Synopsys Among Founding Partners for UCLA Samueli School of Engineering's New Semiconductor Hub

What's New: Today, Synopsys was among the founding partners for UCLA Samueli School of Engineering's New Semiconductor Hub. Read today's announcement:

UCLA Samueli School of Engineering launches $125 million semiconductor hubwith top industry leaders

The initiative, backed by major philanthropic investment, aims to advance AI-powered technologies with broad societal impact

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Key takeaways

- A first-of-its-kind Semiconductor Hub at the UCLA Samueli School of Engineering aims to accelerate research, strengthen U.S. leadership and support workforce development in energy-efficient AI-powered chip technologies critical to economic growth and national security.
- Founding partners behind the $125 million effort include Broadcom, Applied Materials, GlobalFoundries, Meta and Synopsys.
- The initial five-year commitment will establish a long-term collaboration across the semiconductor ecosystem, spanning chip design, software, manufacturing, equipment and advanced materials

Broadcom, Applied Materials, GlobalFoundries, Meta and Synopsys are partnering with the establish a $125 millionUCLA Samueli School of Engineering to Semiconductor Hub aimed at accelerating research and workforce development in artificial intelligence powered chip technologies.

To mark the occasion, UCLA Samueli today hosted an event attended by leaders from the founding member companies; three-time UCLA engineering alumnus and the school's namesake Henry Samueli, who chairs the board of Broadcom; UCLA Chancellor Julio Frenk; former California Gov. Gray Davis; members of the media; and about 250 industry executives, UCLA engineering faculty and Ph.D. students. The half-day program, held in Mong Auditorium in Engineering VI and livestreamed for registered remote participants, also featured a video message from U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla, an executive panel and faculty presentations.

"UCLA is uniquely positioned to bring together expertise across disciplines to push the frontiers of semiconductor innovation and translate that knowledge into scalable solutions," said UCLA Chancellor Julio Frenk. "The Semiconductor Hub at the UCLA Samueli School of Engineering reflects our commitment to forging partnerships with industry in a field critical to economic vitality and national security."

The initial five-year commitment, a combination of philanthropic gifts and in-kind support, will establish a long-term collaboration across the semiconductor ecosystem, spanning chip design, software, manufacturing, equipment and advanced materials. Together, these capabilities underpin new classes of intelligent systems that will help strengthen U.S. competitiveness and accelerate innovation across industries.

"The vision for the Semiconductor Hub took shape after a conversation with Henry Samueli, one of the most influential innovators of our time," said Ah-Hyung "Alissa" Park, the Ronald and Valerie Sugar Dean of Engineering at UCLA Samueli. "Henry cofounded Broadcom while teaching at UCLA, underscoring the school's strong position to help drive semiconductor innovation for a new era of AI. We are thrilled to partner with our founding member companies to share a bold vision addressing both the opportunities and challenges that will define the next decade and beyond."

AI technologies are rapidly transforming everyday life with significant societal impact. Building on this momentum, advances in AI enabled chip technologies will benefit people around the world, enabling faster computing and more efficient energy use while improving quality of life through applications such as precision diagnostics, personalized healthcare, safer transportation systems, stronger financial security and better global connectivity. At the same time, these innovations will be guided by considerations of privacy, cybersecurity and responsible use.

"We're proud to join our founding partners in launching the Semiconductor Hub at the UCLA Samueli School of Engineering — a first of-its-kind hub to advance U.S. leadership in semiconductor technology by fostering a comprehensive ecosystem from foundries and silicon to packaging, equipment, electronic design automation tools and cloud infrastructure," said Charlie Kawwas, president of Broadcom's Semiconductor Solutions Group. "Through deep industry-academia collaboration, we are empowering the next generation of engineers and researchers to drive global innovation and tackle the world's most pressing challenges."

The mission of the Semiconductor Hub is to foster sustained, mid- to long-term collaboration between leading faculty and industry partners to drive advances in connectivity, computing and intelligent systems. These efforts aim to accelerate the development and deployment of semiconductor and AI technologies, align research with industry priorities, convene leaders across technology and policy and create pathways to scale innovation for societal benefit globally.

“At Meta, we’re investing in the foundational technologies that will power the next era of AI,” said Yee Jiun Song, vice president of engineering. “UCLA’s Semiconductor Hub is tackling some of the most important challenges in computing — from energy-efficient chip design to advanced packaging — and we’re excited to support research that can help scale innovation across the industry.”

At the foundation of the hub’s work is a co-design approach that combines materials, devices and system architectures. Key efforts include developing AI-native hardware and software systems and addressing challenges in ultra-broadband data links, energy efficiency, thermal management and advanced packaging. The goal is to move beyond traditional silicon-based scaling limits and enable new computing modalities.

“The technologies shaping the next decade — from AI in the data center to AI in the physical world — all depend on advanced semiconductors,” said Tim Breen, CEO of GlobalFoundries. “As a founding member of UCLA’s Semiconductor Hub, GF is proud to work alongside leading researchers and partners Broadcom, Applied Materials, Meta and Synopsys to tackle the industry’s toughest challenges and develop the talent that will sustain U.S. innovation.”

The hub will also support emerging technological frontiers, including real-time artificial general intelligence inference at the edge, self optimizing data centers and next-generation communication systems spanning radio frequency, terahertz and optical domains. These advances are expected to support applications in autonomous vehicles, robotics, environmental monitoring and space-based systems, which will improve safety, resilience and global connectivity.

“Engineering technology’s future demands co-design of software and hardware, electronics and physics, from silicon to system,” said Sassine Ghazi, Synopsys president and CEO. “Synopsys is proud to provide our leading AI-driven engineering solutions to advance the discovery and development of compute-efficient intelligence that can scale.”

The Semiconductor Hub will be based at UCLA Samueli and builds on a long history of collaboration between UCLA and industry. Some of the most impactful chip innovations originating at the school have helped shape leading global semiconductor companies and enabled technologies used from smartphones to medical devices.

“Strengthening the ties between industry and academia is more important than ever as semiconductor complexity increases and the pace of AI development accelerates,” said Gary Dickerson, president and CEO of Applied Materials. “We look forward to working closely with the Semiconductor Hub partners to bring technology breakthroughs to market faster while inspiring the next generation of engineering talent in the U.S.”

Mona Jarrahi, UCLA Samueli’s Northrop Grumman Professor of Electrical Engineering, will serve as the hub’s faculty director. The multidisciplinary research team includes research thrust leads Jason Cong, the Volgenau Professor for Engineering Excellence; and Alexander Balandin, the Fang Lu Professor in Engineering; as well as other UCLA researchers across engineering disciplines.

As part of the initiative’s goal to accelerate workforce development, the hub will support engineering doctoral students in conducting fundamental research at UCLA and yearlong internships at founding member companies.

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