Purdue University is a state institution, bearing the name of John Purdue, a philanthropic and public-spirited citizen of Lafayette, Indiana, who aided in establishing it. It owes its origin to the Land Grant Act passed by Congress in 1862, otherwise known as the Morrill Act, and to enactments made by the legislative body of Indiana in 1865 and 1869. It is maintained principally by state appropriations, supplemented by federal grants.

The University began its work in 1874. It now has fifty principal buildings and controls over four thousand acres of land. Serving on its various staffs are approximately five hundred persons.

Undergraduate and graduate instruction is offered through the Schools of Agriculture, Engineering (Chemical and Metallurgical, Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, Public Service Engineering, and Engineering-Law), Home Economics, Pharmacy, and Science, Trade and Industrial Education, and the Graduate School.

The University also maintains extensive experiment stations in engineering and agriculture, and carries on statewide extension work in both of these fields.

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