INFORMATICS+
CENTER REPORT 2019-21

GRIFFIN HALL

NKU | COLLEGE OF **Informatics**

INFORMATICS+

Launched Nov. 2019

TALENT
Expand it. Diversify it. Sharpen it.

K-12

+ Teacher training

+ Young Scholars Academy (Computer Science)

+ Summer academies

+ INTERalliance programs

UNIVERSITY

+ Building work experience into applied degrees and certificates

+ Student professionalization

+ Internships and co-ops

+ Support for regionally and globally engaged creative, research, and development projects

+ Informatics Innovation Initiatives

CAREER

+ Employer relations

+ Upskilling

+ Symposia

Informatics is the art, science, business and technology of information. It is about making information useful and meaningful.

The College of Informatics offers 17 degree programs ranging from data science to journalism, from health informatics to public relations, from electronic media to software engineering. We enable our students and the region to flourish in an age of innovation and digital transformation.

Housed in the landmark building Griffin Hall, the college enrolls more than 1,700 students, and is designated a National Center for Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education by the National Security Agency and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

MISSION, VISION, HISTORY

Informatics+ is a center focused on engagement. It simplifies, funds, enhances and encourages connections between the community and NKU on informatics-related endeavors.

Its mission is to enhance the value and accessibility of the College of Informatics as a resource for talent, training and innovation; and to ensure that its students and graduates are not only proficient but creative, experienced and professional.
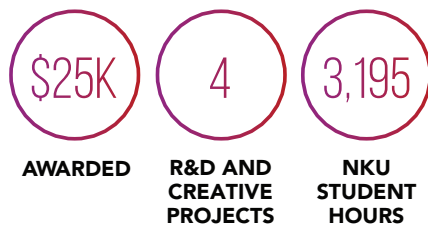
Informatics+ came on the scene in late 2019, as a new center built from the ground up to connect students to careers and the community. The initiative had a soft (but fast) launch on July 1, 2019, and presented its vision to the Board of Regents in September. On Nov. 13, 2019, it was official. This report highlights center activities from the center's soft launch through June 30, 2021.

PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS & FACULTY

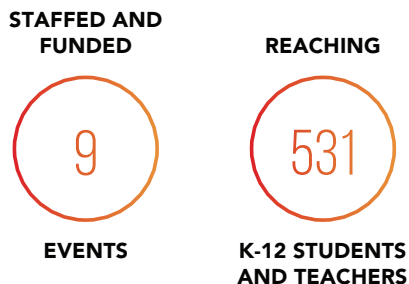*Informatics+ amplifies the scope, capacity and recognition of Informatics students and faculty.*

INFORMATICS+ PROJECT GRANTS

This program funds informatics-centric projects that connect us to the region and the world. Among the funded projects were collaborations with the colleges of Business and Education.
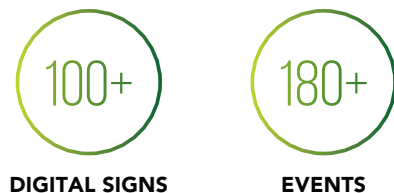
$25K
AWARDED

4
R&D AND CREATIVE PROJECTS

3,195
NKU STUDENT HOURS

K-12

Informatics+ provides staffing support and funding to help enable and enrich Informatics-focused K-12 initiatives.

STAFFED AND FUNDED

9
EVENTS

REACHING

531
K-12 STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

EVENTS AND COMMUNICATION

Informatics+ provides support and promotion for events hosted by Informatics faculty, staff and students.

100+
DIGITAL SIGNS

180+
EVENTS

Informatics+ Funds Students to Work on Science Around Cincy Show

"So, would you be interested in working on a show that's kind of like Bill Nye the Science Guy but centered around Cincinnati?" was how College of Informatics faculty member and NorseMedia advisor John Gibson pitched this project to a few NKU students last year. Naturally, they found this hard to refuse.

The show was Science Around Cincy, developed and hosted by Chris Anderson. The show tells the stories of Cincinnati scientists and their work. An *Informatics+* Project Grant funds the work of students on the video production side of the project, allowing them to utilize the skills they learned as students in the College of Informatics.

NKU electronic media and broadcasting (EMB) major Michael Pikar has taken an active role as the camera operator and post-production editor for the series. "This project has been great in allowing me to get some hands-on learning," he says. Jordan Bardgett, another EMB student on the project, wears multiple hats—acting as director, running the camera and audio and assisting host Chris Anderson. Bardgett fondly states, "Science Around Cincy has made me break my mold of purely concentrating on making art films and being able to adapt my skills to something more suitable for television."

According to John Gibson, "Funding provided by *Informatics+* has allowed the show to expand to a second season and run on KET and on CET. This means the work that our students have done on the project is being seen across the region and the state, and those students gained valuable practical experience."

At sciaroundcincy.com, viewers can learn more about the project and see what this crew has been up to.

STUDENT PROFESSIONALIZATION

Informatics+ provides instruction, one-on-one career advising and paid apprenticeship positions to help students become more polished and professional.

Professionalization Courses

798
STUDENTS

5,606
HOURS

Individual Career Advising

330
STUDENTS

330+
HOURS

Apprenticeship Program

1,257
STUDENT APPRENTICESHIP HOURS

CONNECTING THE COLLEGE OF INFORMATICS AND THE WORLD

Informatics+ leverages faculty, students and external partnerships to benefit our shared community.

TALENT SOLUTIONS

Informatics+ helps meet evolving workforce needs by connecting employers to Informatics student talent.

Corporate Concierge Service

218
BUSINESSES

288
INTERNSHIPS/
CO-OPS

Informatics-Focused Recruitment Events

48
COMPANIES

668
STUDENTS

Career Conversations Program

19
PRESENTATIONS

TO

366
STUDENTS

A Growing Relationship with Kroger

Informatics+ enables unique partnerships. The Kroger Technology & Digital Innovation Lab at Griffin Hall is a good example.

Launched in January 2020, the lab represents a major investment by Kroger: upgrading an older innovation space in Griffin Hall with the latest in digital technology, creating a Kroger staff position and hiring Informatics student interns to work on real Kroger business projects there.

Thirteen interns have worked in the lab since it opened, and this number continues to grow. Interns focus on work that impacts the company's customers across the nation, in areas such as nutrition, health and wellness, and video analytics. It also complements NKU's other key partnership with Kroger, FUEL NKU, the on-campus food pantry. Several interns have graduated into full-time positions at Kroger Technology & Digital.

Titus Jones, general manager of advanced systems concepts at Kroger Technology, says, "This experience is really indispensable for students. The interns are well-trained in high-demand tech areas and are mentored by highly respected and knowledgeable executives in the field," says Titus Jones, general manager of advanced systems concepts at Kroger Technology. "*Informatics+* has been essential in producing these students for this opportunity."

This state-of-the-art lab is the most significant addition to Griffin Hall since the JRG Cyber Threat Intelligence Lab opened in 2018.

INNOVATIVE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Community Partnerships

Informatics+ fosters unique partnerships to benefit students and the community.

Project Innovation

Project Classes place a faculty member and a team of students in challenging real-world scenarios using industry-standard practices and tools to deliver solutions. Recent projects connect to ecology, tourism, science, civics and public history.
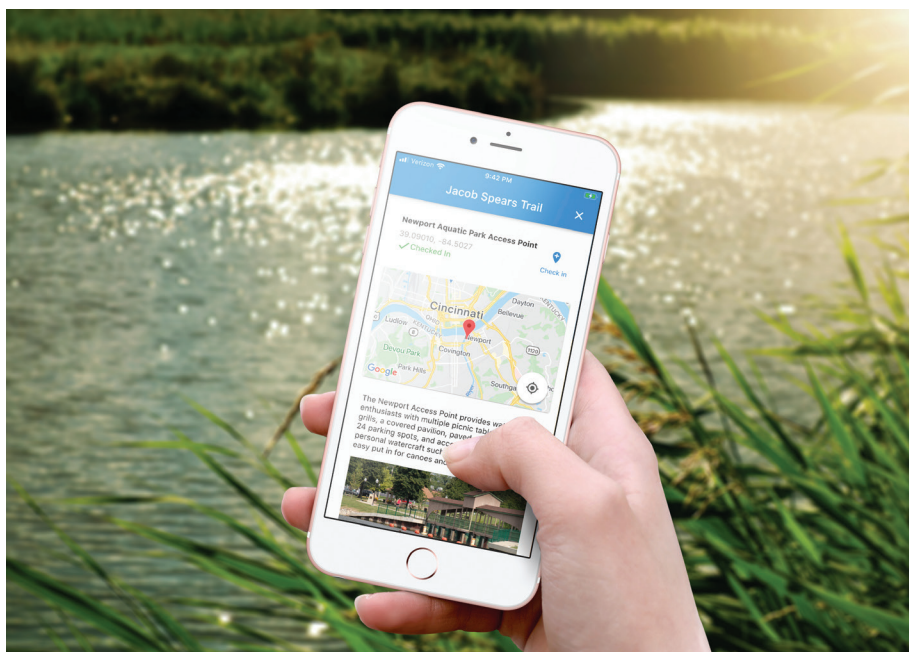
5

PROJECT
CLASSES

5,885

STUDENT
EXPERIENTIAL
LEARNING HOURS

Bourbon, Technology, History, Tourism

To promote outdoor tourism, northern Kentucky civic leaders began exploring the development of a 122-mile trail down the Licking River from Paris, Kentucky, to the Ohio River in 2019. The trail would follow the initial leg of the journey taken by Jacob Spears starting in 1805 to ship to New Orleans what some claim to be the first bourbon ever created.

The Licking River is the watershed for a significant portion of the Commonwealth, touching 23 of Kentucky's 120 counties. The river has a rich history and untapped potential for recreation.

From the beginning, the group thought a mobile app could enhance the experience of river tourists, so John Stanton, director of external affairs for Kenton County, brought the project to the College of Informatics. Chris Brewer, director of innovation and technology at *Informatics+*, is spearheading the project at NKU as it evolves. The goal is to highlight historic and environmental landmarks and to allow boaters to track their progress along what may become famous as Kentucky's version of the Appalachian Trail.

Brewer created faculty-led student teams to develop prototypes for an app. In addition, Professor Brian Hackett in NKU's Public History program had student teams research historic sites along the river. Through three special topics courses, ten NKU students have gained 1,260 hours of experiential learning on the project to date.

The ongoing collaboration continues to bring together government offices, planning and development services, environmental agencies, nonprofits across multiple counties, and NKU students and faculty.

DELIVERING INFORMATICS TO THE WORLD
Informatics+ expands opportunities for awareness and training.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Annual Cybersecurity Symposium

This partnership with the Chase College of Law brings together IT and legal professionals to network and to stay informed of the latest developments in this fast-moving field.

6
EVENTS

158
COMPANIES PARTICIPATING

961
ATTENDEES

SPREADING THE WORD

Informatics+ amplifies, promotes and markets the great work of Informatics faculty and students.

381
SOCIAL MEDIA STORIES

117
MARKETING PIECES CREATED

38
STORIES PUBLISHED

COUNTLESS
WEBSITE UPDATES AND ENHANCEMENTS

Digital Transformation Symposium (DX21) – April 2021

The inaugural annual symposium provided virtual workshops on topics such as blockchain, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, the Internet of things, cybersecurity and business culture dynamics.

6
WORKSHOPS

31
COMPANIES

256
ATTENDEES

Taste of Informatics Series

Our Taste of Informatics programs give the community–from high school students to late-career adults–a chance to gain familiarity with informatics fields, on a path to further professional development.

6
PODCASTS PRODUCED

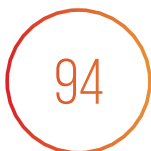**4**
CLASSCASTS

4
WORKSHOPS SCHEDULED

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Informatics+ stands up new "Just in Time" programs as topics and needs arise in the community.

2
PROGRAMS

94
ATTENDEES

BRINGING THE WORLD TO GRIFFIN HALL

Informatics+ welcomes businesses and the community to host events on the beautiful campus of Northern Kentucky University and in Griffin Hall.

200+
EVENTS
PLANNED/HOSTED
AT GRIFFIN HALL

MORE TO COME: SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION
Creating Pathways to College for Incarcerated Individuals

THERE ARE ROUGHLY 2.3 MILLION INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS IN THE UNITED STATES

SOCIAL PROBLEM

40-70%
OF RE-ENTERING INDIVIDUALS RETURN TO JAIL/PRISON WITHIN THREE YEARS OF RELEASE

INTERVENTION

THE SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION PROGRAM COULD DECREASE RECIDIVISM RATES BY

40-50%

Nearly 120,000 people are incarcerated in Ohio and Kentucky. Up to 70 percent return to jail or prison within three years of release. NKU through *Informatics+* is addressing this recidivism problem locally.

Programs offering post-secondary education inside correctional facilities decrease recidivism rates by more than 40 percent. This reduction results in multiple benefits to the community, improving the lives of program participants while reducing tax-payer burden.

The Second Chance Education Program creates pathways to college and livable wages for incarcerated individuals. The program offers training that leads to a CompTIA A+ Information Technology certificate, a highly recognized certification in the industry, along with six NKU credit hours.

The upcoming launch will bring the program to women incarcerated at the Kenton County Detention Center. The project is funded in part by NKU's Success by Design Innovation Challenge. NKU Computer Science faculty members developed and will deliver the curriculum; Social Work faculty members will evaluate program outcomes. If additional funding can be secured, there is interest in expanding the program to include new areas of study and other facilities, such as the River City Correctional Center in Ohio.

Kendall Fisher, *Informatics+* executive director, who herself has experience teaching in jails and prisons, says, "This project is a powerful example of NKU's commitment to increase access to higher education. We hope it will be the first of many such programs at the university."

CONTACT INFORMATION

Kendall Fisher
Executive Director
Griffin Hall 330A
(859) 572-5791
fisherk3@nku.edu

Tina Altenhofen
Budget and Operations Coordinator
Griffin Hall 330E
(859) 572-7689
altenhof@nku.edu

Chris Brewer
Director of Innovation and Technology
Griffin Hall 330D
(859) 572-7734
brewerc1@nku.edu

Brian Jaynes
Associate Director for Professional Education
Griffin Hall 330G
(859) 572-5404
jaynesb1@nku.edu

Krista Rayford
Communications and Events Manager
Griffin Hall 330F
(859) 572-5616
rayfordk1@nku.edu

Juliane Stockman
Director of Corporate Engagement
Griffin Hall 330B
(859) 572-7716
stockmanj1@nku.edu

Sarah Mann, M.Ed., Ed.S.
Lecturer, Business Informatics
K-12 Coordinator
Griffin Hall 426
(859) 572-5907
manns2@nku.edu

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