



Education Philanthropy Program

Ascendium is working to change postsecondary and workforce training systems so that all learners have equitable opportunities for socioeconomic mobility. Our grantmaking focuses on removing systemic barriers faced by learners from low-income backgrounds, especially those in historically underrepresented groups: first-generation students, incarcerated adults, rural community members, students of color and veterans.

OUR FOCUS AREAS

Remove Structural Barriers to Success

Streamline Key Learner Transitions

Expand Postsecondary Education in Prison

Support Rural Postsecondary Education and Workforce Training

Streamline Key Learner Transitions

Ascendium invests in pathways that demonstrate potential for upwards socioeconomic mobility for learners from low-income backgrounds. We know there are multiple pathways beyond traditional higher education systems and that those pathways are most beneficial when they are connected to each other. We also understand that learners often move between educational and training experiences, and systems must respond most effectively to student mobility.

An investment priority to...

Explore diverse pathways to and through postsecondary education and workforce training

Means we support...

- Identifying, validating and scaling high-quality, nontraditional postsecondary education and training models, such as apprenticeships, career pathways, short term credentials and competency-based education
- Promoting collaboration between postsecondary education and non-degree providers

Which will lead to...

- Increasing learners' understanding of the credentialing landscape and equitable pathways to careers
- Increasing completion of nontraditional postsecondary education and training that enhances readiness and access to employment, sustainable career pathways and additional education
- Recognition from the traditional academe of high-quality, non-degree credentials and training, resulting in accessible and equitable pathways to additional education and careers

An investment priority to...

Ease transitions between, and returning to, postsecondary providers

Means we support...

- Reforming policy and practice to improve transfer and application of credit at system, state and regional levels
- Supporting effective strategies to reengage adult learners with some college, but no degree

Which will lead to...

- Learners with some college but no degree re-enrolling and earning a high-quality credential
- Increasing the number of learners who successfully move between education providers without losing credit, slowing momentum or delaying credential completion

An investment priority to...

Smooth transitions between postsecondary education and the workforce

Means we support...

- Promoting postsecondary alignment and collaboration with workforce and economic development
- Expanding data infrastructure and information-sharing between postsecondary and the workforce
- Scaling effective institutional policies and practices that promote successful job placement leading to socioeconomic mobility

Which will lead to...

- Postsecondary and workforce systems sharing data to provide learners with relevant education that meets economic and workforce needs and learners' goals
- Postsecondary institutions demonstrating commitment to learners' career outcomes

Visit ascendiumphilanthropy.org to learn more.