

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Central Louisiana Secures \$3.6 Billion Applied Digital AI Factory Campus

- **The project is expected to create 418 new job opportunities in the Central Region.**
- **The campus will establish Applied Digital's first Louisiana location and support advanced AI and cloud computing workloads.**
- **Initial operations are expected to begin in mid-2027.**

BOYCE, La. – Applied Digital Corporation announced plans to develop a \$3.6 billion, state-of-the-art artificial intelligence (AI) factory campus in Rapides Parish. Known as Delta Forge 1, the facility is purpose-built for large-scale AI training and inference workloads, marking a major milestone in Central Louisiana's economic growth and digital infrastructure expansion.

The new campus will directly support 200 new full-time, on-site jobs with salaries 150% of the state average wage. The project will create over 1,000 construction jobs at peak construction. Louisiana Economic Development estimates the project will result in an additional 218 indirect new jobs, for a total of 418 potential new job opportunities in the Central Region.

"Louisiana is leading America's industrial renaissance while staying committed to the principles outlined in President Trump's Ratepayer Protection Pledge, protecting reliability, affordability and the long-term interests of consumers," Governor Jeff Landry said. "Global companies are choosing Louisiana because they see a state where every region is prepared to deliver at scale, with the infrastructure, workforce and leadership needed to support the technologies and industries shaping the future economy."

Applied Digital designs, builds and operates data centers and colocation services for artificial intelligence, cloud and high-performance computing workloads. Delta Forge 1, will initially include two facilities totaling 300 megawatts of critical IT load across approximately 300 acres with direct access to energy infrastructure. The campus will use Applied Digital's closed-loop cooling technology to support high-density computing environments for AI.

"Central Louisiana is exactly the kind of community we had in mind when we set out to build Applied Digital — a region with strong roots, abundant potential, and people who understand the value of long-term investment," Applied Digital Chairman and CEO Wes Cummins said. "We're honored to bring Delta Forge 1 to Rapides Parish, and we are committed to being a supportive, engaged partner in this community for the long haul. Our hope is that this campus becomes a source of opportunity and pride for the people of Central Louisiana for generations to come."

Site development on the data center campus began in January 2026, with initial operations expected to begin in mid-2027.

"Today, Louisiana is competing differently. With stronger alignment, greater speed and a clear focus, we are seeing unprecedented momentum and growth reach every region of our state," LED Secretary Susan B. Bourgeois said. "This announcement reinforces that global technology companies see Louisiana as a place where they can expand, scale and invest with confidence while creating meaningful outcomes for our people and communities."

Cleco will provide power to support Applied Digital's data center campus, helping meet the energy needs of a large-scale AI and high-performance computing operation.

"This is the largest economic development opportunity in Cleco's 90-plus year history and reflects the region's growing competitive position for major infrastructure and technology investments," Cleco President and CEO Bill Fontenot said. "This investment reflects the potential that many of us here in Central Louisiana have long known existed, and we see it as the beginning of even greater possibilities for our region. Cleco is proud to support transformative investments, like the data center project, that deliver meaningful economic impact while maintaining the affordability, reliability and value our customers expect and deserve."

Applied Digital qualified for Louisiana's state and local sales and use tax exemption on qualifying purchases or leases of data center equipment, established in Act 730 of the 2024 Regular Legislative Session.

"The Delta Forge 1 investment is a defining moment for Central Louisiana and the England Economic & Industrial Development District (EEIDD) as a driver of innovation and opportunity," EEIDD Executive Director Ralph Hennessey said. "This project represents the type of economic progress we were built to attract."

"This project has the potential to be one of the most transformational in the history of Rapides Parish, surpassing even the major industrial investments of the 1950s and 60s," President & CEO of Louisiana Central Chris Masingill said. "In both scale and impact, it positions Central Louisiana to compete for major economic opportunities in ways we haven't seen in generations."

Louisiana companies, make sure your business is registered at SourceLouisiana.com to enter the pipeline for contract and vendor opportunities with development projects statewide.

About Applied Digital Corporation

Applied Digital (Nasdaq: APLD) named Best Data Center in the Americas 2025 by Datacloud — designs, builds, and operates high-performance, sustainably engineered data centers and colocation services for artificial intelligence, cloud, networking, and blockchain workloads. Headquartered in Dallas, TX, and founded in 2021, the company combines hyperscale expertise, proprietary waterless cooling, and rapid deployment capabilities to deliver secure, scalable compute at industry-leading speed and efficiency, while creating economic opportunities in underserved communities through its award-winning Polaris Forge AI Factory model. Learn more at applieddigital.com or follow @APLDdigital on X and LinkedIn.

About LED

Louisiana Economic Development is responsible for driving capital investment, job creation and economic opportunity for the people of Louisiana and employers of all sizes. Explore how LED is positioning Louisiana to win at OpportunityLouisiana.com.

MEDIA CONTACT:

JSA (Jaymie Scotto & Associates)
856.264.7827
jsa_applied@jsa.net

Emma Wagner, LED

Emma.Wagner@la.gov
912.467.2117

Jennifer Cahill, Cleco
jennifer.cahill@cleco.com