Curriculum Connector Seed Grants for Long-Term Impact: Call for Proposals

Overview

The Curriculum Connector invites proposals for new projects that connect students' learning across their degree and into their careers. These are seed grants: resources to design something that can last and grow long after the initial funding ends.

Whether you're redesigning a program, building a new industry partnership, teaming up with colleagues across campus, rethinking a sequence of courses, or trying something that doesn't fit neatly into any category, we want to hear from you! Projects will be designed in Spring and Summer 2027 and launched in Fall 2027.

Funding for this program comes from a State of Texas grant supporting career-connected learning, workforce readiness, and curricular redesign.

Funded projects will also become part of a growing LEEF resource library, so the ideas, tools, and partnerships you build can help colleagues across the university and beyond.

Alignment with Look North: UNT 2030

These seed grants are meant to put UNT's strategic plan into practice. Projects launching in Fall 2027 fall within the plan's 2026–2028 "Build New Capabilities" phase, which commits UNT to integrating career-aligned learning across the curriculum and expanding career-aligned learning opportunities in all academic programs.

Projects may also help move the plan's measures of success, including first-to-second-year retention, 4- and 6-year graduation rates, time to value, post-graduation placement, and the percentage of academic programs that integrate internships, industry-sponsored projects, and other career-aligned experiences.

What We're Looking For

We seek student-centered projects that create new and substantial curricular changes with long-term impacts. Strong proposals fall under one or more of these areas:

- Student Success: helping more students progress, persist, and graduate with a sense of purpose in their future lives and careers purpose
- Career Readiness: connecting coursework to the skills, experiences, and partners students will meet in their careers
- Curricular Innovation and Experimentation: testing new models that others at UNT faculty members could learn from or adopt

Examples of what a project might look like:

- A series of industry- or community-partnered courses or sequences that recur each year
- A program-level redesign that brings industry, community, and alumni partners into students' learning at multiple points across the degree
- Mapping and redesigning a program so courses build intentionally on one another
- Cross-course projects where students in two or three courses, schools, or colleges work on parts of the same project

- Helping students document and articulate their skills across a program (portfolios, micro-credentials, reflection threads)
- Creatively partnering with campus units such as the career center, university libraries, advising, or student affairs

Projects must be new. We will fund a new project or a substantial new phase of existing work (for example, scaling a single-course pilot across a program). Funds may not be used to sustain activities already underway. Preference will be given to proposals with new and substantial changes to curriculum.

We are interested in ideas far beyond these examples. If your project helps students see how their learning connects across their degree and into their futures, we encourage you to apply!

Funding

Awards typically range **from $5,000 to $20,000,** depending on project scope. The Curriculum Connector will determine the number and size of awards based on the proposals received. Applicants should include a detailed budget.

Allowable costs may include:

- Faculty stipends or task payments for design work
- Student wages, stipends, or other direct student support
- Honoraria for industry or community partners
- Materials, software, and supplies
- Event or convening costs
- Promotional materials for the project
- Academic experiences not covered by course fees

All funds must be used and/or transferred to the applicant's home units by August 31, 2027. We understand some expenditures might not take place until Fall 2027, such as visiting speakers or student stipends for a fall course. Please indicate those costs in the Dispersed Fall 2027 column in the budget spreadsheet.

We are especially interested in projects with matching or in-kind support from a department, college, or external partner. Please describe any match in your budget.

Eligibility

The call is open to all UNT faculty (any rank) and staff. Cross-unit and interdisciplinary teams are especially encouraged, as are teams that include industry or community partners. Each project must have a UNT faculty or staff lead.

Timeline

Projects are designed in Spring and Summer 2027 and launch in Fall 2027.

When	Milestone
November (TBD – 2nd week?)	Call released
December 15	Proposals due
January 11	Awards announced

When	Milestone
January 2027	Kickoff consultation with the Curriculum Connector
March 2027	Progress report and check-in
May 12-14	Curriculum Connector Summer Institute
August, 2027	Design complete; launch-ready materials and final design report due
Fall 2027	Project launches
End of Fall 2027	Brief follow-up impact report

Application requirements

Please submit the following, collated into a single pdf file of materials in the order listed below.

1. **Project summary** (maximum 750 words)
    - The problem or opportunity the project addresses
    - What you will design and how it is new or substantially different
    - Intended outcome(s): the work-integrated learning experience and/or curricular change the project will produce, and how you will know it was achieved
    - Connection to student success
2. **Impact and Sustainability Plan** (maximum 500 words)
    - Number of students the project will reach, at launch and over time
    - Potential industry or community connections, and which measures the project could help move (e.g., retention, graduation, time to value, career-aligned learning across programs)
    - Other units, programs, or colleagues who may benefit
    - How the project will continue after the seed grant ends (e.g., departmental support, recurring course structure, external funding), and how you will share what you learn with colleagues at UNT and beyond
3. **Budget and spending timeline** (up to 2 pages)
    - Itemized budget with brief justification (Please use the budget template below.)
    - Timeline for spending from Spring 2027 through Summer 2027
    - Any matching or in-kind funds, and their source
4. **Curriculum vitae**
5. **Letter of support** (1 page) from your department chair or dean

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Budget Form

Before you begin

All funds must be used and/or transferred to the applicant's home unit by August 31, 2027. Some expenses may not take place until Fall 2027, such as visiting speakers or student stipends for a fall course. Please list those costs in the Fall 2027 column.

Enter amounts in whole dollars and fill in the totals for each row and column. Enter $0 for categories that do not apply.

Budget

Category of expenditure	Spring 2027	Summer 2027	Fall 2027**	Total by line*
Faculty stipends or design work	$	$	$	$
Direct student support	$	$	$	$
Honoraria	$	$	$	$
Materials, software, and supplies	$	$	$	$
Event or convening costs	$	$	$	$
Promotional materials	$	$	$	$
Academic experiences not covered by course fees	$	$	$	$
Other (specify):	$	$	$	$
Other (specify):	$	$	$	$
Total by stage of work*	**$**	**$**	**$**	**$**

** Total budget must range between $5,000 and $20,000.*

*** Fall 2027 costs must be transferred to the applicant's home unit by August 31, 2027.*

Review Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by the Curriculum Connector using these criteria:

Criterion	What reviewers look for
Newness, substance, and creativity	A new project or substantial new phase that meaningfully and creatively changes curriculum
Student-centered impact	Clear benefit to students; number of students reached; direct student support
Career connection	Meaningful links to careers, industry, or community partners, and clear alignment with Look North: UNT 2030
Clear outcomes	A defined WIL and/or curricular outcome and a plan to know it was achieved
Sustainability	A realistic path to continue after seed funding ends
Feasibility	Achievable design by end of Summer 2027 and launch in Fall 2027; sound budget
Institutional support	Chair or dean support; matching or in-kind funds a plus
Shareability	Potential for other UNT units to learn from or adopt the model

Expectations of funded projects

As a condition of the award, project teams will take part in a series of consultation meetings with the Curriculum Connector. These meetings support project development, track progress, and document outcomes.

Summer Institute

All funded teams will have the opportunity to participate in a Curriculum Connector Summer Institute (May 12-14, Summer 2027), a three-day working session where teams develop their projects, share progress, and give and receive feedback across projects.

Sharing your work

Funded projects are meant to reach beyond a single course or unit. All funded teams will:

- Contribute materials to the Curriculum Connector resource page (e.g., assignments, syllabus language, program maps, partner models, or a practice brief)
- Present the project at a LEEF or Curriculum Connector showcase, community of practice, or leadership meeting

Teams are also encouraged to:

- Share with external audiences where possible, such as conference presentations, publications, or the Texas Talent Accelerator network
- Partner with LEEF's Research & Evidence team to study the project's impact

How to apply

Submit your proposal through Microsoft forms by **December 15**. Combine the project summary, impact, sustainability plan, budget, CV, and letter of support into one PDF.

Questions are welcome at any time to april.prince@unt.edu.