Physical Facilities and Technical Infrastructure Plan
—
Operation and Maintenance Plan

June 2024 – June 2026

1. Facilities and Technical Infrastructure Plan

1.1. Overview

The adequacy of all physical facilities and technical infrastructure of AIE's Lafayette Campus falls under the oversight of the Head of School, the IT Department, and the staff of the LITE Center facility as well as the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Embedded within the overall physical facilities and technical infrastructure plan are issues concerning the campus' operation and maintenance. The Operation and Maintenance Plan for the AIE Lafayette Campus runs in tandem with the Physical Facilities and Technical Infrastructure plan.

1.2. Personnel

1.2.1. The Role of the Head of School and Campus Administration

The Head of School, in conjunction with the US Financial Controller and the remainder of the US Executive Group, assesses the adequacy of and implements any needs for maintenance and operational changes. This includes at least annual appraisal of all the campus's furniture, fixtures, and equipment, including paint, carpet, lighting, electrical supply, and workspace. These become part of either the campus operating budget or the capital expenditure (CAPEX) budget in the next fiscal cycle.

Immediate needs in the above areas are purchased, repaired, or replaced based on the availability of funding. Emergency needs are covered by the emergency repair/purchase system, with funding allocated by the CEO.

The Head of School also tracks student enrollment and admissions numbers to gauge the adequacy of space and materials given the student population. Those numbers grow at a pace that can be tracked with lead time that allows needed improvements and additions to be incorporated into the campus plan.

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The components of this plan are administered at three levels including local management, the executive committee, and the Board of Directors at least annually as a component of planning, budgeting, and ongoing operations, and more frequently based on current needs.

1.2.2. Role of the IT Department and Technical Infrastructure

The IT Department addresses the adequacy of, as well as the plans for, the maintenance and operation of AIE Lafayette, including the entire technical infrastructure: hardware, software, networking, and other components.

IT maintains a current list of hardware assets and their specifications which are evaluated for adequacy on an ongoing basis. Based on their life cycle and performance, this hardware is upgraded or disposed of as obsolete equipment per IT's Equipment Plan. The details included in the inventory and the specifications of industry standard hardware enable IT to plan the rotation of AIE hardware with minimal challenge.

Each spring (January-May) the Head of School consults with IT about anticipated student enrollment for the coming year, allowing for the purchase of the appropriate number of new machines.

Software needed for AIE coursework and office work is established. Industry software changes are typically communicated in advance, which allows AIE adequate notice to incorporate any changes. Updates to software packages occur regularly, and IT operates on an annual schedule within its licensing agreements to update all software before the next school year begins.

Due to the specific software requirements for AIE's programs, the IT Department negotiates licenses with the software providers on a global scale that includes all seven campuses under the global AIE organizational umbrella.

The campus network is part of the global AIE network and is monitored constantly by both humans and algorithmic software. Performance levels are tracked against acceptable speeds, and if there are shortcomings, solutions are proposed to improve them. Implementation is scheduled based on the budget cycle with emergency needs handled by the emergency repair/purchase system.

1.2.3. Role of LITE Center and University of Louisiana at Lafayette Landlords

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette serves as AIE's landlord for the rented campus and staff offices in the LITE Center.

AIE leases its space on a gross rent basis, and therefore maintenance and operations of this facility are simplified. The planning for facility maintenance and upgrades to the buildings are handled by the landlords, with input from AIE where appropriate or requested.

The Lite Center monitors, maintains, and operates all aspects of the greater buildings including plumbing, roofing, windows, fire alarms, HVAC, landscaping, and public spaces. AIE can make electrical and data system changes within its footprint as needed, which are authorized and approved by the landlords.

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Additionally, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette contracts all regular janitorial and cleaning services. Any recognized needs beyond that scope (i.e. unforeseen carpet cleaning) can be contracted as required.

1.3. Adequacy and Improvement

1.3.1. Current Campus

The Physical Facilities and Technical Infrastructure Plan is updated following an assessment of Campus needs. Campus physical facilities and technical infrastructure are audited annually to determine adequacy and to recommend improvement as needed. AIE is located in the LITE Center at 537 Cajundome Boulevard, Lafayette LA 70506.

AIE occupies Suites 211, 214 and 237 in the LITE Center, totaling 5534 square feet plus has use of the total immersive space on level 2. There are four studio classrooms, several offices, storage/file room, server room, a conference space, two break areas and the total immersive space (which includes a classroom, edit suites, and a small LED wall for the Filmmaking courses).

1.3.2. Adequacy of Physical Facilities

1.3.2.1. Campus Location

The LITE Center location overall is judged to be ideal based upon its central location, access to public transportation, and large parking lot. It is noted that signage is not available and therefore this is something that we need to address.

The premises that comprise AIE's campus are judged to be adequate based upon the availability of suitable workspace for students and staff, the robust technical infrastructure, and additional areas for support services.

Areas of improvement include storage, additional meeting rooms/staff offices, and signage.

1.3.2.2. Technical Infrastructure

1.3.2.2.1. Overall

The technical infrastructure is judged to be fully adequate. Student and staff needs are met by the hardware and software available to them, including a functional and capable network.

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1.3.3. Improvement of Physical Facilities

1.3.3.1. Historic

AIE staff and faculty took occupancy of Suite 211 on May 1, 2011, and occupied Studio A as planned on September 6th, 2011.

The 2012-2013 school year saw the implementation of the first server network.

Between 2013 and 2016, the facility saw painting, furniture and equipment upgrades, moving of offices, and the addition of dozens of computer workstations.

The summer of 2017 saw a substantial technical infrastructure upgrade with a fully rebuilt server and 26,000 feet of CAT6 network cabling. The electrical system in Suite 214 and 237 was completely rewired. The server upgrade improved network speed and improved digital storage for both students and staff, as well as allowing centralized control of the entire system by IT. The electrical upgrade ensured adequate and uninterrupted power for every computer as well as a dedicated circuit for the server itself.

Suite 237 was added in July 2018, and the space became occupied as planned for the 2018 Academic year.

In June 2024 a Strategic Alliance Agreement was signed between the Landlord and AIE for the Immersive Technologies Space – to be refitted for a LED volume and AIE's new filmmaking courses.

1.3.3.2. Planned Improvements

Paint, furniture, fixtures, and carpets are assessed annually for wear and tear, to ensure that students have a quality experience on campus, by the Head of School and Financial Controller. Recognized needs in individual rooms or campus-wide are added to the annual Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) budget for CEO and CFO approval.

The Immersive Technologies Space is to be cleared by the Landlord and set-up as a virtual production studio, small classroom and a couple of edit suits for AIE's new Filmmaking Course with delivery commencement in August 2025. In addition, all classrooms will be assessed in 2024/2025 for optimizing layout, desks, chairs and AV.

The printer is to be moved into the file storage room and the layout of the classroom in 211, optimized for delivery and private access to Head of School and Financial Aid Administrators offices. The time clock next to the printer can also be removed. In addition, a 3D printer will be purchased and installed in room 237, in the vicinity of the scanner. Should the landlord have space available for additional meeting rooms\office space or a larger area for 3 classrooms we could reshuffle the classroom layout to better suit our needs in the short term.

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1.3.3.3. Possible Campus Move

US executive staff monitor the adequacy of the current campus in relation to student numbers, staff numbers, and the working conditions. Projections are that the current campus can serve about 114 students adequately, but that would be near the maximum capacity.

Current enrollment numbers and admissions data make it possible that AIE would hit that threshold in the 2026-2027 school year. That data would be evident in the spring of 2025, triggering a search for new space and a move before the start of classes in the fall of 2026. If projections do not hit those levels, AIE will remain in its current campus.

2. Operation and Maintenance Plan

Note: Personnel responsible for plan implementation is the same as listed in the first part of this document under Physical Facilities and Technical Infrastructure Plan.

2.1. Technical Infrastructure

AIE's technical infrastructure is substantial. More than 70 computers are in operation on campus, the majority of which are student workstations used in daily classes. These are networked directly to the campus server via more than 26,000 feet of CAT6 cabling.

The technical infrastructure also includes a wireless network, many television monitors, gaming consoles, and classroom equipment including VR gear, electronic drawing tablets, and film gear (cameras, lights, green screen).

2.1.1. Equipment

2.1.1.1. Students

The AIE curriculum consists of five programs including Game Programming, Game Art and Animation, and 3D Animation and VFX for Film, Game Design and Production, and Filmmaking. Students generally choose before enrollment whether they want to seek an Advance Diploma or Associate of Occupational Studies in their program. Students of each program require in-class access to a computer, relevant software, and workspace. The Advanced Diploma is designed as a two-year program and the Associate's Degree as a five-semester program. Courses for first year and second year students are held on separate days of the week; therefore, each student will share desk space and equipment with one other. This method allows AIE to maximize use and capacity of facilities and equipment.

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Studios vary in size. They are designed to accommodate 12-30 students at one seating, or 24-60 students per studio. Each student has access to a computer with licenses to the curriculum, dual monitors, half of one 6' worktable (or where possible 4'), a chair, and access to the facility during scheduled classes, and when available outside normal hours. In addition, when available and on an as-needs basis, students may have access to loaner computers to complete work at home. This loan strategy is designed to improve access for students that otherwise would be unable to study.

2.1.1.2. Other equipment

Each studio (classroom) has an affixed projector or TV monitor to enhance instruction during teacher/student presentations. The studio will also include a whiteboard, an instructor's desk, an instructor computer, relevant instructional software, internet access, and digital storage space on the server.

The library includes relevant print materials (some of which are also housed in the studios for easy access).

2.1.1.3. Administrative staff and faculty

Administrative staff and faculty are provided with one on-site computer and relevant software. Additionally, certain employees will have access to a company owned laptop, projector, phone, and other equipment as required by the employee's position. Administrative employees and faculty may request additional equipment as needed through the Head of School and the IT Department for purchase on a prioritized basis.

Other equipment such as file cabinets, fire-proof file cabinets, shelf units, and drawer packs are purchased as needed and are available to employees.

2.1.1.4. Asset rotation

It is AIE's policy to make current technology available to students, faculty, and administrative staff. Current technology will ensure that students maximize their educational experience while studying at AIE. Current technology will help ensure that graduates are prepared to enter the job market having experienced current and up-to-date hardware and software, and industry-related work techniques. As such, company policy mandates a three-year rotation/upgrade of educational computers, annual software updates, and a five-year rotation/upgrade of administrative computers, unless otherwise authorized. Video cards for educational and faculty computers may be updated more frequently as required by internal specifications and software changes.

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2.1.1.5. Emergency acquisitions

From time to time, equipment will malfunction or crash. The first step is to attempt to repair the equipment internally with the assistance of the IT Department. If the equipment cannot be repaired internally, an authorized service center may be used upon approval and if cost of repair is lower than cost of replacement. Damaged equipment must be removed from the asset list which is maintained by IT and/or accounting. If a new purchase is required, the process for ordering equipment is found on the MyAIE site. An attempt will be made to expedite purchases as needed.

Non-technical supplies needed on an accelerated timetable can be approved by the Head of School if within the operating budget.

2.1.2. Supplies

The requirement for student supplies is minimal, and the curriculum does not require textbooks. On occasion, students will need access to art paper, pencils, and other incidentals. These supplies can be requested by students and instructors. As the requirement is minimal, only a few of these will be kept on site.

Faculty and staff supplies consist of pencils, pens, copy paper, rulers, dry erase markers, whiteboard cleaner and erasers, hanging file folders, three-ring binders, and other incidentals. Staff are required to notify the Head of School for any stationery requirements so purchases can be made through our authorized vendors such as Office Depot, Amazon, Walmart, and Sam's upon approval.

2.1.3. Relevant State Law and Federal Codes

The facilities meet ADA (The Americans with Disabilities Act), and other legal safety requirements which are maintained by the campus landlord, the University of Louisiana. The University of Louisiana at Lafayette has regular inspections, and all improvements or renovations are completed with proper and legal permitting and approval.

AIE does not finance its facility improvements through any public bonds or offerings.

Improvements and renovations made within the footprint of AIE follow all applicable permitting and approval processes required by state, parish and municipal law.

While not directly related to facility, the Health and Safety Plan for students, employees, and guests complies with all municipal, parish, state, and federal guidelines, including the proper filing of Clery Act statistics. Fire drills are conducted as required. Inspections from the fire marshal are complied with as they occur. First aid supplies are present with staff trained in both first aid and CPR by a licensed instructor.

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3. Availability of Plans

The Physical Facilities Plan and Operations and Maintenance Plan are made available to employees, students, and the general public on AIE's website: https://aie.edu/studentinformation/documents-and-forms/. They are also available to employees on the staff intranet.

4. Evaluation and Revision of Plans

The Physical Facilities and Operations and Maintenance Plans are reviewed annually by the Head of School with senior executive staff, including from the IT and Facilities Departments. The plan is also reviewed by the faculty and campus staff. Any further revisions or changes recommended by that group go to the Board of Directors, who will authorize any revisions required.

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