



WSU STEM Innovation Center

Transformation of underutilized space to an interdisciplinary purpose

Wayne State University, a public research university in Detroit, MI, realized an opportunity, and a need, to create a hub for interdisciplinary teaching, learning and innovation for undergraduate STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) students. The project is a State of Michigan Capital Outlay Project, meaning a portion of the \$47.5M USD project will be funded by the state. With government funding to support the initiative, the vision is to create an enhanced instructional environment that will invest in workforce development to meet future technical talent demands.

NORR worked in close collaboration with Wayne State students and faculty to design a next-generation facility in its vacant 116,457 square-foot Science and Engineering Library building at the midtown campus. The program elements are fully integrated and include:

- Classroom laboratory spaces that provide interdisciplinary learning environments such as active learning spaces, technology-rich scientific and computer laboratories and seminar spaces
- Innovation labs, which will give students interdisciplinary exposure to skill set development that are not possible in most instructional settings
- Hackerspace/Makerspaces that allow common interest gathering for computer science students who are involved with coding, gaming, 3D graphics, etc., collaborating with other technical type students.
- Collaboration or “third” spaces where students can gather before and after class, to study, continue interdisciplinary discussion or have a conversation with their faculty instructor

The project is targeting LEED® Silver rating. Through architecture, engineering and construction, the design supports materials and systems that provide current and long-term operational efficiencies. The design will transform the former underutilized building to an enhanced purpose that supports education, research and careers, with the objective of putting graduating students at the forefront of technological advances and scientific discoveries in the STEM-based workforce.

CLIENT	Wayne State University
PORTFOLIO	Education
CATEGORY	Higher Education
SIZE	116,457 SF (10,819 SM)
LOCATION	Detroit, MI, US
DATE	October 2020
SERVICES	Architecture MEP Engineering Structural Engineering Interior Design

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Education

It's an exciting time in education. Changing pedagogies, advancing technologies and evolving student expectations are influencing educational facility design. The places in which students interact, engage and learn must be hands-on, flexible and technologically advanced. From primary schools to higher education institutions, we carefully craft connections between students, faculty and staff to positively influence learning outcomes.

Good Design Enhances Learning

From early instruction to higher education, we consider the progression of the student experience; we know that good design enhances learning outcomes. Creating a stimulating environment can directly influence the development and pace of learning for students of any age. Students learn in many different ways, and we understand the importance of crafting a facility that is inclusive – a place where all students, faculty and staff can feel warm, welcome and equal.

Navigating Complexity

NORR recognizes that the spaces we create and the environments we shape have a profound impact on the people who use them. Our mission is to deliver distinctive, high-functioning, sustainable and cost effective design solutions that are unique to each client. We fulfill these goals and aspirations by engaging our

clients in a dynamic, inclusive and creative partnership with the design team throughout the planning and design process. Our design teams work collaboratively with all stakeholders to implement solutions that are effective, economical and environmentally responsible.

We implement systems and strategies guided by sustainability, durability, budget and common sense. We select building materials and systems that will perform over a significant life span while maintaining their intended appearance and efficiency. Our goal is to create an environment that meets and exceeds the client's functional, visual and fiscal requirements, while conveying the essence of the school's identity, values and culture.

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