



Member Handbook



POLSKY

Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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ABOUT

The Polsky Center is the hub for entrepreneurship and innovation at the University of Chicago. As part of the Polsky Center, the Polsky Exchange has two main locations along Hyde Park's 53rd Street, which feature over 34,000 square feet of dedicated incubator space, flexible work space, small and large meeting rooms, classrooms, and large event spaces.

Membership

Membership is available to UChicago students, alumni, faculty, staff, researchers, and local community members.

Membership costs \$150 per quarter, but is free for anyone currently affiliated with the University of Chicago. The Polsky Center does not take equity in member companies. Additional benefits include access to educational programming and a community of entrepreneurs. To sign up for new member orientation, visit bit.ly/PolskyExchangeOrientation.

Incubator

The Polsky Incubator provides mentorship, networking, legal support, training, and dedicated office space for early-stage startups. Teams committed and equipped with the skills necessary to solve an important problem for a large number of users are encouraged to apply. The Polsky Center reserves the right to invest in the next round of funding.

Fab Lab

The Polsky Fab Lab offers all existing Polsky Exchange members a full suite of state-of-the-art equipment to create prototypes and translate ideas into physical objects. Sign up for Fab Lab 101 Orientation, at bit.ly/FabLab101.

Mentorship

The Polsky Mentorship Program connects our members in one-on-one meetings to industry leaders. Register for a mentor appointment by visiting polsky.uchicago.edu/mentorship or by clicking the links in newsletter sent every Tuesday.

Workshops & Events

For more information about upcoming events and workshops, visit the [Polsky events calendar](#) and look for your newsletter every Monday.

Hours of Operation and Security Protocols

Polsky North: 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.; daily

Polsky South: 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.; weekdays only

Fab Lab: 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. (weekdays); 11:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. (Wednesdays)

The Polsky Exchange will be closed on University holidays (New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the day after Thanksgiving, and the week between Christmas and New Year's Day) as well as other select days. Please check the weekly newsletter, website, and signs in the space for closure dates.

Member Check-In & IDs

All Polsky Exchange members and companies are required to tap their ID at the reception desk of both buildings upon entering. For UChicago students, faculty, and staff, your UChicago ID will be granted access once your membership agreement has been approved. For individuals without a University of Chicago ID, you will need to pick up a Campus Card at the Regenstein Library. Membership Campus Card only provide access to the Polsky Exchange. It does not include library privileges.

To receive your Campus Card, please stop by the ID & Privileges Office **after receiving an email confirmation from the Polsky Exchange Team**. Be sure to bring a government-issued photo ID (like a passport or driver's license) to confirm your identity. The office is located in the lobby of the Regenstein Library at: [1100 East 57th Street, Room 100F, Chicago, IL 60637](#)

You can pick up your ID anytime during the following hours:

- Monday - Thursday: 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

It is important that you pick up your card before you can be granted access to the Polsky Exchange. Before arriving at the Polsky Exchange, please contact Katie Spoden, at kspoden@uchicago.edu to alert us that you have picked up your card, and we can add you into the system for building access.

If you lose your ID, please notify a Polsky Staff Member and request a replacement card. Once your order has been received, you'll be able to pick up the new card at the Regenstein Library. Please also notify us that you have picked up your new ID so that we can renew your access.

Mailing Address

Due to the large number of members who are part of the Polsky Exchange, we only accept mail for Incubator companies. Please do not have your mail or packages delivered to the Polsky Exchange - we cannot be responsible for any items that are mis-delivered.

Filming and Photography

If you are interested in filming/recording within the Polsky Exchange for business purposes, a written request must be submitted for approval at least 5 business days prior to requested filming date. All requests must be approved by a Polsky Exchange Staff member, and filming must be done inside a private meeting room/classroom between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Filming is strictly prohibited on the weekends and after hours. Members may be working on proprietary or sensitive information related to their business. Please be respectful of your fellow members' personal and professional privacy while filming or recording in the space. If you would like other members to participate or be filmed, this must be arranged in advance and coordinated with a Polsky Exchange Staff member. Please do not approach members working in the space with filming requests. Please contact Nick Neu at nneu@uchicago.edu with any questions or concerns, and for approval.

Guest Check-In

Guests attending an event should check in with the front desk staff. Guests joining a member for a meeting must sign in at the front desk and contact the member to meet them at reception. You are responsible for your guest while they are at the Polsky Exchange. They must be accompanied by the member at all times and should not be disruptive to other members. If you plan to have more than 5 guests at a time a written request must be submitted for approval at least 72 hours in advance to Nick Neu at nneu@uchicago.edu. Interns and other employees must be members of the Polsky Exchange to access the space. All memberships are individually based and are not transferable from one employee to another.

Personal Belongings and Storage

Please remember that this is a co-working and event space that will have members of the public regularly present. Please contact the front desk to obtain a locker and lock. While the Polsky Exchange has security officers and cameras, you should secure or watch your valuables at all times. Polsky staff is not responsible for these items. Items stored in lockers without advance permission will be discarded. The refrigerator is cleaned every other Friday at 9pm. Everything in the fridge is discarded at this time.

Lost & Found

Lost and Found for the Polsky Exchange is at the front desk in each building. Please tell us what item you are looking for, and we'll check on it for you.

Alcohol, Firearms, and Smoking

Personal consumption of alcohol is not permitted on the Polsky Exchange premises -- either building -- at any time. Alcohol may only be consumed at programs and events approved by the Polsky Exchange staff and in compliance with University policies and the law. Smoking and Firearms are prohibited at the Polsky Exchange in accordance with The University of Chicago policy and the law.

Billing and Fees

Polsky Exchange membership is free for current UChicago students and staff. For all others, the fee is \$50 a month. Quarterly invoices are sent two weeks prior to the start of the quarter. Payment must be submitted within 30 days to prevent cancellation of membership. If your membership is cancelled it may be reactivated with payment.

Member Perks

Business discounts are available for members through the member portal on the Polsky Center Website. Use your CNET ID and password to access these discounts.

Incident Reports

Forms to report a lost item, or issues related to events/ security, the buildings, or another member are available at the front desk. You are welcome to submit incident reports to any Polsky Exchange staff person at any time.

Workspaces and Meeting Rooms

Incubator companies have dedicated desks near the front desk of the Polsky Exchange North and near the windows in Polsky Exchange South. These are reserved for incubator companies only.

As a Polsky Exchange member, you are invited to use the large, main theater space as a flexible workspace. Other workspaces include the café, mezzanine foyer, and the Midway hall. Whiteboards are cleaned each night.

Please note that these spaces may also be used for events, in which case your member access to them may be restricted. If this is the case, we will designate conference and meeting rooms (often the Washington Park Classroom or Promontory Point Conference Room) for co-working. **Please monitor the announcement section of the newsletter and signs posted throughout the space for these dates.**

General Workspace

The Polsky Exchange is designed to be a collaborative community and we don't expect the co-working space to be as quiet as a library. Nevertheless, please remember to be respectful of other members of the community. When you need to focus, we encourage you to find a quieter nook (we recommend the Mezzanine), and noise-canceling headphones are always a plus. You are welcome to move the furniture, but be aware that it is reset and whiteboards are cleaned each night.

Reserving Meeting Rooms

You may reserve conference rooms for up to two hours at polskyrooms.uchicago.edu. Please be considerate of other members when you reserve meeting rooms.

North Building Meeting Rooms:

- Nichols Park and North Field Huddle Rooms (2 people)
- Dorchester Ave Meeting Room (8 people)
- Kimbark Ave and Kenwood Ave Meeting Rooms (10 people)

South Building Meeting Rooms:

- Hyde Park Blvd Meeting Room (6 people)
- Woodlawn Ave and Ellis Ave Meeting Rooms (8 people)

*Note the Jackson Park Meeting Room in Polsky North and the Argonne Office in Polsky South is reserved for Polsky staff use only.

Classroom Spaces

Classroom spaces are reserved for Polsky educational programming and events. Any member usage of the classroom space outside of Polsky educational programming must be approved by Polsky Exchange staff and may require a rental fee. Please inquire with Katie Spoden at kspoden@uchicago.edu if you are interested in reserving a classroom.

Meeting Room Protocol

- Do collaborative work in the coworking space. Reserve a room of the appropriate size and duration of time for your group, and remember to remove cancelled meetings from the reservation system.
- Please do not schedule back-to-back reservations in the same room or across multiple rooms. Polsky reserves the right to cancel reservations in repeated 2-hour blocks.
- Students please use the library and other spaces on campus for studying and group projects.
- We reserve the right to cancel your reservation if you are more than 15 minutes late.
- The meeting rooms may not be used for any programming, including classes, workshops, meetups, info sessions or any event held open to the public unless the event is approved, curated and coordinated by Polsky Exchange staff.
- You must be present during all meetings you reserve.
- Do not unplug any devices and please clean up any trash or spills.
- Do not reorganize furniture in the meeting rooms.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency that engages the fire suppression system and alarm, four (4) fire doors will descend as a precautionary measure. These doors are located on the southern wall of the Theater space. Please do not be alarmed.

There are five (5) emergency exits in Polsky Exchange North and two (2) emergency exits in Polsky Exchange South. Please familiarize yourself with the emergency exits and contact a Polsky staff member if you have any questions.

The initial rally point for an emergency occurring in either Polsky building will be the northeast corner of the intersection at Harper Ave. and 53rd St. Please meet there for further instruction and information to be communicated from a Polsky team representative or emergency personnel.

Technology and A/V

Internet Access

As a member you will have wireless access throughout the Polsky Exchange space. Members can connect to Wi-Fi via the 'uchicago' and 'uchicago-secure' networks and login with their CNET IDs.

Polsky guest wireless access is available through the 'uchicago-guest' network. Guests can request the Wi-Fi access information from the front desk. Wired internet access may also be available for members from selected Ethernet ports in the space.

To obtain a CNET ID:

1. Visit cnet.uchicago.edu and click "Create your CNetID and password."
2. Enter your birthdate and your UChicagoID # (this number will be sent to your e-mail upon membership approval). Click that you have read and accept the terms.
3. Then choose a CNetID and password - be sure to make them easy for you to remember, as this info will be what you use to login to the Wi-Fi.
4. Finally: Please email Katie Spoden (kspoden@uchicago.edu) the CNetID ONLY (not the password!) so that she can grant you access to the Polsky Exchange network.

Slack

Join the Polsky Slack Community to communicate with individuals with similar interests and to hear about events. All Polsky Staff is active on Slack and this can also be a great way to reach them.

TechBar

The Polsky TechBar is run in partnership with UChicago ITServices to offer technical support to Polsky members, guests, and staff. It is located at the core of the Polsky Exchange co-working space and provides the following resources to Polsky Exchange Members:

- Equipment rentals (laptops, chargers etc.)
- Software support
- Hardware support
- Wireless Internet assistance
- TAZ 3D printer assistance/maintenance
- A/V and Meeting Room assistance

The Hours of Operation are:

Monday - Friday: 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Saturdays during the academic year: 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Phone Access

Phones are provided in all of the Polsky Exchange conference and meeting rooms. These phones have local and long-distance service, but not international service. For extended phone conversations, we encourage you to use these rooms and other private areas so that other members are not disturbed. Dial 9, the country code (1 for domestic calls) and then the area code to reach an outside number (e.g. 9-1-773-702-2076).

Printing, Scanning & Copying

Through the PrintWithMe system, Polsky Exchange members can print for a small cost in the main theater space. The printer is located in the southeast corner. To print a document, email polskyexchange@printwithme.com. If you have any troubles printing feel free to stop by the TechBar for assistance.

Fax: The Polsky Exchange does not have a Fax machine. If you need to fax an item, we recommend looking into digital fax options such as eFax (free 30-day trial), myFax (free 30-day trial) and others.

Scanning and copying: Please use an outside service, such as nearby Office Depot, FedEx Office, or Minuteman Press.

Fab Lab Technology

A number of prototyping and fabrication machines are available to Polsky Exchange members through the Fab Lab. Special training and orientations are required to use any of the machines. The schedule is available in the weekly events email. Fab Lab 101 Orientation workshops are available to sign up for throughout the year, please sign up at bit.ly/FabLab101. All members using the Fab Lab must be 18 years or older. The Fab Lab also has Adobe, CAD, and other software for designing your prototype and computers you may use. No previous experience with digital fabrication hardware and software is required.

Fab Lab machines include:

3D Printers

These machines build up complex 3D shapes layer by layer. The Fab Lab has three, and each is useful at a different stage of the prototyping process. The **Taz5** is a desktop 3D printer that's great for early prototypes and getting started with 3D printing. The **uPrint SE Plus** creates strong structural prototypes and moving parts. The **Objet500 Connex3** creates precise and realistic prototypes combining multiple properties like color, flexibility, and transparency. It can also print moving parts.

Laser Cutter

This machine cuts and etches a wide variety of materials for quick iterations and intricate details.

Vinyl Cutter

This machine cuts custom decals to add branding and realism to low-fidelity prototypes.

Computer Numerically Controlled (CNC) Routers:

These machines move in three dimensions and cut away material using rotating cutting tools. The **Shopbot** cuts large prototypes from wood, plastics, and soft metals and can engrave circuit boards. The **X-Carve** is a smaller desktop machine with user-friendly software and is a great tool for getting started with CNC routing.

Wood Shop:

- **Drill Press:** This machine drills holes in a variety of materials using different sizes and shapes of bits.
- **Bandsaw:** This machine makes straight and curving cuts using a continuous, toothed blade.
- **Table Saw:** This machine is ideal for long, straight cuts and cutting large pieces of wood parallel to the grain.
- **Chop/Mitre Saw:** This machine makes cuts at different angles and can cut wood perpendicular to the grain.
- **Oscillating Edge Belt/Spindle Sander:** This machine uses a rotating piece of sandpaper to smooth and shape the material.

Other resources include:

- **Electronics bench**
- **Soldering Workshops**
- **Design consultation**
- **Adobe Illustrator and Onshape Classes**
- **CAD Consultants:** Want help turning your ideas into prototypes? The Polsky Exchange is proud to partner with our neighbors in the Arthur M. Brazier Foundation's CAD (Computer Aided Design) training program. CAD trainees are now available to work with Polsky Exchange members to turn dimensioned sketches into digital files for use on the Fab Lab machines. And all work is free of charge. To get started, contact Elizabeth Koprucki at ekoprucki@uchicago.edu.

Transportation and Safety

Parking

In addition to street parking, parking is available in the surface lot across from the Hyatt Place on Harper Ave or in the covered garage in Harper Court (enter on Lake Park Ave, south of the McDonald's). The Polsky Exchange does not provide discounted or validated parking to members.

Public Transit

- **Metra:** The closest Metra station makes a 51st/53rd stop on the Metra Electric District Line. Starting at the Millennium Park station, the Metra only takes 15 minutes to get to the Polsky Exchange.
- **CTA:** A number of CTA buses make stops near the Polsky Exchange: Bus 15 stops at the corner of Lake Park and 53rd. Bus 28 stops at the corner of Lake Park and 53rd. Bus 172 stops at the corner of Woodlawn and 53rd.

cAlert System

The cAlert system is the University's electronic emergency mass notification system, which enables University officials to provide notification and informational updates to enrollees prior to, during, or after an emergency. The cAlert system can send messages instantaneously through various mechanisms including cellular and land-line phones, email, pagers, and more.

The cAlert system will be used only to contact you in case of an emergency, a University closing, or some other event that requires rapid, wide-scale notification of the community.

Students, faculty, staff, postdoctoral researchers, and other University affiliates can visit the [cAlert website](#) to add or edit your preferred contact information.

Non-affiliated community members can enroll in cAlert by texting "calert" to **226787**.

For additional information on cAlert and how it works, please visit the [cAlert FAQs page](#).

Mentorship Program: Frequently Asked Questions

What is the mentorship program?

The mentorship program is one of the most valuable resources at the Polsky Exchange in which we connect our members in one-on-one meetings to industry leaders. Our mentors bring decades of experience in strategy, fundraising, healthcare, technology, sales and marketing, law, insurance, and other fields. Many have started companies themselves and all have worked with startups.

How do I sign up for a meeting?

Each Tuesday you'll get an email listing the mentor appointments coming up in the next two weeks. Click on a mentor's name to see their bio and book a slot. Note: Mentors whose slots are full may not be listed.

Can I bring a colleague, business partner, etc. to the meeting?

Yes!

How should I prepare for the meeting? Is there anything I need to bring?

Be prepared to make the most of the time by having a list of discussion topics or questions and being ready to describe and show what you're working on in a concise and thorough way. You should also do background research on the

mentor and have a clear idea of what you're looking to get out of the meeting. In preparation for your mentor appointment we suggest you fill out a Business Model Canvas. (<https://strategyzer.com/canvas/business-model-canvas>)

If you'd like to send materials or your website to the mentor ahead of time, send it to Steph Avalos-Bock (stephab@uchicago.edu) at least 24 hours in advance.

Can I meet with a mentor more than once?

Yes, though if you plan on meeting a lot, it's best to set up time outside mentor appointments to make room for others.

Do I need to check in for my appointment?

Please briefly stop at the front desk to pick up a feedback form. Please return it to the front desk after your appointment.

What if I need to cancel?

Please provide at least 72 hours cancellation notice. Our mentors are very generous in donating their time and energy, and many travel some distance. Missed appointments are an embarrassment to both the Exchange and our entrepreneurs, and they strain the relationships that our staff works so hard to build and maintain with the mentors. Without

adequate prior notice, we are unable to fill your spot and the meeting opportunity goes wasted.

Please provide at least 72 hours cancellation notice via email to Steph Avalos-Bock (stephab@uchicago.edu). No shows will be removed from program immediately. The Polsky Mentor Directory is available <https://polsky.uchicago.edu/meet-our-mentors/>

Can I ask a mentor to invest in my company?

As the saying goes, "If you ask for money, you'll get advice, but if you ask for advice, you'll get money." Mentor appointments are a good way to begin building relationships that could lead to investment down the road. You wouldn't ask someone for money the first time you met them, and it wouldn't be money you want anyway.

Can I ask a mentor to sign an NDA?

Most mentors do not sign NDAs. Ideas are much less valuable than execution, and if someone can build your company just from hearing your idea, you probably need a better idea.

However, if you believe you have patentable IP or trade secrets, seek the advice of an attorney before disclosing your idea.

Polsky Exchange Locations



Polsky Exchange - North

1452 E 53rd Street,
Chicago, IL 60615

The Polsky Exchange - North location is home to our co-working space for members, the Incubator, classrooms, meeting rooms, and event space



Polsky Exchange - South

1463 E 53rd Street,
Chicago, IL 60615

Just across the street from the North building, is our state of the art Fabrication Lab, which houses 3D printers, laser cutters, CNC routers, and woodworking tools. Polsky Exchange - South houses Incubator seats as well as dedicated offices for Argonne National Laboratory, the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, and the Institute for Molecular Engineering. Additional conference, meeting, and huddle rooms are also available here.

Have More Questions?

Please contact Steph Avalos-Bock at stephab@uchicago.edu.