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Big \$125M genome center set to start in the Big Apple

November 3, 2011 | By [Ryan McBride](#)

As protesters occupy Wall Street, top academic groups in New York are getting ready to open one of the country's biggest genome centers in the city. With an expected price tag of \$125 million, the New York Genome Center aims to be a major hub for genome sequencing and bioinformatics. The center hopes to attract biotech talent to a city best known as a force in the financial world--one of the reasons that it's drawn the ire of demonstrators who are fed up with the financial system.

The nonprofit center has been in the works for a while, with players behind the center talking to the media and seeking funding for the colossal endeavor. This week the center said that [Illumina \(\\$ILMN\)](#) and [Roche](#)--two major providers of genome sequencing technology--are contributing tech and expertise to the project. Early next year, the center is expected to get up and running in a gleaming new 120,000-square-foot building. The operation is expected to house not only the sequencing machines and other lab tools to study genomes, but also the data-mining and computational resources to help researchers manage and analyze the data, according to a release.

"We're looking to recruit Ph.D.s, mathematicians and computational biologists, to interpret the sequencing data and to assist researchers on a consulting basis," Nancy Kelly, executive director of the genome center, told *Bio-IT World* in an interview.



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Bioinformatics, of course, has been a critical component to the genomics revolution, and many of the world's top providers of sequencing tools and services have been beefing up their computing capabilities as the volume of genome data skyrockets. Also, the center plans

to use IT to facilitate its collaborations with academic groups and researchers at other institutions. It plans to play a role in training for genomics and bioinformatics professionals in New York as well.

New York's leaders in government and academic officials have been working on multiple new programs to boost the city's profile in the genomics field, building on an already strong cluster of pharmaceutical companies and research universities and hospitals. For instance, universities and research groups--including the New York Genome Center--are vying for \$100 million to establish a science and technology campus in the city, *Bloomberg* has reported this week. The hope is that elevating the city's position in biotech will stimulate job growth in the life sciences.

Adding more computational biologists to the city's labor pool could be a nice hedge against lost jobs on Wall Street, which seems as unpopular as ever.

- here's the center's [release](#)
- read the [interview](#) in *Bio-IT World*

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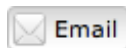
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