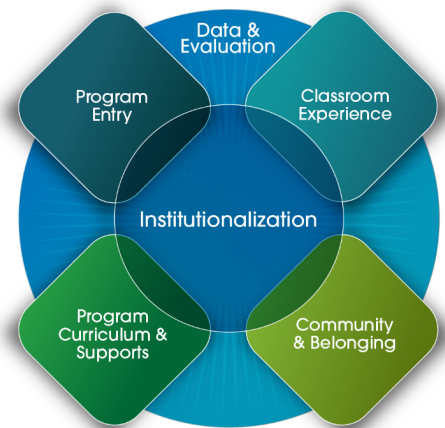


2024-25 NCWIT Higher Ed Learning Circles Overview

Learning Circles are small groups of individuals (one representative per institution) that meet online throughout the academic year with support from NCWIT staff research scientists. Learning Circles are an opportunity to learn, share, and build community with like-minded peers interested in attracting and retaining a more diverse student body to their undergraduate computing programs.

During Fall 2024, Learning Circles will focus on theory and research related to broadening participation in computing, and will train participants to use NCWIT's Tech Inclusion Journey® for Undergraduate Programs (TIJ-UP). The TIJ-UP is an online decision-support tool, based on NCWIT's Undergraduate Systemic Change Model, that enables a local team to assess the practices and conditions in their computing program that promote (or inhibit) inclusivity, guides team discussion and consensus building, connects the team to relevant resources and information, and provides the basis for strategic planning.

During Spring 2025, Learning Circle participants (i.e., trained "Team Leaders") will each lead a local team at their home institution through the TIJ-UP. During this time, the Team Leaders will continue to meet with and receive support from the Learning Circle, and NCWIT research scientists will hold office hours during which teams can receive individualized advice. Each local team's Tech Inclusion Journey® culminates with the completion of a strategic plan, tailored to their program's context and challenges, that will guide their program's ongoing broadening participation efforts.



The TIJ-UP is based on the **NCWIT Undergraduate Systemic Change Model**, a research-based framework that identifies six interrelated focus areas for creating sustainable, systemic change in undergraduate programs.

Participant Roles:

The Team Leader/Learning Circle participant, and members of the local team, must obtain explicit support for participation from their chair, director, or dean, and should carefully review the commitments described in their institution's Learning Circle commitment letter. (A commitment letter template will be provided.)

Team Leader: One representative from each institution - the "Team Leader" - will attend the online Learning Circle meetings and lead a designated team at their home institution through the NCWIT Tech Inclusion Journey® for Undergraduate Programs (TIJ-UP). Team Leaders will plan, schedule, and facilitate their local team meetings, and will ensure that deliverables such as Tracking Tool data submission and their team's strategic plan are completed on time. (Team Leaders should ask team members to assist with these tasks.)

Local Team: Depending on how computing is situated within the institution, the local team may represent a program, department, school, or a college within a university. Teams are typically composed of between three and eight individuals who represent a variety of roles and

perspectives within the program, and may include faculty, administrators (e.g., a department chair or dean), and staff (e.g., advisors, admissions staff, DEI-focused staff). Teams may include some or all members of an existing departmental or institutional DEI committee, and ideally include some individuals with influence to ensure that the team is empowered to make change. Teams may consider asking other key stakeholders to participate in specific sections of the TIJ (for example, advisors for Program Curriculum and Supports; faculty who teach lower division courses for Classroom Experience).

Meetings & Deliverables:

Attend the Learning Circle: Team Leaders from approximately five institutions will attend up to eight, one-hour online Learning Circle meetings during Fall 2024, and two meetings during Spring 2025. Meetings will be led by NCWIT staff research scientists and occasional guest speakers. The Learning Circle will focus on the components of NCWIT's Undergraduate Systemic Change Model and NCWIT's approach to systemic change, and will prepare and support Team Leaders to lead their local teams in using NCWIT's Tech Inclusion Journey® for Undergraduate Programs (TIJ-UP). Some advance preparation for meetings may be asked of participants.

Hold Local Team Meetings: During the second half of the academic year, the local team will meet regularly to work through the TIJ-UP online tool, engage in discussion and consensus building, and develop a strategic plan. Teams should expect about nine weekly one-hour meetings (alternative configurations such as a full or half-day retreat, or a smaller number of longer meetings, are also possible and will be determined by the Team Leader). Advance preparation, such as completing a set of TIJ-UP assessment questions or reviewing informational materials, will be expected prior to most meetings.

Assess Your Program with the TIJ-UP: Each member of the local team will independently complete the six online assessment modules of the NCWIT Tech Inclusion Journey® for Undergraduate Programs (TIJ-UP) prior to team meetings, as assigned by the Team Leader. The TIJ-UP aggregates team members' anonymized responses into a summary report that forms the basis for team discussions aimed at identifying the program's challenges and opportunities. Finally, the TIJ-UP connects users to resources and information about relevant practices for broadening participation, and provides guidance and templates for creating a strategic plan.

Visualize and Understand Your Program's Data. NCWIT staff research scientists will work with the Team Leaders and their institutional research offices to obtain their program's enrollment and outcomes data. NCWIT's Tracking Tool 2.0 creates secure, shareable visualizations of long-term data trends, disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity, that local teams will use to identify problem areas, guide strategic decision-making, and evaluate outcomes of broadening participation efforts.

Create an Actionable Strategic Plan: The local team will utilize their TIJ-UP assessment results, their program's institutional data, NCWIT resources and information, and the provided templates to create a strategic plan for implementing and evaluating practices to broaden participation in their undergraduate computing program.

Questions? contact us at highered@ncwit.org

Interested in participating? Visit ncwit.org/learning-circles and complete the [interest form](#).