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Tech Council of Maryland looks to play bigger role in Baltimore

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The Tech Council of Maryland hopes a new office at the University of Maryland BioPark will help the organization play a bigger role in technology and life sciences in Baltimore.

Much of the tech council's activities are centered in Montgomery County, where the organization's headquarters and many of its members are based. The tech council will open a new office at the biopark and staff it every Thursday. The Baltimore office will focus on strengthening partnerships with other technology organizations in the city and developing new programs that meet needs of Baltimore-area companies.

"In the long run the mission is to help technology and life sciences in Maryland," Tech Council CEO Phil Schiff told me. "We're shooting for a stronger life sciences world up there."

Schiff began meeting with the organization's members in different parts of the state when he joined as CEO last year. Members in Baltimore told Schiff they want to work more closely with the tech council — but don't want to drive out to Montgomery County to do it.

Between 10 percent and 15 percent of the group's 300 members are in Baltimore.

The tech council plans to build up its role in Baltimore slowly, as leaders learn more about what programs, events and other resources would be most valuable to businesses here.

"There's no need to re-create the wheel," Schiff said. "We're not going to duplicate. We're going to bring programming that isn't happening now."

The tech council's partnership with the biopark is an example of the type of work Schiff hopes to expand in the future. The group will be working with the biopark on events geared toward young startups, on topics like business development.