The Simons Center for Geometry and Physics was started in 2007 by a gift from the James and Marilyn Simons Foundation. This gift includes a new building for the Center, scheduled to be completed in September, 2010, on the campus of Stony Brook University. The building will be contiguous to and have direct connections to the Physics Building and the Mathematics Tower, the latter housing the Mathematics Department, the Institute of Mathematical Sciences, and the C.N. Yang Institute for Theoretical Physics. The Simons Foundation gift also provides an endowment to support the continuing operations of the center.

Michael Douglas is the Center’s first permanent member, and John Morgan will become its director in September, 2009. At full strength, the Center will have a faculty consisting of a Director and 6 Permanent Members. As currently envisioned, the center will have 12 three-year postdoctoral type positions, called Research Assistant Professorships, as well as a robust visitors’ program with roughly 18 visitors in residence at any time. In addition, each year the Center will also host several workshops, which are concentrated activities in a specific area for shorter periods of time with outside invitees and speakers, as well as other special lectures and events.

As the name indicates, the intellectual focus of the Center is at the interface of mathematics, in particular geometry, and theoretical physics. The close proximity of the center building to the Physics Building and the Mathematics Tower is symbolic of the close intellectual and programmatic relationship of the Center to the Mathematics Department and Yang Institute for Theoretical Physics. The Center’s activities will be coordinated with the activities in the other two units, and the Center’s programs will typically involve significant participation by their faculty and students.