Illinois Learning Sciences Design Initiative (ILSDI)
inventing the future of teaching and learning

Call for Proposals
2015-2016 Seed Funding Program
Phase I—Developing Working Themes for the ILSDI

Overview

The mission of the Illinois Learning Sciences Design Initiative (ILSDI) as articulated in the Visioning Future Excellence at Illinois Outcomes Report (2013) is to "understand learning mechanisms and to invent learning and educational tools, practices and spaces for the future of teaching and learning across disciplines and professions" (p. 11). This campus-wide initiative aims to build, synthesize, translate, and apply theories of learning to guide designing, building, trialing, assessing, scaling, disseminating, and commercializing evidence-based, replicable, cutting-edge, and transformational technological tools, solutions, and platforms in support of learning environments and practices.

The ILSDI was launched on February 27, 2015 with a lightning symposium [under an initial title of Illinois Learning Sciences Design Laboratory], which featured 60 presentations by 122 faculty, students, and staff from across the Illinois campus. The symposium program addressed **three grand challenges**:

(1) Advancing the scientific understanding of learning in ways that substantially inform the design of transformative learning tools and environments;

(2) Designing and evaluating physical, digital, and/or hybrid learning tools and spaces of the future; and

(3) Curating and analyzing big data to transform unitary platforms into adaptive personalized learning environments.

The **ILSDI Seed Funding Program** is designed to foster inter- and trans-disciplinary intellectual engagement around the aims of the initiative, facilitate the development and submission of large-scale multi-faculty proposals for external funding, and fund pilot or proof-of-concept projects to better position faculty groups to competitively pursue external funding.

The seed-funding program will proceed in two phases. **Phase I** will fund projects (up to $5,000 per proposal) to translate the ILSDI overarching goals and grand challenges into well-defined and articulated working themes. The latter themes will be used to frame the **Phase II** call for proposals, which will fund grant development projects (up to $15,000 per proposal) and pilot or proof-of-concept projects (up to $40,000 per proposal). In both phases, successful proposals will clearly demonstrate how funds will be used to better position the submitting group of faculty, students, and/or staff to compete for significant external funding.

Phase I Call for Proposals

Funding. Four to five proposals will be funded with up to $5,000 per proposal. Funds may be used to support graduate students, academic professionals, or faculty salary, meeting expenses (in compliance with OBFS Guidelines), and consultant fees. Indirect costs (F&A) should not be assessed. Funds may not be used for external faculty salary compensation. Upon notification of award, the PI will receive funds via inter-unit transfer.

Objective. Funds will be used to plan for, and convene, one or more working group, seminar, or colloquium to engage cross-college, multi-disciplinary teams of UIUC faculty, students, and/or staff in translating the overarching goals of the ILSDI into well defined and articulated inter-disciplinary research and/or development themes.

Deliverable. Each funded group will develop a white paper that outlines one working theme, which draws on one or more of the aforementioned three grand challenges for the ILSDI. The white paper (5 to 10 double-spaced pages in length, excluding cover page, references, and appendices) will:

- Articulate the working theme;
- Identify and define specific problems, questions, and opportunities at the cutting-edge of research and development related to the working theme;
- Position the lead project participants to expand on their ideas into research, development, and/or design proposals for internal and/or external funding; and
- Identify specific agencies and programs (state or federal, private or public) that are highly likely to fund competitive research, development, and/or design proposals, which build on the aforementioned problems, questions, and opportunities.

Eligibility

- A UIUC tenure-line faculty member must be identified as Principal Investigator (PI) for each proposal. A PI may participate in several proposals but serve as PI for only one submission.
- Proposals must feature multidisciplinary teams that involve, at least, two UIUC Colleges and/or Institutes. Preference will be given to proposals that feature wide-ranging inter- and trans-disciplinary teams.
- UIUC faculty, full-time academic professional researchers, and post-doctoral fellows from across campus may serve as Co-PIs or Senior Personnel on submissions. Graduate students may serve as Senior Personnel or collaborators.
- Projects may involve researchers from other institutions as resources and may enlist consultant assistance to complement the expertise required to conduct project activities.

Selection Process. Applications will be reviewed by faculty panelists selected by the ILSDI Steering Committee. Criteria for selection include scientific merit, identification of thematic areas of critical importance to the mission and goals of the ILSDI, and potential match to external funding opportunities to sustain programmatic goals.

Important Dates

- **Deadline for proposal submission: 5:00 P.M. CST on June 20, 2015**
- Awards will be announced on July 20, 2015

- White papers are due on November 20, 2015

Application Process

First, go to proposal submission site to submit the:

- Proposal title
- Proposal team names, affiliations, and contact information
- A short abstract (maximum of 250 words)

Next, e-mail the proposal narrative as a single pdf file to tsutton@illinois.edu. The proposal narrative should include:

- A cover page outlining the: Title of the proposal; name and contact information of the PI; and a 25-50 word description of the disciplinary expertise of each proposal team member.
- A one-page, single-space narrative that outlines, in general terms, a possible working theme, which will be developed by the project team. The narrative should describe the activities that will be undertaken toward articulating the working theme and generating the white paper. The narrative also should specify the team member(s) who will take major responsibility for writing the white paper.
- A budget for project activities.
- The name and contact information of the finance officer in the PI's unit who will handle the inter-unit transfer of funds in case the proposal is awarded.

For additional information, please contact

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