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Duke University collaborates with Microsoft for research

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Duke University has announced a new collaboration with Microsoft in several areas including research and cognitive services using Microsoft Azure -a cloud computing platform.

To support the effort, Microsoft is committed to building a dedicated "Innovation Hub" in the Chesterfield building in downtown Durham, where it will be near researchers from Duke's schools of medicine and engineering and the Duke Clinical Research Institute, the university said in a statement on Monday.

Duke already uses Microsoft cloud technology, but the new collaboration will accelerate the use of Azure to advance healthcare research, educational programs, and university operations.

"We can leverage all of the work they have done and we can build on it. For example, Microsoft's efforts to improve radiology with data science can be built upon and advanced by Duke radiologists and data scientists," said Lawrence Carin from Duke University.

Azure has in place the data protections needed to maintain health records privacy, Carin said. Azure cognitive services would include speech-to-text, natural language processing, and machine vision.

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"With Microsoft's support, we will also enable graduate students in research labs to access the rich set of Microsoft Azure services. The computational power that this will bring to our research endeavor is immense," Carin added.