



A GROWTH AGENDA FOR WISCONSIN

GROWING PEOPLE, JOBS, & COMMUNITIES

UW-Stout: Discovery Center and STEM Recruitment/Retention Initiative

Brief summary: UW-Stout will establish a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Discovery Center to prepare graduates for professional careers, to produce innovative solutions to real-world problems by blending theory with practice, and to work closely with business, industry and other educational institutions to benefit students and grow the economy. The UW-Stout Discovery Center will provide faculty and students with the resources to engage business partners and turn emerging technologies into new products.

Why is it needed?

Wisconsin is struggling to remain competitive during its transition to a knowledge and technology economy. Well-prepared graduates and programs that connect university resources to business needs are critical to economic growth. UW-Stout is a career-focused institution with a mission to apply theory and research to real-world solutions and innovations. To fulfill this mission, the university has identified its needs regarding space, coordination, and dedicated resources to solve problems that cross disciplines.

How does this proposal meet the need?

The UW-Stout Discovery Center will provide an access point for business partners to connect with university expertise and resources. The Center will use existing laboratory space and instruments for research teams that are brought together from multiple fields. Additionally, the Discovery Center will recruit visiting professors that can contribute specialized knowledge, provide release time for faculty, fund students to support the faculty, and develop intellectual property rights under WiSys guidelines.

This initiative will also fund a recruitment and retention specialist to focus on drawing more women and minority students into STEM programs and retaining those students as well.

What are the outcomes/benefits?

The UW-Stout Discovery Center will provide students the opportunity to work closely with faculty on real-world projects. These experiences and a diverse student body will prepare graduates to enter the workforce as capable professionals.

By translating knowledge at UW-Stout into solutions for businesses and public entities, the Center promotes the creation of new products and more efficient business practices. Creating collaboration across multiple fields enables the Discovery Center to attract more outside grants. UW-Stout anticipates that grant and contract funding will increase by 2% every year with the Discovery Center.

UW-Stout's strategy of creating well-prepared graduates and supporting the environment in which they will work fosters the growth of high-paying positions and new business.

Estimated ongoing cost: \$657,800 (\$632,100 GPR/\$25,700 Fees)

For more information: Contact Chancellor Charles Sorensen, 715-232-2441