

Higher education institutions are critical local economic and intellectual engines inextricably linked to the long-term well-being of our communities. As higher education leaders, we are uniquely positioned to play a more active role in supporting our local economies, advancing racial equity, and reversing legacies of exclusion and disinvestment.

The Anchor Learning Network is a CUMU member-only learning community created and managed in partnership with The Democracy Collaborative and with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Purpose

The CUMU-TDC Anchor Learning Network (ALN) facilitates a more rapid and effective advancement of the anchor mission within institutions, in home communities, and across the higher education sector. Leveraging a peer learning framework, ALN members will systematically transform higher education to fully serve its public mission and advance the long-term social, economic, and physical health of our campuses and communities.

Vision

Within three years, ALN participants will have made significant progress to institutionalize the anchor mission on their campuses and will be leaders in transforming the national perception of higher education. To do this, participants will further engage faculty, administrators, staff, and students in the anchor mission implementation, develop more intentional multi-anchor and community partnerships, and employ a data collection frame known as the Anchor Dashboard to better assess local impact. These activities will help to deepen existing community engagement work through reciprocal and mutually beneficial partnerships, as well as advance a systems approach to inclusive economic development.

Understanding that all communities have different contexts and histories, we will explore opportunities for advancing anchor mission strategies in multiple areas—hiring, workforce development, small business and innovation centers, purchasing, supplier diversity, affordable housing, and community investing—while gaining an understanding of how to advance racial equity through anchor work.

Benefits of Participation

PEER SUPPORT

Gain access to a diverse network to support the design and implementation of effective and impactful anchor strategies.

- ▶ Facilitated monthly group calls to support institutional goals and build collective practices
- ▶ Peer led webinars (up to three annually) for deeper dives into key best practices
- ▶ Robust online peer exchange to grow connections, problem solve, and inventory knowledge

TARGETED STRATEGIES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Leverage targeted strategies and the ALN collective voice to reinforce local and national momentum.

- ▶ Targeted tools, strategies, case studies, and practical resources to leverage in advancing your anchor mission
- ▶ Proven processes through which participants develop shared tools and solutions to strategic needs
- ▶ ALN members will be highlighted through presentations and working sessions at the CUMU Annual Conference and via bi-monthly e-mails featuring member work, ALN news, and how to engage with the network

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS

1. Designate a point of contact
2. Support campus-wide engagement
 - ▶ Collect Anchor Dashboard data annually
 - ▶ Create and assess annual anchor mission goals
 - ▶ Identify and engage key stakeholders to advance anchor goals
3. Participate in in-person meetings, remote support groups, webinars, and online peer learning platforms
4. Act as ambassadors via strategic communications and marketing

Commitments are for three years. Details can be found on the commitment form.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Connect with peers, engage in deep dive learning sessions, and advance work in real time at in-person network meetings.

- ▶ Spring convening will take place annually at a different ALN member campus
- ▶ Fall convening will align with the CUMU Annual Conference
- ▶ Self-organized campus site visits as desired and organized by members

MEASUREMENT, DATA, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Strong professional support with knowledge, experience, and insight to help strategically advance the work.

- ▶ Collect Anchor Dashboard data annually via confidential online database
- ▶ Access to annual data technical assistance call for direct troubleshooting and support to complete annual data collection
- ▶ Annual reporting call to provide feedback on internal and network programming with field leaders and peers that will inform content development