

Fund for “Innovative Digital Teaching” at the University of Mannheim

Call for applications for the spring semester 2024

Objectives

The Stiftung Innovation in der Hochschullehre has extended our university-wide project “Innovation ermöglichen und Transfer fördern: Strukturen für digitale Hochschullehre (InnoMA)” (Enabling innovation and fostering transfer: Structures for digital teaching at higher education institutions) until December 2025. The objective of InnoMA is to promote the structured funding of the sustainable development and transfer of high-quality digital teaching methods at the University of Mannheim. The extension of the project allows for a new call for applications for the “Innovative Digital Teaching” fund.

The fund is there to enable teaching staff to develop and test digital teaching and learning formats by providing them with the necessary financial freedom while at the same time offering them support with queries related to teaching excellence and the use of technology. This call for applications focuses on the actual use of teaching and learning formats as well as digital support services and their learning effectiveness, such as increased learning success along with their transferability. This means that the developed teaching-learning methods and digital support services could potentially be transferred to other contexts and have a wider impact on a larger number of students.

To help with the implementation of the funded projects, the Teaching and Learning Center (ZLL) and the University IT (UNIT) will support you regarding teaching excellence and the use of technology. The Center for Teacher Education and Educational Innovation (ZLBI) will scientifically evaluate the projects. In order to obtain reliable results regarding the needs of students and the effectiveness of the projects, this process will involve collecting and evaluating survey data, learning process data and data on academic achievements (such as exam results). The research results, which will be made available in various formats, will be used to devise recommendations for teaching staff of the University of Mannheim who are implementing digital teaching elements in their lessons.

Funding of projects

Funding is reserved for projects that aim to strengthen higher education teaching through digitalizing and that (continue to) develop or experiment with new or proven digital elements in teaching. Projects are supposed to harness the potentials of digitalization in teaching in order to create added value for students, increase learning effectiveness, and/or provide further benefits for students. This could include creating individual learning paths, facilitating an easier transition from high school to university, or enabling a more intensive learning experiences on campus (on-site teaching). Please note that in this call for applications, there is a particular focus on ensuring that students actually use the support services and on the transferability of your teaching concept.

The funding period for projects is up to one year. The funding period begins on 1 September 2024 at the earliest and ends on 31 August 2025 at the latest. You can request funding for personnel, such as

academic staff members¹ and student assistants, as well as funding for material resources, such as software and hardware. In the current call for applications, individual teaching projects may receive up to EUR 75,000 whereas joint projects involving several teaching staff members may receive up to EUR 100,000.

Lots

This call for applications consists of three different lots. You will have to choose one of the three following lots. Please note that there are separate application forms for each lot. The submission deadline is the same for all three lots.

- **Lot 1: Extension of existing projects**

Projects that have received funding from the “Innovative Digital Teaching” fund in the past or that are currently being funded can apply for an extension. You will need to explain your request for more time and additional funding to achieve the project objectives or to what extent you are pursuing additional project objectives. Possible reasons for delays in reaching project objectives could be unforeseeable delays in the procurement of necessary software or hardware or in filling a vacancy. Additional project objectives can potentially arise through the implementation of new measures aimed to ensure the actual use of learning opportunities and an increase in learning effectiveness, or by transferring the concepts and findings to another one of your courses. The transfer to a course with a larger number of students is particularly desirable.

- **Lot 2: Transfer from existing InnoMA projects**

Would you like to transfer concepts and insights from an [existing InnoMA project](#) to your course? Together with the project manager(s) of a previous or current InnoMA project, you can submit an application for a joint transfer project. Both project partners will work together on transferring the teaching method and insights from the existing project to the new context. Again, the transfer to a course with a larger number of students is desirable. If requested, the InnoMA team can help put you in touch with existing project partners.

- **Lot 3: New innovative digital teaching projects**

Do you have any new ideas on how to use digital elements to advance your teaching? Then you can also submit an application to receive funding from the “Innovative Digital Teaching” fund. Possible topics include the use of generative AI in higher education, neurodiversity amongst students, the testing of measures to ensure the use of additional digital services by students, digital services specifically for large courses, or digital support services to help students transition more easily from high school to university. Other innovative ideas for digital

¹ As usual, the employment of academic staff members is contingent on the successful review of the necessary prerequisites by the Human Resources Department. After funding has been granted, the review process will begin as soon as all relevant documents have been submitted. Academic staff members that receive funding for their employment may have to take on a certain teaching workload.

teaching projects are also very welcome. Feel free to schedule a consultation with us to discuss and develop your ideas before submitting your application. If there has already been an InnoMA teaching project in the past with a similar aim as your idea, you should submit a lot 2 application for a transfer project instead.

Application Requirements

All teaching staff at the University of Mannheim can apply for funding from the “Innovative Digital Teaching” fund. To support your project and to foster the transfer of your ideas, it is necessary that you (and your project team)...

- ... actively participate in regular events (two to three times per semester) to discuss your experiences.
- ... actively participate in the accompanying research, for example by jointly developing a detailed evaluation concept for the digital teaching project together with the InnoMA team as well as by jointly collecting relevant learning and results data in compliance with data protection standards.
- ... coordinate with the InnoMA team before procuring any hardware, software or licenses (to ensure compliance with the conditions of the external funding provider).
- ... realistically plan the use of resources and coordinate with the InnoMA team in case of any changes to the timeline, staffing or the financing plan.
- ... agree to the publication of project results in presentations and publications within the context of meetings with partners and conferences and inform the InnoMA team about your own project-related publications.
- ... actively participate in creating reports, patterns that can be transferred to other settings, open-access formats and open educational resources.

Application and Selection Procedure

Applications for funding from the “Innovative Digital Teaching” fund can be submitted between 27 March and 5 May 2024. Please email the completed and signed [form](#) to innoma@uni-mannheim.de.

A selection committee consisting of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Teaching, the head of the Teaching and Learning Center, representatives of the various schools as well as representatives of academic staff members and students decides which projects will receive funding. The quality of the teaching concept of the projects will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Feasibility
- Quality of the student-centered approach
- Appropriateness of the methodology
- Level of advancement of your own teaching
- Potential for innovation, based on the status quo at the respective departments
- Transferability to other courses
- Convincing draft of an evaluation concept
- Appropriateness of the use of resources

Funding may be granted subject to a successful thorough evaluation of both the hardware and software you intend to use as well as potential legal questions regarding data protection.

Events and consultation services

The following events will take place online to help you prepare for the submission of your application. All events will be held in German:

Course	Date	Time
General information on the current call for applications (as part of Lunch & Learn)	Tuesday, 19 March 2024	12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
General information on the current call for applications (same content as the event on 19 March)	Wednesday, 10 April 2024	10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Lecture: Planting Ideas – watering with funding – harvesting successful teaching projects (same content as the lectures on 3 and 15 April)	Monday, 25 March 2024	10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Lecture: Planting Ideas – watering with funding – harvesting successful teaching projects (same content as the lectures on 25 March and 15 April)	Wednesday, 3 April 2024	12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Lecture: Planting Ideas – watering with funding – harvesting successful teaching projects (same content as the lectures on 25 March and 3 April)	Monday, 15 April 2024	9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

In addition, you can schedule a private consultation in English:

For general and administrative questions relating to the applications, please contact Marina Friedrich-Schieback. Ute Hager and Andreas Reitzig are available to help with any queries regarding teaching methods or the use of technology. For questions regarding the evaluation concept and accompanying research, please contact Dr. Sabrina Navratil and Samuel Wissel. Feel free to contact us by email or on MS Teams.

Contact

[Here](#), you can find further information on InnoMA, the “Innovative Digital Teaching” fund, and all events. In case you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact the InnoMA team by email at innoma@uni-mannheim.de or on MS Teams.