

Awards for Innovation in Higher Education  
Report on Proposed Uses of Awards

Humboldt Post-Secondary Success Collaborative: Humboldt State University

1. Name of Coordinating Institution: Humboldt State University (HSU)
2. Amount of Award: \$3,000,000
3. Amount of funds proposed for expenditure: \$3,000,000
4. Please send award to:  
Humboldt State University  
C/O Vikash Lakhani  
1 Harpst Street  
Arcata, CA 95521
5. Please make check payable to: Humboldt State University

Proposed use(s) of award:

### Introduction

The members of the Humboldt Post-Secondary Success Collaborative are committed to achieving the goals set forth by the Committee on Awards for Innovation in Higher Education. The proposed uses of the innovation award, as outlined below, are directly aligned with the goals of increasing bachelor's degree attainment, reducing time to degree, and increasing transfer pathways. We recognize that we may not be able to carry out all of the activities outlined in the proposal; however, the members want to be transparent with the plans that we feel will help us achieve the intended goals of the award. We will use continuous assessment and data to determine which of the strategies work and modify as needed. The goal is to identify the right intervention at the right time for the right student, which can then be used by other institutions as a model. We also understand that these funds are one-time in nature and thus, the funds will be used to redesign or build capacity within the activities identified in the proposal. The timeline for the expenditure of funds will vary depending on the implementation of the respective activities.

The members of the Collaborative intends to deploy a toolkit of success strategies that will include numerous direct services to students, as well as a couple of initiatives that will strengthen the capacity of the institutions within Humboldt County to continue the work into the future. Specifically, the use of awards will be outlined in three broad categories including strengthening the pipeline, eliminating barriers to earning a college degree, and building/strengthening capacity.

We will establish a steering committee to provide oversight and guidance on the use of the award funds and to review the assessment of the programs and/or activities implemented.

### Strengthening the Pipeline:

***I've Been Admitted to College (IBAC)***: Early exposure to college is a research based high impact practice that not only increases the chances for students from underrepresented backgrounds to attend college but also results in success post enrollment. Institutional data at Humboldt State University shows that students who have visited the campus are better retained than students who were never exposed to the

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university. The IBAC program, implemented four years ago, allows 8<sup>th</sup> graders in the County to visit Humboldt State University and receive a compact that guarantees them admission to the university upon satisfying certain requirements. A portion of the innovation award will be used to redesign the IBAC program to include parents, teachers, and school counselors.

**Preview Humboldt:** In addition to IBAC, students from the local area will be provided with three additional programs that will enrich their early exposure to college. The local service area for Humboldt State includes the counties of Humboldt, Del Norte, Northern Mendocino, and Trinity. The area includes numerous tribal communities and schools. The first program will be an overnight program during the summer for students in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and their parents. The program will be designed to provide students and their parents with an academic and social experience. The second program, modeled after the successful Preview Plus Program at HSU, will allow local students to spend a night on campus with their colleagues from the other HSU recruitment areas which include Los Angeles, Central Valley, and the Bay Area. A third program is proposed to be established with the College of the Redwoods to provide potential transfer students with the same experience and to establish transfer pathways before they enroll at CR.

**Early Enrollment:** In an effort to reduce time to degree, the Collaborative will build on the dual enrollment program established at the College of the Redwoods. High school Juniors/Seniors will be offered an opportunity to take one college class per semester at HSU while being enrolled in high school, allowing them to earn college credit early. If a student begins taking courses that count towards a degree in their Junior year, they could earn up to 15 semester units eliminating a semester in college.

**College Readiness:** With the implementation of the new Common Core State Standards and the new standardized test, every student will have a college-readiness status in math and English before they begin the senior year. This is an opportune time to help students who are not ready in college-level math and English to be provided with additional support that will make them ready. Enrolling at HSU or any California State University campus college-ready allows students to save up to two semesters in college. The Success Collaborative will assist schools in the county with the adoption of the Expository Reading and Writing Course (ERWC), which is an approved course that satisfies the University of California and California State University Admissions requirements as well as allows students to be college-ready in English. In addition, the ERWC is a nationally recognized course that aligns high school and college curriculum. The Collaborative will work with High School and College math instructors to offer a similar opportunity to students in math.

**Improve Transfer Articulations:** Out of the 5000+ students at the College of the Redwoods (CR) (only local community college), an average of 160 students transfer to HSU each year. There is a dire need to increase articulation agreements and to support the community college in streamlining the transfer process. In addition, we intend to implement a joint training program between HSU and CR to build capacity within the academic counselors at CR regarding the transfer process. A portion of the funds will be used to develop a HSU-to-CR transfer articulation database, which will require time and effort to build articulation agreements as well as implement the necessary technology to ease transfer between the two institutions.

**Summer Early Start/Field Experience:** In an effort to continue to offer students with the opportunity to begin college-ready for college-level math and English courses, a summer enrichment program will be designed around the successful state-wide Early Start Program. The Early Start Program will provide in-person instruction in math/English allowing students to satisfy any remedial needs prior to enrollment.

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In addition, a field experience will be embedded into the program providing incoming students with an opportunity to start working with faculty before they enroll at HSU. The field experiences will be designed using a theme approach allowing for inter-disciplinary design and exposure.

### **Eliminating Barriers to a College Degree:**

***Tuition Guarantee Program:*** In collaboration with key partners, a tuition guarantee program will be established to cover any costs of tuition after all sources of financial aid have been exhausted. One of the biggest reasons students leave HSU, according to institutional research, is lack of financial resources necessary to continue. An endowment will be pursued with potential community-wide contributions that will help support and sustain the tuition guarantee program. In addition, a large monetary contribution to launch the establishment of such a program will send a clear message that higher education is important to the future of the county, and that the three educational institutions as well as one of the largest foundations in the area are coming together to eliminate financial barriers. The intention is to set the stage for future contributions from HSU/CR alumni, business leaders, and other investors.

***Scholarship Central:*** In order to further support the sustainability of the tuition guarantee program, the Collaborative will invest in a sophisticated scholarship system that will allow for a central coordination of all scholarship opportunities available in the county. There are over 500 scholarships offered through HSU, the Humboldt Area Foundation, and the Humboldt County Office of Education. It is crucial for us to establish a single starting point for scholarships for our local students to make sure that the students are not missing out on any scholarship opportunities. In addition, a centralized scholarship system allows for an equitable and broad award system. This will also serve as the portal for local high school students and their families to acquire accurate and reliable financial aid information.

***Financial Aid Collaboration and Awareness:*** Building on the work that has been initiated this year, representatives from HSU, CR, and HCOE will continue to support local awareness of financial aid information such as FAFSA, Cal Grants, Middle Class Scholarship, and more. These representatives will support local high school staff to become stewards of the financial aid process in an effort to diversify high quality financial aid knowledge and supports across the region.

### **Building/Strengthening Capacity**

***Actionable Intelligence:*** In July 2014, the Collaborative became one of five groups funded by the College Access Foundation to receive technical assistance from Stanford University's John Gardner Center. The Collaborative is developing a consistent, dynamic tool to share data on specific annual trends in each educational segment for dissemination, close study, discussion, and responsive actions. Data determines "best fit" strategies and provides information on the impact of those actions over time. Efforts are modified or replaced based on data indicators. Working with the institutional research offices at HSU, CR, and Humboldt County Office of Education, the collaborative will invest in developing a data system that will allow for actionable intelligence and facilitate predictive modeling, early warning systems, and data sharing.

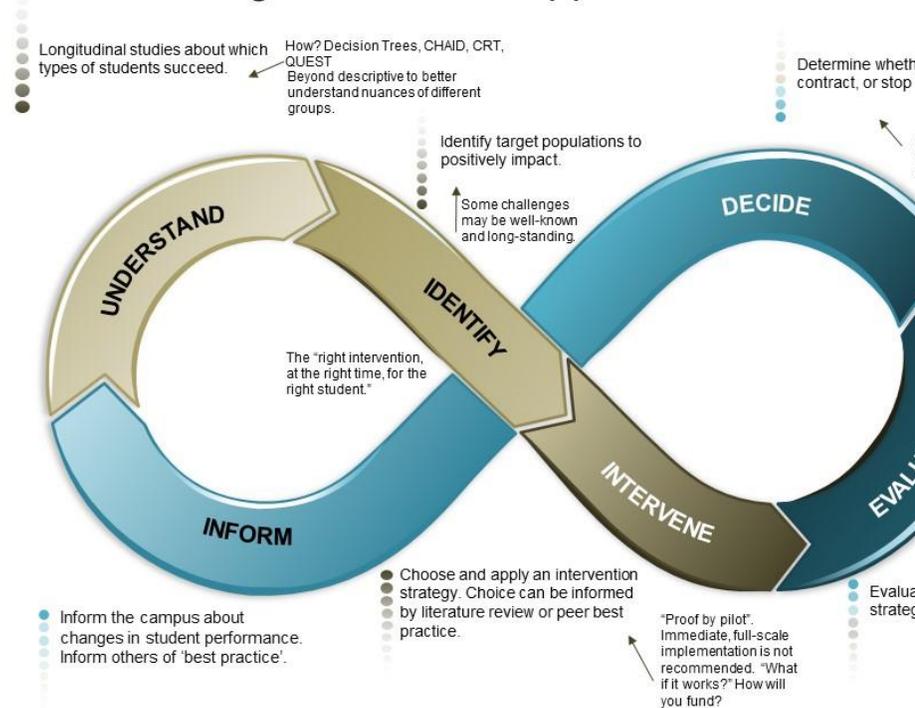
### **Evaluation Plan**

Program assessment and evaluation, or strategic analytics will be key components implemented to answer the question “Did it work?” Key stakeholders across each educational segment will need easy access to information and, more importantly, robust analyses that inform necessary changes and where to strengthen priorities. These analytics will take the form of three integrated and interdependent components: 1) Data collection and validation 2) Research strategy and design, and 3) Data interpretation and visualization. Together, these three prongs will create a holistic, integrated and longitudinal set of research that can be leveraged towards continuous improvement.

Chart 1 on the following page is a visual representation of how the collaborative envisions the implementation of the assessment and evaluation process:

Chart 1:

### Process Diagram: How it happens



**Theoretical Construct:**

To ensure a sound a robust research design, Tinto’s model of student attrition (1993) will be used as a backdrop. As one of the most cited models on student departure, Tinto’s (1993) model includes a structural framework model and offers guidance in selecting variables for study to individuals studying college student change. In specific, Tinto (1993) theorized that students enter college with a variety of personal characteristics and social and academic skills. The student also has within him or her a level of commitment to both the goal of completing a degree as well as a commitment to the institution he or she attends. During college attendance, the student interacts with the formal and informal social and academic structures. As a result of these long-term interactions, a student’s level of commitment and strength of intention to continue forward constantly is being modified and reformulated.

**Sharing the Success:**

As outlined earlier in the proposal, a continuous assessment system will be implemented to evaluate the programs and activities in place. This will allow the Collaborative to realize which programs or a combination of programs are making the greatest impact on reducing time to degree, increasing bachelor's degree attainment, reducing cost to degree, and easing transfer pathways.

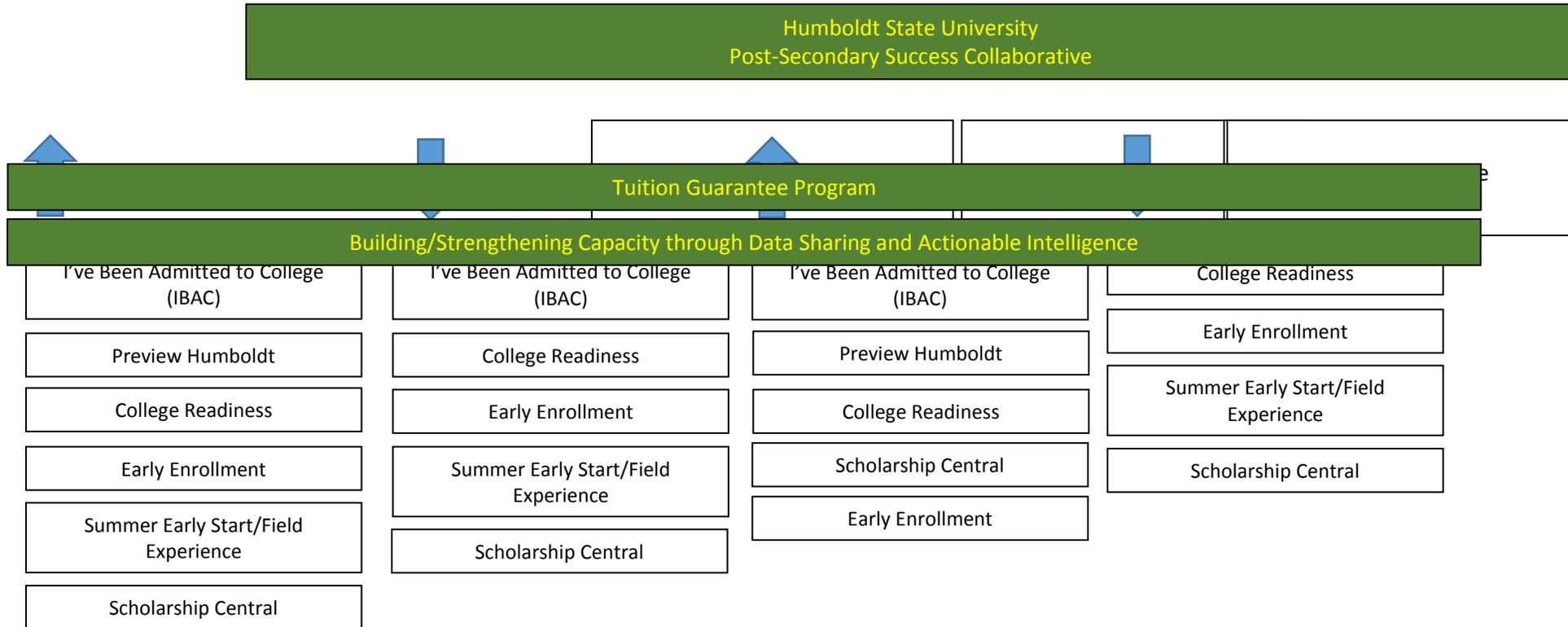
A comprehensive marketing and dissemination plan will be developed by the Collaborative which may include publications, implementation guidelines, assessment models, presentations, and research articles. We anticipate a portion of the budget being assigned to support the marketing and dissemination plan.

**Conclusion**

Chart 2 on the next page provides a visual summary of the activities outlined in this proposal that fit in line with the goals set forth by the Committee on Awards for Innovation in Higher Education of increasing bachelor's degree attainment, reducing time to degree, and increasing transfer pathways.

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Chart 2:





# HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the President

April 10, 2015

California Department of Finance  
Education Systems Unit – Innovation Awards  
915 L Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Review Committee:

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the proposal being submitted today by the Humboldt Post-Secondary Success Collaborative to provide additional information on our plans to utilize Humboldt State University's Award for Innovation in Higher Education. I have thoroughly reviewed the proposal, and I believe that the programs and activities described clearly reflect our commitment to expanding the pipeline of students in our service area attending college and to eliminating barriers that might otherwise impede their success in earning a college degree. Additionally, the proposal outlines important efforts we want to undertake collaboratively to strengthen our capacity and assess our efforts.

We are proud to have been long-time partners in this Collaborative, and we believe that our track record of finding innovative ways to positively impact our service area through our work together is unique. We understand that we are required to submit reports on our efforts, and we look forward to sharing with other institutions how this award has impacted our success. We also understand that we are responsible for distributing the funds to the other members of the Collaborative, as appropriate, and we agree to do so.

Thank you very much for making this opportunity available to the Humboldt Post-Secondary Success Collaborative. We know that it will have a meaningful impact of our work.

Sincerely,

Lisa A. Rossbacher, Ph.D.  
President