MetroBridge Program
Support for Local Governments and Community Partners
Call for Spring 2021 Projects

MetroBridge embeds real-world projects for municipalities and community organizations into courses at BU, enlisting our students and faculty as allies in addressing real issues confronting our region. The MetroBridge team assists with project scoping, arranges meetings between students and community partners, and ensures effective communication between BU and project liaisons. At the end of the semester, students present their work directly to partnering local governments and or community organizations, and the MetroBridge team oversees the development of final deliverables.

How to Submit a Project Idea

MetroBridge welcomes the submission of original project ideas and/or projects selected from the menu of options below. To submit a project idea, please fill out the brief MetroBridge Call for Spring 2021 Projects Survey at your earliest convenience. A member of our team will contact you with any questions and the faculty-matching process will take place in December-January. We do our best to match each project idea with a course, but if we are unable do so for Spring 2021, your project idea will also be considered for the Fall 2021 semester.

Menu of MetroBridge Project Options

COVID-19 Projects:
- Develop materials for public health agencies on how to communicate health disparities and which population(s) are at high-risk for contracting the virus
- Research the unique challenges health care providers and first responders are facing amidst the pandemic
- Explore issues of death and dying during the COVID-19 crisis and the unusual circumstances in which families and communities are forced to grieve
- Provide research support to guide organizational planning in light of COVID-19 budget cuts
- Conduct policy research/analysis on health care questions related to COVID-19
- Create designs for community art projects that offer tribute to lives lost during COVID-19
- Explore the impact of COVID-19 on small businesses (especially retail and restaurants)

Public Health Projects:
- Develop a plan for a community-based health needs assessment
- Design a community health intervention and corresponding communications strategy
- Create plans for community-based interventions targeting diet, physical activity, and obesity

Human/Social Services Projects:
- Explore evidence-based best practices for mental health and addiction interventions or policies
- Explore issues related to immigration, asylum court, and/or deportation

Public Safety/Criminal Justice Projects:
- Surveys, interviews, and/or literature reviews on a criminal justice issue
- Analysis of police data (e.g. service calls, arrests, incident reports) to explore trends
- Support for improving police data dashboards

Environment/Environmental Justice Projects:
- Analysis of extreme heat and urban heat islands
- Measure air, water, or soil quality in a specific community to test for pollutants
- Artistic interpretation of an environmental justice issue (e.g., public art mural)
- Build a monitoring device to measure snow accumulation or test water quality
- Research an environmental justice issue (e.g., climate, urban greening, access to open space)

Communications & Community Engagement Projects:
- Research on a community's social media network (e.g., Twitter) to understand how to improve engagement
- Create a mock-up of a new website design for a local government or community organization
- Develop and implement a resident/stakeholder survey and analyze the results

Policy Analysis or Best Practice Research Projects:
- Policy analysis or best practices scans on various issues
- Behavioral economics analysis of a policy issue or program (e.g., encouraging residents to recycle)

Local Economy Projects:
- Explore approaches to improving the local tourism market
- Research/consulting on a business or economic development issue

Education Projects:
- Research on bilingual student populations or field work with bilingual students

Data Science Projects:
- Build data visualizations or data dashboards using city/town data

Historic Preservation Projects:
- Compiling a neighborhood's history or mapping the historical features of a city

MetroBridge Project Timeline (Spring 2021 Semester)
The MetroBridge program operates on the academic semester cycle. Each semester is 16 weeks long. The Spring 2021 semester runs from January to May and student project deliverables will be completed in June 2021. Visit our website at www.bu.edu/ioc/metrobridge.