Call for Workshop Proposal Guidelines

Achieving the Dream is pleased to open the Call for Workshop Proposals for DREAM 2015 to be held February 17-20 in Baltimore, Maryland. Workshop proposals are due COB Friday, September 22, 2014.

Background

DREAM is the annual convening of the Achieving the Dream National Reform Network – the nation’s most comprehensive non-governmental reform network for student success in higher education history. This flagship event brings together over 1,800 influential policy-makers, investors, thought-leaders, and practitioners from more than 200 colleges throughout 34 states and the District of Columbia, who are dedicated to addressing one of our nation’s most urgent challenges: helping more community college students succeed. DREAM, which stands for Data, Reform, Equity, Achievement, Movement, provides participants with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of evidence-based policies and practices that close achievement gaps and increase student success all while broadening their influence in the national student success movement.

The emphasis of DREAM 2015 is on “Equity and Excellence,” where the focus is on student success and closing achievement gaps for historically underserved student populations. Under this overarching focus, DREAM 2015 has a multifaceted purpose:

- To reflect on and share lessons from experience with Achieving the Dream
- To deepen understanding about ways to increase student success
- To increase capacity for data analysis, program evaluation, and student-centered, data-informed decision making
- To continue to build the community of learners in Achieving the Dream

ATD seeks proposals for workshops within eight areas of concentration and that strengthen participants’ understanding and skills for applying the Achieving the Dream Student-Centered Model of Institutional improvement. Successfully delivered workshops will demonstrate how applying the five principles of the ATD model contributed to the success of the strategy, program or policy. (See listing of principles below.)

As an example, a workshop on teaching and learning should include discussion of how the commitment of leaders gave support for the reforms or innovations, how a culture of evidence contributed to the decision to implement as well as evaluate the strategy, how broad engagement of stakeholders helped solidify support for the work, how systems thinking contributed to the design and sustainability of the innovation, and how issues of equity were addressed.

In addition to the workshops, another option we offer for our Achieving the Dream Institutions is to participate in the Emerging Ideas Exchange. This is an opportunity to share information about your ATD successes beyond the workshop environment through table-top posters, pictures, handouts, videos, technology demonstrations, and conversation.
DREAM 2015 Themes: Five Principles of the Achieving the Dream Student-Centered Model of Institutional improvement

1. Committed Leadership

Senior college leaders actively support efforts to improve student success, not just to increase enrollments, and are committed to achieving equity in student outcomes across racial, ethnic, and income groups. Administrators, board members, and faculty and staff leaders demonstrate a willingness to make changes in policies, programs, and resource allocation to improve student success.

2. Use of Evidence to Improve Programs and Services

The college establishes processes for using data about student progression and outcomes to identify achievement gaps among student groups, formulates strategies for addressing the gaps identified and improving student success overall, and evaluates the effectiveness of those strategies.

3. Broad Engagement

Faculty, student services staff, and administrators share responsibility for student success, and collaborate on assessing the effectiveness of programs and services and improving them. Other stakeholders with influence on student success (K-12 systems, community groups, employers, etc.) are included in discussions about student performance, desired outcomes, and potential improvement strategies. The college also gains invaluable insight about ways to improve student success from students themselves through surveys, focus groups, and/or advisory councils.

4. Systemic Institutional Improvement

The college establishes planning processes that rely on data to set goals for student success and then uses the data to measure goal attainment. The college regularly evaluates its academic programs and services to determine how well they promote student success and how they can be improved. Decisions about budget allocations are based on evidence of program effectiveness and are linked to plans to increase student success. Faculty and staff are afforded professional development opportunities that reinforce efforts that help to close achievement gaps and improve overall student success.

5. Equity

Achieving the Dream colleges commit to eliminating achievement gaps among student groups, including students of color and low income students while improving outcomes for all students. When an achievement gap exists, institutions engage faculty, staff, and administration in developing and implementing strategic changes that ensure pedagogy and services are tailored to students’ unique needs. Colleges establish an educational environment where all students have the best opportunities to succeed. A commitment to equity ensures that institutions focus on achieving high rates of success and completion for all students, especially those who have traditionally faced the most significant barriers to achievement.
DREAM 2015 Program Areas of Concentration

Teaching and Learning. These workshops focus on course-based and classroom initiatives to improve students’ learning. Examples include creating learning communities, service-learning opportunities, reforming curriculum, competency based and contextualized instruction, prior learning assessments, improved assessment and placement strategies, increasing student collaboration and active learning, and restructuring developmental education.

Strategic Partnerships. These workshops focus on developing and leveraging partnerships to advance the student success and completion agenda. Examples include working with local social service agencies to help students secure income and work supports (e.g., food stamps, emergency loans, child care, etc), forming regional partnerships with other community colleges, high schools, and universities to align curriculum and advising policies and guarantee eligibility for enrollment, creating college-industry partnerships or college-community based organization partnerships that expand access and increase student success.

Improving Student Success through Technology. These workshops focus on using data-based systems to improve communication between students, faculty, advisors, student support staff, and administrators and to carefully track student success over time. Examples include early intervention systems, retention and case management systems, advanced analytics, virtual advising platforms, and course planning tools.

Pathways. These workshops focus on building clearer and more efficient pathways to credentials. Examples include reducing course options or other choice points, use of mega majors, academic and career guidance that help students make smarter choices about courses that lead to credentials, new STEM pathways built with employer input, and policies and practices that apply behavioral economics to help students make smart choices.

Workforce. These workshops focus on strategies to help students prepare for and attain jobs that provide family sustaining wages. Examples include innovative programs arising from TAACCCT grants, innovative ways for using Prior Learning Assessment, strategies that ease the transition to and from career programs to academic programs, and apprenticeship and other strategies that combine school and work.

Scaling. These workshops focus on strategies that result in significant scaling of effective policies and practices. Examples include designing reforms that start at scale, expanding the target group receiving effective services, and building partnerships that help the college achieve scale.

Leadership. These workshops focus on strategies to build the skills of faculty, administrators, and staff to play strong leadership roles in the institution and to advance to key leadership positions rapidly being vacated by aging administrators, faculty and staff. Examples include mentoring programs, leadership institutes, professional development and other skill building activities.

Financial Empowerment. These workshops focus on strategies that help students attain and manage financial assets. Examples include income leveling strategies such as distribution of financial aid based on retention or achievement milestones, financial literacy training and financial coaching, advising that helps students reduce debt, and creative partnerships that reduce costs to students.

Workshops on other breakthrough strategies and successes are also welcome.
Preparing Your DREAM 2015 Proposal

Please review these proposal requirements carefully. Complete all sections of the online proposal form. Within the form, you are able to save your work and return to complete the process or edit the proposal as needed until the September 22 deadline. Incomplete proposals will not be considered.

The DREAM Call for Workshop Proposals webpage contains several resources to help you submit a strong proposal:
- Strong sample workshop proposals;
- The DREAM 2014 program as a resource along with talking with your coaches to identify colleges you might collaborate with; and
- Two webinars created to help you prepare a high-quality proposal and lead an excellent workshop. One webinar will focus on designing a high-quality, interactive workshop while the second will recommend ways to efficiently present data in a workshop environment. A summary of these webinars’ principal messages is attached.

Submission Steps
To begin the submission process, visit (insert hyperlink) and follow these steps.

You will then choose the “Submission Type” – A) Workshop Proposal or B) Emerging Ideas Exchange

A) Workshop Proposal

Overview

Workshops will focus on both successes and struggles that colleges have experienced in their student success and equity work and will be 75 minutes long. All workshops are required to be highly interactive, and should focus on how to replicate success while avoiding pitfalls.

We encourage you to consider including a student as a co-presenter to share his or her experiences. To help with travel costs, Achieving the Dream has secured a discounted student hotel rate. Registration details will be available in September.

All workshop proposals must be submitted electronically by COB Friday, September 22, 2014. Multiple proposals may be submitted, but no more than two will be accepted from any one institution (this does not apply to proposals co-authored by multiple institutions). All applicants will be notified via email of the status of their proposals by October 31, 2014.

Workshop proposals with the following characteristics will have the best chance of being accepted:
- Display evidence of success to support the claims in the proposal.
- Employ a workshop style that will engage and involve the audience - we especially encourage including experiential learning techniques.
- Address closing achievement gaps between racial/ethnic, gender or income groups.
- Are co-developed and led with more than one institution.
- Feature interventions that have been implemented, evaluated, taken to scale, and are replicable.
**Workshop Proposal Title**
A proposal must have a short, specific presentation title that indicates the nature of the presentation. Catchy titles to attract attendees are encouraged as long as they clearly define the content of the workshop. Consider the workshop learning objectives as you create the title, i.e., what is the main take-away? Workshop titles may be edited prior to final publication in the program book to meet length and space requirements.

**Task List**
After entering the proposal’s title, there are four sections of the proposal called “tasks,” that need to be completed before submission. Each task is outlined below.

1) **Workshop Proposal Leaders**
Workshops have a maximum of four workshop leaders. Insert the first name, last name, email address, and indicate if they are lead or a supporting presenter. Complete contact information is required for all workshop leaders, including a short bio (six sentences maximum). The bio and email address will be included in the program for DREAM.

2) **Narrative Description and Details**
Your narrative description should give Achieving the Dream proposal reviewers a complete picture of the workshop and understanding of your evidence of effectiveness. Each segment has a maximum length of 1,000 including spaces.

**Workshop Description**
Descriptions should clearly define the content of the workshop. Consider the workshop learning objectives, i.e., What is the main take-away? What will the learner know or be able to do?

**Program Theme**
Choose the primary and optional secondary program theme that best describes your workshop.
- Teaching and Learning.
- Strategic Partnerships.
- Improving Student Success Through Technology.
- Pathways.
- Workforce.
- Scaling.
- Leadership.
- Financial Empowerment.

**Type of Intervention**
*Direct Interventions:* Interventions that directly affect students. For example, a learning community is a direct intervention. Its success can be measured by analyzing the performance and retention of students participating in learning communities compared to students who are not.

*Indirect Interventions:* Interventions that create an environment more conducive to student success that does not directly affect students. For example, improving a college’s institutional research capacity is an indirect intervention that could improve institutional effectiveness. However, it would be difficult to associate an increase in student success with the implementation of such an intervention.

**AV Needs**
Each workshop room will have an LCD projector, screen, one lavaliere microphone, one hand-held microphone and a podium. If additional AV is required, workshop leaders may be asked to cover the expense, including Internet or other video needs. Laptops will not be supplied; workshop leaders may bring their own.
Session Outcomes
As a result of this workshop participants will learn what three items.

Tips and Lessons Learned
Describe any helpful tips and lessons learned that will be shared during your workshop.

Participant Engagement
How will participants be engaged in the workshop? Describe any tools or strategies that will be used. I.e., polls, think-pair-share, break for questions, etc.

Target Population for this Intervention
Specify who the target demographic is for this intervention.

Closing Achievement Gaps
Does the workshop address closing achievement gaps between student sub-groups based on race/ethnicity or income? If so, how?

Evaluation
Define the process or criteria for measurement thus far.

Taking It to Scale
Has this intervention been taken to scale? If yes, how? What is the level of scale? If not, why? Describe the planning, strategies, challenges, as well the success within the scaling process. Evidence of scaling is not required but sharing your experience is strongly encouraged.

Target Audience for this Workshop
Who will benefit the most from your workshop?

3) Supporting Evidence of Success
Every proposal about a direct intervention must be accompanied by documentation demonstrating at least four consecutive semesters or quarters of evidence of success. The stronger the evidence of success, the stronger the proposal. If you are submitting a proposal about an indirect intervention, attaching a file with evidence of success is not required but highly encouraged. We require evidence to substantiate all claims of success.

Examples of evidence of success include four or more semesters of GPA data, retention rates, or graduation rates with brief descriptions of the data presented—these are typically displayed graphically with tables and charts. The evidence should clearly show that those affected by an intervention or strategy benefit more than those that are not affected or that the success rates of the targeted group have increased. This evidence of success must be in one file and should be no longer than three pages in length including charts, graphs, and descriptions. The supporting evidence must also be incorporated into the workshop. Students should be represented as numbers and as a percent of total enrollment (not ATD cohort).
4) Workshop Leader Responsibilities

**Handouts and PowerPoint Presentations**
All workshop leaders must submit their handouts and PowerPoint presentations to dream@achievingthedream.org no later than February 1, 2015 for posting on the Achieving the Dream website for viewing by the ATD network. Past DREAM attendees have stressed how helpful it is to have the presentations and evidence of success documents on the website prior to the event.

Workshop leaders should anticipate an audience size of 50-75 participants. Please plan to ship or print hard copies of handouts for distribution at your session. We will provide shipping and printing information at a later date.

**Registration and Related Costs**
All workshop leaders must register for DREAM 2015. **Submitting a proposal or leading a workshop does not register you for DREAM.** As in past years, each Achieving the Dream institution will be allotted a certain number of complimentary registrations. Having workshop leaders from your institution will not change the number of complimentary registrations your institution is allotted. Information on the registration process will be provided soon. Please include the workshop leaders when selecting your team.

**Proposal Completion**
Now that you have completed the proposal’s title and four tasks,

*If you do not click the “Submit” button, we will not review the proposal.*

Remember, you can edit your proposal after submission until COB September 22, when the review process begins.

After clicking the “Submit” button, you will return to the homepage. From here, you can preview and edit your proposal. You can also start a new proposal.

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**B) Emerging Ideas Exchange**

The Emerging Ideas Exchange is a tabletop display session where any Achieving the Dream College can highlight strategies that show great promise and/or demonstrations of strategic uses of technology. Evidence of success is not required therefore up-and-coming strategies are welcome. Colleges with tables are encouraged display their work with easy-to-understand data and logic models in addition to brochures, handouts, videos (your own battery-powered player), pictures, and posters. DREAM participants will be invited to stop by your table to learn about your work and may wish to collect contact information. Tables are subject to availability.

**Application Process**
Select Submission Type: Emerging Ideas Exchange. Provide the following details on the online proposal form:

- Name of the program or effort you will be displaying
- Brief description (4-5 sentences) of the program or effort to be included in the DREAM program.
Click on the ‘Preview and Save’ button at any time, which will confirm that you have completed the two tasks or alert you to incomplete tasks and save your reservation. Once all tasks are complete and the reservation is saved, you can click on the “Submit” button to submit your reservation.

*If you do not click the “Submit” button, we will not receive the reservation.

You will receive a confirmation email. Remember, you can edit your reservation after submission until December 8, 2014.

Proposal Withdrawal

If for any reason you want to withdraw your proposal, click on the proposal name then click “Active” and change “Active” to “Withdrawn.” You can undo this change later anytime prior to September 4th.

Timeline

Workshop Submission Deadline: **September 22, 2014**
Workshop Selection Announced: **October 31, 2014**
Emerging Ideas Exchange Deadline: **November 7, 2014**
Deadline for Workshop Materials: **February 1, 2015**
DREAM Begins: **February 17, 2015**

Questions or Concerns

If you have questions or concerns regarding the proposal process contact events@achievingthedream.org.