



# Innovation Partnership Grant

Call for Proposals

**Stantec is a proud to partner with IDEC to offer the opportunity to work together, as practitioners, educators, and students, to solve problems creatively and improve the quality of life for the communities we serve and inhabit.**

At Stantec, we design with community in mind, and that means being on the forefront of research and innovation.

We are pleased to renew the Stantec Innovation Partnership Grant of \$10,000 for 2025. The purpose of this grant is to encourage research partnership between industry and academia.

This grant invites a student/academic research team to partner with Stantec to explore a question of interest within a theme, as they pertain to educational environments.

# Stantec / IDEC Research Partnership

Stantec seeks proposals from (1) educator and (1) student (graduate or rising senior undergraduate) from CIDA accredited programs with whom to partner on a research project related to one of the themes described.

A grant of \$10,000 will be awarded to the selected student and educator team. The distribution of funds will occur in phases as the above action items are completed. No indirect (F&A) costs should be included.

The successful grant recipients will work with Stantec interior designers to fulfill their research proposal. The division of labor between Stantec, educator, and student may vary based on the proposal and topic, but the intention is for all three parties to work virtually and collaboratively, providing equal effort and input so as to maximize the value of the three unique perspectives brought to the project.

**At minimum, the team will:**

- ✓ **Create an intermediate report sharing their progress**
- ✓ **Submit a proposal to present their project at IDEC’s annual North American conference**
- ✓ **Author a whitepaper to share their completed findings**

These 3 items are considered minimum deliverables, and the team is encouraged to disseminate findings as widely as possible.

## SCHEDULE

### 2025

- April 7**  
Proposals due
- May 5**  
Awards announced
- May**
- Kickoff meeting
  - 50% of funding released
- December**
- Progress report due
  - 25% of funding released

### 2026

- March**  
Provide poster at IDEC conference demonstrating work in progress
- June**
- White paper due
  - 25% of funding released
- September**  
Submission to IDEC conference due

### 2027

- March**  
IDEC conference

## DEADLINE

**Project submissions  
will be accepted until  
Monday, April 7, 2025.**

**5:00 PM**  
Mountain Standard Time (MST)

Applicants are invited to reach out to Stantec during the application process to pose questions. Questions may be directed to:  
✉ **Gwen Morgan**

RESEARCH THEMES

The following four themes are listed in order of preference for consideration.

01. Design Justice

Design Justice explores the relationship of design, inclusivity and diversity to uncover structural inequities in the interior environment and the processes by which they are designed. How do we design in such a way that all voices authentically expressed and heard?

How do our designs manifest experiences for people to feel safe, included, and equal? What are the opportunities in design that will encourage individuals to thrive and be their best selves? What is the contribution of interior design to a diverse and flourishing society?

02. Health and Wellness

Increasingly, we see the ways in which health- physical, mental, and spiritual- is foundational to a strong society. Interior design has the power to create a more resilient community through strategic design interventions to support the wellness of building occupants.

What design elements or strategies are most effective in reinforcing health and fortitude for the users of a space? How can our approach to design assure that we are positively influencing wellbeing? In what ways might be create spaces that foster social resilience, enhance identity, or strengthen community cohesion?

03. Artificial Intelligence

The rise in accessibility of artificially intelligent tools is bringing rapid change to society. The use of AI is influencing the way that designers approach their design process, how design solutions are presented, and how the ultimate implementation of that design is measured, communicated, and advertised. How can designers harness AI most effectively to explore and share creative solutions for their clients?

AI is also shifting the way in which people experience the spaces they occupy, and interior designers must respond to these evolving expectations. What are the implications for interior designers seeking to provide the optimum human experience in this context? Where can we find the best balance between the benefits and draw-backs of artificial intelligence, considering the contrasting nature of connectedness and respite, convenience and privacy, originality and simulation?

04. Renovation and Adaptation

The re-purposing of existing spaces in lieu of constructing new buildings often offers numerous possible advantages including lower cost, shorter construction schedules, and a lower carbon footprint. Older buildings may also have unique character and historic design elements that can make a space special to occupants and celebrate local culture.

What opportunities do we have to renew older infrastructure and revitalize their function? How can we approach design of these spaces in a way that honors the past and maximizes their potential in the future?

SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria. The successful proposal will provide:

A compelling question

The research initiative will be creative, forward-thinking, and have the potential to make a significant impact for how interior designers improve quality of life. The proposal will demonstrate how this research relates to one of the themes within the context of the design of an educational (or education-adjacent) environment.

A comprehensive workplan

A workplan outlining the scope of work to be undertaken and the associated timeline to achieve the various deliverables and milestones. It will also describe the roles and strategic integration of the interior design educator, student, and practitioner, and show how each will be an active participant how their strengths and perspectives will be leveraged.

Sound research methodology

The research methodology will be well-articulated using any combination of quantitative or qualitative research methods. The research methodology will meet all ethical standards and be applicable to the research question.

Application to practice

The proposal will demonstrate how this research can be applied to help shift design practice, processes and outcomes.

Student / Academic qualifications

Student and educator CV will demonstrate rigor and academic excellence.

<p><b>PROPOSAL FORMAT</b></p> <p><b>Proponents will provide the following information by uploading to the IDEC website. Note, some items will be required as an attachment.</b></p>	
<p><b>Applicant information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name</li> <li>• University</li> <li>• Contact information</li> </ul>	<p><b>Research workplan</b> (Attach PDF)</p> <p><i>No identifying information should be included.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a workplan, project schedule, and budget for the activities you will undertake</li> <li>• Explain how the work will be shared between the student, educator, and practitioner partner in the research project</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research title</b></p> <p><i>No identifying information should be included.</i></p>	<p><b>Research methodology</b></p> <p><i>No identifying information should be included.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the research methodology you will employ to undertake your research, and its relevance to your research question</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research abstract</b> (500 words)</p> <p><i>No identifying information should be included.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe your proposed research project</li> </ul>	<p><b>Student portfolio</b> (Optional)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any student work that demonstrates a relationship to the proposed research topic</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research application</b> (200 words)</p> <p><i>No identifying information should be included.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain how your project connects to your selected theme</li> <li>• Include which sector(s) will be most impacted by the research findings?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Educator research history</b></p> <p>(Attach supporting letter)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter of reference from a supervising representative indicating ability to conduct research</li> <li>• List of previous research works</li> </ul>

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

The file structure should mimic the following:

There is a folder with each research theme.  
Please add your submission with your files properly named by your region, sector or centralized.

File structure should look like this (one folder per entry):  
Region>Category Name or  
Sector>Category Name or  
Central>Category Name

PDF files – file naming should be:  
RegionXXXX\_Project Name\_01.pdf  
SectorXXXX\_ Project Name\_02.pdf

Source files for graphics in PDF (zip or compressed file)  
Please include the Resource Library ID number or link in your submission document.

SUBMIT YOUR FILES

IN PARTNERSHIP



Disclaimer: Although submissions will be electronic, all submissions will become Stantec/IDEC possession.