

TO: **Kevyn Collins-Thompson**, Associate Professor of Information, School of Information and Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, College of Engineering  
**Mike Ion**, Research Fellow, School of Information

FROM: **James DeVaney**, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Innovation

DATE: Feb 21, 2025

RE: Academic Innovation Fund (AIF) Award: GenAI Tools

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Dear Dr. Collins-Thompson and Dr. Ion,

Congratulations! We are excited to partner with you to design and develop your GenAI Project, *Learning Through Technical Interviews: Combining Data Science Mentorship with AI-Powered Practice*.

Your proposal helps to further the culture of innovation in learning at the University of Michigan and is an important step in realizing our vision of the future in which education connects and empowers learners everywhere to reach their full potential throughout their lives.

With this award you are joining a growing community of more than 400 innovators here at U-M who have created new innovations and solutions through partnership with the Center for Academic Innovation.

The Academic Innovation Fund was created to support targeted experimentation designed to maximize institutional impact and further our mission to collaborate across campus and around the world to create equitable, lifelong educational opportunities for learners everywhere. Since the fund was established in 2014, we have invested over \$16M in more than 375 academic innovation projects. Guided by our core design principles -- *learner-centered*, *research-driven*, *scalable*, and *sustainable* -- the projects supported by the fund have reached over 99% of current undergraduate students through student success initiatives; led to more than 19.2M enrollments in our open online courses; reached more than 11.1M learners from more than 195 countries; produced more than 130 publications; and, generated over \$194M in gross revenue.

To help position your initiative for success, multiple levels of support are now available to you through this partnership:

- Financial Resources – We will provide up to \$12,435 in funding to support student research, interview incentives, project staffing, and UM GPT API

services, with payments distributed as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding referenced below.

- In-Kind Advisory Services – We will provide consultation and guidance on tool developments, including updates, implementation considerations, and strategic insights.
- Institutional Knowledge Sharing and Marketing – We will work with the initiative champions to identify and facilitate opportunities for knowledge sharing across the U-M community and beyond.

These commitments are described more fully in the executed memorandum of understanding.

We are excited to partner with you to design, launch, and carry forward this initiative! If you have any questions, please contact me at [jdevaney@umich.edu](mailto:jdevaney@umich.edu).

Sincerely,

James DeVaney