



2023 Learning Environments Grant Request for Proposals

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the Learning Environments Grant (LEG) is to provide funds up to \$25,000 for the creation of informal and formal learning spaces on campus. The program is designed to spur thinking, conversations, and actions that intentionally bring together learning spaces, learning practices, teaching approaches, and community-building activities of faculty, staff, and students. We seek proposals for spaces that are innovative, inclusive, and engaging, but especially those proposals that will create inclusive and equitable learning environments.

Eligibility

Faculty and staff at IUPUI, IUPUC, and IU Fort Wayne are eligible to apply for the Learning Environments Grant to change and improve spaces over which a sponsoring school, department, or program holds jurisdiction, or have permission to change. Proposed spaces are to be inhabited substantively and regularly by students. Please note: Due to the Fall 2024 separation of Indiana University and Purdue University and the project cycle (which ends in May 2025), only grant proposals from Indiana University schools will be considered.

Definitions

Informal learning spaces typically function as unsupervised multi-use spaces that a school makes available for use among university students, staff, faculty, and other inhabitants. If appropriate, such spaces may be reserved by groups for planned activities. Informal learning spaces are understood to support the learning goals of a curriculum, program, department, or school in ways that promote a culture of inclusion and openness. The design and promotion of informal learning spaces encourage student interactions and engagement as well as the pursuit of independent study.

Formal learning spaces are spaces in which teacher and students are co-present and in which the activities are teacher supervised. Formal learning spaces are understood to support the learning goals and teaching approaches of a curriculum, program, department, or school in ways that promote and foster inclusion and equity.

Timeline for Proposal Submissions, Awards, and Project Completion

2023 LEG Timeline	
July 28, 2023	(Preliminary Ideas) Capital Projects Request for Service Submission Due
October 11, 2023	LEG Proposal Submission Due
October 31, 2023	Notification of Award Decisions
November/December 2023	Projects Begin
January 2025	Projects Completed

February 2025	Final Reports with Photos Due
May 2025	Addendum (data/assessment report) Due

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

Plan the Proposal

The information below can be used to guide the process of gathering needed information and writing your proposal.

To begin planning your project:

1. Identify a space and what you'd like to do with it.
2. Articulate the reasons why you want to change a space/environment.

Complete the Capital Projects Request for Service Form – due by July 28, 2023

The information enumerated below will be needed to complete the [Capital Projects Request for Service](#) form.

1. Request information and justification for project
2. Departmental Reference Number (ask department's fiscal officer for this number)
3. Building/site
4. Room
5. Funding Account Number (ask department's fiscal officer for this number)
6. Sub Account (ask department's fiscal officer for this number)

Once your *Request for Service* has been submitted, someone from Capital Projects will contact you to discuss the details and the feasibility of your project and provide preliminary designs and associated budgets (needed for your proposal).

Develop the Proposal

After you've submitted your *Request for Service* to Capital Projects, you will begin preparing a detailed proposal, one that will need to address each of the following numbered items (note that the actual data entry form includes word limits for each of these answers):

1. What is your project title?
2. In what building and room/area will your project be located?
3. Why is the project needed? Include the purpose and goals of the project; how it aligns with campus, school, or department priorities; what the benefits of the project are. (750 words)
4. Who are the stakeholders in this project? Include description of who inhabits and uses the space or who is affected by changes in the space.
5. What students (e.g., from specific courses and programs) and how many students per academic year, would benefit from the project? If faculty and/or staff would also be beneficiaries, please explain. All proposals must have benefits for students. (250 words)

6. How will the project improve inclusivity in the space, program and/or your school?—Consider the ways in which inclusivity of the space will be promoted through the space’s physical features and location, as well as through the space’s planned activities, uses, programming, promotion and representation, and through the training of faculty, students and other inhabitants. (250 words)
7. What measures will be taken to ensure accessibility for individuals with physical challenges/disabilities? (250 words)
8. What are the details of the project? Include elements that will be changed or added to the space (e.g., new construction, changes to floor coverings, interior design, changes to ceiling, new furniture, etc.). (500 words)
9. How will completion of this project impact student learning, success and/or sense of belonging? (500 words)
10. How will the project provide opportunities for faculty-student and/or student-student interaction? (500 words)
11. How will the project’s impact be evaluated? (500 words)
12. What plans are in place for the maintenance and upkeep of furnishings and equipment purchased for this project? (500 words)
13. What amount of funding will you request? Work with Capital Projects to develop an itemized budget document (maximum \$25,000 per project).
14. What other funding sources will the project have, if any? Projects costing more than \$25,000 must provide signed letters of commitment from the additional funding source(s).
15. What is the project timeline? Create a detailed timeline (for PDF document upload).
16. What relevant images and/or informal sketches do you have that might help others better visualize your proposed project? Consider embedding images separately into each of the numbered items above, when appropriate
17. After you have drafted satisfactory answers to each of the above questions, write a synopsis of your case for a Learning Environments Grant, and include images/drawings when appropriate (400 words maximum)

Support for Proposal Planning

In addition to the support provided by Capital Projects, members of the Learning Environments Committee are available to meet with you to discuss and provide feedback on the proposal’s details and characteristics, goals, etc. Contact Douglas Jerolimov (djerolim@iupui.edu), Center for Teaching and Learning, to schedule a consultation to discuss your project.

Review the Criteria for Final Proposal

The committee considers the following criteria when reviewing submitted proposals:

- Enhancement of inclusion through planning of the space’s features and location, as well as through the space’s planned activities, uses, and programming—i.e., regardless of whether proposal is for a formal or informal learning space, the space’s physical features should be informed by principles of universal design to improve physical inclusivity, and the proposal may include measures, plans, guidelines, promotion, and training to increase the likelihood that inclusive teaching, learning, and social practices will occur within the space (Burgstahler n.d., Burgstahler 2020, Evans 2022).

- Demonstrable positive impact on student learning, success and/or sense of belonging
- Number of students who will benefit (All proposals must have benefits for students.)
- New/critical academic experiences made possible for students
- Opportunities for faculty-student and/or student-student interactions
- ADA compliance
- Creativity
- Availability of any additional needed funds
- Plans and funds in place for repairs and maintenance of the space and for its furnishings and equipment
- Plans to assess/measure attainment of project goals

*Submit the Proposal**

Proposal authors must submit their completed proposal by October 11, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. See the [Learning Environments Grant website](#) for more information on writing and submitting a proposal. Please note that there are word limits on the proposal submission form for many of the items listed in the section above, *Develop Your Proposal*.

* Upon request, proposal review procedures will be made available to anyone submitting a proposal. Members of the Learning Environments Committee will not review proposals that could directly benefit themselves or their home department.

References

Burgstahler, S. (n.d.), Universal design: Process, principles, and applications. Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology [online]. Retrieved June 29, 2023 from <https://www.washington.edu/doit/universal-design-process-principles-and-applications>.

Burgstahler, S. (2020). *Creating inclusive learning opportunities in higher education: A universal design toolkit*. Harvard Education Press. Accessible as eBook at <https://iucat.iu.edu/catalog/18796304>

Evans, G. (2022). UDL Learning Spaces Idea Kit, v3.0: UDL card alignment and idea guide. Universal Design for Learning Implementation and Research Network [online]. Retrieved June 29, 2023 from <https://udl-irn.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Reference-guide3.0.pdf>.

Lowenkron, H. (2021, August 18). Creating more accessible, inclusive buildings. *CityLab* [bloomberg.com]. Retrieved June 29, 2023 from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2021-08-18/how-universal-design-creates-inclusive-infrastructure>.