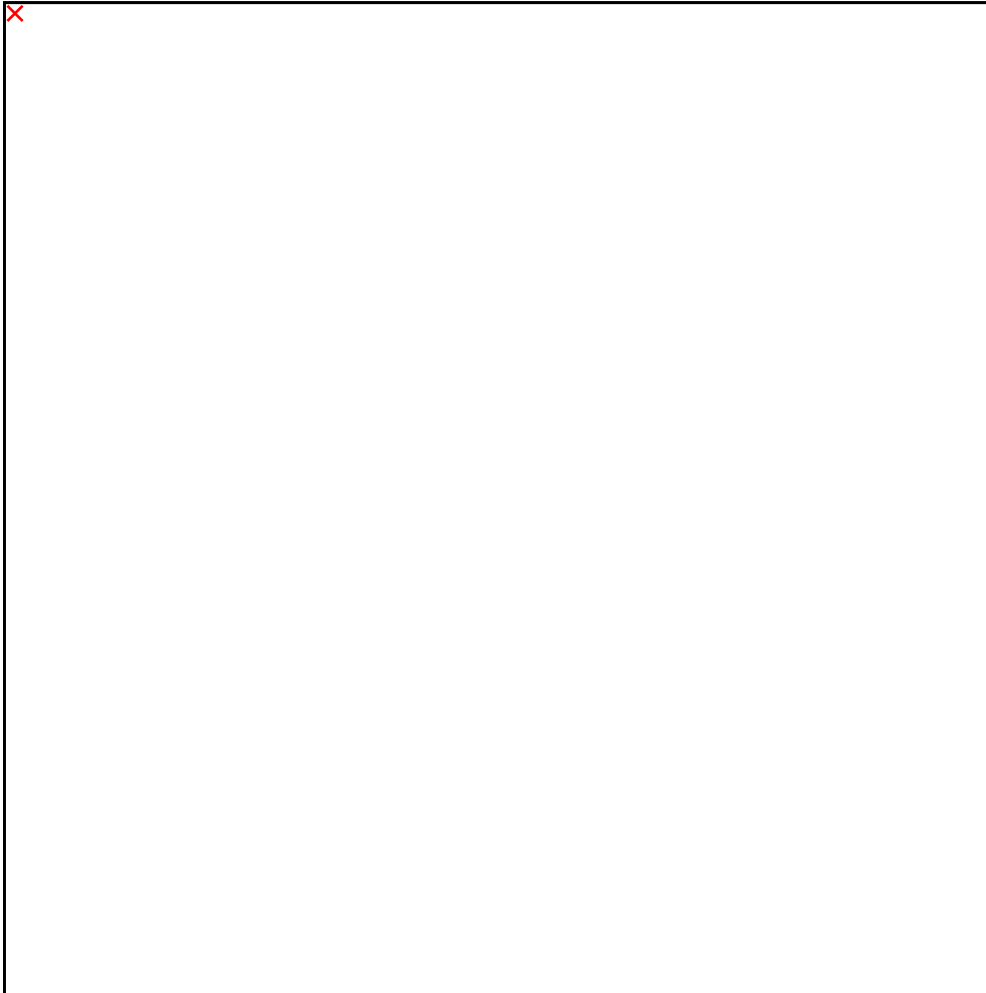


The David Rubenstein Forum Now Open for Booking

11/18/2020



(Chicago, IL) November 18, 2020 -- The University of Chicago proudly announces that the [David Rubenstein Forum](#), an innovative new meeting facility on its iconic South Side campus, is now open for booking. The Forum provides a dynamic convening hub for the kind of rigorous inquiry, vigorous debate, and academic collaboration that defines the University of Chicago, and makes it a destination for scholars, students, thought leaders and dignitaries from around the world. The building, designed by the acclaimed New York architecture firm of Diller Scofidio + Renfro and targeted for LEED Gold certification, provides the University with much-needed meeting spaces for workshops, symposia, lectures and other activities, while providing a green, environmentally friendly retreat that enhances contemplation and scholarship.

The Forum is also available to corporate and non-profit groups searching for an elevated alternative for intellectual engagement. Conveniently and centrally located at the intersection of 60th Street and Woodlawn Avenue, the striking, ten-story building features a biophilic design that offers expansive natural light and stunning views of the campus, the city skyline, Lake Michigan and the historic Midway Plaisance.

The Forum derives its name from a generous gift by noted philanthropist **David M. Rubenstein**, a 1973 graduate of the University of Chicago Law School and a member of the University's Board of Trustees. Rubenstein is Co-Founder and Co-Executive Chairman of The Carlyle Group, one of the world's most successful private investment firms.

The Forum is a longtime vision of University of Chicago President **Robert J. Zimmer**, who recognized the urgent need for a centrally located, technically sophisticated venue that could be used by the University's various departments for a wide array of high profile programs and events, in addition to serving as an intellectual destination for Chicago's professional community and beyond.

“The David Rubenstein Forum has the distinctive purpose of fostering intellectual exchange, engagement and collaboration in an environment that encourages contemplation and reflection,” said **Katie Callow-Wright**, Executive Vice President of the University of Chicago. “With its beautiful campus setting, striking architecture and high-quality services, the Forum provides a convening space unlike any other.”

BENCHMARK®, the Woodlands (Houston)-based global hospitality company, has been selected to manage the day-to-day operations of the Forum. BENCHMARK will manage a team of over 60 professionals equipped to deliver state-of-the-art hospitality services across the Forum’s various programs, including food and beverage, sales and marketing, event management, operations, audiovisual and more.

“We are very proud to partner with the University of Chicago,” says Benchmark CEO **Alex Cabañas**. “For nearly 40 years, Benchmark has pioneered and refined the concept of a dedicated, technologically advanced conference center. We understand and embrace the global vision and unique demands of the University of Chicago for creating a distinctive, productive and technologically advanced learning environment and meeting experience.”

Custom designed for collaboration

The Forum’s striking, contemporary design features approx. 70,000 square feet of usable interior space, including Friedman Hall, an auditorium optimized for spoken word and equipped to accommodate 285 guests with adjacent pre-function space; the multi-purpose University Room which can accommodate a 500-guest banquet, 600+ via theater seating, or be divided into two rooms of 250 guests each; the top floor City View Room providing a more formal setting with expansive views accommodating up to 145 guests; all in addition to a variety of meeting and smaller breakout rooms.

For food and beverage options, the Forum features the sophisticated **BAR DAVID** street-level wine bar and café, which accommodates up to 74 guests, in addition to an upscale dining room designed to seat up to 92 guests, with the option for clients to host private evening events in an adjacent VIP space. A state-of-the-art kitchen meets the complex dietary demands of today’s meeting attendees, as award-winning Executive Chef Marco Bahena provides food that is fresh, locally sourced and creatively prepared. Refreshment breaks at the Forum match the elevated experience found in every other aspect of the venue, with kiosks available throughout featuring in-house, chef-made platters of gourmet treats with an array of health-focused and delicious snacks.

The Forum’s Event Concierge offers superior support to help curate flawless, productive meetings and gatherings. From warm greetings and coat check service on arrival to technology orientations and swiftly accommodating program changes and additions, conferences and events are executed seamlessly from start to finish.

COVID-related standards

The health and safety of the Forum’s guests and employees is paramount. Stringent industry best practices and sanitation standards are implemented throughout the Forum in accordance with CDC guidelines, as well as State, City and University protocols.

About the David Rubenstein Forum

The David Rubenstein Forum’s dynamic architecture is designed to foster engagement and exchange of ideas while allowing private space for smaller groups and individual retreats. The building is composed of a two-story base and a ten-story tower. Glass walls bring in natural light and afford expansive views of Chicago’s iconic Midway Plaisance, the Chicago Loop and Lake Michigan as well as the University campus and Woodlawn community. The tower is organized as a stack of “neighborhoods” with meeting and communal spaces that offer diverse environments suited to different activities, from structured spaces to more animated and spontaneous features. Each neighborhood coalesces around a central lounge that offers a sense of community and identity. The building prompts its varied conference guests to interact with one another to enhance intellectual exchange. The lower floors of the Forum are open and dynamic with connections to the campus and the community in all directions. Ascending the building, there is a progressive retreat to more contemplative spaces.

For more information on the David Rubenstein Forum please visit davidrubensteinforum.uchicago.edu or call 773-702-2110.

About the University of Chicago

The University of Chicago is a leading academic and research institution that has driven new ways of thinking since its founding in 1890. As an intellectual destination, the University draws scholars and students from around the world to its campuses and centers around the globe. The University provides a distinctive educational experience and research environment, empowering individuals to challenge conventional thinking and pursue field-defining research that produces new understanding and breakthroughs with global impact

About BENCHMARK®

BENCHMARK®, a global hospitality company, is a leader in the development, management, and marketing of independent, soft branded, and experiential hard branded resorts, hotels, and conference centers. In addition to the company's award-winning full service **Benchmark Resorts & Hotels**, its lifestyle and luxury **Gemstone Collection**, and its industry-leading Benchmark Conference Center division, **etc.venues**, is a leading provider of contemporary city center venues for meetings, signature events, and conferences. BENCHMARK's combined portfolio features more than 80 unique projects across three continents. The company is passionately committed to delivering personal, inspiring, and memory-making experiences, driving total revenue and profitability, and cultivating an award winning, "Be the Difference" culture for all its employees. BENCHMARK is based in The Woodlands (Houston), Texas, with offices in London, England; Miami, Florida; Park City, Utah; Scottsdale, Arizona; New Brunswick, New Jersey; Seattle, Washington; and Tokyo, Japan. For more information, please visit www.benchmarkglobalhospitality.com.

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