



# APLU'S POWERED BY PUBLICS SCALING STUDENT SUCCESS

## Powered by Publics Equity Roundtables

Activate Responsive and Reflective Dialogue

*Issue Date: March 11, 2022*

*Application Due Date: April 11, 2022*

### Purpose

APLU is committed to supporting [Powered by Publics](#) institutions in championing institution-wide equity practices. Specifically, Powered by Publics institutions have committed to halving the equity gap in graduation rates while increasing access and degree completion for minoritized and low-income students. Toward that end APLU invites Powered by Publics institutions and the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities to participate in roundtable discussions to advance equitable access and success for underserved students in higher education. The roundtables will engage a diverse group of university leaders, current students (particularly students from marginalized populations), and alumni to engage in candid conversations about systemic barriers that contribute to inequitable outcomes, and strategies to overcome such obstacles for all students, particularly those from marginalized populations. This initiative is supported by funding from Lumina Foundation.



### EQUITY FRAMEWORK



## Objectives and Goals

The objectives of the roundtable are to:

- Provide opportunities to include student voices in institutional policies and practices
- Provide a forum for candid discussions of equitable and inequitable policies and practices
- Create a vehicle to develop and disseminate promising strategies that eliminate barriers to the success of marginalized students on their academic journey

Primary goals are to:

1. Amplify the lived experiences of students on each campus by engaging current students, staff, and alumni from different racial/ethnic backgrounds as equal participants in discussions
2. Identify barriers that contribute to inequitable outcomes for marginalized students
3. Discuss strategies that address the root causes of inequity at various points through the student journey: from access to employment
4. Produce a report to share the findings with Powered by Publics and APLU members
5. Host a convening featuring highlights of the roundtables, lived experiences of students and alumni, shared goals of administrators and students, and strategies that will lead towards eliminating achievement gaps

## Methodology

To achieve these goals, APLU invites institutions from the Powered by Publics and the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities to participate in one of four Roundtable discussions between June and August 2022.

Each participating institution will identify teams of five to seven individuals consisting of 1 or 2 university administrators and 4 to 5 students or alumni, with representation from each group. University administrators might include the chief diversity officer or representatives from academic affairs, student affairs, alumni affairs or enrollment management. Institutions are encouraged to recruit students and alumni from African American, Latino/a/x, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, adult learner (25+ undergraduate), and transfer student populations. A diverse group of students *is required* and must include transfer students, adult learners, or alumni.

Each roundtable will consist of teams from 5 institutions in the same (or a similar) geographic region and will be scheduled during June - August of 2022. Collaborative partnerships among institutions within the same region and/or state are encouraged. One institution will host the Roundtable and four other institutions will attend. **Host institutions will receive an award to cover the cost of food and/or logistics as necessary. Please indicate your willingness to serve as host in the application.**

The Roundtables will be held in one of two formats: in-person or virtual. Virtual roundtables will include three 90-minute sessions over three days. Participants will be assigned to different breakout rooms and breaks will be included in each session.

The in-person Roundtables will take place in one day at a host location for a total time of 4.5 hours of discussion. **Funds will be available to offset travel costs for attendees and a stipend will be provided to student participants.**

## Topics for the Roundtable Conversations

The conversations are intended to be a dialogue with balanced representation of university personnel, students, and alumni.

Sample Discussion Questions by Topic

**Equitable Access:** *Acceptance is the first major hurdle that students face on their journey.*

1. How do students learn about the university and why do they choose to attend?
2. What challenges do they face in applying to college?
3. How do the participating universities recruit students from different populations?
4. What groups are least well-served by current enrollment policies and practices?
5. What myths or assumptions might exist about these students?
6. What policy changes might address the root causes of inequity?
7. What strategies reduce the number of students who stop or drop out?

**Equitable Student Success:** *University programs and services should be designed so that students can complete a degree on time – meeting students' academic and non-academic needs.*

1. How did students experience academic advising and what was the role of the advisor in selecting a major?
2. What challenges do students experience navigating the program?
3. What resources are offered to support students' academic, financial, and holistic needs, and are there gaps in those resources?
4. How are students on academic probation engaged?
5. How accessible is information on a student's progress toward a degree, and how are students engaged in planning their completion?
6. Where do students go when they are struggling?
7. What policy changes would meet student needs?

**Equitable Career Pathways:** *Despite the long-term ROI of a college degree, the racial wealth gap persists, even among college graduates. How do we ensure equitable outcomes for students beyond graduation?*

1. To what extent do career center advisors match students with careers in their majors?
2. How helpful are career centers to students?
3. What are the benefits of centralization versus decentralization of career services?
4. How do we expand access in fields where racial/ethnic minorities are underrepresented (e.g., STEM)?
5. What financial aid solutions will best mitigate student debt post-graduation?

Follow Up: Capstone Convening

**Delivering on the Promise of Racial Equity for Students in Higher Education (November 2022):** *An open, APLU-wide, convening featuring stories, themes, conversations, and findings from the Equity Roundtable discussions. This convening will lead to action items on where we go from here. (Participants from the Equity Roundtables attending the Capstone Convening will have their travel expenses covered.)*

- Session 1: Results of the roundtables with a student panel
- Session 2: Integrating strategies, identifying opportunities, and creating a call to action

## How to Apply

Applications must include:

1. A cover page with the following information:
  - a. Name and Address of your institution
  - b. Name, title, office, phone number and email address of the person submitting the application
  - c. Name, title, office, phone number and email address of a senior leader at the cabinet level supporting this work
  - d. Signature of the senior leader verifying their support
  - e. Your preference for a virtual or in-person roundtable
  - f. If selected, would you be willing to host a virtual roundtable?
  - g. If selected, would you be willing to host an in-person roundtable?
  - h. Which Powered by Publics/Urban Serving universities would you like to be included in the same roundtable?
    - For the universities you indicate, each university will need to apply. To assist this process, our office will reach out to the cluster members at those universities, inform them of the desired collaboration and encourage them to apply.
    - University members who have been invited to apply are asked to submit their applications by Monday, April 18th.
    - Please note that the actual makeup of the roundtables will be dependent on who applies and is selected by the selection committee.
2. A short narrative (maximum 1000 words) describing your interest in participating in the Equity Roundtables that includes information on:
  - a. The student groups that are considered marginalized on your campus
  - b. The equity work that your institution is currently doing in this area (Please feel free to provide links to websites or documents that describe your equity plans)
  - c. Changes relating to equity and student success you hope to see in the future and how your participation could assist these efforts
  - d. The composition of the team you expect to bring to the event (race/ethnicity, adult learner, transfer student, alumni, etc.)
    - If selected, the names, titles and pronouns of attendees will be required by mid-May.

For best consideration, please send your completed application in pdf format to [afrederick@aplu.org](mailto:afrederick@aplu.org) by April 11, 2022. For the universities we contact to inform of a desired collaboration, please submit your application by April 18, 2022.

## A Project Funded by Lumina Foundation

Lumina Foundation is an independent, private foundation in Indianapolis that is committed to making opportunities for learning beyond high school available to all. We envision a system that is easy to navigate, delivers fair results, and meets the nation's need for talent through a broad range of credentials. Our goal is to prepare people for informed citizenship and for success in a global economy. More on Lumina's own commitments to racial justice and equity is available here: <https://www.luminafoundation.org/aof/racial-equity/>.