



2021 – 2022 Pilot Projects Program

Call for Proposals

Technology Innovations in Educational Research and Design

Submission Deadline: Friday, April 23, 2021 by 5 pm Central Time

Technology Innovation in Educational Research and Design (TIER-ED) is a campus-wide initiative based out of the College of Education that seeks to build a community of interdisciplinary researchers and designers developing applications of new technologies to address critical issues in education and learning. TIER-ED aspires to draw expertise from across University of Illinois to strengthen capacity for interdisciplinary research, increase the student population working on innovative technological solutions for solving critical educational problems, attract external funding, and cultivate and extend partnerships with industries and other partners to create internships and career options for students with research interests related to TIER-ED. This initiative strongly encourages designing, developing, building, trialing, assessing, scaling, disseminating, and commercializing evidence-based, replicable, cutting-edge, and transformational technological tools, solutions, and platforms to support, enhance, and create innovative learning environments and practices.

The **TIER-ED Pilot Projects Program** is designed to foster inter- or trans-disciplinary intellectual engagement through funding pilot or proof-of-concept projects to better position faculty teams for competitive external funding and have more collaborative research opportunities for students interested in pursuing graduate studies in TIER-ED focused areas. It encourages implementation of projects that highlight not only strong scope for building connections with the community and opportunities for public engagement but also the possibility of creating, analyzing, and implementing technology-enhanced products in the community through schools and museums.

The target for this call is to fund multiple proposals for up to **\$20,000** per proposal. Funding will support interdisciplinary research teams and can be for initial development and/or specific pilot research to generate sufficient findings to position the project for competitive external proposal submission.

Eligibility

Project teams must include faculty, staff, or students from at least two campus units. The principal investigator must be a faculty member at the university. The submission form will ask for the names of up to 4 project team members, but the roles of additional team members can

be described under “others” and in the project narrative. 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 also serve as Senior Personnel or collaborators. Teams may include researchers or consultants affiliated with other institutions to include expertise required for the success of the project activities. If your proposal is funded, we encourage you to use TIER-ED faculty/student spaces at Children’s Research Center for research and meeting purposes once we are back on campus in-person.

The project proposal will have to be uploaded on the form. It should include project description, significance, expected impact, and a clear budget with justification.

Funding Stipulations

- Project funds may be used to support Illinois graduate student and academic professional salaries, meeting expenses (in compliance with [OBFS Guidelines](#)), and external consultant fees. Graduate students can be funded at their home department rates for one semester or the academic year. It may also cover other research expenses, including materials and supplies, participant incentives, research travel, and computer programming costs (excluding the purchase of equipment).
- For the purpose of this competition, “large-scale” funding is defined as proposals seeking \$500,000 or more in external funds. Preference will be given to proposals seeking federal funding that will receive full F&A (Facilities and Administrations) cost.
- Upon notification of award, the PI’s primary unit will receive funds via inter-unit transfer, and will be responsible for fiscal management
- Funds awarded must be expended by May 15th, 2022.

Deliverable

Awarded teams will submit a 3-to-5 page final report detailing their project design, methodologies, and an outline of results. The report must be submitted by June 15, 2022. They will also develop a complete, ready-to-submit proposal for external funding—including all main and ancillary documents and materials—as stipulated by the requirements of the target funding agency. A copy of the external proposal (once submitted) should be also forwarded to TIER-ED (tier-ed@education.illinois.edu).

Proposal Development Support

Institutional supports for proposal development and submission are available. For proposals seeking more than \$1 million in external funding are eligible for grant development assistance through the [Office of Proposal Development \(OPD\)](#) in the [Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research](#). Other proposals seeking \$500,000+ in external funding with Principal, Co-Principal Investigators or Senior Personnel from the College of Education, are eligible for strategic proposal development assistance and submission support through the [Bureau of Educational Research \(BER\)](#). Any team intending to request BER support should do so at least 8 weeks prior to the anticipated submission deadline.

Selection Process

Proposals will be reviewed by interdisciplinary faculty group who will be selected by the TIER-ED Steering Committee. Criteria for selection include scientific merit, interdisciplinary nature, feasibility of the project, alignment with TIER-ED visions, and its potential to successfully produce a proposal for external funding that is competitive and robust.

Seed Funding Program Working Themes

While TIER-ED will consider submissions related to any aspect of technology applications to education, the Pilot Project Program particularly welcomes proposals that address one or more of the following working themes:

1. Technology designs that seek to optimize learning in a variety of disciplines, knowledge domains, skills, and practices.
2. Augmented, virtual, and mixed reality environments that enable new ways to interact with learning content.
3. Data analytics methods that explore personalized learning environments and understand issues of access and equity.
4. Exploration of online learning platforms' role in transforming learning, peer interaction, assessment, feedback, and peer reviews.
5. Collaborative gaming and/or digital learning environments with integrated capabilities for mining user inputs to detect learning, assess progress toward learning goals, and provide users and instructors with just-in-time feedback to scaffold, support, and improve learning.
6. Design, deployment, and use of educational technologies to improve learning outcomes for underrepresented and disadvantaged populations.
7. Technology designs that aim to improve learning for struggling learners or students with disabilities.
8. Interplay of technologies, learning, and the design of learning spaces - both formal and informal.
9. Innovative use of technology to understand, explore, create or improve access to learning opportunities during a pandemic or to facilitate transition out of a pandemic.

Proposal Submission

Please complete the application form and upload the project proposal at [TIER-ED Call for Proposals](#). All submissions must be completed by the deadline (5 p.m. CST on April 23, 2021) to get full consideration.

For Additional Information or questions, please contact

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Or

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