

PROSPECTUS

20 December 2022

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OVERVIEW

A rare opportunity exists to collect convincing evidence about **how students are impacted by school designs**. Expressions of interest to share in the development and use of this knowledge are now being invited.

The rarity comes from a **confluence of events**. We have significant research that provides a strong baseline from the ILETC and *ILE+SE Scoping Study* projects. We have an established international network of industry, education, and academic leaders in this field. We have refined our international cross-sector collaboration methods through the Scoping Study. We own intellectual property on effective measurement tools.

ILE+SE: The Evidence will allow its partner organisations to demonstrate which of their designs are working, and under what circumstances.

It will identify correlations between design, student learning outcomes, engagement and participation, and inclusivity and wellbeing.

It will enable evaluation of existing small or large infrastructure and inform future school developments.

It will allow participating industries, academics, and educational bodies the opportunity to tailor analyses of complex arrangements of school designs and how they are used, then benchmark against international data.

ILE+SE: The Evidence will produce a data set of unprecedented size and scope, informed in part by each partner organisation's requirements. This will be available for their exclusive use, providing them with issues-relevant analyses. It will provide partner organisations a one-off opportunity to link their developments with a high-quality body of evidence.

This is a unique opportunity to **underpin massive investment in learning environments infrastructure** with nuanced factual evidence of their benefits.

Please note: This EOI Prospectus seeks **your permission to advance to the next level** – the year of co-development, overseen by Contract 1. While the EOI letter asks for in-principle agreement to fund ILE+SE if the project proves viable, that commitment will only be legally binding on signature of Contract 2 later in 2023, issued when full project details have been resolved by the LEARN research team and Consortiums.

ORGANISATION & RESEARCH APPROACH

A study about all students in all spaces

ILE+SE: The Evidence is a comprehensive response to demands for evidence. Over 200 international experts across industry, school, and academe - identified (1) students are inequitably impacted in their schooling due to a myriad of functional, cognitive and physical capacities; (2) designs of learning environments must influence this range of experiences; and (3) there exists very little foundational evidence to help designers, educators, and academics to understand this phenomenon¹. While studies are now showing innovative learning environments (ILEs) are linked to better teaching and improved learning², there remains no comprehensive evidence to help us understand the student component - what works, with whom, and under what circumstances.

The ILE+SE Scoping Study was clear in its findings; the gaps that currently exist in ILE research are consistent across geographies, and we need evidence that can inform localised 'in-depth' understandings of how spaces impact students. Using 217 world leaders from industries, education bodies, and academics, and a 37-member Delphi international expert group, it identified 20 'most significant' research gaps and prioritised the five most urgent.

Unique research approach

In response to the Scoping Study findings, *ILE+SE: The Evidence* will utilise a two-study strategy, the first directly funded by this proposal, the second embedded in this study but independently developed and funded due to their specialised foci.

(1) First, *ILE+SE: The Evidence* will run as an 'umbrella' project over three years to produce evidence based on the Scoping Study's priorities. It will address how school designs impact students across three streams: a) student learning outcomes, both the academic outcomes and 'affective' skills; b) student engagement and participation, that is, *all* students achieving to their potential; and c) inclusivity and well-being – creating spaces that are good for all. These three streams will gather comprehensive empirical data, capable of significant correlational analyses.

(2) Second, a suite of 'in-depth' studies will be developed from year 1 'umbrella' analyses. These will 'unpack' the umbrella evidence within the context of localised issues. In other words, partner organisations will use our exclusive empirical data to explore their own complex associations of their spaces and student experiences. Due to their 'localised' foci, these will be independently designed and run by the partner organisations, they will access funding through local grant schemes, but will access all needed support from the LEARN research team. They will remain embedded in the *ILE+SE: The Evidence* research community, comparing methods and results, and building ongoing research networks and partnerships.

About the Consortiums

For simplicity, all EOs will be termed a Consortium. A Consortium may be one educational institution, industry-based company, or academic organisation. Or as is most likely, it may be a collaboration of participating organisations. These do not necessarily have to come from one geographical region.

1 See the ILESE White paper and supporting technical reports at www.ilesescopingstudy.com.au/useful-links
2 See ILETC Final Report at www.iletc.com.au

Each Consortium will carry the responsibility to meet funding commitments, to participate in the research design, recruitment of school/industry sites for data collection, and aid in monitoring data collection. Some 'in-kind' (non-paying) partners in a Consortium are encouraged. These provide services in lieu of funding – for example schools offering research sites or academics offering data collection assistance.

Lead by leaders

The study will be conducted by LEARN, led by A/Prof Wesley Imms in collaboration with Edith Cowan University's Dr Julia Morris. They will work with an experienced LEARN research team, each assigned to 'buddy' individual Consortia. This team provides the project with extensive ILE research experience, networking expertise, and intellectual property. They own considerable expertise built through the largest ILE research projects run internationally. For example, ILET³ built unique statistical and qualitative measurement tools, a proven dissemination strategy, and expertise in international collaboration and industry participation. These capacities were reflected in the *ILE+SE Scoping Study*⁴.

Each umbrella stream will be supervised by an acknowledged leader:

- John Hattie, Laureate Professor Emeritus at the University of Melbourne, will supervise the learning outcomes stream.
- Christine Imms, Professor and Apex Chair for disabilities research at Melbourne University's Faculty of Medicine, President of the International Alliance of Academies of Childhood Disability, will supervise the engagement and participation stream.
- A world-leading researcher in inclusiveness and wellbeing is to be confirmed.

User pays, payer uses

The complexity of this project requires a healthy investment. For this reason, it is logical that – except for some 'in-kind' partner organisation contributions - those who benefit should fund its operation. In return LEARN will control raw data and **only participating organisations will have access to its data and analysis**. Three levels of analyses are planned: (1) overall project analysis of each of the three streams by LEARN; (2) analyses conducted in negotiation with individual Consortia to unpack the findings according to local needs; (3) where possible, fine-grained analyses for individual partner organisations.

The claims

ILE+SE will provide added maturity to research about learning environments. Participating organisations across industries, academe, and education will be able to make these claims:

Here is the evidence! We are now making **evidence-based decisions** on our infrastructure investment. We have evidence that **certain spaces** suit **certain children** under **certain circumstances**. We can, with confidence, move forward into more sophisticated understandings of **how all students manipulate spaces** to achieve full participation. We have empirical evidence that we are **improving student experiences** through good design.

3 Innovative Learning Environments and Teacher Change, www.ilet.com.au
4 Innovative Learning Environments and Student Experience, www.ilescopingstudy.com.au

COMMITMENTS & NEXT STEPS

Funding

Financial viability of *ILE+SE: The Evidence* requires a minimum of 12 Consortiums. Each will commit to three annual contributions of AUD\$100,000 per year. These will be invoiced no earlier than January 2024, 2025, and 2026. An additional AUD\$10,000 per Consortium will be invoiced early in 2023 to fund the development phase of ILE+SE. These funds will provide all needed research management personnel, the costs of events and travel, and dissemination costs.

Deliverables

For this investment, *ILE+SE: The Evidence* will provide all project governance, ethics, and support for Consortium buddy tasks. It will undertake development (in consultation with the Consortiums) and implementation of the data collection for all three 'umbrella' streams of *ILE+SE: The Evidence*, conduct all first-level data analyses, and (in consultation with Consortiums) additional finer grained analyses. It will establish data storage and management methods that meet individual regional statutes. It will produce technical reports for partner organisation use and additional academic publications (many co-authored with partner organisations). It will organize and run any required events.

Intellectual Property (IP)

The University of Melbourne (UoM) will be the primary host institution, with LEaRN affiliates co-hosting. Contracts will be between each Consortium's nominated leader and the UoM and/or LEaRN affiliates. In line with normal academic protocols, UoM will own IP on all generated data and authorship will be in line with the Vancouver Protocol. However, as is also normal practice, UoM will (with few limitations) cede rights to the partner organisations to publish and utilise co-generated data. While commercialisation of these co-owned data is not normally permitted, the use of data will include reasonable for-profit commercial developments.

Lodging the EOI, and Next Steps

Now: Partner Organisations negotiate their own Consortiums.

By March 31st 2023: Lodge an Expression of Interest letter. The template can be accessed from [here](#), or available on www.ilesescopingstudy.com.au/eoi. This provides the needed content.

By April 30th 2023: The LEaRN research team will issue Contract 1 which only commits Consortiums to fund (AUD\$10,000) and participate in the 2023 development phase.

May – September 2023 – Development Phase: The LEaRN research team collaborates with Consortiums on the research design.

October 1st 2023: The LEaRN research team issues Contract 2, committing Consortiums to the study.

November-January 2024: Project set up.

February 1st 2024: *ILE+SE: The Evidence* commences.

For queries, and to lodge an EOI, please contact...