

# ASU's semiconductor work to be featured at nation's largest microelectronics trade show

**SEMICON West to be held in Phoenix Oct. 7–9, marking the first time the event will be held outside of California in its 55-year history**

By Lisa Robbins, ASU News  
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Arizona's rise as a semiconductor powerhouse is being recognized by industry leaders, who will gather in Phoenix this week for [SEMICON West](#), the biggest microelectronics trade show in North America.

SEMICON West will run Oct. 7–9 at the Phoenix Convention Center — the first time the flagship event will take place outside of California in its 55-year history. The event will be a showcase of semiconductor advancements made in Arizona and at Arizona State University.

ASU, which leads some of the largest projects as part of the CHIPS and Science Act, works across the entire semiconductor ecosystem — from cutting-edge research to advanced packaging, large-scale manufacturing and workforce development, and will have an extensive presence at SEMICON West.

ASU President Michael Crow will deliver a keynote address, and several faculty experts will give presentations, including Binil Starly, director of the [School of Manufacturing Systems and Networks](#), who will discuss how AI and robots can be used in dangerous conditions in fabrication labs.

ASU will have an exhibit booth designed as a central resource to share the university's semiconductor research, commercial collaboration and workforce-training programs.

SEMICON West's move to Phoenix is a validation of ASU's approach, according to Kyle Squires, senior vice provost of engineering, computing and technology and dean of the [Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering](#).

"We have focused strategically as the university on semiconductor tech, workforce, research and development, innovation, spinouts. And it's always good when the external community around the country and around the world is admiring what you do and [learning](#) more about us," he said.

"This is an opportunity for us to continue to elevate our profile. You have proximity, you have an opportunity to interact and to show examples of what we do."

Workforce development is a specific focus of the convention, as the industry faces thousands of unfilled jobs. A recent survey of companies by the SEMI Foundation, sponsor of the convention, indicates that more than 5% of engineering positions are open because U.S. universities are not producing enough graduates.

ASU engineering students already connected with employers during [Semiconductor Week](#) on campus last month, and the Phoenix event will give them the opportunity to network and become connected to career paths. The convention's largest sponsor is TSMC, the company that is investing billions into a chip-manufacturing complex in Phoenix.

"ASU is one of the largest producers of talent that is needed by the industry ecosystem, not just one particular company," Starly said.

"Our academic programs are aligned to produce that — not just at the bachelor's level, but also master's and PhD."

Students and recent grads in engineering, computer science, chemistry, physics, math, data science and business are encouraged to attend SEMICON and can get a [free pass](#) that admits them to exhibits, networking events, keynote addresses and panel discussions. There's also a lounge for young professionals and a spot for free headshots.

ASU will also show how it's been reaching [K-12 students](#) to spark interest in careers in the semiconductor industry. ASU and ASU Prep leaders will present their K-12 microelectronics education model, which aims to reach 25,000 K-12 students and 500 teachers in the next five years with exploration events, experiential learning and academic pathways for high school.

Also, a student-created game, [Future Fab Heroes](#), will be launched at the Arizona Science Center, and will also be in the SEMI Foundation booth at SEMICON West. The immersive training simulation, geared to middle schoolers, can be downloaded and played by anyone.

"We didn't outsource that to professional developers — it was students developing with some staff and mentor guidance. They are video game designers and computer programmers who know nothing about microelectronics, and they've had to learn it," Starly said.

On Oct. 9, ASU and Applied Materials will mark the launch of the [Materials-to-Fab Center](#) at ASU in the Macrotechnology Works building located at ASU Research Park. That \$270 million lab, announced two years ago, will speed the transfer of innovations from ideation to fab prototype.

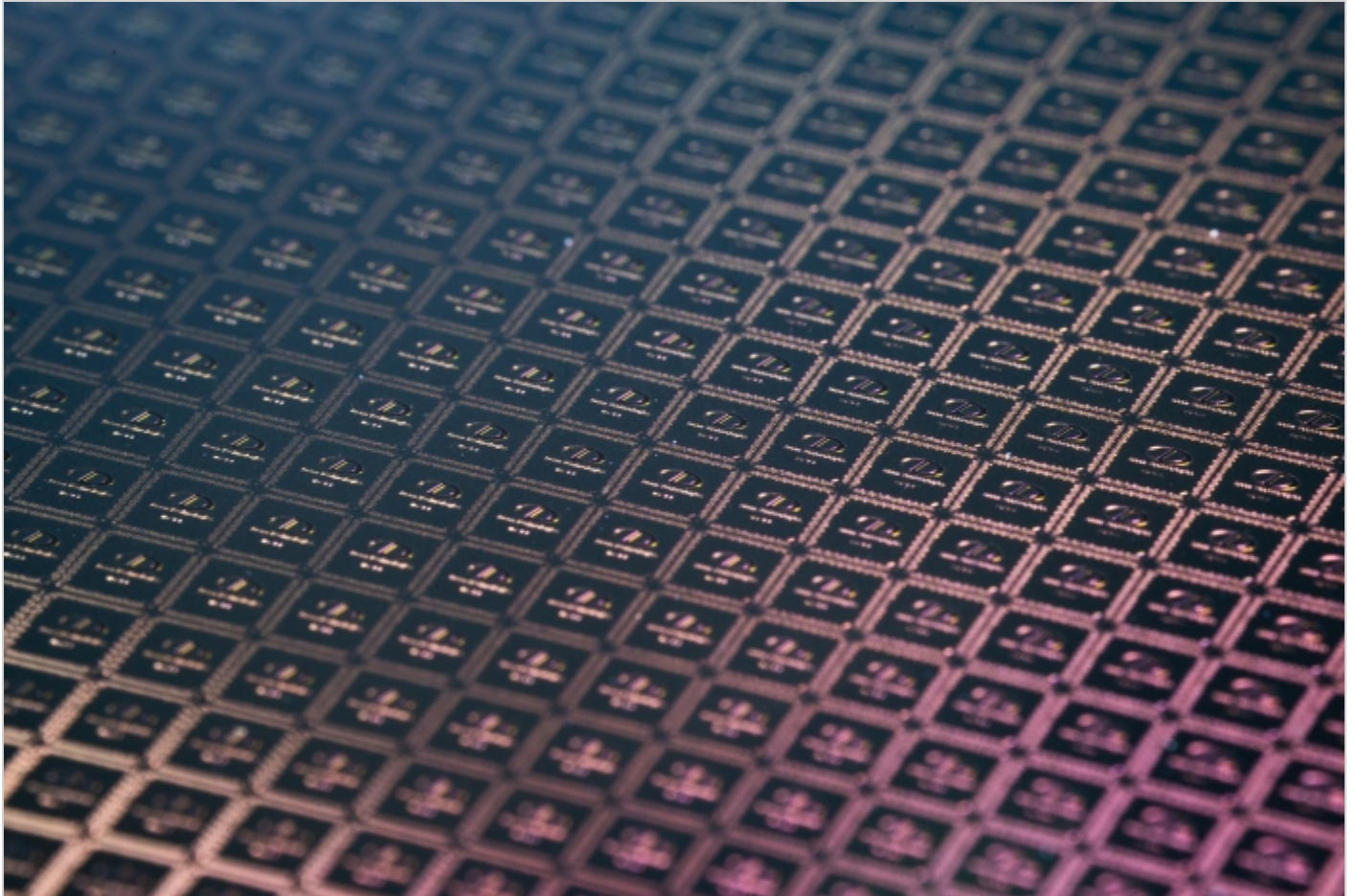
“Applied Materials is a leader in their sector, semiconductor equipment and tools processing. And they want to have this center here because Phoenix is this hotbed of innovation talent,” Squires said.

“Applied Materials could have put this in a lot of places, but they chose to put it here.”

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*This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).*

## Main image



An electronic wafer produced by semiconductor company Deca Technologies, which is based at the ASU Research Park in Tempe, Arizona. Photo by Emma Fitzgerald/Arizona State University