

Funding Opportunities for Learning and Teaching Innovation: Briefing Note and Call for Expressions of Interest

- **Pedagogy Transformation Fund**
- **Digital Innovation Fund**
- **President's Excellence Fund for Learning and Teaching Innovation**

1. Executive Summary

The Education Office is coordinating an open call for expressions of interest for learning and teaching innovations which have potential to be scalable, have impact widely across Imperial and are aligned with the aims of the [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#).

This call draws together the **Pedagogy Transformation Fund**, the **President's Excellence Fund for Learning and Teaching Innovation** and the **Digital Innovation Fund**. We are running a single unified call for all three funds.

Funding for projects of up to £50K each will be eligible for support from the **President's Excellence Fund for Learning and Teaching Innovation**. Projects totalling £50K and over will be considered under the **Pedagogy Transformation** and **Digital Innovation** funding routes.

Proposal forms for projects should be submitted by **12:00pm on Friday 9th May 2025**. **This date is flexible depending on project team needs.**

2. Background

The [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#) has facilitated investment in our people and places, our digital and physical infrastructure, and the student experience. Imperial's dedication to the highest quality of learning and teaching has also been reflected in both objective and subjective external benchmarking – with the university securing its highest ever student satisfaction scores in the National Student Survey in recent years, a [Gold Award in the Teaching Excellence Framework](#), and several University of the Year awards from respected, high-profile rankings.

Through collaboration with academic departments, faculties, our student support teams and the student body, comprehensive community feedback gathered during the 2022/23 academic year identified five fresh aims for phase two of the strategy. Further information can be found online at: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/education/our-vision/>

A key tenet of the strategy has been to recognise the immense value and insight that our student community can offer. Our close partnership, collaboration and co-creation with students and Imperial College Union are a focal point for our enduring success and remain at the centre of all we do.

The focus of this funding call is to provide an opportunity for **Faculties, Departments, Institutes** and **teams** to explore new opportunities or build on existing work which can be shared across Imperial to enhance and innovate our pedagogy, educational delivery and the student experience.

3. Funding Priorities

As this call draws together the **Pedagogy Transformation Fund**, the **President's Excellence Fund for Learning and Teaching Innovation** and the **Digital Innovation Fund**, all proposals will be reviewed and prioritised under the most appropriate route.

Projects are expected to further Imperial's aims and align with the Learning and Teaching Strategy in one or more of these areas:

- Reviewing our approach to **assessment and feedback**, with the aim of improving quality and reducing workloads for students and staff
- Delivering degree programmes that challenge students to achieve their full potential through authentic **discovery-based learning**
- Developing **extended learning opportunities** for our current students, alumni, and a global community of learners yet to discover us
- Growing our **digital education capabilities** both in scale and in scope to enhance our use of novel digital technologies, virtual educational spaces and data
- Fostering a **supportive environment** which offers a sense of community both inside and beyond the learning environment

Further details about these five aims can be found online at:
<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/education/our-aims/>

4. Who Can Apply?

We welcome applications from across the breadth of the College and its Faculties, Departments, Institutes, and teams. We are keen to particularly encourage:

- Multidisciplinary and cross-department proposals
- Proposals with potential for pan-College impact, and/or integration with other established College projects
- Proposals which are developed with students as partners

5. What Can Funding Support?

In line with the [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#), the aim of the funding is to enable the realisation of creative new projects by **providing resources** and **freeing-up time** and **space** for staff to innovate, to develop and adapt known methods, and to introduce entirely new teaching methods while evaluating the effectiveness of these methods in the context of Imperial.

This funding call provides seed funding to allow staff to pilot projects and demonstrate potential for impact and integration across Imperial. It is not anticipated that continuation funding will be available for projects funded via this call. Proposals are expected to outline plans for long-term sustainability, including how any required future funding will be

sought (for example, via Faculty/Department buy-in or seeking external funding). Applications must be supported by the Head(s) of Departments(s) or equivalent.

The resources needed to carry out a project will depend on local priorities, the scope, the size of the department/team and the extent to which the proposal develops entirely new activity or builds upon existing work.

Funding is intended to support the following:

1. The 'buyout' of existing College staff
2. Additional, fixed-term staff to support and facilitate innovation and expertise in learning and teaching
3. [StudentShapers](#)
4. Additional GTAs and UTAs
5. Specific support from centralised teams. For example, Educational Design and Technology (e.g. from the Digital Media Lab, EdTech Labs, ICT or other partner departments)

Additionally, centralised consultancy-style support can be arranged from the [Educational Development Unit \(EDU\)](#), [Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship \(CHERS\)](#) and/or the Education Office as required throughout the lifecycle of the project.

Funding will be available for projects starting in financial year **2025/26** and **2026/27**, and will be available up to the end of the **2027/28** financial year.

For consistency in recruitment and to attract appropriately skilled staff, exemplar job descriptions and expectations for project funded roles can be provided by the Education Office.

7. Further Support for Project Teams

Members of staff who are funded to work on approved projects will join a multidisciplinary community of staff and students who are engaged in the development, research and evaluation learning and teaching across Imperial and the sector. Teams in receipt of funding will be encouraged to take an active role in this community by sharing project progress and outcomes at meetings, events and written communications.

Project teams will be able to tap into an extensive pool of colleagues with diverse and deep expertise and interests to help further develop their projects and will be supported through College networks and centres of expertise to build these links.

Those receiving funds are expected to take an evidence-based approach, evaluating innovation and change and ensuring that their work is informed by the educational research literature. Support to do this will be provided through opportunities to engage with professional development and networking opportunities provided by CHERS and the Education Office.

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Completed proposals to be sent to: ltstrategy@imperial.ac.uk

8. Contact

If you have any questions regarding these funds or the application process, please contact Courtney Lair (ltstrategy@imperial.ac.uk).

7 January 2025