

Call for Proposals for Common Ground Pilot Subjects

The MIT Schwarzman College of Computing (SCC) is hosting the fourth annual 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 2024 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 offering of the class, in the form of TAs and/or instructor summer salary. For subsequent, steady-state offerings of the class, Common Ground can provide some TA support, depending on enrollment and available funds.

Applicants are encouraged to identify additional sources of funding (departmental or other offices, such as the Office of the Vice Chancellor through d'Arbelloff 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.

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 should still provide a budget.

Timeline

Grant Process	Proposal Deadline	Funding Decisions By
Fall 2024	November 1	Early February

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.