



City of Cleveland
Justin M. Bibb, Mayor

Office of the Mayor
Cleveland City Hall
601 Lakeside Avenue, Room 202
Cleveland, Ohio 44114
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Comebacker Campaign

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Comebacker Campaign

This ARPA investment will be used to support a communications campaign to elevate and leverage existing investments in college-debt forgiveness to give Cleveland residents an opportunity to increase both their educational attainment and earning power.

Cleveland has a population of approximately 60,000 residents who began higher-education but were unable to complete their degree. Through a "comebacker" campaign, we can recruit these adults to join programming that will allow them to finish their degree and access higher-quality and better paying employment. Studies estimate that a person with a college degree earns \$19,000 more annually than a person with some college but no degree. Over a lifetime, there is more than a \$300,000 difference in net earnings for these two groups.

The Ohio College Comeback, Cuyahoga County, the Ohio Department of Higher Education, and the Higher Education Compact of Cleveland are already working together to address the financial barriers that comebackers typically face related to student-debt. A fund of over \$2,000,000 has been assembled to address the need. Additionally, College Now has staff available to consult with students who are interested in returning and advise them on program eligibility and enrollment processes. The opportunity is to make sure that Clevelanders are informed of and able to capitalize on this unprecedented opportunity.

Comebacker Campaign Budget

The figures included in the budget are projections. The actual costs may vary.

Communications	2023	2024	2025	Total Project Costs
Communications Consultant	\$ 25,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$45,000
Advertising & Social Media	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	\$180,000
Outreach	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$75,000
Total Capital Cost	\$ 110,000	\$ 95,000	\$ 95,000	\$ 300,000
Overall Project Costs	\$ 110,000	\$ 95,000	\$ 95,000	\$ 300,000

Date: December 13, 2022

Name of Requesting Entity / Individual: **Higher Education Compact (College Now Fiscal Agent)**

EIN (if applicable)

Address of Requesting Entity: 1500 W. 3rd Street Suite 125 Cleveland Ohio

City Council Ward Number of Requesting Entity

Geographic Scope of Project: select one [City Council Ward] [multiple City Council Wards] **[City-wide]** [Beyond the City]

If applicable, please specify City Council Ward Number(s) of Project Scope

Primary City Contact Name: **Holly Trifiro (Chief of Education)**

Email Address: **HTrifiro@clevelandohio.gov**

Phone Number: **216-571-3537**

Primary Organization Contact Name: **Margaret McGrath**

Email Address: **MMcgrath@collegenowgc.org**

Which priority area(s) does this initiative address? Check all that apply.

- Stabilizing the Budget Inclusive Economic Recovery Housing for All Violence Prevention & Public Safety
 Closing the Digital Divide A Modern & Transparent City Hall **X Education for Everyone** Lead-safe Cleveland
 Arts & Neighborhood Amenities Civic Participation Fund

Total Amount Requested for Initiative \$ 300,000

Initiative description [500 words or less]

Cleveland has a population of approximately 60,000 residents who began higher-education but were unable to complete their degree. Through a "comebacker" campaign, we can recruit these adults to join programming that will allow them to finish their degree and access higher-quality and better paying employment. Studies estimate that a person with a college degree earns \$19,000 more annually than a person with some college but no degree. Over a lifetime, there is more than a \$300,000 difference in net earnings for these two groups.

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ARPA funds should be used to support a communications campaign to elevate and leverage existing investments in college-debt forgiveness to give Cleveland residents an opportunity to increase both their educational attainment and earning power.

Estimated timeline for implementing/launching initiative (including start date, end date, and major milestones)

The infrastructure for the work is already established and operational. A communications campaign could be launched on the following timeline:

- February 2023: Receive funds, Source and select a communications firm
- March - April 2023: Design and test communications
- May 2023: Launch Comebacker Campaign across Cleveland
- June 2023 – December 2025: Implement Comebacker Campaign Communications Efforts

Who will be implementing/executing this work? Will it be done by the City, require additional staff, require contractors or an RFP process? Have those implementing already been identified? [300 words or less]

The Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland, in partnership with College Now, will implement this work. They will hire a communications consultant to design and lead the campaign as needed.

Secured partners or collaborators in this initiative. Include entity name, contact information, and role in initiative

- Higher Education Compact – Margaret McGrath (Contact Info above)
- College Now
- Ohio College Comeback Compact
- Cuyahoga County Comebacker Campaign

The Ohio Department of Higher Education is also very supportive of efforts to relieve financial burdens to allow more students to complete their degrees. Additional state action aligned to these efforts is in consideration now.

What are the goals of this initiative? [300 words or less]

In today's economy, higher education is increasingly important for those seeking jobs that pay a living wage. Education and training beyond a high school diploma matters today more than ever, preparing individuals to contribute to their communities, allowing them to lead healthier and more productive lives, and strengthening the economy.

The state of Ohio has set a goal that that by 2025, 65% of Ohioans aged 25 to 64 will have a degree, certificate, or other postsecondary workforce credential of value. Ohio currently stands at 49.5% but lags the nation currently at 51.9%. Cleveland is even further behind with only 39.7% holding an associates degree or higher.

With more than sixty thousand residents in the city of Cleveland with some college and no degree, we intend to:

- Create and launch a multi-faceted marketing campaign to re-engage adults that have some college and no degree, to promote the availability of funds and programs that exist to help them reenroll to complete a postsecondary degree or credential.
- Provide supportive services and information through College Now's resource center to help adults re-enroll at a postsecondary institution that fits with their educational goals (i.e. – FAFSA support, career exploration, transfer offices and debt forgiveness programs).
- Increase the number of some college no degree students that are enrolling in eligible postsecondary institutions through utilization of debt forgiveness program funding.

What metrics will you use to determine its success? [300 words or less]

Success of the program will be measured by tracking:

- Specific metrics related to the marketing campaign's effectiveness will be tracked using some of the following as examples:
 - Numbers of social media views and clicks,
 - unique website visits
 - intake forms from College Now
- College Now will track data on all prospective students they conduct outreach to and provide services for. For example, College Now will provide reports detailing services rendered such as FAFSA support or debt counseling.
- Eligible postsecondary partners will be asked to provide reporting on newly enrolled students that have utilized debt forgiveness program funds.

How does this initiative address racial equity and inclusion? [300 words or less]

Current degree attainment rates in the City of Cleveland show racial disparities with 28.9% of White residents holding a college degree while only 10.3% of Black residents and 9.2% of Hispanic residents do. Financial barriers are a major component of this disparity. This campaign allows additional residents to overcome those barriers and would particularly consider how best to reach and engage communities of color with these opportunities.

What is the community impact of this initiative? Who will be served? For example, approximately how many citizens will it impact, how many businesses will it support, and/or how many jobs will it create? [300 words or less]

The communications effort would be broadly aiming to reach the 60,000 Cleveland residents with some college but no degree. The campaign would particularly seek to reach communities of color in order to re-engage these residents on their path to a degree from a higher-education institution.

How does this initiative set Cleveland apart at a state, national, and/or international level? [300 words or less]

This initiative sets Cleveland apart at a state and national level. There is no one else doing this work to the same level, and there are no other set of institutions working together to allow students to transfer between institutions with institutional debt as seen in the Ohio College Comeback Compact. The Cleveland region is at the forefront of this work, and many other states are beginning to take notice that this can and should be done. It is a proven economic benefit to students, postsecondary institutions, and regional economies.

How might ARPA funding leverage additional support for this initiative? What other sources of support or matching do you anticipate for this initiative? List each source, dollar amount, and whether it is expected or secured. This may include federal funding beyond ARPA (like IJA), private, or philanthropic dollars [300 words or less]

Additional financial support has already been granted to make this initiative possible:

\$1,000,000 from Cuyahoga County

\$1,190,000 in private national philanthropy

Cleveland's investment in this pilot would likely bolster the effort's ability to reach those who would benefit from the service afforded by these other funding sources. The State of Ohio is also interested in state level investments in scaling this effort further. Cleveland's investment would be viewed positively by the state in those considerations.

How will this initiative be sustained and for how long will it continue to provide value to the community? [300 words or less]

The hope is that this program of student-debt forgiveness and advising will be sustained through investment from the State of Ohio over the long-term.

The funding provided through ARPA would provide for a three year communications campaign restricted to the City of Cleveland. Insights from that campaign's success could be used to inform future education engagement efforts across the city, region and state.

Invest in Education Pathways to Good Jobs

Education For All ARPA Initiative



CITY OF CLEVELAND

Mayor Justin M. Bibb

Agenda

- 01** The Need
- 02** Initiative Overview
Narrative & Impact Measures
- 03** Initiative Implementation
Key Partners & Timeline
- 04** Initiative Finances
Cost, Leverage & Sustainability Plan

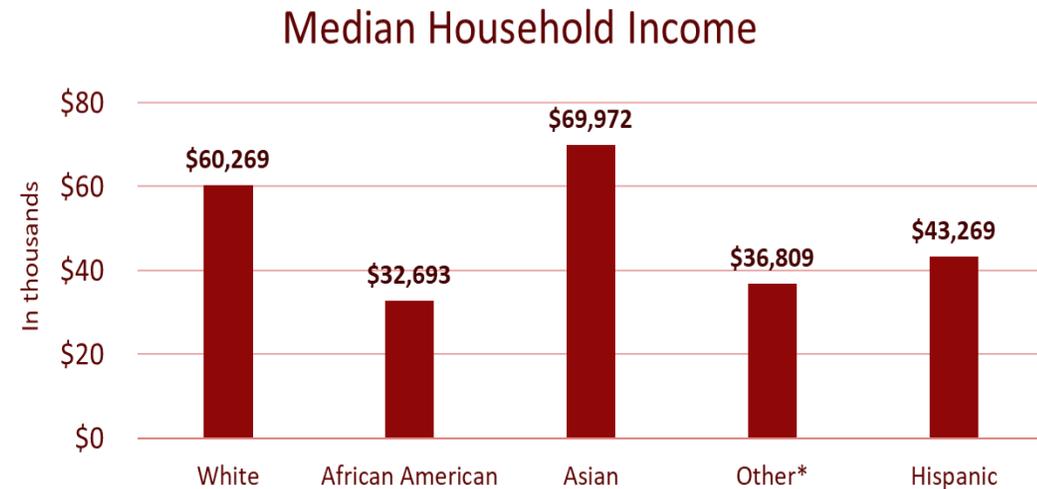


The Need for Education Pathways to Good Jobs

Unless Clevelanders are offered expanded affordable education offerings, they will continue to be shut out of the high-pay, high-growth jobs available in Northeast Ohio

There are wide disparities in median income by race.

This is partly due to racial disparity in education levels, with white Northeast Ohioans achieving 4-year degrees at significantly higher rates than Black and Latinx citizens in the region.



Investments to Re-engage Adult Learners

Education For All ARPA Initiative



CITY OF CLEVELAND

Mayor Justin M. Bibb

Initiative Overview

To increase the number of Cleveland adults with living wage jobs, we will create learning opportunities and programs for adults, seniors, and others who need non-traditional learning pathways through:

- Pathways to a diploma, GED, and/or industry-recognized certifications for young adults who did not graduate from high school
- Informing adults who recently earned high-school equivalency about courses that provide skills and certifications for adults looking to transition careers and/or improve their job prospects to secure a living wage
- Communications campaign to inform Cleveland citizens of comebacker opportunities that provide support to adults looking to return to college to complete their degrees **This is the initiative from this package is being reviewed by City Council committee on January 24, 2023.*

Impact Measures

- Increased enrollment in courses that provide skills and certifications
- Increased enrollment in college of adults returning to finish their degrees

Key Partners

- College Now
- Higher Education Compact
- Ohio Means Jobs
- Seeds of Literacy



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Delivery Model	Key Partners	Cost (over three years)
<p>Provide funding to College Now to hire a communications consultant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Design comebacker campaign• Purchase ads• Engage in outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher Education Compact• College Now• Ohio College Comeback Compact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$300,000 for communications, materials, and advertising
		Leverage
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$1M in Cuyahoga County Funding for student debt forgiveness• \$1.19M in National Private Philanthropy for student debt forgiveness



* This initiative will be reviewed by City Council's Workforce, Education and Youth Development committee on January 24, 2023.

Pathways to GED & Industry Credentials

To allow more citizens access to a living wage, it is imperative that systems and effective outreach are in place to create pathways for those without high school diplomas or industry certifications to receive them. Therefore, this programming and communication campaign will create opportunities to provide these credentials to adult job seekers.

Evidence-Base

- Adults without a high school diploma have the greatest risk of unemployment
- Earning a diploma can lead to an average increase in annual income of more than \$9,000 with greater job security (Northeastern, 2020)
- There is a need to expand access to workforce credentials in key sectors.

Delivery Model

- Provide financial supports for GED courses and credential to adults.
- Partner locally to increase access to in-demand industry credentials specifically for recent GED graduates.
- Conduct communication research and campaign to advertise access to programming locally.

Cost (over three years)

- \$100,000 to Seeds of Literacy to support GED preparation and testing
- \$200,000 to Seeds of Literacy to support communications, outreach, and market research to increase enrollment and completion in GED courses
- \$100,000 to Ohio Means Jobs to support communications and outreach about industry recognized credentials and related employment opportunities.



Questions?



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