

60 by 25 Network Leadership Community Application

Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University (EdSystems), on behalf of the public and private partners supporting the 60 by 25 Network, invites your community to seek designation as a **60 by 25 Network Leadership Community**.

The Leadership Communities designated through this application process will be eligible to receive *targeted technical assistance, capacity building, and funding to support community-level approaches to career pathway system development and increasing postsecondary degree and credential attainment*. These supports will be coordinated through the 60 by 25 Network lead organizations: EdSystems, Advance Illinois, and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission

This is an open application and communities may apply at any time. Questions may be addressed to Edith Njuguna at enjuguna@niu.edu

Background:

The 60 by 25 Network is a growing network of Illinois communities that are committed to the Illinois' goal of ensuring that 60% of all adults in Illinois have a college or career credential by 2025. The mission of the 60 by 25 Network is to **support regions to increase meaningful and equitable postsecondary attainment**, which is connected to the objective that communities have of **preparing more students for opportunities in their regional economies, and ensuring that all students have access to postsecondary and career opportunities**.

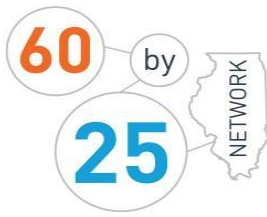
The Network lead organizations came together to create a community of practice to help local and regional teams accelerate progress toward the 60% by 2025 goal. These teams are using the principles of collective impact to support collaboration between public and private partners to:

- Align student transitions from high school through postsecondary education and into careers
- Adopt a college and career pathways system framework as a key strategy to equitably increase possibilities for postsecondary degree and credential attainment
- Support implementation of real life learning in the context of the Illinois Learning Standards
- Use data for continuous improvement

Theory of Change: *Collective Impact*

The Network is committed to partnering with communities using the process principles of collective impact:

1. A shared community vision for change;
2. Evidence-based decision-making using shared measurement;
3. Collaborative action in mutually reinforcing activities;
4. Continuous communication among all stakeholders; and
5. The development of backbone support—an organization that can act as an intermediary for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies.



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The Network recognizes that developing community-level approaches to career pathway systems and postsecondary degree and credential attainment requires a deep commitment from partners across the spectrum of workforce development, education, human services, community-based organizations, employers, and economic development agencies. Coordination of this kind requires investment and a model for sustainability as well as state-level commitments to providing technical and networking supports and helping communities leverage available resources in innovative ways.

60 by 25 Leadership Communities will partner with each other, the Network's lead organizations, and other partners to support the goals of: developing cross-sector partnerships, determining and seeking adequate financial resources towards community identified goals, and documenting a local urgency for change.

Theory of Change: *College and Career Pathway System Development*

A local college and career pathway system addresses five interconnected elements:

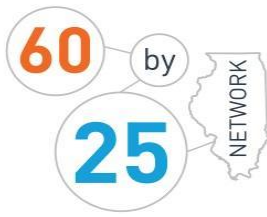
1. **Rigorous academics** that prepare students for community colleges or universities, as well as for apprenticeships, certifications, and other postsecondary opportunities.
2. **A career-focused instructional sequence** that prepare students for a high-skill and high-wage employment.
3. **Work-based learning** that helps students to develop and apply their skills through informative real-world activities, such as problem-based learning, internships, apprenticeships, and other professional skill-building activities.
4. **Support services** that include career information and advising, individualized planning, and, as needed, additional instruction in reading, writing, and math.
5. **Stackable, industry recognized** credentials and degrees.

College and career pathway systems are not tracking; rather, they are a way of enabling student-focused contextualized learning as well as career awareness, exploration, and preparation towards the end of **meaningful postsecondary attainment for all learners**.

Since 2011, Illinois identified priority industry sectors that are of strategic value to local and regional economies, and that are of broader strategic value to the state, first as part of the Illinois Pathways planning process, and again in 2015 as part of a broader Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act planning process. Several overarching industry sectors have emerged as having core strategic value for students and communities, as they develop pathways towards high-skill and high-wage employment opportunities.

Leadership communities are asked to identify locally prioritized career pathway systems in industry sectors that are aligned to broader regional and state priorities. More information can be found [here](#).¹

¹ <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning/Pages/RegionalPlanning.aspx>



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Application:

All communities applying to receive the 60 by 25 Leadership Community designation must develop a proposal using the table on the following page and a submit a Memoranda of Understanding² among community partners that addresses the following issues:

- Document a partnership involving:
 - i. Employers,
 - ii. Education, including PreK-12, community college, and university representatives
 - iii. Municipal leaders, and
 - iv. Representatives from community-based organizations
- Define a geographic community of focus
- Identify at least three prioritized industry sectors (e.g., Manufacturing, Health Science, IT) for the development of college and career pathway systems
- Identify a trusted intermediary organization to build a common agenda, articulate mutually reinforcing activities, measurements, and communications across sectors involving PreK-12 education, postsecondary education, employers, and civic community

In addition, the application must include a plan of no more than 4 pages describing the community's key strategies for increasing meaningful and equitable postsecondary attainment during the next 12–24-month period. This may include undertaking other locally-determined activities, including those activities with out-of-school time partners which are identified as relevant to the local postsecondary attainment goals.

Expectations:

As a 60 by 25 Leadership Community designee, communities are expected to thoughtfully engage in the peer-to-peer learning network through:

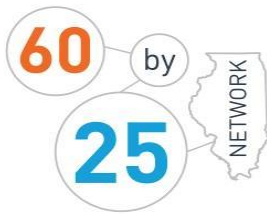
- Participation in annual conferences and meetings where appropriate and feasible;
- Sharing of best-practices, milestones, and outcomes on a regular basis; and
- Using data for continuous improvement

² Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) can take multiple forms, including an intergovernmental agreement, compact, governing board organizational document, etc. Examples can be found below:

MOU Example 1 <http://bit.ly/2kx9Ko6>

MOU Example 2 <http://bit.ly/2kxeSbL>

MOU Example 3 <http://bit.ly/2ij25ow>



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Please complete the Narrative section for each Application Component in the table below.

Application Component	Narrative
<p>Documenting the partnership</p>	
<p>Define the community/region of focus</p>	
<p>Selection of at least 3 prioritized STEM industry clusters for development of career pathway systems</p>	
<p>Lead intermediary organization</p>	

Please include a copy of a plan of no more than 4 pages describing the community’s key strategies for increasing meaningful and equitable postsecondary attainment during the next 12–24-month period.