Winona State University - Center for Interdisciplinary Collaboration, Engagement, and Learning

**AT A GLANCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2024 Request Amount:</th>
<th>$71,793</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Priority Ranking:</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Project Summary:</td>
<td>The university seeks $71.793 million to construct a new 73,000 GSF Net Zero Energy building to replace obsolete Gildemeister and Watkins Halls. The new building supports the demand for fields of study that combine practice of science, art, design, and technology. It provides learning spaces, studio spaces, student support spaces, and faculty workspaces that encourage innovation, creativity, collaboration, and experimentation and are flexible and adaptable to meet future needs.</td>
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**Project Description**


The new building’s learning spaces will support a wide variety of learning styles and include active learning classrooms, high-touch art/design and maker/fabrication studios, and high-tech and augmented reality labs. The learning spaces will contain 750 learning space seats in a variety of room sizes. Each department will have a “home” that includes faculty and student collaboration space and faculty office space. The TRIO program will have office, advising and tutoring spaces. The building will also have shared common spaces for casual and group study, collaboration with local community and regional business partners, student and faculty research, and other campus and community events. Computer Science’s IT infrastructure will provide connectivity and support to WSU’s Rochester campus which enrolls over 900 WSU students.

By consolidating the building program into a single structure, the campus gains a new green space that bridges the academic core and residential zones of the campus. The project will establish a more inviting entry point leading to the academic core of the campus and this new green space.

This project will forward WSU’s commitment to sustainability, resilience, and well-being. The design will promote health and well-being through daylighting, high-quality ventilation, elimination of harmful products and materials, and a focus on user comfort and satisfaction. Building operation will be carbon neutral, use net zero energy, balance on-site water use, and create zero operational waste. And construction materials and details will facilitate adaptability and change to ensure future usefulness and relevance.

**Project Rationale**

WSU’s Strategic Framework is built on five themes that closely align with the Minnesota State Board
of Trustees’ capital budget guidelines. These themes are student learning, student success, inclusive excellence, relationships, and stewards of place and resources.

**Adapting and modernizing academic and support spaces critical to student success.** Gildemeister Hall and Watkins Hall are obsolete and cannot be reconfigured to create suitable spaces for modern learning needs. Nearly all of the building systems are in backlog or due for renewal. The interior layouts, fixtures, and finishes reflect pedagogy of the 1960s and no longer support the needs of students and faculty. The new building will remove over $11 million in deferred maintenance and reduce building operating costs by half. Having spaces designed for current needs, and to be adaptable for future needs, will increase building utilization for scheduled and unscheduled learning activities.

**Facilitate fulfilling the vision of Equity 2030**
This project will create learning, work, and social spaces designed for equity and access. Users from all backgrounds, cultures, and abilities will feel comfortable and welcome. The most recent knowledge of equity design will be leveraged for this project. To support students, WSU’s TRIO program will be in the building to provide advising, tutoring, and career guidance for qualified students.

**Advancing resilience and environmental sustainability**
Winona State University’s 2022 Comprehensive Facilities Plan has set a goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. The recent on-campus installation of 1.4 megawatts of solar PV and this CICEL project are key steps to reaching this goal. In addition to producing renewable energy and being net zero energy and carbon neutral, the building and site will be water balanced, low waste, and toxin free. The project is estimated to reduce annual campus energy use by 8.7 million kBTU, carbon emissions by 1.8 million pounds, and water use by 890,000 gallons.

**No net increase in academic footprint**
This project replaces two aged structures with a single new structure. The new building will reduce the overall campus square footage by 5,300 GSF and add an acre of green space to the academic core of campus. Additionally, maintaining and servicing one building versus two buildings will provide operational savings.

**Access to an extraordinary education for all Minnesotans**
The Art & Design, Computer Sciences, and Mathematics & Statistics departments provide courses for a significant portion of the WSU student body; over one-third of the undergraduate students enroll in their courses in any academic year. Over 80% of first-time undergraduate students enroll in courses offered by one of these departments during their time at WSU. The three departments also offer over 60 courses to fulfill General Education Program requirements and numerous electives to enrich students’ educational experiences.

This project provides the departments opportunities to expand their collaboration in the areas of bioinformatics, data visualization, design thinking, interactive design, and sustainability, and to develop new programs of study.

Internships and service projects are integrated into numerous programs of study. For example, the
Software Testing and Development Lab, Statistical Testing Center, and Design Services hire students to work on business projects contracted by local and regional companies.

**Project Timeline**
- Designer selection: Aug-Sep 2023
- Design completion (100% CDs): Feb 2025
- Bidding: Mar-Jun 2025
- Start of construction: Aug 2025
- Substantial completion: Sep 2027

**Other Considerations**
Both Gildemeister and Watkins Halls are in critically poor condition with FCI ratings of 0.30 and 0.41, respectively. As the three departments serve such a significant percentage of WSU’s students, the poor condition of these outdated facilities has impacted WSU’s ability to recruit and enroll students and retain faculty and staff. Gildemeister and Watkins Halls do not meet the needs and expectations of today’s and tomorrow’s students, nor do they compete with facilities at peer institutions. Additionally, the constraints of the existing buildings limit development of new course offerings and growth of the departments. The physical condition of the buildings limits the type of courses that can safely be offered; this is particularly true in Art & Design and Computer Science where the equipment and materials used for instruction require specific infrastructure and environmental conditions.

**Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**
The predesign process diligently compared options for renovating the existing buildings, partial replacement and renovation of an existing building, and constructing a new building. This analysis revealed that while the new building is marginally more expensive to build, it would greatly improve the quality and adaptability of space, be more capable of meeting WSU’s sustainability goals, and reduce operating and maintenance costs. The additional initial investment in new construction will:
- Reduce operating costs by 50%
- Reduce maintenance backlog by $11 million
- Provide a return on investment of 9.5 years
- Provide life cycle cost savings of more than $25 million.

**Description of Previous Appropriations**
$4.866 million appropriated in 2023 for design.

**Project Contact Person**
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