High Impact Practices and Equity-Minded Learning Pathways

Request for Proposals

With support from the Lumina Foundation, the work of this project will focus on scaling implementation of High Impact Practices and Equity-Minded Learning Pathways in selected systems within the NASH TS[3] Network. Research demonstrates that participating in high-impact educational practices[1] and pursuing degree programs along clear "guided curricular pathways"[2] can improve success for first-generation students, Hispanic and African American students, and students entering college less academically well prepared. These approaches, however, are not yet fully integrated into "regular" institutional practices especially at larger public institutions and systems. Guided pathways have been implemented at some institutions to increase efficiency of degree attainment, but they have not yet been implemented using other elements of the new learning infrastructure nor have they been designed in ways that replace less effective curricular models within the pathways with these high-impact practices that deploy more active, relevant, and equity-minded pedagogies. This project will help to demonstrate the impact of a coordinated scaled approach to student success and paint a compelling and clear picture of this new, higher quality learning infrastructure.

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[1] See *Assessing Underserved Students' Engagement in High-Impact* Practices (AAC&U, 2013); *Investing in Success: Cost-Effective Strategies to Increase Student Success* (AAC&U, 2013); "Taking Student Success to Scale," by Rebecca Martin, *Change Magazine* (January/February 2017); "HIPS at Ten," by George Kuh, Ken O'Donnell, and Carol Geary Schneider, *Change Magazine* (forthcoming, xxxx 2017).

[2] Guided pathways research

Eligibility

NASH systems currently involved in *Taking Student Success to Scale* and the TS[3] Network are eligible to submit a proposal addressing these elements:

- Institutional readiness and leadership commitment for scaling up high impact practices or equity-minded pathways across the system and campuses involved

- Explicit commitment to improving student success and closing equity gaps as priorities at both the system and the campus levels

- Demonstrated ability to impact the education of a substantial number of low income, Hispanic, African American and Native American students

- Active involvement of at least five campuses (three for smaller systems); preference will be given to those including at least one minority-serving institution[3]

- Clear plans for addressing access to and impact of the selected strategy on low income, Hispanic, African American and Native American students

- Agreement to collect and share related data and institutional narratives

- Dedicated time from a system leader to coordinate the effort and commitment to sustain the effort beyond the funding horizon

Additional consideration will be given to those systems that have contributed financially to *Taking Student Success to Scale* through the TS[3] Partners.

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[3] For the purposes of this proposal, minority-serving institutions will be defined as those with minority student enrollments of at least 25% of the undergraduate student body.

System Plans

The proposal should address initial thinking regarding the following elements of the proposed

work.

1. Current Status

   Please describe the current status of work on high impact practices and guided

   pathways in your system and on your campuses. Include areas of strength on particular

   campuses, ways in which campus and system leaders are championing this work, and

   the relative importance of improving student success and closing equity gaps within the

   system and campus priorities and strategic plans.

2. Campuses

   Please identify the specific campuses that will be engaged in this phase of the work,

   including their undergraduate enrollment data disaggregated by race, ethnicity and low

   income status. In selecting participating campuses, provide both evidence of strength

   for campuses in the lead and opportunities for development for those with potential to

   advance. Lead campuses will provide important synergy both within the system and

   across the four systems in the project.

3. Strategies

   While scaled implementation may vary based on campus context, the system will adopt

   an overall approach to these innovations that will include at least one of the following:

   - Embedding high impact practices in required curricula

- Embedding high impact practices into equity-minded guided pathways

In each case, the scaled implementation should have the goal of ultimately reaching a majority of the students on each participating campus in increasingly sophisticated ways over time. In addition, there should be intentional mechanisms for ensuring access to the selected strategy for low income, Hispanic, African American and Native American students.

Although our understanding of high impact practices is evolving, two seminal works from George Kuh provide important definitions for consideration.[4] Relevant passages from these publications are attached in the appendix at the end of this document. For the purposes of this project, a high impact practice is defined as an educationally purposeful activity that includes: activities that require reflection and metacognition; evidence of sustained effort over an extended period of time culminating in a major accomplishment or product such as a report from a research project or applied learning experience; and demonstration of one or more desired outcomes such as perseverance, increased engagement, interpersonal competence, writing proficiency. If your system plans to pursue a practice that does not fall within the parameters of the classic high impact practices described by Kuh, please address how and why you consider them to be high impact.

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[4] See *High Impact Practices* (Kuh 2008) and *Ensuring Quality and Taking High Impact Practices to Scale* (Kuh 2013).

Guided pathways provide curricular approaches that advance student success. Elements of these pathways as defined by Complete College America include: whole programs of study, informed choices and majors, default pathways, intrusive advising and math alignment to majors.[5] See the appendix for further explanation of these interventions. In this project, we hope to build on these approaches to develop equity-minded guided pathways that are designed with underrepresented minority and low-income students in mind. These will have embedded within them high impact practices. They may also include equity or diversity content, as well as teaching and learning approaches that are culturally competent. Equity in terms of access, outcomes and quality should also be considered.

4. <u>New Learning Infrastructure</u>

Tools to support the emerging learning infrastructure will contribute to the quality of the student learning experience. Each system will incorporate into their efforts the development of at least one of the following:

- Learning frameworks, such as the Degree Qualifications Profile, Beta Credentials Frameworks, industry frameworks for specific programs, etc.

- Assessment of student learning, using tools such as the VALUE Rubric, CLA, competency-based frameworks, etc.[6]

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[5] http://completecollege.org/the-game-changers/
[6] For more information on HIPs assessment, please see the NASH webinar series at ts3.nashonline.org/high-impact-practices/.

- Comprehensive student record, capturing student engagement and learning in activities beyond the traditional classroom

The system should seek to leverage the impact of these approaches by encouraging the alignment of efforts across the participating campuses, while not limiting the involvement of each campus to a single element. Current engagement in any of these areas is a plus. Please indicate where work is already underway in the utilization of these tools and select a new area to pursue, at either the system or campus level.

5. Data

An important goal of this project is to generate new approaches to data collection related to high impact practices and their impact on low income, Hispanic, African American and Native American students. Recognizing that significant differences exist among our systems, we are not seeking to develop common metrics across the initiative. Systems are encouraged to coordinate these efforts across their participating campuses, leaving room for more robust campus models to develop where possible. Plans should include early thinking regarding:

- The development of feasible data collection approaches to track participation and results for high impact practices and equity-minded pathways, including common elements where possible

- Institutional student learning outcomes that contribute to the quality of student learning and may be associated with participation on high-impact practices and

guided pathways, such as deep, transferable learning, personal and social

responsibility, curiosity and self-efficacy

- Institutionalization of a process for tracking comparable and disaggregated data on

indicators leading to impact on graduation rates and numbers of degrees awarded

Technical assistance to design institutional data collection for high impact practices will

be available to support each system.

6. Faculty Engagement

The active involvement of faculty is crucial to the success of high impact practices,

whether required in degree programs or incorporated into learning pathways. Teaching

and learning approaches that are culturally competent are essential to provide

successful environments for Hispanic, African American, and low income students.

Plans for a scaled approach to faculty engagement across the participating campuses

should be included. Please include evidence of existing strength in the area, as well as

plans for the next level of engagement, beyond those already utilizing high impact

practices in their teaching or programs.

7. Culture

Engaging in this work in meaningful ways is about more than introducing a new strategy

on a few campuses. To be truly effective in improving student success, we need to shift

the focus from how our students fail to how we are failing to support them. Advancing

a culture of innovation with real collaboration to retain and complete students at its

core is hard work, requiring sustained institutional leadership and creative problem

solving. Shared vision around mutually reinforcing activities and continuous

communication, both internally and externally, are needed to embed new thinking into

the ways that our systems and campuses define themselves. Please share both current

progress and initial thinking on addressing these challenges in your particular system

context.

Funding

Over the course of the two-year project, $150,000 will be provided to each system to support

their work, with $100,000 at the outset of the project and $50,000 after the report of the first

year's progress is submitted. These funds should be used to support:

- system-wide convenings of campus teams with TS^3 experts

- development of mechanisms for related data collection

- a portion of the staff time dedicated to coordinating this work across the system (no
  more than 25% of the budget)

- faculty release time on certain campuses

- professional development opportunities such as the NASH/ACE System Leadership
  Academy on student success and AAC&U's Summer HIPs Institute

- memberships, publications and travel associated with relevant organizations and
  projects in the field, such as AAC&U's VALUE Institute

- attendance at the annual TS^3 Network Meeting in April 2018 and 2019

Through participation in this project, your system and campus teams will also receive funded travel to two national project-wide convenings, technical assistance in the development of relevant data collections models, and access to experienced practitioners in assessment, faculty engagement, and implementation of high impact practices.

Using the form at the end of this RFP, please include a draft budget for how you will utilize these funds in your proposal.

Outcomes

Throughout this project, we will work with the system/campus teams to develop the following deliverables, designed to create tools and opportunities beyond this cohort for the intentional implementation of high impact practices and equity-minded learning pathways at scale.

- A report and/or series of compelling stories about implementing student success interventions and the necessary conditions for scaling these interventions

- The development of generic tools to support the implementation and scaling of HIPs and equity-minded learning pathways in other systems and campuses, such as taxonomies, assessment frameworks, and comprehensive student record formats

- Compelling narratives about the challenges and opportunities of using new learning infrastructure tools (e.g. competency frameworks, authentic assessments, comprehensive student records)

- Preliminary comparable and disaggregated data from individual institutions demonstrating the impact of incorporating high-impact practices at scale (either within

equity-minded guided pathways or in specific programs) on retention, engagement, and learning

- Mechanisms for tracking comparable and disaggregated data on indicators leading to impact on graduation rates and numbers of degrees awarded

- Sample data reporting templates appropriate for use in both institutional improvement efforts and state/system level accountability and quality assurance approaches.

- Narratives or data about faculty engagement

The larger TS[3] Network will also continue to function during the HIPs adoption phase, primarily in the virtual learning community and through its annual convenings. Network members will be kept apprised of the activities in the campuses and systems moving forward with deeper adoption, learning from their challenges and successes.

Submission Process

There will be a webinar to discuss this opportunity and respond to questions on September 19, 2017.

Proposals should be submitted by October 31, 2017 to:

      Rebecca Martin, Executive Director

      National Association of System Heads

      rebecca@nash-dc.org

Selection decisions will be made by an external review team in November, with funding available by December 1.