Call for Proposals for Common Ground Pilot Subjects

The MIT Schwarzman College of Computing (SCC) is hosting the second open call for proposals for Common Ground subjects. The call is open to all faculty and lecturers interested in collaborating with colleagues in different departments to pilot computing classes which are useful across a range of areas and support the educational mission of the individual departments. Limited funding is available for the development and teaching of these subjects.

Information on the Common Ground for Computing Education, and teaching as part of the initiative, can be found on the SCC website at https://computing.mit.edu/cross-cutting/common-ground-for-computing-education/for-instructors/.

Proposals for the Fall 2022 grant process are due on or before November 1. Anyone considering proposing a Common Ground subject is encouraged to reach out to the focus area co-chairs (cg-subcomm-cochairs@mit.edu) early on (prior to the deadline) to discuss ideas and for help identifying potential co-instructors and partnering departments.

Criteria

Common Ground subjects:

- Have core computational content that is broadly applicable, cross-fertilized across disciplines, and blended with discipline-specific material. The computing content and discipline-specific content should be combined conceptually, enabling students to frame disciplinary problems using a richly computational approach.
- Involve collaboration by two or more departments in the form of co-development and teaching or as part of a co-requisite structure developed and staffed by collaborating departments. Course 6 does not need to be part of the collaboration.
- Are new subjects or new versions of existing subjects revised in consonance with the criteria noted above.
- Have written support from the heads of the collaborating departments. Faculty and lecturers should coordinate with their department heads to obtain support for the pilot and to discuss how the class, in a steady state, will add value to the department’s curriculum.

See current and past pilots.

Funding

The amount and length of funding for Common Ground pilots vary depending on situations specific to each subject. Typically, support is provided during the development phase and/or the first year that a class is taught.

Examples of support provided to past Common Ground pilots include TAs and summer salaries for faculty/lecturers, as well as funds for some class materials. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional sources of funding (departmental or other offices, such as the Office of the Vice Chancellor through d’Arbeloff and Alumni Class Funds) to round out support for the class.
Proposal guidelines

Pilot subjects must be proposed and overseen by MIT faculty or lecturers from two or more departments to address common needs across those departments.

Instructors should coordinate with their department heads to obtain support for the pilot and to discuss how the class, in a steady state, will add value to the department’s curriculum. A brief letter of support from the head of each collaborating department must be submitted with the proposal.

Instructors must include a syllabus with their proposal. A rough draft is sufficient.

The review process is iterative. The class need not be in its final form at the time the proposal is submitted. The subcommittees of the Common Ground Standing Committee will work with proposers to further develop pilots that address the needs of departments while satisfying criteria for Common Ground.

Seed fund applicants must submit a budget that includes a breakdown of costs, amount of Common Ground funding requested, and other funding sources, as well as a budget narrative explaining the costs. Those not requesting funding can omit the budget.

Timeline

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<th>Grant Process</th>
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<td>Fall 2022</td>
<td>November 1</td>
<td>Early February</td>
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Instructors who want their class published in the Subject Listing and Schedule should also adhere to the Registrar’s curriculum planning timeline to ensure a catalog proposal reaches the Committee on Curricula (undergraduate) and/or Committee on Graduate Programs (graduate) within catalog deadlines. Your departmental catalog coordinator can facilitate this for you.

How to apply

- Download proposal form and budget sheet.
- Send completed proposal form and budget sheet, class syllabus, and department head letters of support to commongroundproposals@mit.edu. Only when all these items are submitted will the application be considered complete.
- Proposal will be reviewed by the appropriate subcommittee(s) of the Common Ground Standing Committee.

More information

- Frequently asked questions
- Current and past pilots
- If you have questions about proposals or the process, please send email to common-ground@mit.edu.