

# **CSU AI Educational Innovations Challenge (AIEIC)**

## **Integrating AI Tools in Curriculum and Instruction**

**2025 - 2026**

### **Call for Proposals**

#### **Program Purpose**

The CSU is the nation's largest AI-empowered university system. While delivering high-quality instruction, faculty have begun to integrate cognitive engagement with Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools into their instructional strategies. The AI Educational Innovations Challenge (AIEIC) invites CSU faculty to leverage emerging AI technologies to enhance critical thinking skills, lead innovation in a variety of disciplines and promote ethical and responsible use of AI. The goal of this call for proposals is to provide support for faculty and campuses to:

- define AI literacies and competencies related to their discipline,
- develop strategies to ensure students learn with and through AI rather than letting it circumvent deep learning and critical thinking, and
- redesign curricula to prepare students to be empowered, equitable and ethical users and developers of AI in an increasingly AI-driven workplace.

The CSU faculty community has demonstrated remarkable creativity through previous initiatives, and we now seek proposals for projects to develop instructional and curricular innovations to ensure the next generation of students is equipped to navigate an increasingly complex digital landscape.

The challenge will complement the systemwide deployment of AI tools and resources in the [CSU AI Commons](#). This funding opportunity addresses the fast-evolving educational AI landscape, encouraging participants to develop innovative applications of and approaches to AI for their courses and programs. Faculty are encouraged to submit proposals for projects that will launch in summer 2025 and conclude by the end of spring 2026. Special emphasis is placed on applications that can be replicated across the CSU. Detailed guidelines on eligibility and proposal submission are provided in the sections below. This will be a competitive grant process, and as many grant proposals will be funded as possible. Funding can be up to \$30,000 or \$60,000 per proposal, depending on the scope of the project.

## Project Timeline

Date	Activity
April 1, 2025	CFP Release
April 30, 2025	Proposal submission deadline
May 2025	Awardees announced. Subawards distributed to campuses
June 2025	Project activity begins
January 2026	Midterm report due to the Office of the Chancellor
June 2026	Project activity ends; deadline for spending funds
August 2026	Final narrative report due to CO

## Award Eligibility

Tenure-track faculty, tenured faculty and lecturers from all disciplines are eligible to submit proposals. Directors of faculty development or centers for teaching and learning may submit proposals that will involve faculty. Faculty from multiple campuses may create a team to submit a proposal. One person must be identified as the principal investigator (PI). Multi-campus projects may identify co-principal investigators, one from each participating campus.

## Selection Criteria

Each proposal should directly address innovative teaching practices that develop critical thinking skills while integrating AI tools. For example, utilizing [information literacy frameworks](#), such as the [Research Libraries Guiding Principles for Artificial Intelligence](#), would be encouraged. Proposals that involve students as partners in developing innovative applications and responsible and ethical uses of AI are encouraged. This program supports faculty incorporating AI literacy into course and project learning outcomes and developing instructional models, assignments or assessments that enhance critical thinking strategies with and about AI tools. Proposals will be evaluated on creativity, innovation, and potential student impact. Proposals that infuse AI literacy into lower-division general education curriculum as well as those that revise learning outcomes for majors are encouraged.

## **Selection Criteria for AI in Teaching Innovation Proposals**

1. Pedagogical Innovation
  - a. Evidence of innovative teaching practices that meaningfully integrate AI tools
  - b. Creative approaches to developing students' critical thinking skills alongside AI utilization
  - c. Quality of instructional models, assignments or assessments incorporating AI
2. Curricular Impact and Reach
  - a. Integration of AI literacy into course/project learning outcomes
  - b. Potential for student impact across diverse learner populations
  - c. Priority areas (receiving special consideration):
    - i. Lower-division general education curriculum integration
    - ii. Major-specific learning outcome revisions
    - iii. Courses satisfying the CSU's Critical Thinking general education requirement
3. Ethical Framework and Student Engagement
  - a. Emphasis on ethical and responsible AI tool usage
  - b. Use of established frameworks (such as Research Libraries Guiding Principles for AI)
  - c. Involvement of students as partners in developing or implementing AI applications
4. Project Viability and Assessment
  - a. Clear project narrative with well-articulated rationale and need
  - b. Defined expected outcomes and assessment methodology
  - c. Potential for scalability beyond initial implementation
  - d. Thoughtful budget aligned with proposed activities

Special consideration will be given to projects that address ethical and responsible use of AI tools and critical thinking strategies, particularly in courses that satisfy the CSU's Critical Thinking general education requirement.

Awardees will be selected based on the overall quality of the response of their proposal, including: project narrative; rationale for the project and its expected outcomes; project scalability; project evaluation or assessment; and a thoughtful budget.

## Available Funding

There are two tiers of funding available. Projects focusing on individual courses, or courses within a single discipline, should be submitted as a Tier 1. Proposals requesting funding up to \$30,000 should apply for Tier 1 funding. Proposals submitted to Tier 2 should involve multiple courses within a project or involve more than one discipline and courses. Proposals requesting funding up to \$60,000 should apply for Tier 2 funding.

Funding Tiers	Amount	Description
Tier 1	Up to \$30,000	Should focus on individual courses or courses within a single discipline
Tier 2	Up to \$60,000	Should involve multiple courses within a project or involve more than one discipline and courses

## Allowable Expenses

Allowable expenses include but are not limited to:

- Faculty, staff and student staff time, in the form of buyouts or stipends (as allowed).
- To promote equitable access to technology, preference will be given to projects utilizing AI tools and resources already available across the CSU. Projects focused on other AI tools should include justification.
- Additional expenses as allowable within campus regulations.

## Ineligible Expenses

- Hardware purchases
- Travel costs
- Indirect costs

## How to Apply

Proposals must be submitted via the online proposal submission form by 11:59 p.m. on April 30, 2025. Each proposal must be submitted using the proposal template and include the following information:

- Contact information and campus details
- Project narrative, including a focus on equity and scalability

- Evaluation plan
- Budget narrative
- Letter(s) of support from department chair and/or college dean
- Endorsement memo or letter from the provost

See the **Submitting Your Proposal Guide** (below) for additional information. Proposals must be completed to be considered for funding and will not be accepted after the deadline.

### **CSU AI Educational Innovations Challenge Points of Contact:**

For questions, regarding submission of the CSU AI Educational Challenge, please contact:

Leslie Kennedy, Ed.D., Assistant Vice Chancellor  
Academic Technology Services, CSU Office of the Chancellor  
[lkennedy@calstate.edu](mailto:lkennedy@calstate.edu)

Emily Magruder, Ph.D., Director  
Innovative Teaching and Future Faculty Development, CSU Office of the Chancellor  
[emagruder@calstate.edu](mailto:emagruder@calstate.edu)

For questions regarding the CSU Artificial Intelligence Strategy, please contact:

Nathan Evans, Ed.D., Deputy Vice Chancellor  
Academic and Student Affairs, CSU Office of the Chancellor  
[nevans@calstate.edu](mailto:nevans@calstate.edu)

Meera Komarraju, Ph.D., Provost  
CSU Northridge  
Member CSU AI Workforce Acceleration Board  
[meera.komarraju@csun.edu](mailto:meera.komarraju@csun.edu)

When you are ready to apply, **please use the designated AIEIC call for proposals submission form.**

## Submitting Your Proposal Guide

### AI Educational Innovations Challenge (AIEIC) Integrating AI Tools in Curriculum and Teaching

Please use this proposal guide to prepare your application for the AIEIC project. Note that all information provided in this guide will need to be entered into the **online proposal submission form**. It is intended to be used to guide the development of your application.

You may direct questions about the application process to Emily Magruder at [emagruder@calstate.edu](mailto:emagruder@calstate.edu) or Leslie Kennedy at [lkennedy@calstate.edu](mailto:lkennedy@calstate.edu).

#### Proposal Criteria:

- **Contact information and campus details**
  - Campus Name:
  - Primary PI Name and Contact Information:
  - Additional Faculty Co-PIs (if applicable):
  - Proposed Budget (in dollars):
- **Project title and abstract.** Include the full title and a brief abstract describing the project (up to 150 words).
- **Project narrative.** Describe the project in full. Include the goals and rationale, timeline, students who will immediately benefit, and expected outcomes (up to 800 words).
- **Focus on enhancing teaching and learning with AI tools.** Explain how the project explicitly develops innovative applications of AI to deepen critical thinking. How will the project support faculty to define AI literacies and competencies related to their discipline, to develop strategies to ensure

students learn with and from AI rather than letting it circumvent deep learning and critical thinking, or redesign curriculum to prepare students to be empowered, equitable, and ethical users and developers of AI in an increasingly AI-driven workplace? (up to 500 words)

- **Project scalability.** Explain the scalability of the project. To what degree will the instructional strategies, frameworks, resources or materials the project produces be replicable in other contexts across the CSU? (up to 500 words).
- **Evaluation plan.** Describe how the project's success will be measured with a focus on (but not limited to) the following (Up to 500 words).
  - **AI Tools & Purpose:** Specify which AI tools will be utilized and their intended purpose.
  - **Effectiveness Measures:** Outline the metrics and/or methods which will be used to assess the project's impact.
  - **Learning & Ethical Use:** Explain how the project could deepen student's critical thinking, expand their knowledge, and promote responsible usage among faculty and students.
  - **Social & Cultural Impact:** Describe the intended societal and cultural impact the project aims to achieve and explain how it could prepare faculty and students for an increasingly AI-driven workplace.
- **Budget narrative.** Describe how funds will be allocated across budget categories and identify if this proposal is Tier 1 or Tier 2 (see **Available Funding** above). (up to 500 words).
- **Estimated Budget.** Describe your spending categories for 1. Salaries, 2. Benefits, 3. Materials & Supplies, 4. Other(s): Indicate Items(s). Use the submission form to describe your spending categories.
- **Total Estimated Budget.**
- **Letter(s) of Support.** Letters from the primary principal investigator's department chair and/or college dean must explicitly authorize expenditures involving faculty or staff time. If the proposal includes additional co-PIs, letters from each faculty member's department chair/dean are required. An endorsement memo or letter from the PIs' provost(s) is also required.