



## Who Should Read

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Heads of  
Teaching and Learning

CIOs

Provosts

Faculty

# Engaging Faculty in the Technology Selection Process

Findings from the Teaching and Learning Functional Collaborative

## Study in Brief

This report identifies the key barriers that inhibit faculty adoption of instructional technologies. It profiles strategies that innovative institutions use to engage faculty in the technology selection process. These tactics increase the number of faculty with whom teaching and learning staff interact and encourage faculty to clearly articulate use cases for technology prior to procurement.

## 5 Ways to Use This Research

1. Educate campus leaders about barriers that prevent instructional tool adoption
2. Encourage teaching and learning staff to include faculty in the procurement process
3. Align IT with the institution's teaching and learning mission
4. Ensure that instructional technology demonstrates high ROI
5. Assess faculty technology needs more systematically and accurately

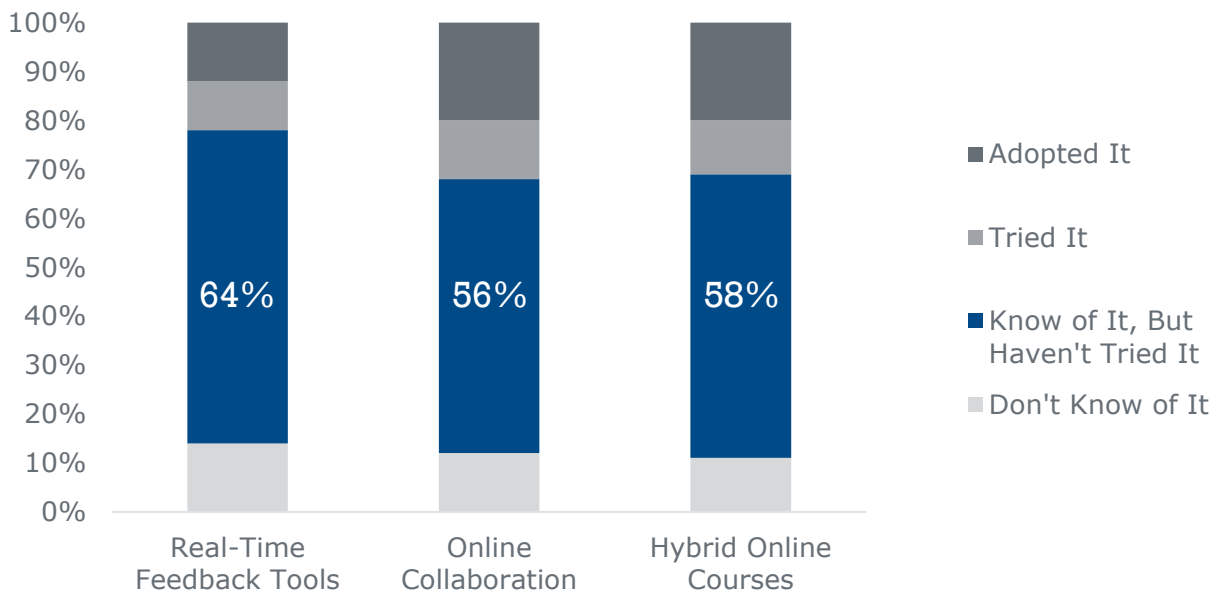
# Despite Growing Familiarity with Tools, Adoption Lags

## Knowledge of Innovative Technologies Does Not Necessarily Lead to Adoption

There is no shortage of new teaching and learning technologies in higher education. But despite faculty familiarity with and access to these new tools, a significant percentage of faculty have not begun using – or testing – frequently mentioned instructional technologies.

Given the extensive resources that teaching and learning units invest into the plethora of new technologies that promise to improve learning outcomes for students and facilitate instruction for faculty, this low rate of faculty uptake is cause for concern. If not adopted, these new tools do not impact student outcomes and therefore fail to support the institution’s teaching and learning mission.

### “Professors Know About High-Tech Teaching Methods, but Few Use Them”



“We’ve built several new active learning spaces, but we haven’t seen the shift in pedagogy that we expected. There is no faculty buy-in. In our most recently renovated space, the instructor moved the active learning tables back into a traditional lecture setup within four days!”

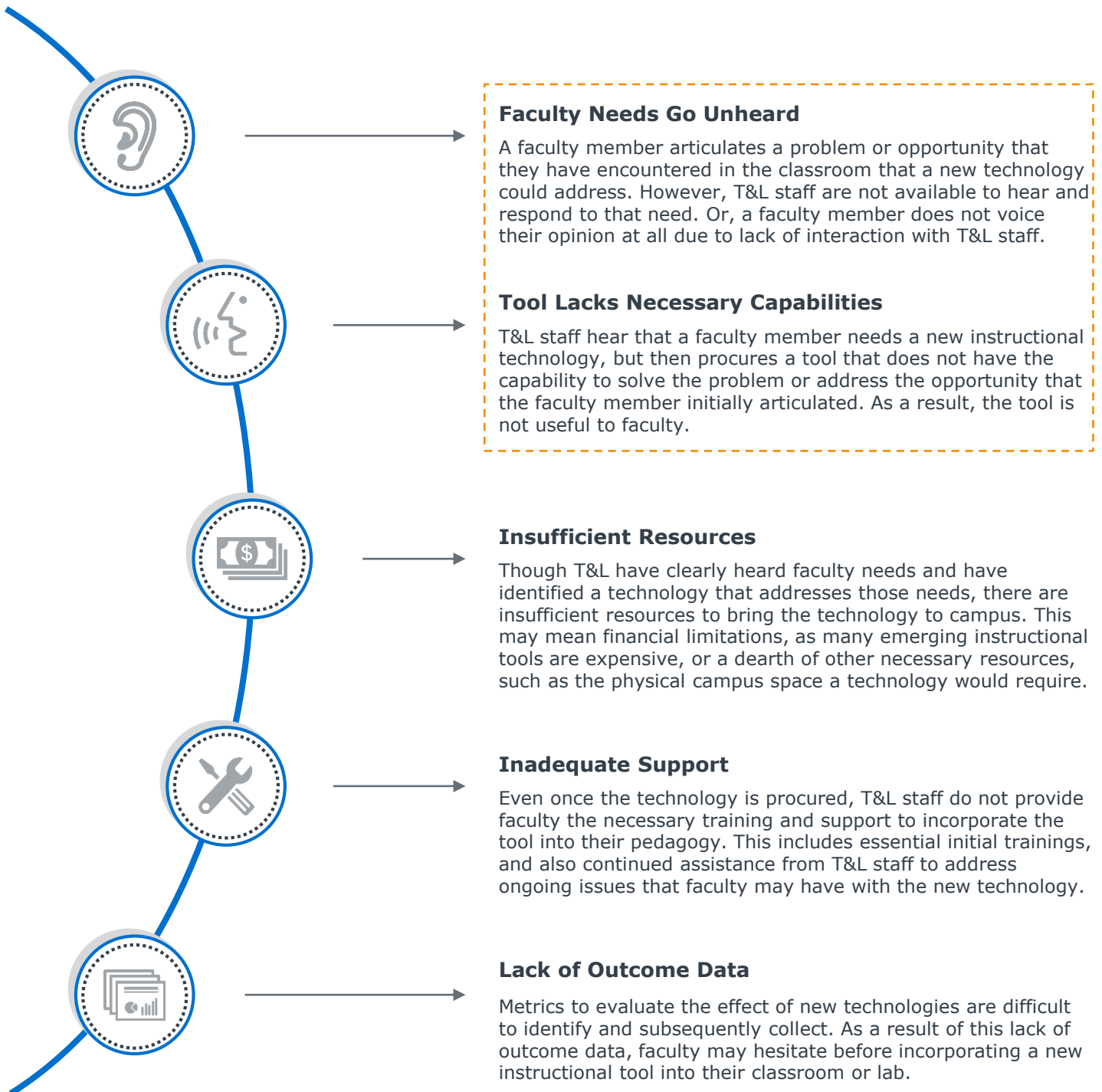
Classroom Technology Engineer  
Public Research University

Source: The Chronicle. “Professors Know About High Tech Teaching Methods But Few Use Them.” 2015. <https://www.chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/professors-know-about-high-tech-teaching-methods-but-few-use-them/55777>.

# Key Barriers Prevent Faculty Experimentation

## Why is Teaching and Learning Tool Adoption Low?

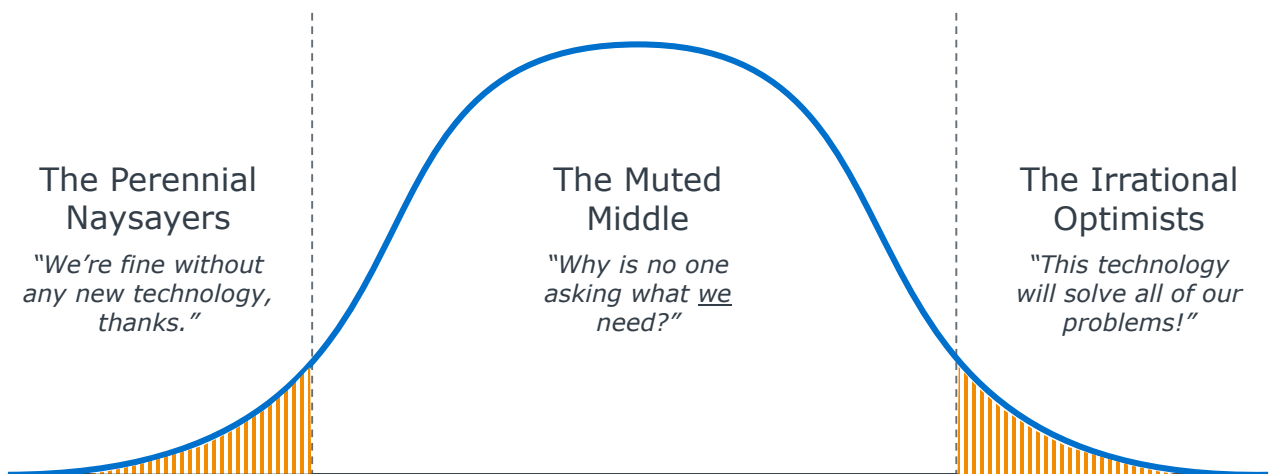
Eighty-five percent of teaching and learning leaders identify “Faculty Needs Go Unheard” and “Tool Lacks Necessary Capabilities” as the two most frequent barriers to faculty adoption of instructional technology. As such, teaching and learning staff must expand the number of faculty from whom they solicit feedback and ensure that procured technologies meet faculty needs in order to increase tool adoption on campus.



# When Faculty Needs are Ignored or Misheard

## 1 Teaching and Learning Staff Do Not Hear All Faculty Needs

Heads of Teaching and Learning report that they often only hear from a small number of faculty on campus, most of whom fall into the two categories: the “Perennial Naysayers,” who tend to reflexively reject technology in the classroom, and “Irrational Optimists,” who wholeheartedly embrace technology as a silver bullet to pedagogical challenges. The middle segment of faculty, who comprise the majority of instructors, are often left out of the conversation and, as a result, T&L staff are unaware of their technology needs.



## 2 New Tools May Fail to Meet Faculty Requirements

Procured technology must have the features required by the faculty members that originally requested the tool. This means that faculty must be active participants in assessing a new technology's capabilities prior to procurement. Without faculty input in the tool's evaluation, the technology that teaching and learning staff bring to campus may not meet faculty requirements, and ultimately go unused.

“

A few years ago, campus leaders decided to bring a MakerBot Space to campus. The problem was, faculty didn't want or need it. Faculty weren't involved in the decision-making process. As a result, thirty or more costly 3D printers are going unused, stashed away in a hallway that you could walk right past and not know was there. This technology doesn't help faculty at all. So why do we have it?"

*Director of Academic Computing  
Public Research University*

# Looking for Frontier Practices

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## *Best Practices Sourced From Across Higher Education*

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This study is based on understanding gained from diverse higher education leaders in the teaching and learning space. We are grateful to interviewees for sharing institutional insights and practices. We have abstracted their institutional insights to make them more generalizable to apply to colleges and universities with different missions and budgets, but the IT Forum's work is as ever grounded in the proven innovations of progressive practitioners.

## *Featured Institutions—With Sincere Appreciation*

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**Kelly Reimer**  
Director of Teaching and Learning  
Technologies



**Matthew Gardzina**  
Director of Digital Pedagogy &  
Scholarship



**John Fritz**  
AVP of Instructional Technology



**Renee Pfeifer-Luckett**  
Director of Learning Technology  
Development



**Susan Lamparter**  
AVP of Technology Solutions



**Lisa Keohane**  
Senior Instructional & Research  
Technologist

**Donna Keil**  
Director of Innovative Learning

## *Selected Research Participants*

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### **University of Cincinnati**

**Pat Reid**  
Director of Instructional Innovation

### **Central Michigan University**

**Ben Andera**  
Executive Director of Academic and  
Research Computing

### **University of Iowa**

**Anna Flaming**  
Teaching & Learning Specialist  
**Maggie Jesse**  
Senior IT Director

### **Indiana University**

**Stacy Morrone**  
AVP for Learning Technologies

### **Michigan State University**

**Brendan Guenther**  
Director of Academic Information  
Technology

### **University of Oklahoma**

**Kevin Buck**  
Associate Director of Learning  
Spaces

### **The College of New Jersey**

**Ryan Gladysiewicz**  
Associate Director for the Office of  
Instructional Design

### **University of New Mexico**

**Elisha Allen**  
Director of Academic Learning  
Technologies & Innovation

**Becky Adams**  
Online Course Development

### **Colorado School of Mines**

**Corey Parham**  
Classroom Technology Engineer

# What the Best Are Doing

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The IT Forum has identified two key barriers that prevent faculty from adopting teaching and learning technologies at higher rates:

- 1 Their technology needs go unheard, because teaching and learning staff typically only hear from a vocal subset of faculty members.
- 2 The procured technology does not have the capabilities that faculty require to address the problem or opportunity that the faculty member initially identified.

The strategies below seek to remedy both of these issues, facilitating widespread adoption of instructional technologies on campus.

## *Increasing the Breadth of Faculty Interactions*

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### **Low-Lift Technology Grant Applications**

*Streamlining the Grant Process to Encourage Experimentation*

Offer small, one-time grants to faculty who want to bring a specific instructional technology into their classroom. Simplifying the grant application process results in more applications and more opportunities for innovation. This encourages more faculty to experiment with instructional technologies, increasing the number of faculty with which teaching and learning staff interact.



### **Faculty Engagement Tracker**

*Leveraging Data to Identify Opportunities for Innovation*

Track teaching and learning staff consultations with individual faculty members to identify faculty interest and recognize which areas of campus are least engaged. Also, find potential faculty innovators through data stored in campus systems, such as the LMS. Both tactics record faculty involvement with teaching and learning initiatives and provide staff members the data they need to strategically promote greater faculty engagement.

## *Appropriately Evaluating Tool Capabilities*

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### **Preliminary Stakeholder Use Cases**

*Prioritizing Constituent Needs Prior to Procurement*

Provide campus stakeholders the opportunity to articulate use cases for a technology prior to evaluating vendor options. If possible, require vendors to demonstrate how their product addresses specific stakeholder needs prior to procurement. This ensures that acquired technology aligns with the requirements of faculty, students, and staff, prior to deciding on a specific vendor's product.



### **Faculty-Led Tool Assessment**

*Empowering Faculty to Drive the Technology Adoption Process*

Give faculty the deciding voice in the instructional technology selection process. The process should begin with a clearly articulated faculty need and faculty should be involved throughout the procurement process to assess whether the proposed technology has the capabilities to meet their needs. This way, teaching and learning staff are held accountable for evaluating potential technologies to ensure that they meet stakeholder requirements.

# Low-Lift Technology Grant Applications



## Streamlining the Grant Process to Encourage Experimentation

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### Practice in Brief

Offer small, one-time grants to faculty who want to bring a specific instructional technology into their classroom. Simplifying the grant application process results in more applications and more opportunities for innovation. This encourages more faculty to experiment with instructional technologies, increasing the number of faculty with which teaching and learning staff interact.

### Implementation Steps

- Collaborate with the CIO and academic technologists to set aside a pool of money to fund small-scale technology projects for innovative faculty members. The amount of funding awarded per grant should be less than \$2000, with the intention of financing many smaller initiatives rather than a few large projects. For example, to fully fund 25 projects it is necessary to set aside \$50,000.
- Establish grant evaluation criteria and communicate this to faculty. This will ensure that faculty are aware of the type of project the grant is meant to fund. In turn, this facilitates the application process by increasing the quality of grant proposals and supporting committee consensus during the evaluation process.
- Create a low-lift grant application that asks for only the most pertinent information, encourages the applicant to share hyperlinks, notifies applicants when an answer is optional, and provides examples to guide applicants' responses. A faculty member should be able to complete the application in a single sitting.
- Advertise the grant to faculty members across campus through faculty senate meetings, departmental listservs, and other channels. This will encourage faculty members who may not otherwise engage with teaching and learning staff to apply for a technology grant.

### Benefits to Institution

- » More technology grant applicants and recipients
- » Increased opportunities for innovative pedagogy across disciplines

— “ —

We want the application to be low-stakes. If we required a faculty member to write a long proposal, they wouldn't apply for it. We've had 30 faculty apply in the past year through the shorter application, demonstrating stronger faculty engagement in teaching and learning than before."

Kelly Reimer  
Director of Teaching and Learning Technologies  
*Elon University*



## Elon's Criteria for Grants Establish Clear Guidelines



**Purpose:** Must use funding to test a new technology, not one already in use on campus



**Use:** Funded technology must be integrated into pedagogy; may not be used only for research



**Fit:** Must reflect the goals of a department and serve as a model to other faculty members



**Timeline:** Must use new tool between 3 and 12 months from the date of application



**Cost:** Must specify a grant amount of no more than \$2,000



**Hardware:** Must not require upgraded standard hardware, such as a high-powered computer



**Follow Up:** Must submit half-page report describing how the technology was used

≤ \$2,000

Amount awarded to grant recipients

20 to 30

grant applicants in the 2016-17 academic year

67%

of applicants received a grant

## Low-Lift Application Expands Number of Applicants

**EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION (Limit responses in this section to 2 total pages)**

Name and Description of Requested Technology (include web link if available)

Primary Intended Use of Technology

Secondary Intended Use of Technology (optional; if none, write n/a)

Short-term instructional need, challenge, or problem addressed by technology (be sure to explicitly indicate how students will benefit from use of this technology)

Long-term impact of the technology on teaching & learning in your department.

Additional departmental goals met by use of this technology (if none, write n/a)

Long-term impact of the technology on teaching & learning at Elon.

Suggests a page limit

Encourages use of hyperlinks

Explicit instructions to guide responses

Clarifies when questions are not mandatory



# Faculty Engagement Tracker

## Leveraging Data to Identify Opportunities for Innovation



### Practice in Brief

Track teaching and learning staff consultations with individual faculty members to identify faculty interest and recognize which areas of campus are least engaged. Also, find potential faculty innovators through data stored in campus systems, such as the LMS. Both tactics record faculty involvement with teaching and learning initiatives and provide staff members the data they need to strategically promote greater faculty engagement.

### Implementation Steps

- Begin tracking teaching and learning staff interactions with faculty members. Include the following information about instructors in a Faculty Interaction Log, and house this data in a central location such as a service management system:
  - Name, department, and courses taught
  - Details surrounding their technology request
  - Name of the teaching and learning staff member with whom they interacted
- Assign one teaching and learning staff member to support a specific faculty member with multiple requests over the course of the academic year, or longer. This allows for the faculty member to build a relationship with this individual over time, and permits the teaching and learning staff member to gain a more holistic understanding of the faculty member's needs.
- Reflect on this data to recognize which departments, disciplines, and faculty members are most and least likely to visit and engage with teaching and learning staff and resources. Then, convene a group of relevant stakeholders to create strategies to increase the breadth of faculty with whom teaching and learning staff collaborate.
- As teaching and learning staff members build this database of specific innovators and engagement gaps, pinpoint campus systems (such as the LMS) that T&L staff can leverage to proactively identify faculty with innovative pedagogical techniques, whose input would be valuable in campus-wide teaching and learning initiatives.

### Benefits to Institution

- » Teaching and learning staff hear from a broader subset of faculty members
- » Sustained faculty relationships with teaching and learning staff

— “ —

We use this data to receive a high-level view of faculty engagement. Then, I strategize with my staff how to better market our services to less engaged departments.”

Matt Gardzina  
Director of Digital Pedagogy & Scholarship  
*Bucknell University*



## Spotlight Practices

Bucknell University  
University of Maryland, Baltimore County

### Track T&L Staff Interactions to Surface Opportunities

To better understand the breadth and depth of their relationships with faculty, teaching and learning staff at Bucknell University track each of their faculty interactions using this log:

#### Faculty Interaction Log

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Technology Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Assigned T&L Specialist: \_\_\_\_\_

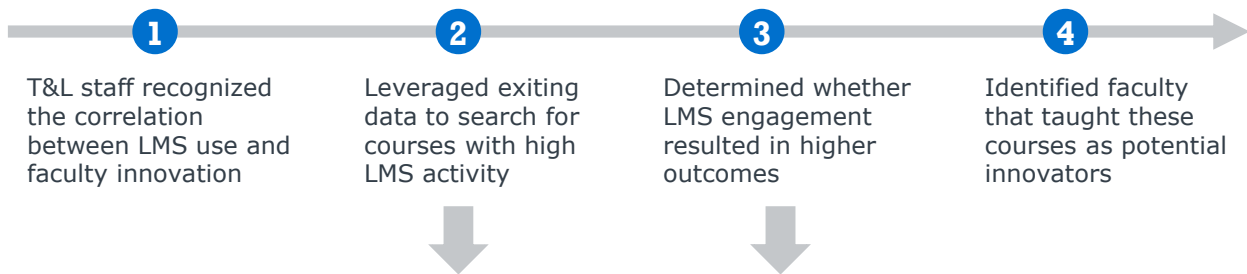
Prior Interactions: \_\_\_\_\_

One T&L staff member is assigned to a particular faculty member, to facilitate relationship building

Provides qualitative data on the type of interaction with the faculty member so that T&L staff can understand the quality – as well as quantity – of interactions

Semester	Description of Interaction

### Proactively Identifying “Stealth Innovators” Using Existing Data



Course	Hits	Hits per User
Principles of Accounting	90,893	2,838
Project Management Ops	32,642	1,632
Structured Systems Analysis	31,026	1,551

**Strong Outcomes Indicate Innovative Pedagogy**

- ✓ 20% higher scores on final
- ✓ Higher than average GPAs in next course (3.37 vs. 2.76)

# Preliminary Stakeholder Use Cases



## Prioritizing Constituent Needs Prior to Procurement

### Practice in Brief

Provide campus stakeholders the opportunity to articulate use cases for a technology prior to evaluating vendor options. If possible, require vendors to demonstrate how their product addresses specific stakeholder needs prior to procurement. This ensures that acquired technology aligns with the requirements of faculty, students, and staff, prior to deciding on a specific vendor's product.

### Implementation Steps

- Convene a diverse group of stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, and administrators in person or virtually. Source product requirements from each stakeholder for the technology at hand. Ask them to be as specific and exhaustive as possible with regard to the various ways that they would use the product and how they need the tool to function in their context.
- Do not discuss specific vendors when sourcing end user requirements for the product's use case and feature set. This avoids teaching and learning staff deferring to the most well-known and persistent vendors without carefully considering constituent needs.
- Evaluate specific vendors against the use cases and feature set that stakeholders have articulated, taking into consideration the existing technology ecosystem, integration with existing tools, security, and enterprise architecture requirements.
  - If issuing an RFP, include specific use case scenarios (sourced from campus stakeholders) in the RFP and require vendors to explain how their product best addresses user needs.
  - If there is no RFP, list all possible vendors for the tool and systematically eliminate those that do not have capacities that end users have articulated.
- If there are multiple vendors that meet stakeholder requirements and are equally feasible within existing enterprise architecture, offer opportunities for end users to engage with the product to experiment with its features and uses. Ask for feedback related to how well the product functions in the context of their needs.

### Benefits to Institution

- » Greater ROI from procured technologies due to higher rate of faculty adoption
- » Stakeholder-specific requirements are prioritized during the procurement process

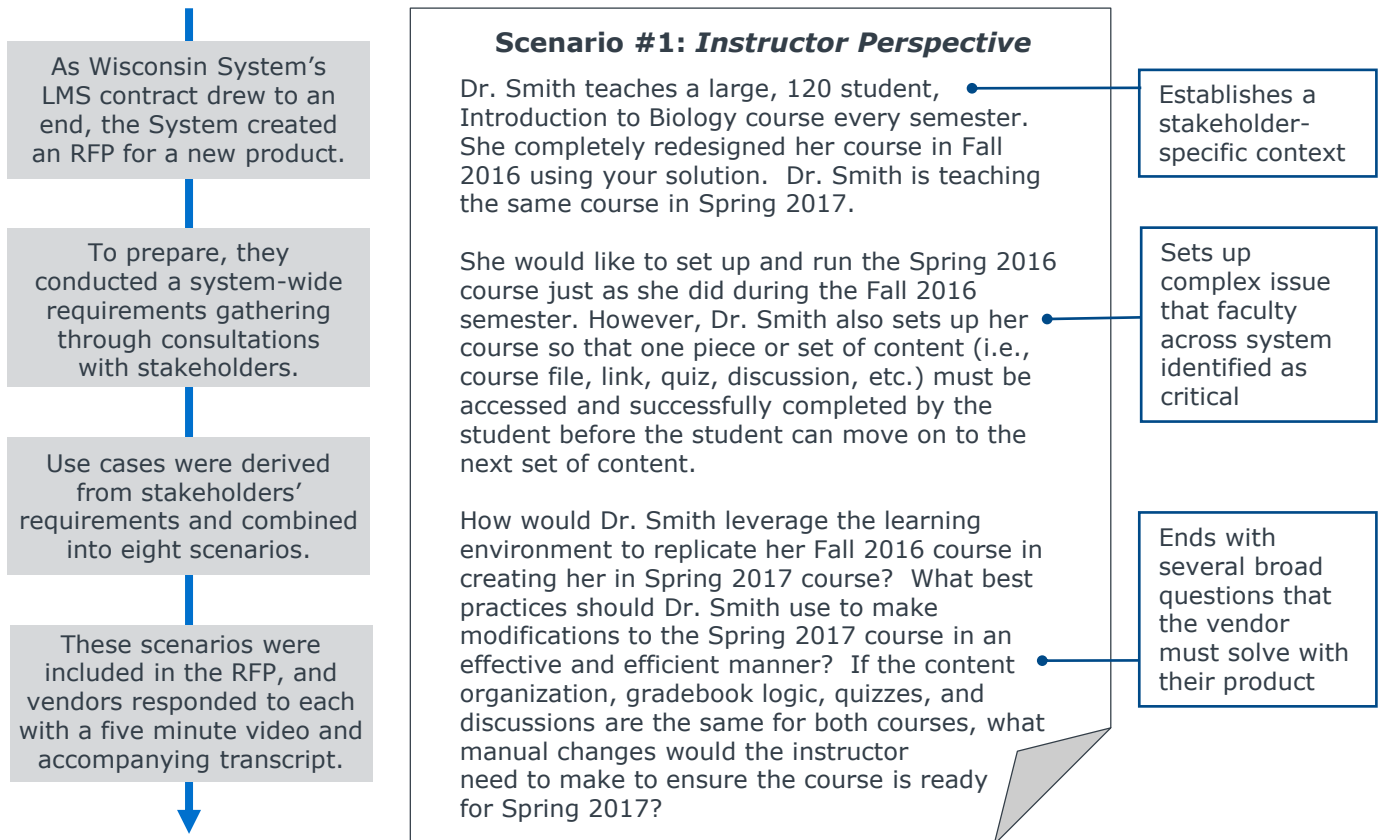


Since we prioritized end user use cases when deciding which new web-conferencing software to adopt, engagement has skyrocketed. Meeting minutes and participants have doubled since bringing the new platform to campus."

Susan Lamparter  
AVP of Academic Technology Solutions  
*Roosevelt University*

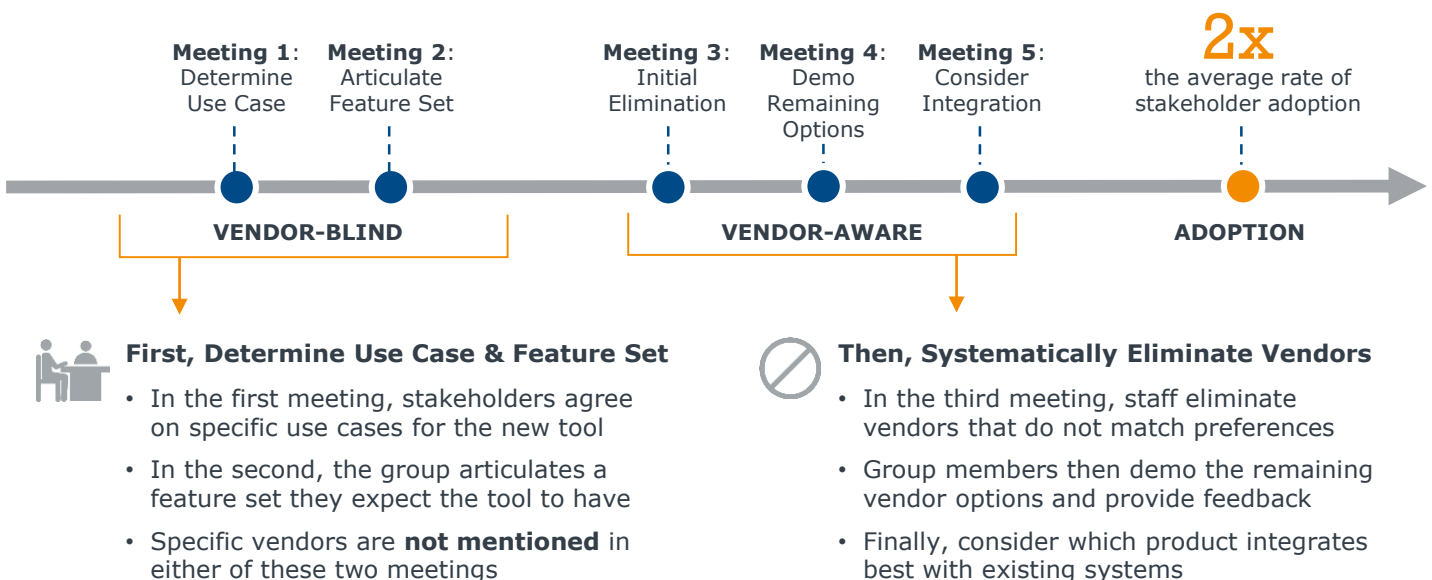


## Leveraging Use Case Scenarios in the RFP Process



## Vendor-Blind Tool Selection Emphasizes Use Case

Faculty at Roosevelt University sought a new webconferencing software. Prior to deciding on a specific product, teaching and learning staff convened a group of stakeholders (including faculty, students, and administrators) for a series of meetings.



# Faculty-Led Tool Assessment

## Empowering Faculty to Drive the Technology Adoption Process



### Practice in Brief

Give faculty the deciding voice in the instructional technology selection process. The process should begin with a clearly articulated faculty need and faculty should be involved throughout the procurement process to assess whether the proposed technology has the capabilities to meet their needs. This way, teaching and learning staff are held accountable for evaluating potential technologies to ensure that they meet stakeholder requirements.

### Implementation Steps

- Form a committee of faculty from across departments, the CIO, and one or more teaching and learning staff members. This committee will meet quarterly (see step four below) and act as the final approving body of all faculty technology requests. Collectively, the committee should have a strong grasp of whether a specific tool would be useful for faculty, the available budget for new technology acquisition, and the likelihood of faculty adoption of the technology.
- Establish a clear, multi-stage technology selection procedure. The next page illustrates Babson's four-stage process that assesses a technology's capabilities prior to procurement, which:
  1. Begins with a need articulated by one or more faculty members;
  2. Permits faculty to veto technology recommendations made by teaching and learning staff;
  3. Includes an opportunity for faculty to pilot the tool prior to procurement;
  4. Requires the committee of faculty, mentioned above, to approve the tool prior to procurement, based on its number of use cases among other factors.
- Advertise this process in faculty senate meetings, campus listservs, and other channels. This will let faculty know that teaching and learning staff welcome their technology requests and input, and ensure that they understand the new technology selection process.

### Benefits to Institution

- » Puts a streamlined process in place to address faculty technology needs
- » Ensures that a new tool has enough use cases across disciplines prior to its procurement

— “ —

Faculty needed an easy-to-use group peer review tool, and through the Innovation Pipeline we developed an in-house tool that integrated with groups created in Blackboard. It caught on in one division and spread; now, 97 groups use it.”

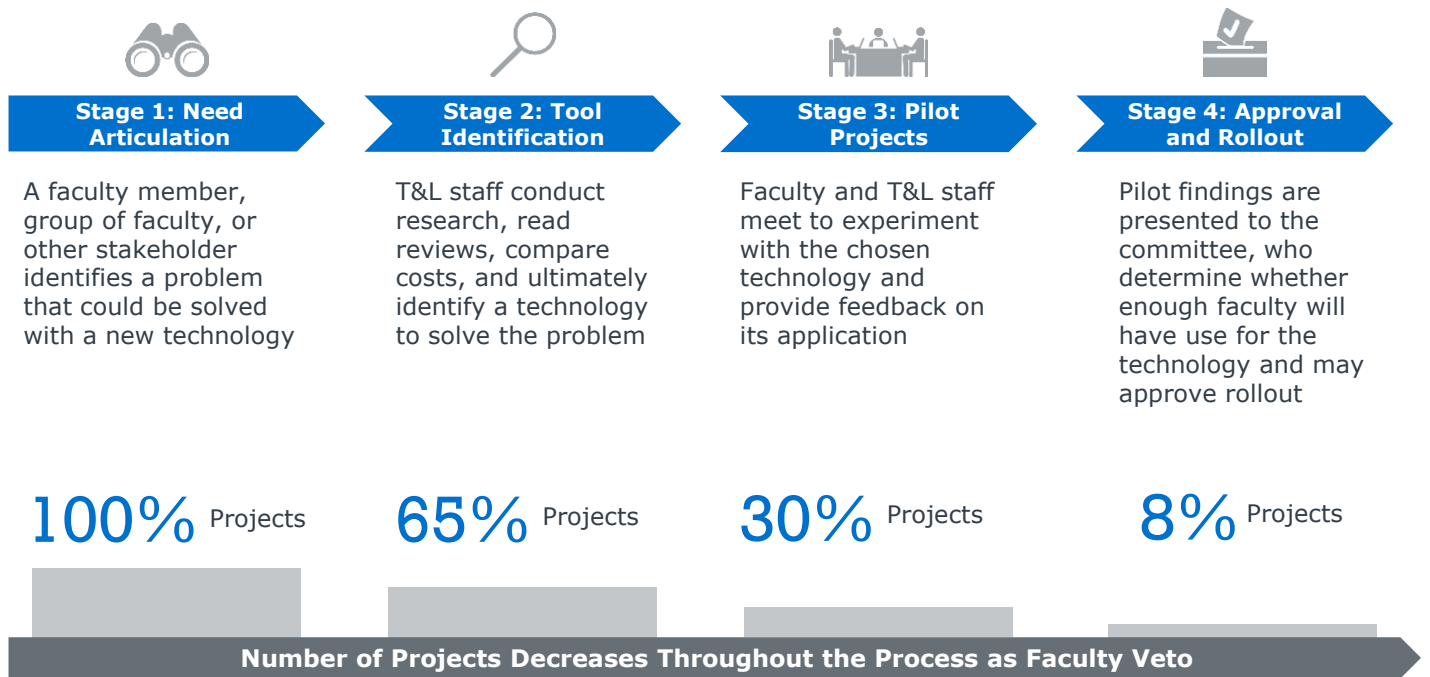
Lisa Koehane  
Senior Instructional & Research Technologist  
*Babson College*



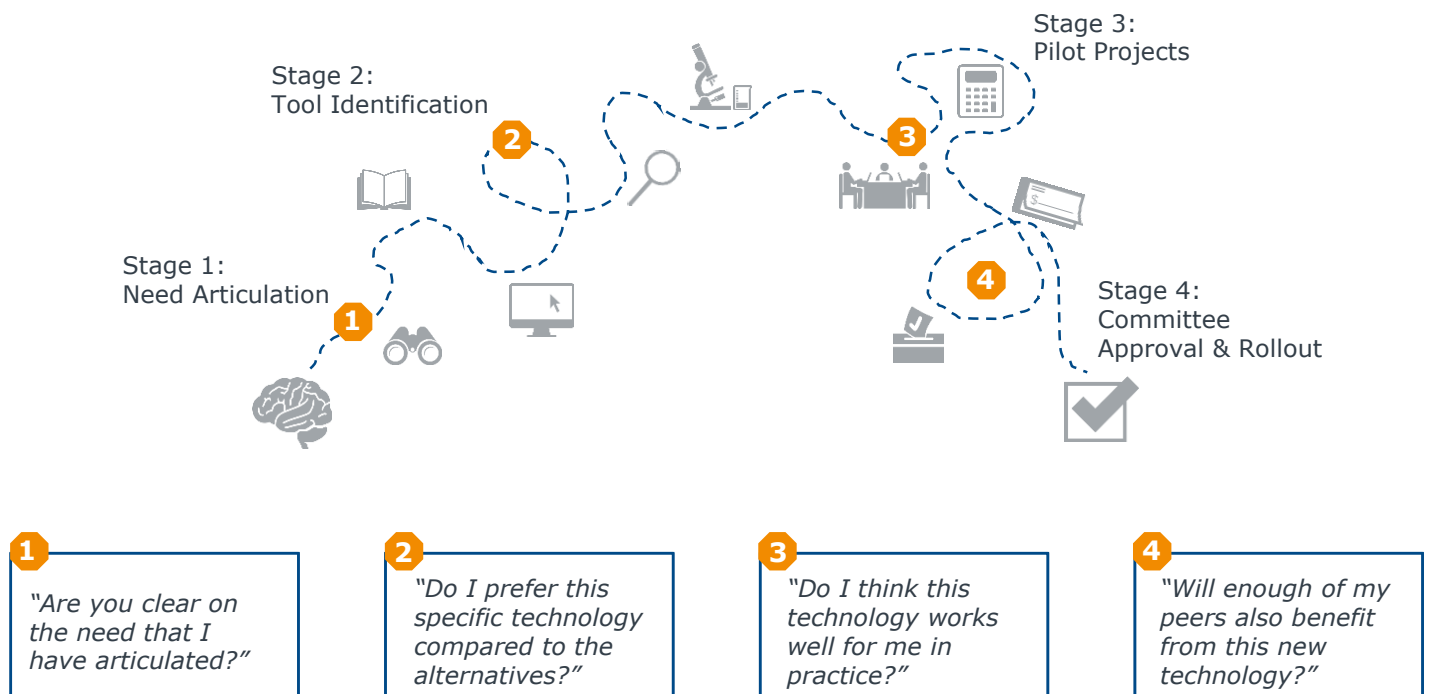
# Spotlight Practice

Babson University

## A Four-Stage, Faculty-Driven Tool Assessment Process



## Questions Faculty Pose to Pause, Halt, or Reroute Technology Adoption





## Discussion Guide

# Engaging Faculty in the Technology Selection Process

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### Using this Report to Speed Consensus for Change

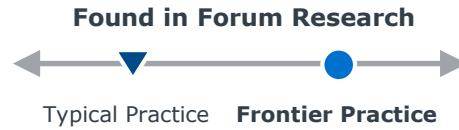
Many IT Forum members use our research as an occasion to convene IT and campus leaders to review best-practice lessons from innovative higher education institutions, deliberate about the need to revisit policies, implement new processes, reallocate staff and budget dollars, or advance task force and strategic plan goals.

To that end, IT Forum reports feature self-evaluation diagnostics and discussion guides that IT leaders can use as a backbone for focused working sessions at staff and task force meetings. We recommend that members distribute the report to the relevant stakeholders as pre-reading to establish a common vocabulary and fact base, then spending time going through the diagnostics and discussion questions to decide whether policy course-correction or resource re-allocations make sense. IT Forum staff would be happy to facilitate such discussions live on your campus or on a private web conference as helpful.

### Creating an IT Team Working Session

- Send report to teaching and learning leadership for pre-reading
- Convene group to discuss diagnostic questions and assess need for adopting profiled practices
- Contact IT Forum for implementation support:
  - Unmetered consultation with Forum researchers
  - Networking contact with profiled institutions
  - Model policy and process templates

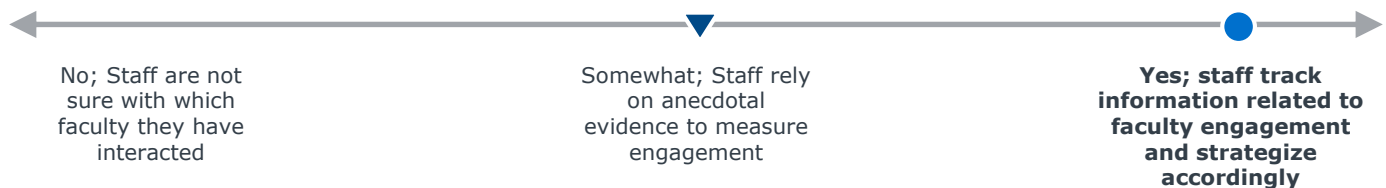
# Tool Selection Often Driven By Loudest Minorities



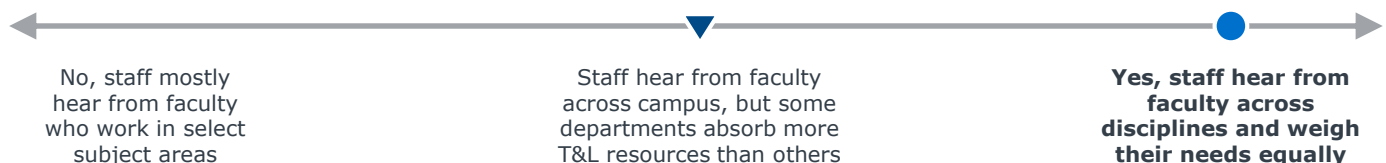
## 1) What percent of faculty actively engage with teaching and learning initiatives?



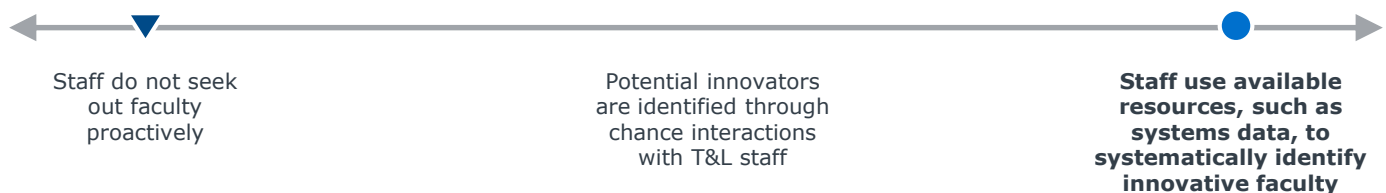
## 2) Do teaching and learning staff know which faculty are most and least engaged?



## 3) Do faculty from a range of disciplines interact with teaching and learning staff?



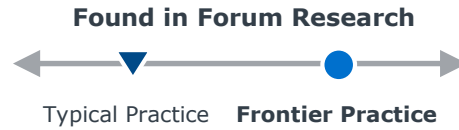
## 4) How do teaching and learning staff proactively seek out potential faculty innovators?



Do you need support overcoming this barrier? Skip ahead to Pages 18 and 19 of this document.



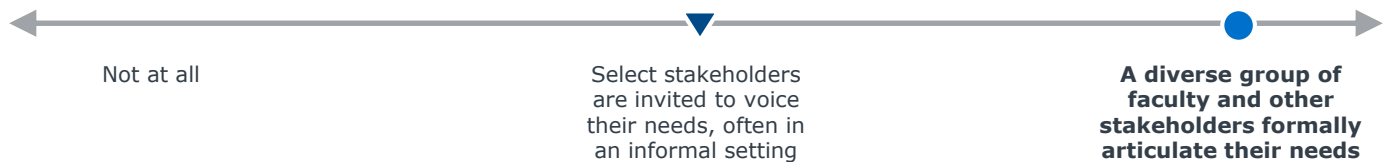
# New Tool Capabilities Fail to Meet Faculty Needs



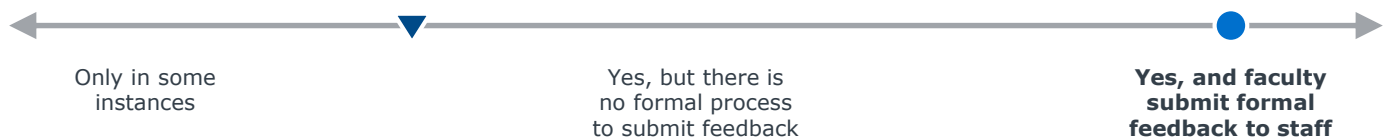
## 1) What percent of procured technologies go unused or underused after being brought to campus?



## 2) To what extent are faculty and other stakeholders encouraged to articulate their specific needs during the tool selection process?



## 3) Are faculty able to test out a new technology and provide feedback prior to its procurement?



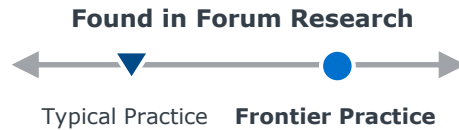
## 4) Are prospective vendors required to prove that their product meets stakeholder needs?



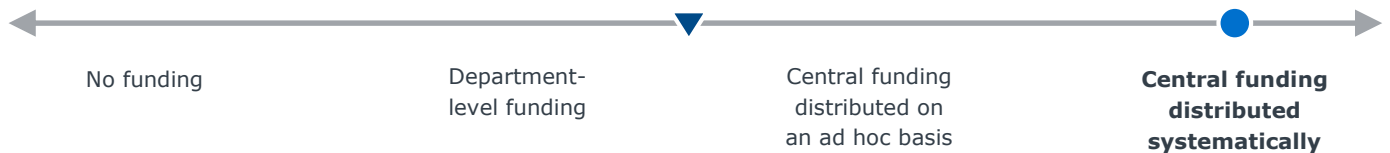
Do you need support overcoming this barrier? Skip ahead to Pages 20 and 21 of this document.

# Low-Lift Technology Grant Applications

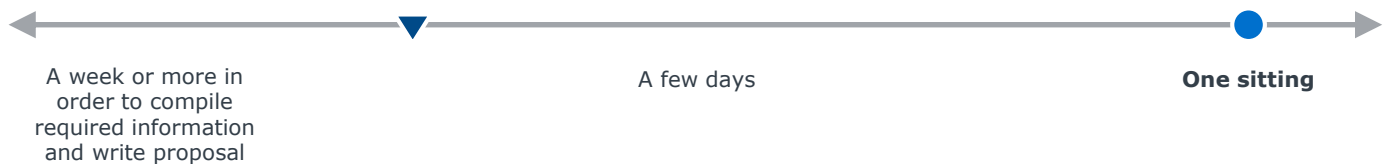
Offer small, one-time grants to faculty who want to bring a specific instructional technology into their classroom. Simplifying the grant application process results in more applications and more opportunities for innovation. This encourages more faculty to experiment with instructional technologies, increasing the number of faculty with which teaching and learning staff interact.



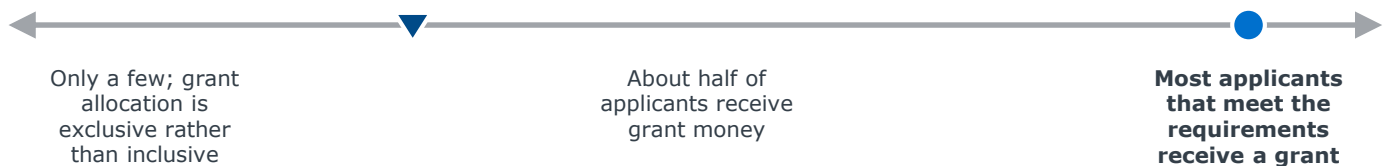
## 1) What funding is available for faculty to experiment with classroom technology?



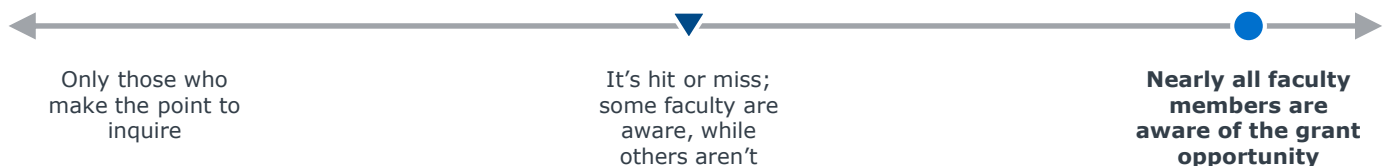
## 2) How long does it take a faculty member to complete the application for this funding?



## 3) How many faculty members receive this funding opportunity?

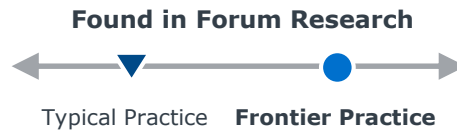


## 4) How many faculty members are aware that this funding is available?

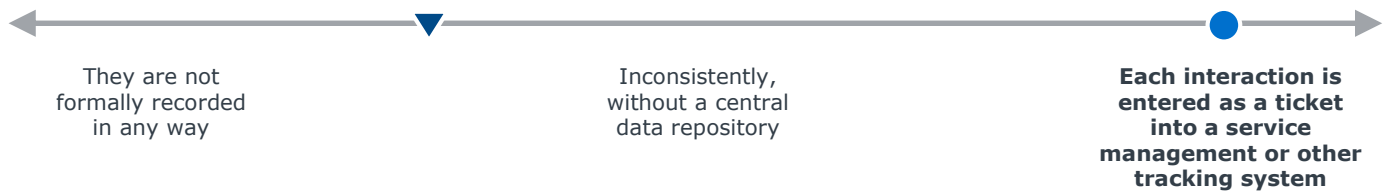


# Faculty Engagement Tracker

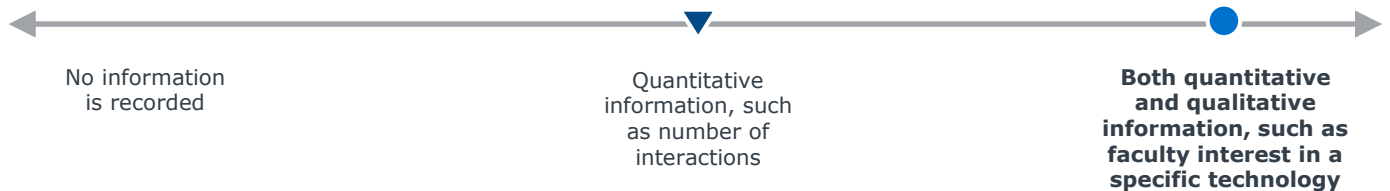
Track teaching and learning staff consultations with individual faculty members to identify faculty interest and recognize which areas of campus are least engaged. Also, find potential faculty innovators through data stored in campus systems, such as the LMS. Both tactics record faculty involvement with teaching and learning initiatives and provide staff members the data they need to strategically promote greater faculty engagement.



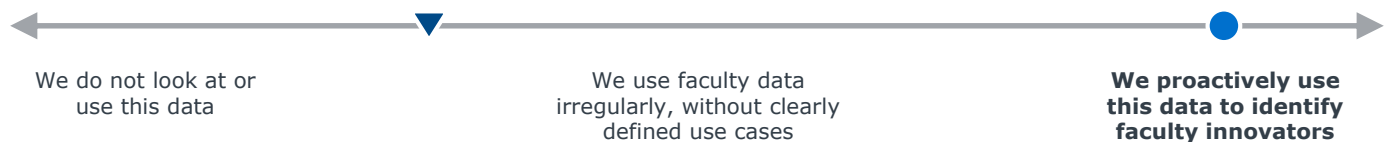
## 1) How are teaching and learning staff interactions with faculty members currently tracked?



## 2) What type of information is recorded related to faculty interactions?



## 3) How do you leverage faculty data in existing campus systems?



## 4) How have you used your data on faculty interactions with T&L staff?

- To evaluate how many faculty members T&L staff reach during resource allocations

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- To recognize the faculty members that are least engaged in T&L initiatives

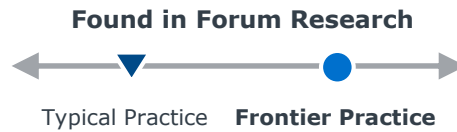
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- To inform future T&L procurements, based on faculty members' historical rate of adoption

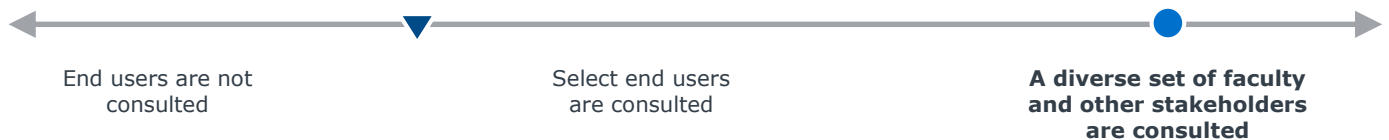
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# Preliminary Stakeholder Use Cases

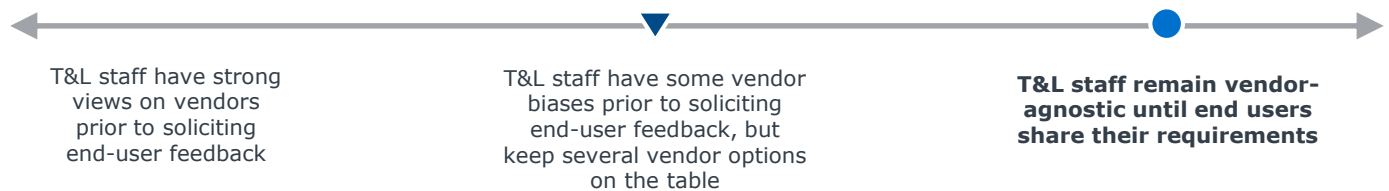
Provide campus stakeholders the opportunity to articulate use cases for a technology prior to evaluating vendor options. If possible, require vendors to demonstrate how their product addresses specific stakeholder needs prior to procurement. This ensures that acquired technology aligns with the requirements of faculty, students, and staff, prior to deciding on a specific vendor's product.



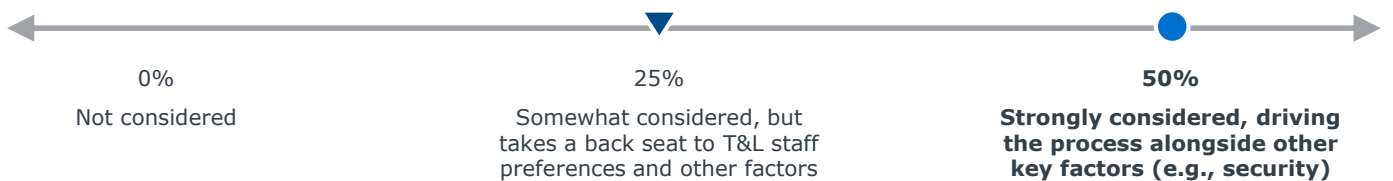
## 1) Which end users are included in determining a tool's use cases and feature set?



## 2) What role do vendors play in conversations prior to technology selection?



## 3) How is stakeholder feedback weighted in the tool selection process?



## 4) If your unit includes use cases in the RFP, do you...

- Conduct a needs assessment of all stakeholders to understand their requirements?

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- Ensure all end user perspectives are represented in the use case portfolio?

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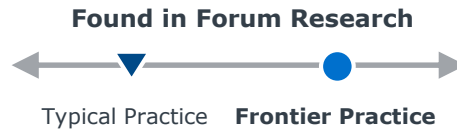
- Ask vendors specific questions within each use case to prove their product's functionality?

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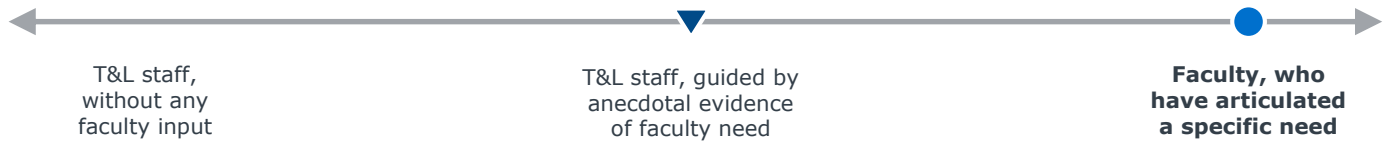
- Request stakeholder feedback on vendors' responses to use cases prior to procurement?

# Faculty-Led Technology Assessment

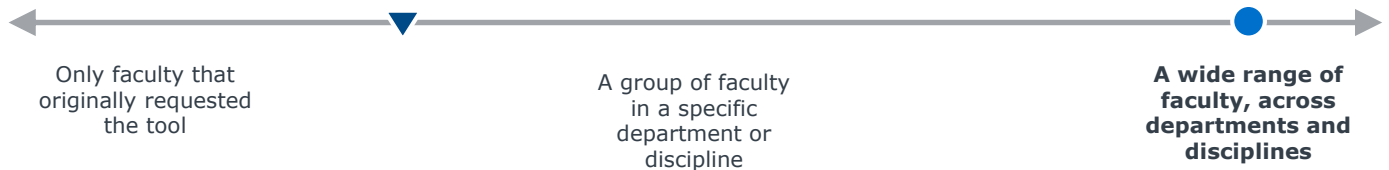
Give faculty the deciding voice in the instructional technology selection process. The process should begin with a clearly articulated faculty need and faculty should be involved throughout the procurement process to assess whether the proposed technology has the capabilities to meet their needs. This way, teaching and learning staff are held accountable for evaluating potential technologies to ensure that they meet stakeholder requirements.



**1) At the start of the teaching and learning tool selection process, who decides that a new tool is needed?**



**2) Which faculty are consulted during the technology selection process?**



**3) What are the current stages of your technology selection process?**

**1** \_\_\_\_\_

**2** \_\_\_\_\_

**3** \_\_\_\_\_

**4** \_\_\_\_\_

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