



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

Expand Postsecondary Education in Prison

Ascendium supports efforts that can help the field better understand what types of postsecondary education in prison programs are effective, how to forge the systemic and institutional partnerships needed to get them in place and how to spread and sustain best practices on a broad scale to catalyze systemic change.

An investment priority to...

Develop and scale high-quality postsecondary education in prison delivery models

Means we support...

- Prioritizing initiatives that increase student access and success while providing opportunity for shared problem-solving or idea generation across the field or local systems

Which will lead to...

- Leveraging technology and innovative program design for learner access and success
- Expanding postsecondary and career options that are relevant to regional workforce needs
- Increasing quality in postsecondary education in prison instruction and curricula
- Increasing the number and percentage of eligible incarcerated learners who enroll and complete

An investment priority to...

Develop a better understanding of incarcerated learners through data and research

Means we support...

- Building shared data capacity and practical application across programs, institutions and systems
- Identifying key research priorities and generating new knowledge

Which will lead to...

- Supporting institution and system partners to develop robust data collection, interpretation and reporting practice across a relevant set of outcomes
- Enabling trend assessment in incarcerated learner outcomes on state and national levels
- Generating new knowledge about how to amplify incarcerated learner success

An investment priority to...

Support strategic partnerships between postsecondary education, correction systems, employers and community-based organizations

Means we support...

- Developing and implementing a vision for increasing system-wide access to a coordinated array of high-quality postsecondary degrees and credentials
- Removing institutional barriers to program quality, program accessibility and learner academic and career success

Which will lead to...

- States developing, implementing or readying system-wide strategies
- Developing of key institutional partnerships
- Removing prohibitive policies, practices, incapacities and cultural barriers
- Increasing the number of learners/prison facilities served by high quality programs

Visit ascendiumphilanthropy.org to learn more.