

# Fermilab's future: to be determined

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The University of Chicago wants to become administrator of Fermilab -- the home of the Tevatron, the world's most powerful atomic particle accelerator.

But a new accelerator being built in Switzerland and France goes into operation next year, meaning the United States' leadership in particle physics might be lost to Europe, the Chicago Tribune reported.

The university is to submit a bid next month to become Fermilab's co-administrator and build a multibillion-dollar, 18-mile-long facility dubbed the International Linear Collider.

Under the University of Chicago's proposal, the school would become an equal partner with Universities Research Association Inc., the newspaper said. Northwestern University, the Illinois Institute of Technology, the University of Illinois and Northern Illinois University would have oversight advisory roles.

If Fermilab is to survive beyond the Tevatron, it must begin work to build a giant new physics machine, or find another mission, the Tribune said. The facility is scheduled to close in 2010.

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