1. PROJECT SUMMARY

1. Lead PI
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Project Title: Designing Academic Success at Medgar Evers College

Summary (200 word maximum)
This project convenes a team of natural and social scientists to improve the educational setting at Medgar Evers College (MEC), a Predominantly Black Institution in Brooklyn where 75% of the students are women. Led by an urban planner committed to participatory design and a chemist committed to diversifying STEM careers, the project convenes a team of environmental psychologists, practicing architects, students and faculty in STEM to carry out a participatory design intervention in the sciences wing of the College. Using inductive mixed methods, we aim to redesign an academic environment to promote faculty mentorship of students, promote student engagement and retention, and improve the overall impact of STEM education at MEC. These goals have been identified through an earlier phase of research at MEC, which has a dropout rate of 64%. We now seek funds through this grant proposal for Phase 2, specifically underwriting our research on a design intervention. We bring to the project a commitment from campus administrators to fund an architectural intervention, buy-in from MEC faculty, and the collaboration of practicing partners at two architecture firms in New York City. The project is well-positioned to serve as a model for future funding and research.