

Embedded incubator for community research and service learning

Lead contact: Carol LaFayette, MFA, Director, Institute for Applied Creativity
lurleen@viz.tamu.edu / office: 979-845-5691 / cel: 979-220-4770

Key Participating units: College of Architecture Council on Diversity, Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning, Department of Sociology, Department of Architecture, Department of Visualization, Institute for Applied Creativity

Anticipated Request Amount: 847,000.

Executive summary

We propose a community incubator in downtown Bryan that brings together researchers, faculty leading in service learning initiatives, students, and citizens, in multi-disciplinary teams to solve complex societal problems that require the interplay of multiple disciplines fueled by cross-sector funding. — Carol LaFayette, Director, Institute for Applied Creativity

Our students and faculty will conduct interdisciplinary research, teaching, and service that touches, engages, and embraces the Bryan community as part of AGGIES COMMIT. We bring together Visualization, Construction Science, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Urban Planning, Land and Property Development REAL PROJECTS. Our students will reinforce the University's commitment to engaging and serving the community through life-long learning best practices. — Geoffrey J. Booth, Youngblood Endowed Professor of Land Development, Master of Land and Property Development Program

A presence in downtown Bryan would allow a more consistent and comprehensive way to engage, research, and impact our own community. It will be an asset for the university as it augments its land grant role. It will allow us to pursue objectives for a variety of disciplines, catalyzing a dialogue among different approaches. City and community challenges need multidisciplinary responses. — Cecilia Giusti, College of Architecture Associate Dean for Outreach and Diversity; Associate Professor, Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning

As a Texas Master Gardener intern, and sociologist specializing in community studies — their formation, maintenance, change, and/or demise — and a Service Learning Faculty Fellow, the concept of community gardens is the centerpiece of my research, teaching, and service. As part of a collaboration between the College of Architecture and the College of Liberal Arts, the goal of developing an accessible space for a seed library, tool checkout, and training space for sustainable gardening (staffed by student interns, Master Gardeners, and community volunteers) is central. — Sarah Gatson Ph.D., Department of Sociology

By seeking constitutive guidance from member-representatives of the neighborhoods served, this incubator will distinguish itself as an exchange-based for mutually transformative collaboration across the boundaries that traditionally separate the university from the local community and the public from the private. The centrally located incubator will connect those in need of tools, support and innovative solutions to experience and expertise that comes not only from the university community but also from individuals and groups within their own communities. — Stephen Caffey, Ph.D., Instructional Assistant Professor, Architecture and Visualization