

# Influential Thought Leader Richard Florida to Keynote Ann Arbor SPARK Annual Meeting

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ANN ARBOR, Mich.--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--Ann Arbor SPARK will host Richard Florida, one of the world's leading public intellectuals on economic competitiveness, demographic trends, and cultural and technological innovation, as the keynote speaker at its annual meeting. Ann Arbor SPARK's annual meeting, the region's premier gathering of business and community leaders, will be held on April 24, 2017, at the Eastern Michigan University Student Center in Ypsilanti, Mich.

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“Richard has called Ann Arbor a center for creativity. He will talk about his latest research and his new book, *The New Urban Crisis*, to be released next year in April,” said Paul Krutko, president and CEO of Ann Arbor SPARK. “It’s exciting to have Richard here to share his perspective on how the characteristics that make this region unique – creativity, vibrancy, intelligence -- is fueling our economic success It’s also exciting that Ann Arbor SPARK’s annual meeting will be held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the North America International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation.”

Florida, author of the award-winning *Rise of the Creative Class*, is a researcher and professor, serving as the director of the Martin Prosperity Institute at the University of Toronto’s Rotman School of Management, Global Research Professor at New York University, and a visiting fellow at Florida International University. He is also founder of the Creative Class Group, which works closely with governments and companies worldwide.

A 2013 MIT study named Florida the world’s most influential thought leader. *TIME* magazine recognized his Twitter feed as one of the 140 most influential in the world.

Florida is a writer and journalist, having penned several global bestsellers, and serving as senior editor for *The Atlantic*, where he co-founded and serves as Editor-at-Large for CityLab.

He previously taught at Carnegie Mellon, Ohio State University, and George Mason University, and has been a visiting professor at Harvard and MIT, and visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution.

Ann Arbor SPARK's annual meeting is proudly sponsored by the DTE Energy Foundation.

### **About Ann Arbor SPARK**

Ann Arbor SPARK, a non-profit organization, is advancing the region by encouraging and supporting business acceleration, attraction and retention. The organization identifies and meets the needs of business at every stage, from start-ups to large organizations. Ann Arbor SPARK collaborates with business, academic, government, and community investor partners including the University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, Washtenaw Community College, Washtenaw County, Livingston County, the *Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti SmartZone (LDFA)*, Washtenaw County etc/Michigan Works!, the City of Ann Arbor, Bank of Ann Arbor and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. For more information, please call (734) 761-9317 or visit [www.AnnArborUSA.org](http://www.AnnArborUSA.org).

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