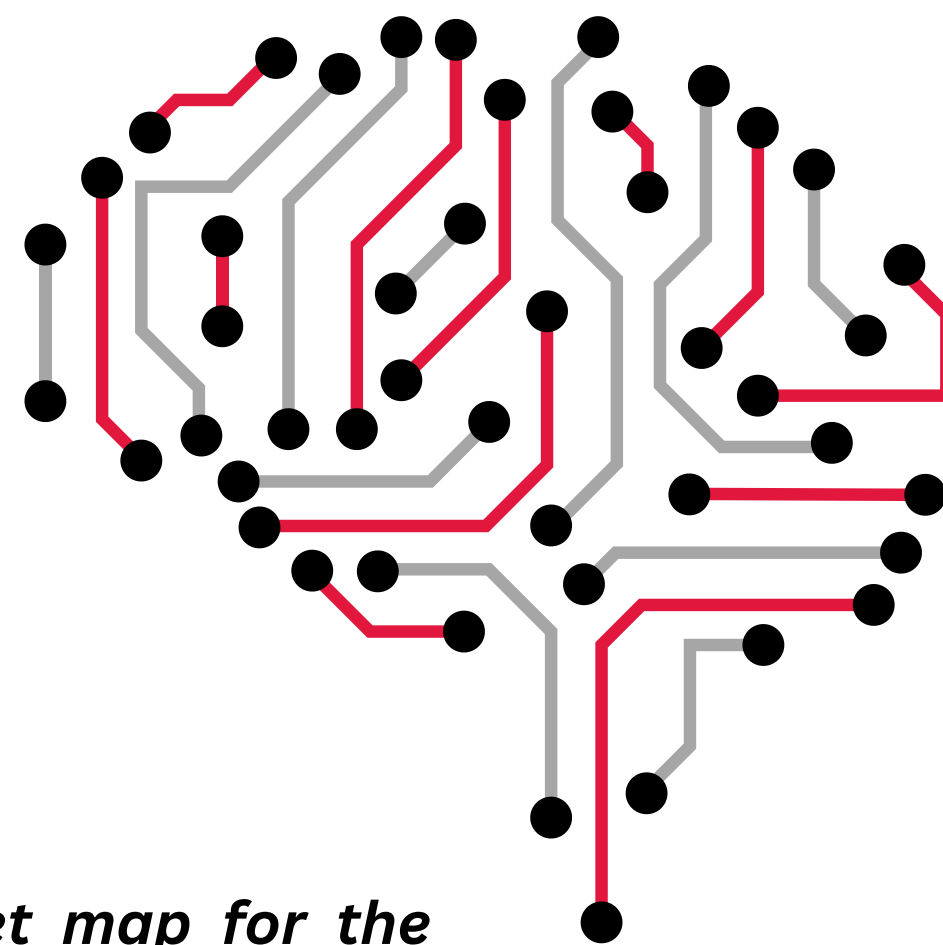


# Exploring AI Through a Community Lens



*The 2029 cohort will partner with The Wedge to create an asset map for the Riverbend area by utilizing state-of-the-art generative AI technologies. They will utilize AI at various stages of the project with an understanding and awareness of its ethical implications and consequences.*

Situated in the heart of Alton, Illinois, The Wedge offers unparalleled access to cutting-edge research, technical expertise, and professional education. In partnership with SIUE and others, The Wedge provides programs that enable real-world problem-solving, small business support and community-focused innovation, creating a collaborative environment where members can engage with advanced research to develop transformative solutions for today's challenges.

Asset mapping is the process of analyzing and visualizing how a community perceives its cultural assets, including physical spaces, activities, and people (such as artists, musicians, and poets). Such an understanding can be used to improve cultural and social dynamics as well as inform revitalization efforts throughout the community. In collaboration with the Wedge in Alton, Illinois, this project aims to create an asset map for the Riverbend area by utilizing state-of-the-art generative AI technologies. The project consists of the following main phases.



Data collection and processing - collecting data from the community regarding how people view things such as industry, investments, recreation and cultural assets in the area.



Appreciative inquiry on ethical matters – address questions that arise and analyze data sovereignty, potential biases in the data, and other relevant data ethics concerns.



Potential implementation of AI technologies – understanding pain points, how best to address them using AI platforms or tools, and identification of appropriate AI solutions and how best to educate and implement them for long-term success.

We aim to gain a critical understanding of how AI can be applied in community-oriented projects and answer the following questions:

- Can AI interpret cultural maps in the way humans do?
- What implications could this have for asset mapping?
- What kind of biases could AI inherit from human data and/or introduce to the data?

Our desire is that the results will be analyzed and critically examined to assess whether the asset map accurately represents the data and provides insights for future decision-making and strategic planning to aid in community planning, revitalization and economic growth. Revisions to the AI-generated map will be made as needed.

## TheWedge + SIUE

**CODES**  
SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
EDWARDSVILLE

**CODES** is a selective program offering full tuition for students who are Pell Eligible, historically underrepresented in their major, or among the first in their families to attend college. CODE Scholars collaborate with community partners with the goal of creating a more socially just world. They study and address the local shape of global problems and share their outcomes using digital humanities methods. CODES apply methods from various fields, including history, literature, anthropology, biology, and sociology, for example.