

FOREVER BRIGHTER™

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY®



EXPANDING UNIVERSITY INITIATIVES

DESIGN INNOVATION

Inspiring Collaborative Doers, Makers, Fixers and Experimenters

Design Innovation (DI) brings together students, faculty and experts from multiple disciplines to thoughtfully address technology and society through design and innovation strategies. DI supports and inspires students to become creative, intersectional problem-solvers who are fearless collaborators in the face of complex, messy problems. This is accomplished through coursework and co-curricular projects, competitions, hackathons and grand challenges as part of a “challenge-based-innovation” strategy.





The DI Hub is located in the former art building in the heart of the Kent Campus. The Hub features innovation workshops, labs for experimentation and prototyping, and social spaces to support “kinetic collisions” between diverse intelligences.

Amplifying the Innovation Ecosystem

This initiative lies at the heart of our pioneering vision for the future of Kent State. We will create an interdisciplinary university community in which anyone, regardless of academic major, can become a problem-solver by applying the principles of design thinking and innovation.

Creating this unique environment requires interconnected spaces where students, faculty and industry partners can dynamically collaborate throughout our eight-campus system. DI sparks students’ curiosity and passion for exploration, causing them to look beyond boundaries to find new and unexpected destinations. DI opens the door to a much broader community of thinkers, dreamers and doers.

This initiative will have a transformative impact on vital priorities including education, workforce development, innovation and entrepreneurship.

It formalizes and extends an already impressive array of Kent State programs and resources including the University “Spark” Makerspace, LaunchNET, Fashion/Tech Hackathon, MakerFaire, Kent Hack Enough, Student Multimedia Studio, TechStyleLAB, MuseLab, the Brain Health “Collaboratories,” Advanced Materials and Liquid Crystal Institute (AMLCI) Labs and other innovation resources through human-centered design approaches to problem-solving.

BIOLBLACK TEAM WINS INTERNATIONAL BIODESIGN CHALLENGE

A team of Kent State students was recognized for its efforts to create a sustainable black dye alternative at the Biodesign Challenge. The team took top honors at the event with their eco-friendly replacement to synthetic dye used by the fashion industry to create the color black.

Janda Van Dyk, '22 (fashion), Jordan Smith, '22 (fashion), Kirsten Thieman, '21 (biology) and Lizeth Ramirez, '21 (fashion) formed the team and used their separate disciplines to create a new, sustainable process through their work with bacteria. “Today the fashion industry is one of the largest contributors of water waste, and they use toxic chemicals to create their dyes,” Thieman said.

The students were enrolled in the Biodesign Challenge course that was created to challenge the idea that the two separate disciplines could not collaborate. The course was a joint effort between Design Innovation and Environmental Science and Design Research Initiative.



UNIQUE COLLABORATION CELEBRATES LIBERTY

Kent State University and the Opera di Santa Croce in Florence, Italy, collaborated on the creation of “Sisters in Liberty: From Florence, Italy, to New York, New York,” an exhibition that was presented at the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration in New York in late 2019. Kent State created a 3D-printed replica of the Liberty of Poetry statue that enabled visitors to see the Italian predecessor to the U.S. Statue of Liberty.

The exhibition featured two distinct sculptural personifications of liberty: New York City’s Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World and Florence’s Liberty of Poetry. Exhibit visitors participated in a multimedia experience as they considered the question, “What does liberty mean to me?”

As a part of this collaboration, the partners leveraged existing unique and innovative tools and platforms of the university, including the Wick Poetry Center, Design Innovation Initiative and the digital visualization technologies created by faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Aeronautics and Engineering, College of the Arts, and College of Architecture and Environmental Design.



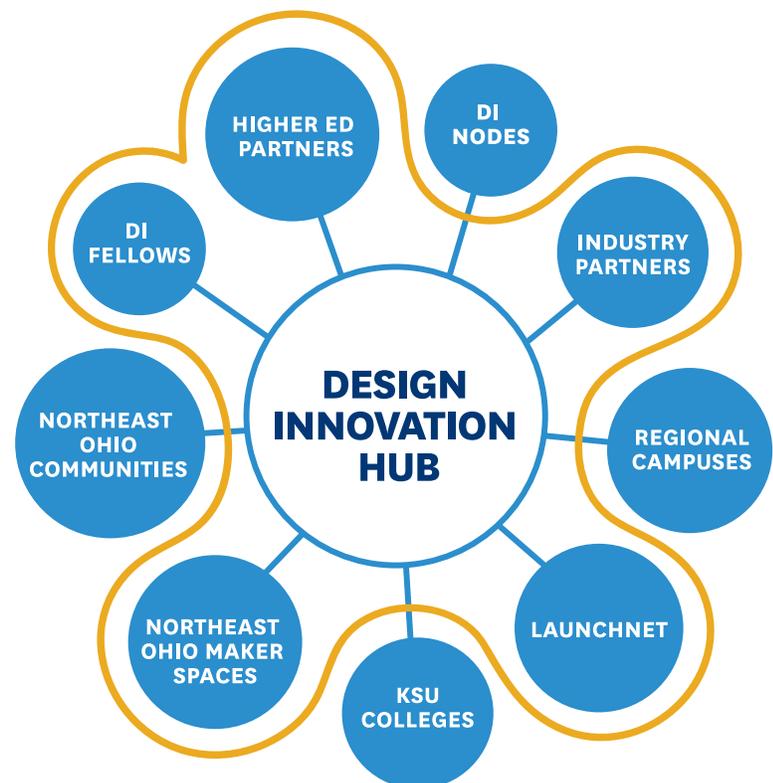
Design Innovation Nodes, Makerspaces and Resource Labs

The DI Hub connects students, faculty and the community to a network of existing spaces, or DI Nodes, makerspaces and resource laboratories across the university. This connection will improve innovation at the intersections between disciplines and increase awareness and access to the broad range of university design, technology and resource laboratories.

Each of the nearly 30 DI Nodes is available to support students’ inquiries, not just those in their respective degree program areas. These nodes are part of the larger DI and “maker-culture” of the university and host challenge-based innovation events to support collaborative problem-solving.

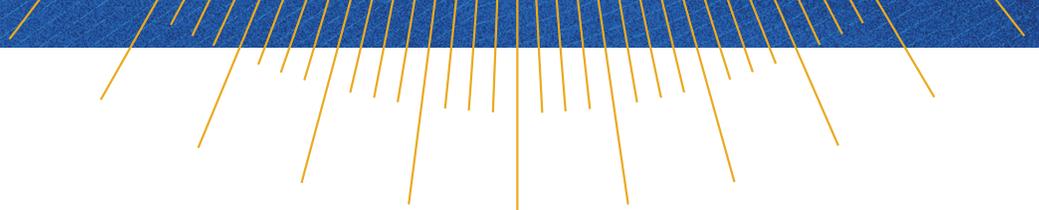
Node locations include: College of Aeronautics and Engineering, Campus Kitchen, College of Architecture and Environmental Design, College of Education, Health and Human Services, LaunchNET, Liquid Crystal Institute, MuseLab, Spark Innovation Studio, TechStyleLAB and many others.

KSU DESIGN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM



“From industry challenges to foundational coursework, hackathons and other cross-disciplinary events – we are using DI to tackle problem-solving from every angle imaginable. At Kent State, we are coming together to find breakthroughs that set us apart.”

J.R. Campbell, Executive Director, Design Innovation Initiative



WHY IS PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT NEEDED?

Philanthropic support is more than simply important; it is essential if we are to make this vision a reality. We are engaging in an innovative philanthropic campaign to secure funds for our program and capital needs. There are a number of areas in which private philanthropic support will make a significant impact. These include:

DI Grand Challenges - Donations support student involvement on interdisciplinary teams to address real and impactful challenge-based innovation projects.

DI Labs and Studios - Environments that provide space where students are encouraged to take on new projects and cross-disciplinary collaborations.

DI Fellows Program - Donations fund student fellows who engage in challenge-based innovation projects and events such as the annual Fashion/Tech Hackathon and bi-annual SkyHack Competition.

DI Designer in Residence Program - Donor support will allow us to host Innovators in Residence who will inspire and support our DI students, faculty and staff.

DI Reactor/DI Ecosystem - The DI Reactor serves as the core of a collaborative series of makerspace environments inside the DI Hub, connected to the DI Nodes across the university.

The bottom line is simple: We need supporters who share our understanding of the importance of the Design Innovation Initiative and support our vision for the future to lean forward and say “yes” to support this important and transformative work. This will impact our current students and faculty, our alumni and the future of Design Innovation both in Ohio and across the globe. We need your support to make our future *Forever Brighter*.



For more information or to discuss a philanthropic gift,
please contact us at DI@kent.edu or 330-672-0192.

www.kent.edu/supportdesigninnovation

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DESIGN INNOVATION FELLOWS PROGRAM

A Network of Student-to-Student Learning

The Design Innovation (DI) Fellows Program empowers students to engage in and become ambassadors for cross-disciplinary challenge-based innovation. The DI Fellows Program utilizes student-to-student learning to create a network of leaders committed to meaningful, positive change. We aspire to create an impactful community of thinkers, makers and doers who seek out, reframe and inspire creative solutions.



INNOVATION FOR DESIGN THINKING

The DI Fellows Program promotes and demonstrates how thinking, ethnicity, gender and gender ID, skills and disciplines can be a powerful recipe for innovation through design thinking, process and methods. Fellows tackle complex problems as members of diverse teams by engaging with and becoming advocates for the Design Innovation Initiative.

Fellows are selected as part of a competitive process that includes extracurricular, cross-disciplinary and collaborative workshops and design challenges. These students serve as part of the shared leadership model for the DI Initiative at Kent State University, and this program builds a network of leaders for meaningful change in higher education at the national level.



SELECTION CRITERIA

The greatest indicators for success in the DI Fellows Program include:

- Motivation and willingness to work in cross-disciplinary teams to tackle complex problems
- Passion for taking action, doing and making
- Strong interest in bringing skills and knowledge to a team with the ability to collaborate and reframe thinking



Khalil Thompson

Major: Digital Media Production

Fellows Involvement:
Member of the Blank_Lab Team and Akron Civic Duty project

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Participation in an annual Kent State DI Workshop/Symposium and Fellowship Workshop
- Priority access to collaborative workspaces in the Design Innovation Hub
- Funding support for travel in participation with a non-Kent State innovation conference
- Support to create a cross-disciplinary research initiative – in collaboration with at least two faculty members from different academic units across the university
- Eligible for participation in the Stanford University Innovation Fellows program

SUPPORT DI FELLOWS

Fellowships are made possible through philanthropic donations. Each fellowship requires \$1,500 per year of support. An entire class of fellows can be supported for \$15,000 annually.



For more information or to discuss a philanthropic gift, please contact us at DI@kent.edu or 330-672-0192.

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