



2022-23 Transformational Ideas Initiative

The Transformational Ideas Initiative (TI²) program seeks project ideas that include the integration of character strength development, which is one of the core principles of the Kern Institute. There are 24 character strengths that everyone possesses, and each person develops their character strengths to different levels throughout their lifetime. To learn more about character strengths and examples on how to strengthen each of them, visit [VIA Institute on Character](#).

In Your Application

Character strength development should be embedded in your project or program idea. Think about what your program or project will need for learners and teaching faculty to have experiences that will help them strengthen their character traits. The category of project ideas is broad, including areas like curriculum enhancements, equity, diversity and inclusion related projects, professional identity formation, supporting students and residents during their training, or well-being initiatives. No matter what your project idea is, there are ways to incorporate character strengthening experiences.

Examples of Character Traits and How They Might Appear in your Project

Virtue	Character Trait	How it Might Appear in your Project
Wisdom	Creativity	Identify projects that allow others to use their strengths; providing multiple strategies for addressing goals/problems
	Curiosity	Ask others about their lives (listening actively)
	Judgement	Plan ahead for meetings; ask questions that guide others to more thoroughly think things through; aligning educational opportunities with learner level
	Perspective	Pursue all of the story when something goes wrong; Consider why a smart/well-intentioned person would do X; Support the voicing of differences of opinion
	Love of Learning	Support others pursuing new skills/knowledge; Help others create a learning plan
Courage	Bravery	Speak up when observing issues; Commend others for speaking-up or acting on something; Encourage others to try something new; support someone who is expressing vulnerability; providing appropriate autonomy and allowing others to safely fail
	Perseverance	Sincerely acknowledge the continued hard work being done; Celebrate when a project is finished; Help others identify next steps when something wasn't successful
	Zest	Demonstrate enthusiasm for others' accomplishments/plans; Provide the gift of your energy when addressing a situation
	Honesty	Provide sincere, useful, growth-directed feedback; Admit to mistakes; Follow through on intentions/promises
Virtue	Character Trait	How it Might Appear in your Project

Humanity	Social Intelligence	Ask questions to understand motives and feelings of others; respond to verbal and non-verbal cues with curiosity; recognizing and responding when others are struggling
	Kindness	Be generous with your knowledge and your time; Demonstrate compassion for others; Nurture the development of others, ask how you might help/support a team member
	Love	Build appropriate (and warm) relationships; demonstrate genuine caring appropriate to the situation
Justice	Leadership	Organize activities that meet others' needs; seek and acknowledge input from others; identify and allow others to apply their strengths; inspire by demonstrating (and explicitly discussing) character strengths; provide clear expectations and hold self/others accountable; go the extra mile whenever possible
	Fairness	Encourage participation by all; follow through on promises; don't blame others for your mistakes; be consistent and truthful; be transparent about decisions
	Teamwork	Distribute work taking strengths of self/others into account; think out loud as you make decisions; maintain situational awareness and respond to the needs of others; ask for help in a timely fashion, share team successes

Temperance	Forgiveness	Don't assume things (especially those told you by others); demonstrate tolerance of contrary opinions; encourage others to move past mistakes; debrief constructively following errors/bad outcomes
	Humility	Acknowledge limitations and mistakes; say I don't know; apologize when you are wrong; avoid being aggressive or domineering
	Prudence	Plan ahead for meetings; actively listen and gather multiple perspectives; help others balance their work and life commitments; help others weigh risks/benefits of any decision, Elicit agenda items prior to meetings from the entire team
	Self-Regulation	Take initiative to pursue learning opportunities; demonstrate follow through; encourage perspective-taking in complex situations; Avoid sarcastic remarks; place healthy boundaries around sharing opinions; when providing constructive feedback assure privacy
Transcendence	Gratitude	Say thank you; praise others' accomplishments, being specific and relating how it brings value; mention the "little things" that often go overlooked; send a thank you email/note
	Spirituality	Identify/explore others' beliefs and values; encourage others integrate core values in decision making; discuss meaning and purpose with others
	Appreciation of Beauty Excellence	Recognize the expertise and talents of others; Direct others to things of excellence or beauty; introduce appreciative inquiry into interactions (e.g., what is the best thing that happened today?); encourage others to take a break when stressed, encourage regular reflection/sharing
	Hope	Be a sounding board and guide others through multiple strategies; encourage others to set goals and reasonable action plans; demonstrate confidence in others
	Humor	Smile; promote humor/playfulness in appropriate situations; have and encourage fun