

# The College Completion Innovation Fund

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## 2020 AWARD CYCLE

Graduate NYC's College Completion Innovation Fund (CCIF), the first collaborative fund focused exclusively on college retention and completion in New York City, is investing in innovative projects for greater rates of degree completion through the 2020 Award Cycle.

The CCIF invites colleges and community-based organizations (CBOs) in the five boroughs of New York City to apply for awards via a two-step application process beginning in December 2019. All awards made by the CCIF aim to catalyze marked increases in the college persistence and completion rates of New York City students attending college *locally*. The Fund seeks potentially transformative solutions that are new to the region, and that bring the possibility of large-scale improvements for degree completion. Ideal pilot projects should be new or not widely implemented in New York City. Ideas borrowed from other areas of the country or other sectors of work are welcome. The CCIF will support institutions and organizations in developing innovative project proposals to address issues of completion by improving student outcomes in one of the following categories:

### **Increasing Momentum**

- Improving efficiency and decreasing time to degree

### **Improving Transfer Student Success**

- Strengthening the two- to four-year college transfer pipeline,
- Systems change and partnerships

### **Reducing Non-Academic Barriers to Education**

- Basic needs and accessibility

## The Process

To help build capacity and encourage greater innovation among education and nonprofit organizations, the CCIF will sponsor a two-step award process during winter 2020.

Among the initial short-form applications received, leaders and staff from up to 25 organizations will have the opportunity to participate in a College Completion Innovation Series, led by Education Design Lab. After participating in the two-day workshop series, participating organizations will be invited to develop and submit a full proposal to implement their respective innovative practices. Please note that applicants must identify two or three project leaders who can commit to participating in the two-day workshop. Project leaders must be conducting their work at the program director level or in a similar capacity. Partnering organizations should have representatives from each organization present.

After a review of full proposals, the CCIF intends to invest in at least four of these innovative programs. Organizations may request awards from \$100,000 to \$200,000, to support work over the course of one to two years. During the award period, the CCIF expects funded project personnel to participate in additional implementation support workshops and to leverage these opportunities to make improvements to their projects.

## Eligibility

Eligible parties include New York City-based undergraduate colleges (public or nonprofit) and nonprofit CBOs with a minimum of three years experience implementing college access, retention, and/or success work for low-income students. Interested organizations will be asked to complete a brief application, which outlines the specific challenges to be addressed and the students who will be served.

### Supporters of the CCIF include:

- Altman Foundation
- Aronson Family Foundation
- Booth Ferris Foundation
- Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation
- ECMC Foundation
- Fordham Street Foundation
- Heckscher Foundation for Children
- Jewish Foundation for Education of Women
- Lucius N. Littauer Foundation
- Macquarie Group Foundation
- NYC Opportunity
- Solon E. Summerfield Foundation
- Teagle Foundation

## Timeline | 2020 AWARD CYCLE

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Friday, December 20, 2019:	Initial applications due
January 15, 2020:	Applicants notified
February 10 and March 11, 2020:	College Completion Innovation Series held for accepted applicants
April 8, 2020:	Full proposals due from accepted applicants
Late May 2020:	Award decisions communicated

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## Frequently Asked Questions

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### **WHEN IS THE APPLICATION DUE?**

Applications for the 2020 Award Cycle are due at close of business on December 20, 2019.

### **WHEN WILL I BE NOTIFIED AS TO WHETHER MY ORGANIZATION IS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COLLEGE COMPLETION INNOVATION SERIES?**

Organizations will be notified on January 15, 2020 as to whether they have been invited to participate in the College Completion Innovation Series.

### **WHAT IF I AM INTERESTED IN ADDRESSING SUMMER MELT THROUGH THIS AWARD?**

All funded projects must tackle issues of completion for current college students. Summer projects are eligible if they target student populations that have completed at least one semester of college.

### **IS THERE A REQUIREMENT FOR A MINIMUM NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED THROUGH THIS AWARD?**

Currently, there is no required minimum number of students that must be served through this award. However, the fund is interested in pilots that have the potential to impact a large subset of students.

### **CAN MY ORGANIZATION SUBMIT A JOINT APPLICATION WITH ANOTHER ORGANIZATION?**

Yes, the CCIF encourages organizations to submit applications together when possible. If selected, partnering organizations should have representatives from each organization present at the workshop series.

### **HOW DO I KNOW IF MY PROJECT IS INNOVATIVE?**

If your proposed project is new or not a widely implemented strategy in New York City, it fits the criteria. Ideas borrowed from other sectors or geographic locations are welcome.

### **IS COLLEGE COMPLETION INNOVATION SERIES ATTENDANCE MANDATORY IF I ATTENDED DURING THE 2020 CYCLE?**

College Completion Innovation Series attendance would be optional in this case, but please contact Sharlene Diamond (Sharlene.Diamond@cuny.edu) in order to discuss.

### **I STILL HAVE QUESTIONS, WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?**

For additional questions not covered in the FAQ page, please contact Sharlene Diamond at 718-254-7173 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM.

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