The boundaries of knowledge are advanced by colleges and universities, where learning and research reshape what we know and what we can do. This is the essence of innovation: to redefine what individuals, organizations, industries, and societies achieve and how they do so. At its heart, higher education is an enterprise dedicated to driving innovation across all fields of human endeavor.

Information technology is a catalyst and source of innovation. As IT transforms work, learning, and society, it also profoundly influences how colleges and universities pursue their missions. With technology as a prime enabler, innovation in the learning enterprise has increased dramatically: from using web resources in the classroom to developing online and hybrid learning to conducting classes in virtual environments. Likewise, advances in cyberinfrastructure are creating entirely new possibilities for research and collaboration across a variety of disciplines. And it would be virtually impossible to run today’s higher education institutions without the information systems and computing resources that allow for efficient operations and effective decision-making.

Being a part of the higher education IT community means generating, experiencing, leading, and managing innovation on a daily basis. Higher education IT professionals play a central role in harnessing the transformative potential of technology for the good of their institutions and the communities those institutions serve. They monitor developments in technology in order to identify and capture the value of IT innovations for their institutions. They themselves often create and develop innovative technologies, uses of technology, and processes that capitalize on the best of what technology has to offer. And higher education IT professionals provide leadership on their campuses by clarifying the role that technology-based innovations can play in advancing the institutional mission and strategic goals.

As the higher education technology association, EDUCAUSE embraces the value of innovation. EDUCAUSE understands not only the importance of innovation to higher education but also the supporting role that technology can play as a tool for innovation in the learning, discovery, and engagement that colleges and universities offer. Through its events, programs, services, and collaborations, EDUCAUSE strives to enhance the innovative capacity of the higher education IT community. The EDUCAUSE motto of “uncommon thinking for the common good” captures this commitment to innovation. EDUCAUSE works to generate new ideas and approaches that will enable members to more effectively serve their institutions and that will help institutions to better fulfill their missions. Together, all of us in the EDUCAUSE community strive to produce innovations that will advance higher education’s mission of creating, transmitting, and preserving knowledge.

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