

Frequently asked questions

Answers to our most common questions about the AI in Real Estate Lab Student Fellowship



12

Fellows in the cohort

2-10

Hours per week

Sept 20

Application deadline

Jump to a question

- 1 What is the AI in Real Estate Lab?
- 2 What makes this different from a typical student program or club?
- 3 Who is eligible to apply?
- 4 Do I need real estate experience?
- 5 Do I need AI experience?
- 6 Do I need coding experience?
- 7 What kinds of students are you looking for?
- 8 Who is probably not a good fit?
- 9 What will Student Fellows actually do?
- 10 What kinds of projects might Fellows support?
- 11 What role does Dr. Jeremy Welland play?
- 12 How often will Fellows meet?
- 13 Are meetings in person or virtual?
- 14 What are the key dates?
- 15 How much time should I expect to commit?
- 16 Is the fellowship paid?
- 17 What will Fellows gain from participating?
- 18 Will I be working alone or with others?
- 19 Will I interact with companies directly?
- 20 What is the lab's connection to AI Forge?
- 21 What should I submit with my application?
- 22 What kinds of work samples are most helpful?
- 23 What will the selection process look like?
- 24 How selective is the fellowship?
- 25 Who are the key leaders involved in the lab?
- 26 Where can I find the application?

1. What is the AI in Real Estate Lab?

A Marquette University initiative housed within the Vieth Institute for Real Estate Leadership. It brings together student talent, faculty expertise, and company partners to explore how artificial intelligence can be applied in practical ways across the commercial real estate and built environment ecosystem.

The lab helps companies advance their use of AI while giving students the opportunity to learn at a high level and contribute through real-world applied work.

2. What makes this different from a typical student program or club?

This is not a casual extracurricular and it is not a passive, observational program. The lab is a serious, selective, applied fellowship. Fellows engage directly with company partners, participate in faculty-guided cohort learning, and help advance real AI projects.

Students will not simply talk about AI trends. They will be expected to think critically, build thoughtfully, contribute meaningfully, and grow through practice.

3. Who is eligible to apply?

Any Marquette University student: undergraduate students, graduate students, and students from any of Marquette's nine colleges.

Students from all academic backgrounds are encouraged to apply if they have demonstrated AI capability and a strong interest in applied problem-solving.

4. Do I need real estate experience?

No. The fellowship is open to students from across disciplines. While the lab focuses on companies operating in and around commercial real estate, selection centers first on AI capability, builder mindset, communication ability, and readiness to contribute.

Students interested in business, technology, design, engineering, law, data, entrepreneurship, construction, finance, architecture, or adjacent areas may all be strong candidates.

5. Do I need AI experience?

Yes. Applicants should already have meaningful experience using and building with AI. Backgrounds can vary, but students should be beyond basic experimentation, with evidence of building, testing, automating, prototyping, or solving problems with it. Examples include:

Agentic AI tools or workflows	AI automations
Custom GPTs or AI assistants	AI-enabled research tools
Prototypes or proofs of concept	Data analysis using AI
No-code or low-code AI systems	AI-supported applications
Independent or class build projects	GitHub repos or technical artifacts



A Student Fellow presenting AI work to industry leaders

6. Do I need coding experience?

Coding is not required, but it is encouraged, especially at a basic level. Fellows may bring coding, no-code tools, low-code tools, workflow platforms, and other AI systems. What matters most is evidence that you can build, learn, adapt, and solve problems.

Coding experience can strengthen your application. If you do not have it, show that you have built meaningful AI-based solutions in other ways.

7. What kinds of students are you looking for?

Students with a strong combination of:

Demonstrated AI capability	Curiosity and resourcefulness
Grit and resilience	Entrepreneurial mindset
Strong communication	Collaborative disposition
Evidence of building	Depth of thought

This fellowship is for students who want to do real work, ask smart questions, keep developing their skills, and contribute to a high-performing cohort.

8. Who is probably not a good fit?

Students looking mainly for a resume line, hoping for a passive or low-engagement experience, uninterested in working through ambiguity, unable to commit regular time and follow-through, or new to AI and still at the earliest exploration stage.

The strongest candidates will be energized by challenge, excited to keep learning, and genuinely interested in building with others.

Frequently asked questions

9. What will Student Fellows actually do?

Fellows contribute to applied AI work in collaboration with faculty, peers, and company champions. Depending on the project, fellows may:

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Build prototypes | Conduct research |
| Evaluate AI tools | Automate workflows |
| Analyze data | Create proofs of concept |
| Prepare recommendations | Help scope business problems |
| Test practical use cases | Document work for portfolios |

Some fellows work closely with one company, while others rotate across projects depending on lab needs, student strengths, and the shape of the cohort.

10. What kinds of projects might Fellows support?

Projects vary by company and need. Past examples have included:

- An app to cross-reference zoning codes with possible building ideas
- A search tool to navigate DNR information and environmental concerns tied to project sites
- A tool to support creation of marketing offering memoranda for properties for sale

More broadly, projects may involve AI workflows, research tools, automations, prototypes, internal process improvements, or early-stage solution development. The emphasis is on practical, useful work, not abstract exercises.

11. What role does Dr. Jeremy Welland play?

Dr. Welland is one of the most important parts of the Student Fellow experience. Fellows meet regularly as a cohort with him, a nationally renowned Marquette faculty expert in artificial intelligence and machine learning.

These sessions are deeply meaningful learning environments where students sharpen their technical thinking, ask better questions, share what they are building, troubleshoot issues, and grow in skill and judgment. For many students they become the most valuable part of the fellowship, because they create space not just to build, but to be mentored while building.

12. How often will Fellows meet?

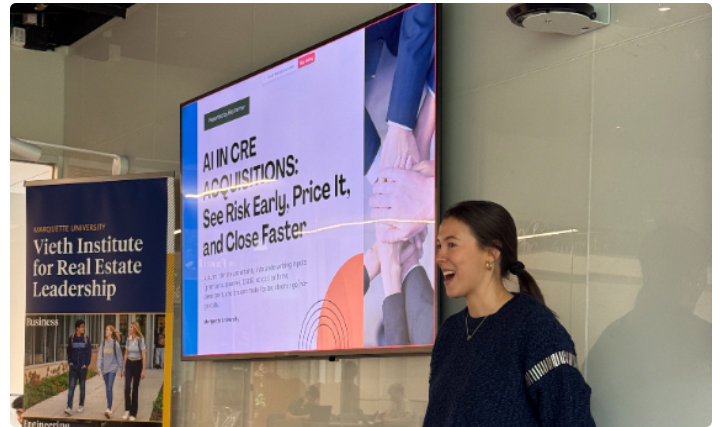
Expect a combination of recurring meetings and independent project work through the academic year:

- Weekly cohort meetings with Dr. Jeremy Welland
- Weekly meetings with company champions, often virtual, sometimes in person
- Monthly all-lab meetings with students, sponsors, champions, and lab leadership
- Project work, documentation, and preparation outside scheduled meetings

Weekly cohort meeting times will be set after fellows are selected.

13. Are meetings in person or virtual?

A mix. Meetings with Dr. Welland are mostly in person, with some virtual as needed. Company meetings may be virtual or in person, depending on what works best for all parties. Monthly all-lab meetings include an in-person experience with a virtual option.



A Fellow walking company partners through an AI prototype

14. What are the key dates?

Application deadline	Sunday, Sept 20, 2026, 11:59 p.m. CST
Final-round interviews	Late in the week of Sept 21–25, 2026
Selection decisions	By Oct 1, 2026
First all-lab meeting	Friday, Oct 9, 2026, 9–11 a.m.
Fall all-lab meetings	Nov 6 and Dec 3, 9–11 a.m.
Spring schedule	To be determined

The fellowship runs the full academic year, September 2026 through May/June 2027.

15. How much time should I expect to commit?

Roughly 2 to 10 hours per week, depending on project scope, meeting cadence, and where you are in the work. The commitment is flexible, but fellows should treat it as a real responsibility requiring consistency, responsiveness, and professionalism over the year.

16. Is the fellowship paid?

No. This is an unpaid fellowship. The value comes through advanced AI learning, meaningful mentorship, applied company-facing work, portfolio development, professional relationship-building, and a rare, highly selective growth opportunity.

For the right student, the long-term educational and professional value can be substantial.

17. What will Fellows gain from participating?

A combination of technical growth, applied experience, mentorship, and professional exposure:

- Advanced training in AI and machine learning
- Direct mentorship and coaching from Dr. Welland and lab leadership
- Experience working with real companies on real challenges
- A stronger ability to translate AI ideas into business solutions
- A portfolio of prototypes, documentation, workflows, demos, and write-ups
- Exposure to interdisciplinary industries connected to the built environment
- A high-performing cohort of peers and a network of faculty, staff, and professionals
- Career-relevant experience that may support future internships or jobs, though none are guaranteed

18. Will I be working alone or with others?

Both. Fellows may work individually, in small teams, or as part of the larger cohort. The lab is intentionally collaborative, but some project phases require more independent ownership.

19. Will I interact with companies directly?

Yes. Fellows work primarily with company champions, the main points of contact on company-facing projects. Students may also present ideas or progress to broader company audiences, including sponsors or executives.

20. What is the lab's connection to AI Forge?

The AI in Real Estate Lab is a partner with AI Forge, Marquette's leading student-led AI club. AI Forge is where Marquette students learn to use, build, and monetize artificial intelligence through real projects, hackathons, and industry connections. Applicants for the lab are encouraged to join AI Forge as well.

More information is at aiforgemu.com or contact club president Charles "Win" Williams at charles.williams@marquette.edu.

21. What should I submit with my application?

Submit background information, short essay responses, a resume, and links to work samples or artifacts if available.

We strongly encourage links to work that shows AI building experience: GitHub repositories, prototypes, demos, workflow examples, portfolio pages, project write-ups, AI tools or automations, and class or independent build projects.

If your work is not public, describe it clearly in the application.

22. What kinds of work samples are most helpful?

Samples that show what you built, what problem you were solving, what your role was, and what tools or methods you used.

A polished final product helps, and so does evidence of initiative, experimentation, and iteration. We are looking for signs that you can build and learn.

23. What will the selection process look like?

1. Application review
2. Review of essays, resume, and work samples
3. Final-round interviews for top candidates
4. Selection of 12 Student Fellows

Applications are evaluated for technical ability as well as communication, initiative, curiosity, and readiness to work in a company-facing environment.



Company champions sharing project ideas with the lab

24. How selective is the fellowship?

Very selective. Only 12 Student Fellows will be selected for the 2026–2027 cohort. That small cohort size is intentional. It creates a stronger learning environment, more meaningful mentorship, and a more immersive experience.

25. Who are the key leaders involved in the lab?

- Dr. Jeremy Welland, nationally renowned faculty expert in artificial intelligence and machine learning
- Andy Hunt, Vieth Institute for Real Estate Leadership
- Win Williams, student leader of the AI Forge student club

Together they shape the lab's collaborative learning environment.

26. Where can I find the application?

Apply at marquette.edu/business/real-estate/ai-lab or scan the QR code on page 1.

Apply before the deadline with thoughtful responses, a current resume, and strong examples of prior work.

Applications close Sunday, Sept 20, 2026

Questions? Email lab co-directors: jeremy.welland@marquette.edu · andrew.hunt@marquette.edu

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