

ESTABLISHING A NEW LIVING-LEARNING COMMUNITY AT VIRGINIA TECH

Greetings, and thank you for expressing interest in Living-Learning Communities (LLCs) at Virginia Tech!

LLCs at Virginia Tech are specialized housing communities where students choose to live in an environment focused on a common major, theme, or idea. At Virginia Tech, we believe that learning happens everywhere, and our LLCs capitalize on that belief by creating opportunities in our residence halls for students to make sense of what they are learning in the classroom, to explore their likes and interests, and to learn from one another in community. There are a variety of benefits to this enhanced residential experience which include: opportunities for mentorship with peers, increased opportunity to connect and develop relationships with faculty, and finding a place of belonging on a large college campus.

We currently have 15 different programs in our portfolio which range from disciplinary to interdisciplinary, arts to engineering, and everything in between! Over time, LLCs have become known for the way they create seamless connections between living and learning. Whether through formal events, community dinners, movie nights, hosted speakers, there are endless ways LLCs impact the student experience for the better at Virginia Tech. Please read on to find out more information about establishing new LLCs and the beginning stages of partnership development.

Thank you again, and please don't hesitate to reach out!

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Kwiatkowski'.

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5 STEPS TO CREATING A LIVING-LEARNING COMMUNITY AT VIRGINIA TECH

This infographic highlights the ideal process by which a Living-Learning Community at Virginia Tech is created from idea, through successful launch of the community.

1. IDEA

Interested partner **approaches HRL with a concept** for a new LLC.

3. PROPOSAL

After initial consultation, the **partner creates a 2-3 page proposal detailing their LLC**. In this process, they are encouraged to seek assistance from the Office for Learning Partnerships.

5. LAUNCH

After the planning process is complete, the community launches and **the steering committee transforms to an advisory committee** which continues to assist the program director in the growth and development of the community.

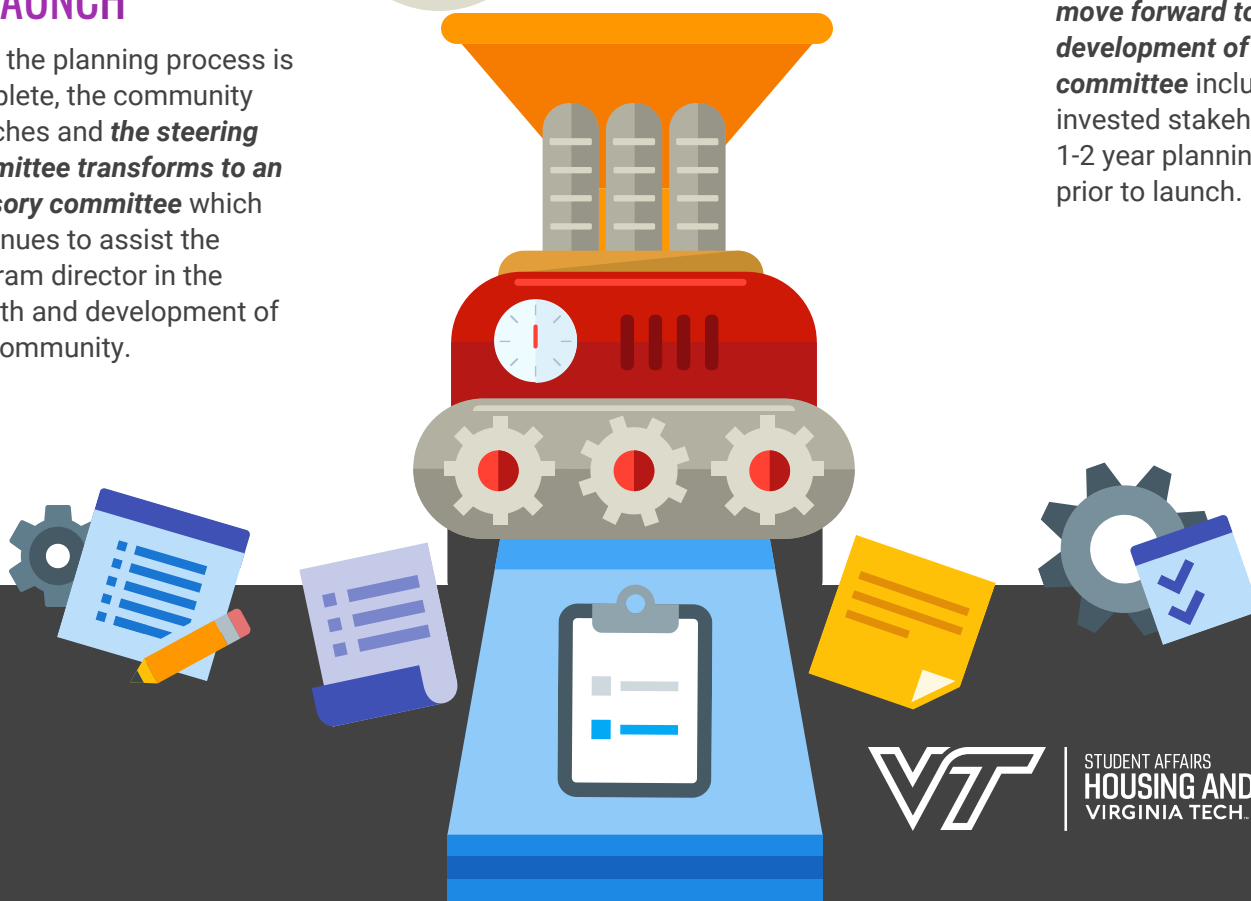


2. CONSULTATION

A member of the **Academic Initiatives team meets with the partner** to take them on a tour of existing spaces, discuss existing LLCs, and discuss the specific project the partner wants to investigate further.

4. DESIGN

Pending approval from HRL Leadership, the LLC will **move forward to the development of a steering committee** inclusive of invested stakeholders for a 1-2 year planning process prior to launch.



Steps to Creating a Living-Learning Community

As Virginia Tech and Housing and Residence Life seek to grow enrollment in Living-Learning Communities (LLCs), it is important for potential stakeholders in new LLCs to understand how these communities form and what the planning process entails.

1. IDEA

Initially, a partner should approach the Associate Director for Academic Initiatives in Housing and Residence Life (contact information on the first page), regarding their idea for a potential LLC.

2. CONSULTATION

The Associate Director for Academic Initiatives will work directly with the partner to discuss the idea and explore the current portfolio of LLCs at Virginia Tech, paying particular attention to any overlap between the partner's idea and existing LLCs. This initial meeting will also include a tour of LLC spaces on campus and discussing the basic assumptions of an LLC at Virginia Tech.

3. PROPOSAL

If the partner continues to be interested after the initial meeting, they need to draft an LLC Proposal outlining what the community could be, who the stakeholders involved in the community might be, and what stakeholders are willing to commit to or offer to the community in terms of resources, funding, or opportunities (see **LLC Proposal: Essential Criteria** on next page). During this phase of the process, the Office for Learning Partnerships will be a helpful resource to answer any questions the partner may have about their proposal. Completed proposals are then reviewed by leadership in Housing and Residence Life.

4. DESIGN

When proposals are approved by Housing and Residence Life leadership, a steering committee is formed to build the LLC over an 18-month period. The projected timeline and start date for planning LLCs is at the discretion of Housing and Residence Life leadership.

5. LAUNCH

After the 18-month planning process, the new LLC will launch and the steering committee will transform into an advisory committee which will continue to support the program director in growth and development of the community.

LLC Proposal: Essential Criteria

Are you interested in developing a living-learning community (LLC) at Virginia Tech? Below are the essential criteria Housing and Residence Life will review in a 2-3 page proposal for new LLCs:

What it is:

- What is the idea?
- What will students experience?
- How can this community support the Student Affairs [Aspirations for Student Learning](#)?

Who is involved:

- Who will serve on the steering committee?
- Who, at this point, are your committed partners?
- What investment are these partners willing to make (time, resources, monetary funds, opportunities for students, etc..)
- How will faculty in academic departments be included in the operation and future direction of the LLC?
- Is there an identified person to be the program director?

Why is this community a need (or want):

- What kind of student is this community for?
- How does this contribute to the on-campus experience for students?
- Is there any existing data to support a need for this type of community?

How does this concept include essential elements of a living-learning community?

- Multi-generational
- Interdisciplinary
- Sustainable growth: Target of 100-200 students within 5 years of launch
- Partnerships in both academic affairs and student affairs
- Resources towards program director (at least 50% of existing position with the eventual goal of 100%)

Questions along the way?

Feel free to contact the

Office for Learning Partnerships

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When finished, please email proposal to:

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