

## Community Innovation Grant Awardees 2026

Project Name	PI	Unit	Description
Youth Cognitive Privacy Initiative	Brian Gran	College of Arts & Sciences: Sociology	This initiative helps Cleveland high school students protect their Cognitive Data Privacy (CDP), the privacy of mental data, neural data, and cognitive biometrics, through a partnership with Open Doors Academy (ODA) and CWRU's Veale Institute for Entrepreneurship. Students will participate in seminars introducing CDP risks and rights, followed by thinkFAST workshops where ODA and CWRU students co design tools and strategies to safeguard emerging forms of personal data. The project empowers youth to understand and protect their cognitive privacy while gaining hands-on experience in innovation, design, and entrepreneurship. It also establishes the foundation for a sustainable, community engaged CDP education and research initiative.
Immersive Health Design An Art Medicine Collaboration to Advance Human Centered Simulation Education	Julianne DeMartino, MD, FACOG	School of Medicine: Clinical Skills and Simulation Center	This project establishes a community-engaged collaboration between the Clinical Skills and Simulation Center at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and the Cleveland Institute of Art. A CIA student employee will work with simulation faculty, technical staff, and learners to design visual, environmental, and storytelling elements for immersive medical simulations in the ZILS Interactive Suite. The project intentionally brings the humanities and sciences together by integrating art, design, storytelling, immersive technology, and clinical education. The pilot will be developed, tested, evaluated, and shared with faculty and learners.
Vel's Purple Oasis: Community Garden Restoration and Gathering Space	Narcisz Fejes	Department of English: Writing Program	Vel's Purple Oasis is a long-standing community garden near CWRU in the Fairfax/University Circle area, stewarded by Vel Scott, who came to Cleveland from Mississippi during the Great Migration. The project will restore and beautify the garden, rebuild a pergola/pavilion damaged by heavy snow, and create a sustainable gathering space for residents and students. In collaboration with Writing, Cognitive Science, Environmental Studies, and Engineering, students will participate in ecological planting, construction, and place-based learning on food, local history, environmental stewardship, and community care. They will also document their experience through writing and multimodal reflection.
Doan Brook Dialogues	Cassi Pittman Claytor	College of Arts & Sciences: Sociology	The Doan Brook Dialogues will build awareness and foster collaboration around the Doan Brook Watershed, connecting stakeholders, residents of the Glenville and University Circle communities, and CWRU students enrolled in "SOC 242: Race, Climate Change, and Environmental Justice." The project pursues three objectives: (1) to deepen student learning through community engagement and research, (2) to raise awareness of a local environmental issue—the Lower Shaker Lakes Dam Removal Project—while also promoting resident voice and participation, and (3) to develop strategies of action that exemplify equitable environmental advocacy. The Dialogues will culminate in two events co-designed by students and community leaders.