



COLLEGE PREPARATION & COMPLETION



Michael & Susan Dell
FOUNDATION

Our College Preparation and Completion (CPC) initiative supports organizations across the United States that work to increase the number of low-income students who are ready for, enrolling in, and finishing college with a bachelor's degree.

WHY IS COLLEGE COMPLETION IMPORTANT?

Regardless of zip code, all students deserve the opportunity to enroll in college and graduate with a bachelor's degree.

- We know that low-income students enroll and graduate from college at much lower rates than students from wealthier families, putting them at a disadvantage when seeking employment.
- We know that 21st century jobs require higher levels of education, making a college degree even more valuable than it has been in the past.
- We know that the poverty cycle is most effectively broken through education.
- We know that society-at-large benefits from more students receiving a college degree.

EACH YEAR, THE MICHAEL & SUSAN
DELL FOUNDATION WILL HELP 350,000
LOW-INCOME STUDENTS GLOBALLY
EARN UNIVERSITY DEGREES.

We believe the right interventions at the right times can help low-income students get accepted to college and successfully graduate.

To that end, we fund programs and technologies that support low-income students as they work toward their ultimate goal of college graduation.

OUR FUNDING FOCUS AREAS

RIGOROUS ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

Prepare students to successfully complete college-level course work, while also taking and passing high-stakes exams.

NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS/CHARACTER EDUCATION

Provide students with the support and social/emotional/character skills needed to complete rigorous academic curriculum and manage environmental challenges in college.

FINANCIAL ACCESS/COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

Reduce financial barriers to college entry and completion while also increasing financial literacy and college affordability knowledge.

WRAP-AROUND SUPPORT

Provide the support that enables students to persist through and graduate from a four-year college (e.g. coaching, advising, and mentoring).

KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

To further the mission of the foundation, we expect all new CPC-related investments to directly impact the following key success measures:

- College enrollment rate (four year schools)
- College persistence rate (first to second year)
- College completion rate (bachelor's degree within six years)

INVESTMENT GUIDELINES

The foundation's CPC team makes grants and program related investments (PRIs) to non-profit and for-profit organizations. To ensure the most efficient use of funds, we adhere to the following investment guidelines:

- We make multi-year investments where appropriate (i.e. based on the time it takes to complete the project work), and most investments last three or more years in duration.

- We fund specific, time-bound projects and do not make unrestricted grants.
- We fund only incremental staff positions (i.e. new, for the purpose of the project) and/or direct project costs, and will not fund existing positions nor organizational overhead.
- We expect every investment to include an assessment/evaluation of student and organizational outcomes that result from the project work.
- All investees will be expected to report on their number of students served and cost per student served on an annual basis, as well as any other success measures relevant to the project work.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

As of January 2018, the foundation will only add new organizations to its CPC portfolio that have proposals focused solely on supporting students already in college (i.e. college completion activities). Additional priorities include:

- Programs that are not typically attractive to local funders (e.g. national office infrastructure, pilots of unproven ideas, evaluation of project results/impact)
- Projects designed to increase an organization's effectiveness, efficiency, and/or scale
- Programs that serve students across the U.S. rather than focused on a single geography or region
- Organizations that have already achieved a significant degree of scale and above-average results with low-income students prior to an initial funding request from the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation
- Programs and projects that have the potential to be catalysts for systemic, large-scale change beyond just the organization requesting the investment