

What does ATI do to help colleges and universities increase socioeconomic diversity?

ATI provides a venue for the presidents and senior leaders of four-year colleges and universities to learn from each other about what is working (and not working) to support increased enrollment and success for lower-income students at their individual campuses. This knowledge-sharing is accomplished through convenings, original and commissioned research, and analysis of institution- and national-level data.

What are ATI member institutions doing to advance socioeconomic diversity?

Each ATI member commits to endorsing the 50,000-by-2025 goal and setting goals and action plans to support enrollment and success for more lower-income students on their individual campuses. The specific strategies that an institution employs will depend on the institution's context and span four shared focus areas: robust outreach to lower-income students; inclusive admissions and enrollment; generous need-based financial aid; and fostering inclusion, a sense of belonging, and equitable outcomes for lower-income students.

What specifically is your institution committing to change or do differently for lower-income students?

[Consider sharing your collective impact framework (CIF) goals]

What happens if a college does not increase the number of lower-income students enrolled?

The goal of ATI is to increase enrollment and success across all high-graduation-rate four-year colleges and universities. Whether any individual institution increases lower-income student enrollment will depend on that institution's specific context. For instance, some ATI members already enroll large numbers of lower-income students. If an institution would like to increase lower-income student enrollment but is experiencing difficulty, ATI can support the institution in achieving its goal through facilitating connections between members, conducting targeted research on areas for growth and overcoming challenges, and providing individual technical assistance.

The high cost of college can be prohibitive for many lower-income students and their families. What are ATI colleges doing to promote affordability for these families?

The answer varies from school to school, but strategies to provide sufficient need-based aid typically entail some combination of raising additional resources and reallocating existing ones. Some of the ways that institutions prioritize need-based aid are to:

- Shift more financial aid for highly talented students away from so-called merit aid (which often goes to students with little or no financial need) to need-based aid (which goes to those with greater financial need)
- Make need-based financial aid a higher priority for alumni and private philanthropic giving
- Work with state governments to increase funding for need-based financial aid programs



ATI Questions to Expect

- Reallocate resources to need-based aid from activities that are nonessential to maintaining the quality of education.
- Raise new revenue or reduce costs through innovation and increased efficiency.

How will colleges ensure access for middle-income students, especially those just above the Pell Grant eligibility threshold?

The approach will vary by institution, but two specific strategies have emerged as critically important to supporting middle-income student enrollment. The first is for the institution to monitor enrollment to understand whether students just above the Pell Grant eligibility threshold are underrepresented. The second is to ensure that when these middle-income students are admitted, they receive enough need-based financial aid to ensure affordability and success. Often, this aid must be provided by the institution, as federal aid is typically given to the students with the highest financial need.

How does a focus on socioeconomic diversity affect racial and ethnic diversity at ATI institutions?

Both types of diversity are important, and pursuing one should not compromise the capacity of a college to pursue the other. In fact, colleges that have expanded socioeconomic diversity tend to increase racial and ethnic diversity as well.

Do ATI member schools accept students who otherwise might not have been qualified to enroll?

Quite the opposite. Simply said, talented students thrive in rigorous academic environments regardless of their family economic situation. In reality, many colleges and universities are currently admitting less-qualified wealthy students because they can pay, and failing to enroll qualified, lower-income students because they can't afford the cost. This is not good for students, colleges, or our country.

How is ATI connected to Michael Bloomberg and his presidential campaign?

While Bloomberg Philanthropies, which funds ATI, is Michael Bloomberg's charitable foundation, it does not influence, nor is it influenced by, any of Bloomberg's political activities. ATI is managed independently by two nonpartisan organizations, the Aspen Institute and Ithaka S+R, and has always been intentionally apolitical.