

D2L Educators-in-Residence Initiative Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Welcome to the Educator-in-Residence initiative FAQ! This document provides answers to common questions about this exciting opportunity, overseen by the Academic Affairs Team at D2L in collaboration with SUNY. Here you'll find information regarding project selection, seed grant distribution, ideal team size, and contractual obligations. We encourage you to review these questions and answers to gain a clear understanding of the initiative.

Q: Do these research projects have to include the use of Brightspace?

A: Yes, a key focus of this initiative is to deepen our understanding of the impact the Brightspace learning management system is having on student success (or the student experience). Therefore, **proposals should explicitly include the exploration of specific Brightspace features** within the research design. In addition to outlining the Brightspace features under investigation, proposals should also provide a brief description of the institution or organization involved, clearly define the intended study population, and articulate a specific problem statement or hypothesis that the research aims to address within the Brightspace context.

Q: How will projects for the Educators-in-Residence initiative be selected?

A: The Academic Affairs Team at D2L, which oversees and provides this initiative, will be responsible for the selection of projects. The final selection will be made by **October 20, 2025**. In making their decision, the team aims to highlight a diverse group of institutions within the State University of New York (SUNY) system that demonstrate a strong research agenda. This focus on diversity across SUNY institutions will ensure a broad range of perspectives and research areas are represented in the Educators-in-Residence project.

Q: How are the seed grants distributed for the Educators-in-Residence projects?

A: Seed grants, amounting to a total of \$5000 per project (provided through D2L and SUNY), are intended to provide a small recognition of the critical research undertaken by the Educators in Residence. These grants will be awarded directly to the researchers involved in the project. The funds will be distributed at the **conclusion of the project**, specifically once a paper submission related to the research has been secured. This ensures that the grant directly supports the dissemination of the valuable insights generated through the initiative.

Q: What is the ideal team size for an Educator-in-Residence project?

A: Based on our experience with similar projects, we've found that teams of **no more than three individuals** tend to be the most effective. While we recognize the valuable contributions of Institutional Research (IR) staff and other data support personnel at an institutional level, the core research questions for these projects are typically driven by a particular educator or instructional designer. Therefore, the ideal team primarily consists of these key individuals, potentially benefiting from broader institutional support as needed.

Q: What are the contractual obligations associated with this initiative?

A: Once the Academic Affairs Team determines the distribution of the seed funds with the research team, a **contract will be generated and sent to each participant on the team who is receiving a portion of the grant**. This contract will clearly outline the terms and conditions of the seed grant. Importantly, it will also specify the **completion milestones** that are required to fulfill the obligations of the initiative. Participants can expect to receive this contract after the seed fund distribution plan has been established.

Q: Do these research projects have to focus exclusively on completely online courses?

A: No, the scope of these research projects is not limited to completely online courses. In fact, we are interested in exploring the **range of modalities** that SUNY institutions utilize to support students in their learning experiences across the entire campus. This includes fully online, hybrid, blended, and face-to-face courses, as well as various technology-enhanced learning environments. We encourage projects that investigate effective pedagogical practices and student engagement strategies across this spectrum of instructional delivery methods.

Q: What are the key deliverables of this opportunity and why are they important?

A: The key deliverables for the Educator in Residence initiative are the **completion of the research study** and the **submission of an article for publication**. In an era where understanding the efficacy and impact of educational technology is paramount, these deliverables are crucial for several reasons:

- **Completion of the Research Study:** This ensures that the dedicated time and resources invested in the project result in tangible findings and insights. It allows for a systematic investigation of the research questions and the generation of evidence-based conclusions.
- **Submission of an Article for Publication:** This step is vital for disseminating the valuable knowledge gained through the research to a wider audience within the field of education. Publication in peer-reviewed journals or other relevant outlets contributes to the scholarly conversation, informs practice, and allows other institutions and educators to benefit from the findings.

Ultimately, these deliverables underscore the initiative's commitment to advancing our understanding of educational technology's role and impact within the SUNY system and beyond.

Q: Who owns the research conducted through this initiative?

A: These projects are intended to be original research endeavors. The intellectual property rights for this research and the resulting data will reside with the participating faculty members and their respective institutions, in accordance with those institutions' policies. D2L explicitly has no right to or stake in any claim over the research data generated through these project

Q: Who is the point of contact at SUNY for inquiries related to this initiative?

A: Dan Feinberg, Interim Director of SUNY Online. Email contact: dan.feinberg@suny.edu