Postsecondary Data for Action Network
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Application Opens	July 24, 2025
Application Deadline	August 28, 2025

The Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) and the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) invite proposals for the Postsecondary Data for Action Network. The Postsecondary Data for Action Network is a joint initiative to strengthen the connection among applied research, institutional practice, and policy development. This national learning and leadership initiative will support institution- and system-level teams in strategically using data to inform actionable solutions that improve undergraduate student success and degree completion. Participation is open to all institutions that grant associate and/or bachelor's degrees. We also encourage system offices to apply, alongside one or more of their institutions. Teams should ideally be comprised of leaders and staff across functional and program areas, including system representatives, institutional administrators, student success leads, and institutional research or effectiveness leads. The goal is to support cross-functional institutional- and system-level teams that are positioned to scale data-informed and completion-focused change.

Selected participants will join a community of applied researchers and policy-engaged practitioners dedicated to improving student outcomes, especially for learners who face persistent barriers to completing college. Participants in the Postsecondary Data for Action Network will:
- Use administrative and institutional data to inform strategy related to student degree completion and share insights and learning with other cohort participants;
- Participate in quarterly virtual convenings and one in-person convening, with minimal expectations for work outside the scheduled sessions;
- Stay informed on federal data policy developments and their implications for institutions, while offering feedback to help shape future policy;
- Engage with a broader learning community to exchange promising practices and support collective progress.

We seek proposals from teams prepared to:
- Leverage administrative and institutional data to inform current institutional strategies and decision making related to completion;
- Translate data findings into actionable insights for policy and practice;
- Actively participate in federal postsecondary policy conversations and share institutional perspectives with policy audiences;
- Commit to cross-functional collaboration, ideally, with engagement from system-level leadership.

Schedule of Events
Virtual Convenings:
- Meeting 1: October 2025-December 2025
- Meeting 2: January 2026-March 2026
- Meeting 3: April 2026 – June 2026
- Meeting 4: October 2026 – December 2026

In-Person Convening:
- July 2026-September 2026

Application Instructions

Please respond to the following sections. The total proposal should not exceed 6 pages. Supporting materials (e.g., resumes, letters of support) are not required. Please note that in addition to covering travel to the in-person convening, all teams will be granted a small honorarium for their participation.

Section 1: Use of Strategic Data to Inform Student Completion

Please describe how your team is currently using data to generate actionable insights that inform or improve student progress and completion outcomes. Your response should address the following:

- **Data & Insights**: Briefly describe how your team leverages data to inform student completion efforts. If applicable, include how disaggregated data (e.g., student characteristics, institutional characteristics/mission, academic programs, etc.) are used to uncover trends, address differences in outcomes, or inform interventions.
- **Alignment with Broader Goals**: Explain how your student completion efforts align with your institution's, system-level, or statewide goals. This may include connections to a strategic plan, completion agenda, or other long-term priorities focused on student progress and success.
- **Anticipated Outcomes (through 2026)**: This community of practice culminates at the end of 2026. What specific questions do you hope to explore or answer by then? Are there particular milestones, decisions, policies, or programs you aim to inform or shape through strategic data use?

Section 2: Postsecondary Education Policy Engagement

Please describe your team's experience or interest in engaging with federal postsecondary education policy and its impact on institutional and system-level completion efforts. Your responses should address the following:

- **Policy Awareness**: Briefly explain how your team stays informed about state and federal postsecondary policy development. If applicable, include examples of how your institution or system has shared perspectives with policymakers or participated in policy conversations.
- **Connection to Completion Strategies**: Please describe how an awareness of postsecondary policy informs or influences your institution's or system's strategies related to student progress and completion. You may highlight specific examples where policy knowledge has shaped planning, priorities, or resource allocation.

Section 3: Team (up to 6 individuals)

Please describe the composition of the team who will participate in the Postsecondary Data for Action Network. Your response should address the following:

- **Team Member Backgrounds**: Provide a brief biography (no more than a paragraph per person) for each core team member highlighting relevant experience and expertise. This may include prior work or roles in institutional research, advising, academic affairs, student success, or policy translation and development.
- **Integration of Expertise and Perspectives**. Describe how your team brings together diverse perspectives and roles to support data-informed decision making. Explain how this collaboration

enhances the strategic use of data and contributes to broader institutional or system level improvements.

- **Experience Applying Data to Strategy or Policy**. Share any relevant examples of how your team or institution has previously used data insights to inform institutional strategy or influence state or federal postsecondary policy.

Please include a cover page with the following information:

1. The name of your institution or higher education system
2. Name and title of team lead
3. Email and phone number of team lead
4. Name(s), role(s), and department(s) of all proposed team member(s)

Please email completed applications in PDF format to Edgar Lopez: elopez@ihep.org