



Achieving the Dream™

## 2022 Leader College

### Application

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*If you have questions or concerns about the 2022 Leader College Application, please contact [network@achievingthedream.org](mailto:network@achievingthedream.org).*

*Applications are due by Wednesday, September 15, at 5:00 p.m. ET.*

### Introduction

Your institution is part of the Achieving the Dream Network, the nation's largest network of community colleges working to become strong engines of student and community growth. For over 15 years, ATD has worked with colleges across the country to redesign the student experience with the ultimate goal of increasing credential attainment and closing equity gaps.

ATD uses the designation of Leader College to recognize and celebrate colleges that have achieved and sustained substantial improvements in student outcomes. ATD Leader Colleges are strong in the capacities fundamental to implementing reforms and are models for how colleges can better serve their students. The lessons from their experiences provide valuable insights to the ATD Network.

ATD Network colleges have long championed equity in their student success efforts and consistent with ATD's Statement on Equity are committed to dismantling the barriers to student access and success that exist in our institutions. You will find that the Leader College application includes questions about your institution's equity efforts, as well as current and future opportunities to deepen racial equity work necessitated by the effects of structural racism.

Leader College certification metrics require colleges to provide four years of data and highlight a three-year upward trend on the **two metrics** selected in the All Students (Overall) group. Colleges must demonstrate, through disaggregation, the **narrowing of an equity gap** on at least **one student characteristic** on **one or more metrics**.

Leader Colleges have their own identity as part of the ATD Network. The designation of Leader College status indicates that each person who is affiliated with the institution is committed to ensuring student success for all of its students.

## How to Apply

Colleges must upload the following completed application documents to the [application submission website](#):

- Application questions completed inside of the application form (upload this PDF form)
- Data Collection Workbook (upload Excel workbook)
- President/Chancellor’s Letter of Support and Engagement (upload as a PDF)

## What Makes a Strong Application

ATD encourages each applicant to review the [Leader College evaluation rubric](#) (PDF) and consider how your responses align.

## Questions or Concerns

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Achieving the Dream staff at [network@achievingthedream.org](mailto:network@achievingthedream.org).

## Institutional Contacts

Role	First and Last Name	Title	Phone Number	Email
Application Contact				
Public Information Officer				
President/CEO				

## Section I: Quantitative

### Leader College Data Collection Template

Please download the [Leader College Data Template](#) (.xls) to view and complete the data collection template with evidence of growth or an upward trend in at least two performance metrics for the most recent four-year period. These are specified in the data template.

All metrics require four years of data with evidence of growth or an upward trend for at least three years. To apply for Leader College designation, you must select two metrics and demonstrate that growth occurred in the Overall category.

Further, you must indicate that an equity gap was narrowed or closed between the groups in at least one student characteristic on one or more metrics. Note that gateway/college-level courses count for a single metric toward this count, even if you present data for the three separate options (Math Only, English Only, Math/English Combined).

### Data Analysis

After completing your data collection workbook, please describe the improvements in the two or more metrics by answering the questions below. The same reforms and practices may apply to multiple gains; you will be asked to reflect on each outcome individually and describe how institutional changes contributed to the gains in outcomes. These metrics should be reflective of the Overall section of your data collection workbook.

**I. Metric One** Choose an item.

- i. Describe the improvement on this metric. Include the nature, scale, and timing of the student success reforms and practices that were implemented to improve these outcomes *and* the ways/processes in which your analysis shows they contributed to the improved outcomes.

*Maximum character count: 2500 characters*

ii. Does this metric have a three-year change of at least three percentage points?

- Yes
- No

IF THE ANSWER IS NO: Please justify with a trend note explaining why the change is substantive.

*Maximum character count: 2500 characters*

iii. Did your institution narrow an equity gap on this measure?

- Yes
- No

IF THE ANSWER IS YES: Describe:

- Which student groups the equity gap narrowed or closed for
- Why your institution focused on the student groups for which the equity gap narrowed or closed
- What reforms and practices contributed to these outcomes

*Maximum character count: 2500 characters*

- iv. Any gap narrowing of less than two percentage points should be justified in the following space with an explanation of why the change is substantive. If the gap was not narrowed at all, please leave this space blank.

*Maximum character count: 2500 characters*

**II. Metric Two** Choose an item.

- i. Describe the improvement on this metric. Include the nature, scale, and timing of the student success reforms and practices that were implemented to improve these outcomes *and* the ways/processes in which your analysis shows they contributed to the improved outcomes.

*Maximum character count: 2500 characters*



ii. Does this metric have a three-year change of at least three percentage points?

- Yes
- No

IF THE ANSWER IS NO: Please justify with a trend note explaining why the change is substantive.

*Maximum character count: 2500 characters*

iii. Did your institution narrow an equity gap on this measure?

- Yes
- No

IF THE ANSWER IS YES: Describe:

- Which student groups the equity gap narrowed or closed for
- Why your institution focused on the student groups for which the equity gap narrowed or closed
- What reforms and practices contributed to these outcomes

*Maximum character count: 2500 characters*

- iv. Any gap narrowing of less than two percentage points should be justified in the following space with an explanation of why the change is substantive. If the gap was not narrowed at all, please leave this space blank.

*Maximum character count: 2500 characters*

## Section II: Narrative

*This section should elaborate on the narratives of success on specific outcomes that you described in Section I.*

Please reflect on the extent to which your institution's culture promotes equity and demonstrate how your institution's approach builds on the foundations of the seven capacity areas of the ATD Institutional Capacity Framework. Share both how your work connects to the successes you shared in Section I and the opportunities you have identified for future work. Your narrative should include specifics on how you have addressed campus climate and fostered an inclusive culture. In addition to your overall equity work, discuss any equity work specifically focused on racial equity. Discussions of equity should include not only outcomes but any qualitative data you have on sense of belonging or student experiences on campus. Successful applicants will tell a cohesive, engaging story of how the institution leveraged and/or augmented institutional strengths to implement transformative student success reforms or programs, how your institution advances equity, including racial equity specifically, and the extent to which your college has built and/or strengthened capacity to sustain these reforms and achieve equitable outcomes at scale.

*Maximum character count: 4300 characters*

### Section III: President/Chancellor Letter

Please include a letter from the president/chancellor that further explains why your institution should receive Leader College status or recertification of Leader College status.

Submit your letter as a PDF document on the [submission site](#).

Your letter should include how your institution demonstrates a commitment to equity; and your contributions to the ATD Network, including:

- how your college has increased their overall student success metrics (i.e., completion metrics);
- ways your college is centering equity in your student success work (include your institution's equity statement and plan of action if you have one);
- the progress you have made around equity on campus and the structure that is driving that change;
- current and future opportunities to deepen your racial equity work; and
- ways your college will contribute to the ATD Network (e.g., hosted other colleges for learning days, presented on the college's ATD work at national conferences, contributed to an ATD publication, participated in national media calls, participated in ATD grant funded learning initiatives).

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