



# Promoting Transfer Pathways to the Liberal Arts

WEBINAR

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# About Us



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# Webinar Purpose

Learn about the promise and potential of liberal arts transfer pathways from community colleges to independent colleges

- **Ithaca S+R** on the scale and potential of community college transfer to independent colleges, including challenges and promising strategies used by individual institutions and state or regional consortia.
- **North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities** on their experience with launching a comprehensive transfer agreement with the North Carolina Community College System.
- **The Teagle Foundation** on a funding opportunity for leaders interested in collaboratively building liberal arts transfer pathways between community colleges and independent colleges in their region or state.



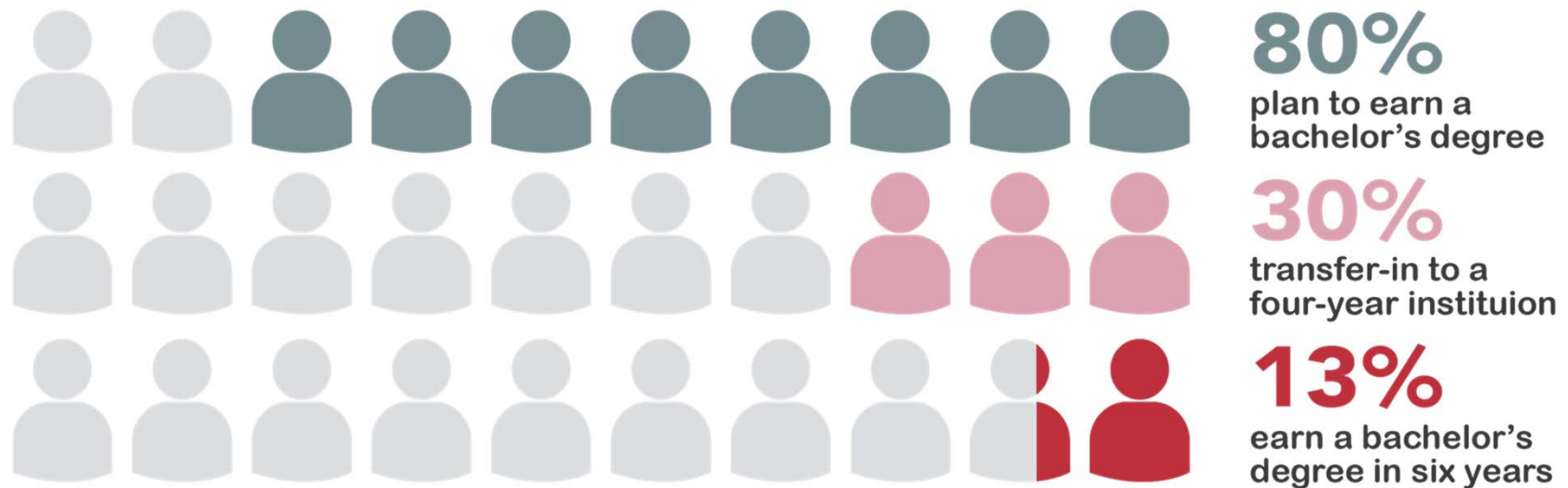
## Research Perspective from Ithaka S+R



# Transfer Pathways Are Broken

National practices between two- and four-year institutions are not adequately serving students

- Every fall, 1.1 million American students begin their higher education at community colleges
- While most intend to earn their bachelor's degree, **only 13 percent** do



Sources: [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16\\_305.10.asp?current=yes](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16_305.10.asp?current=yes) | <https://nscresearchcenter.org/signaturereport13/>

# Why Improve Liberal Arts Transfer?

Improving transfer from community colleges to independent colleges offers many valuable opportunities

Liberal arts and small independents (LASIs) share many facets aligned to a traditional liberal arts education:

- breadth and depth of study
- small class sizes
- self-guided assignments
- group work
- access to faculty outside of the classroom
- extracurricular activities
- experiential learning opportunities

# Why Improve Liberal Arts Transfer?

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## Students

- Liberal arts graduates receive long-term economic benefits
- There is growing demand for the “soft” skills liberal arts instill
- Liberal arts experiences prepare students to be engaged citizens and lifelong learners
- Two-year transfers receive these benefits at a greatly reduced price

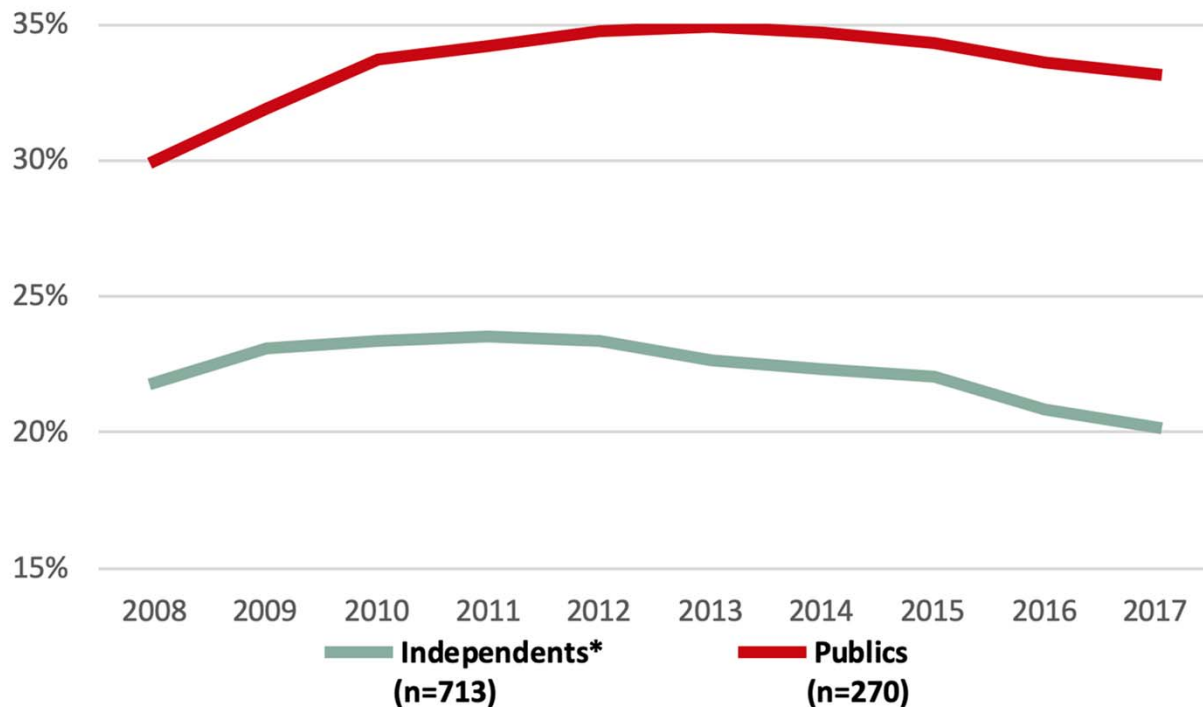
## Institutions

- National high school graduating classes are shrinking
- Associate degree earners complete heavy load of humanities and liberal arts coursework
- Transfer students perform on par or better than their native peers
- Admitting community college students will increase diversity

# Unrealized Opportunities

Independents are transferring in less students than their public peers and have continued to decrease transfer-in rates

**AVERAGE FALL TRANSFER-IN RATES: 2008-2017**



**\* LASIs comprise 76% of this sample**

*Population: nonprofit, proximate baccalaureate institutions that offer liberal arts degrees*

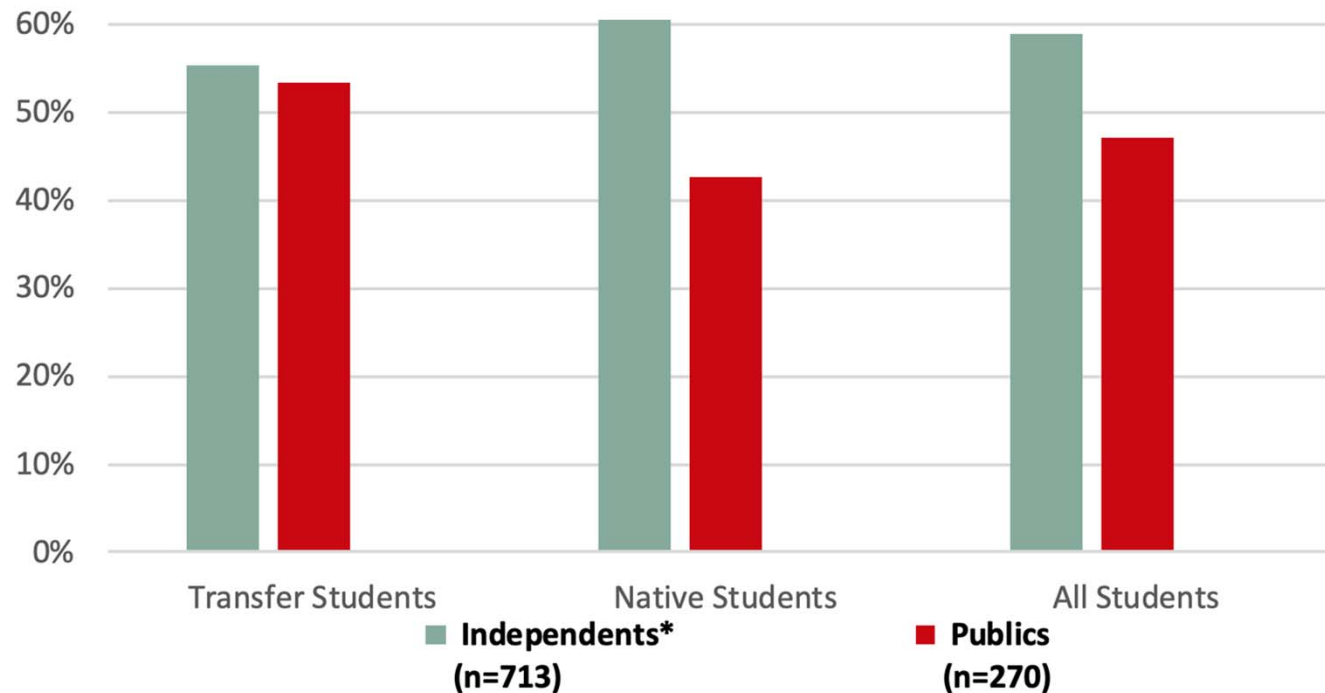
*(Undergraduate FTE 300-10,000)*



# Unrealized Opportunities

Independent colleges can graduate students successfully but have not turned enough attention to transfer success

## TRANSFER-IN SIX-YEAR COMPLETION RATES: 2015-2016

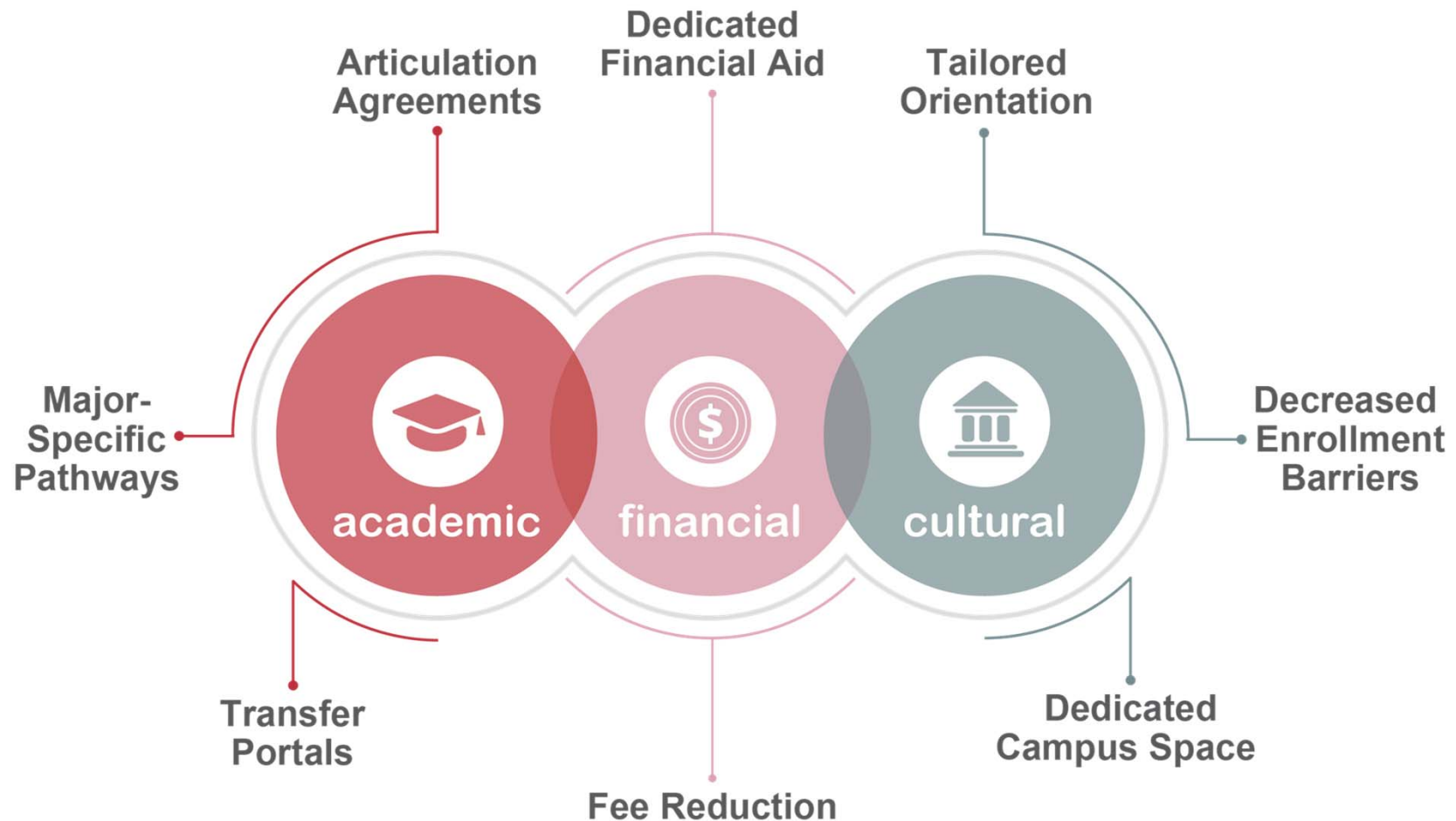


\* LASIs comprise 76% of this sample

Population: nonprofit, proximate baccalaureate institutions that offer liberal arts degrees

(Undergraduate FTE 300-10,000)

# The Pathway from Community College to Independent College Takes Work

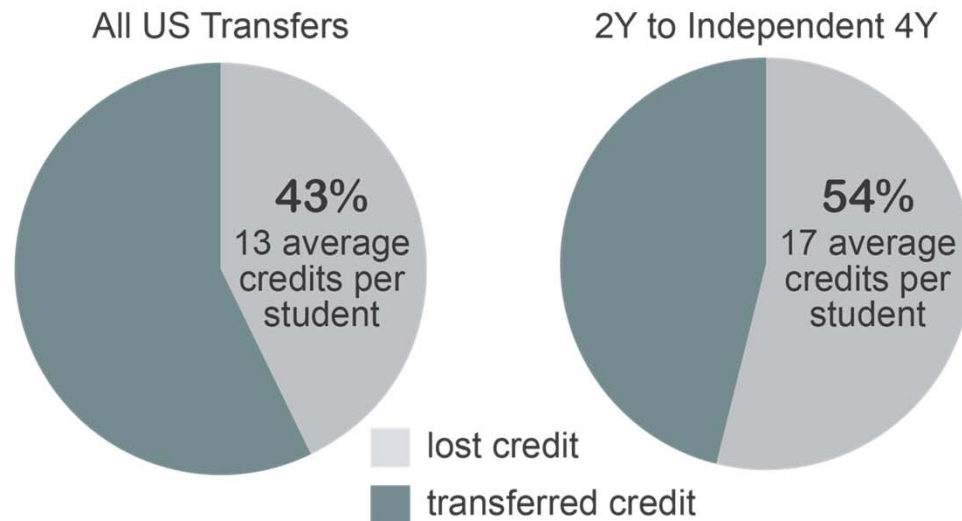


# Credit Loss Hinders Student Success

Poor credit transfer between institutions is the top barrier for community college transfer students pursuing a bachelor's degree

- The greater the credit loss, the lower the chances of bachelor's completion
- Community college students who have most or all of their credits transferred are **2.5 times more likely** to earn a bachelor's degree

## Percent of Average Credit Lost and Transferred



Sources: <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373714521865> | <https://www.gao.gov/assets/690/686530.pdf>

# Academic Policies Improve Success

Three key practices reduce credit loss, navigate transfer students to the degree, and help independent institutions capitalize on existing transfer policies

## Articulation Agreements

**WHAT** Contracts between two- and four-year schools that guarantee the block transfer of coursework as well as junior-level status

**WHY** Only one-third of CIC members accept associate degree holders as juniors, and 78% require additional general education coursework for transfer students holding an associate degree

## Major-Specific Pathways

**WHAT** Guides shared early in two-year students' education that clearly map course requirements, sequences, and prerequisites for completing the degree

**WHY** Excess credit occurs even with articulation agreements; in fact US bachelor's degree holders graduate with 16.5 excess credits on average

## Transfer Portals

**WHAT** Online tools that help students see how their earned credit transfers to different schools and help institutions automate the transfer of bundled coursework

**WHY** Course transfer can be a black box experience for students; increased transparency can navigate students to institutions they previously hadn't considered

Sources: <https://docplayer.net/9370258-Summary-of-survey-results-of-community-college-transfer-programs-by-the-council-of-independent-colleges.html> | <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/time-is-the-enemy.pdf>

# Why Consortia?

Articulation and other transfer-related initiatives can be most effectively approached through a consortial model

- Respond to regional patterns in transfer behavior
- Facilitate initiatives modeled after existing public transfer agreements
  - Establish independents as option for community college transfer
- Encourage cultural shifts across multiple institutions
- Ensure commitment to liberal arts transfer pathways across sectors



# Practitioner Perspective from NCICU



# NCICU Independent Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (ICAA)

Allows students at 2-year colleges to transfer seamlessly as juniors to 4-year independent colleges & universities

The associate degree transfers as a unit to meet general education requirements rather than by individual courses

Includes a course requiring students to explore transfer to a 4-year college

**30** of our 35 4-year colleges and universities have signed the ICAA

# NCICU Discipline-Specific Articulation Agreements

- Streamlined course selection for students
- Avoids more electives than necessary, reducing time to degree

RN to  
BSN

Music

Theatre

Fine  
Arts

Teacher  
Education

Currently Under  
Development



# Teagle Grant Through CIC

Financial aid  
policy  
component

**Psychology  
and  
Sociology**

*Under Development*

Advising  
component  
with Gardner  
Institute and  
NACADA

*50th Anniversary*  
NORTH CAROLINA  
INDEPENDENT  
COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

# Why Comprehensive Agreements?

Clarity  
for  
students

Variety  
of  
choices

Ability to  
transfer  
statewide



# Funder Perspective from the Teagle Foundation



# The Teagle Foundation

## Our Mission

The Teagle Foundation works to support and strengthen liberal arts education, which we see as fundamental to meaningful work, effective citizenship, and a fulfilling life. Our aim is to serve as a catalyst for the improvement of teaching and learning in the arts and sciences while addressing issues of financial sustainability and accountability in higher education.

# Pathways to the Liberal Arts

Supporting a diverse array of institutions in the work of securing access to and success in the liberal arts

To promote transfer access to the liberal arts, we prioritize projects that:

- Engage a regional or statewide set of public two-year and private four-year colleges
- Elevate faculty leadership and trust-building
- Build on existing state transfer policies, if any
- Lead to comprehensive transfer frameworks that ensure block transfer of credit, completion of general education requirements, and/or entry with junior status in liberal arts majors
- Ensure credits don't merely transfer but **apply** towards the baccalaureate in the liberal arts

**We will NOT fund projects that involve:**

- Developing agreements between a pair of two- and four-year campus partners or multiple two-year campuses and a single four-year partner
- Developing course-to-course equivalencies for transfer

# How We Grant

We have a two-stage application process

- Prospective grantees should submit a brief 3-5 page **concept paper** that helps us understand the following:
  - What approach do you have in mind to strengthen the academic/curricular aspect of transfer with Teagle's support? How will you engage faculty at the two- and four-year partners?
  - How will you address the cultural and financial aspects of transfer, either through cost-sharing or other sources of external support?
  - How will the participating campus partners be strengthened as a result of the Teagle grant?
  - How will the substantive changes brought about with grant support be sustained beyond the life of the grant?
- Based on the strength of the concept paper, **prospective applicants are then invited to submit a full proposal**

# Types of Grants

Choose the grant type that will best meet the needs of your institutions and will lead to strong and sustainable liberal arts transfer pathways

## Planning Grant

- Typically run for 6 to 12 months
- Help collaborating partners to meet in-person, connect with field experts, participate in professional development opportunities, pilot their project, and/or refine their plans for implementation
- Planning grants do not guarantee implementation funding

## Implementation Grant

- Typically run for 24-36 months
- Cover stipends for project leaders and faculty participants; honoraria for visiting experts or consultants; professional development (e.g., conference participation), evaluation; and dissemination of lessons learned; administrative assistance
- The Foundation **does not** cover indirect/overhead costs or defray compensation for senior administrators

# Deadline for Submission

We review concept papers on a **rolling basis** to maximize flexibility for our grantees.

If a proposal is invited, program staff will confer with the applicants to determine the appropriate timeline for submission for review by Teagle's Board of Directors when it meets in November, February, or May.



# Learn More

- Teagle's Pathways to the Liberal Arts RFP:  
<http://www.teaglefoundation.org/Grants-Initiatives>
- More on "How We Grant":  
<http://www.teaglefoundation.org/Grants-Initiatives/How-We-Grant>

# Resources

## Examples of Transfer Frameworks

- Independent Comprehensive Articulation Agreement between North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities and North Carolina Community College System ([https://ncicu.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ICAA\\_30-campuses\\_updated-10.22.19.pdf](https://ncicu.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ICAA_30-campuses_updated-10.22.19.pdf))
- Uniform Articulation Agreement between North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities and North Carolina Community College System for Bachelor of Fine Arts Programs (<https://ncicu.org/ncicuncccsfinearts2019>)

# Resources

## On Transfer

- Tackling Transfer: A Guide to Convening Community Colleges and Universities to Improve Transfer Student Outcomes (<https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/tackling-transfer-guide-convening-community-colleges-universities-improve-transfer-student-outcomes.html>)
- The Transfer Playbook: Essential Practices for Two- and Four-Year Institutions (<https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/transfer-playbook-essential-practices.html>)
- Why Community Colleges are Good for You (<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Why-Community-Colleges-Are/242359>)

## On Working Consortially

- Consortial Leadership Towards Large-Scale Change ([http://www.teaglefoundation.org/Teagle/media/GlobalMediaLibrary/documents/resources/Adrianna-Kezar\\_Consortial-Leadership-Toward-Large-Scale-Change.pdf?ext=.pdf](http://www.teaglefoundation.org/Teagle/media/GlobalMediaLibrary/documents/resources/Adrianna-Kezar_Consortial-Leadership-Toward-Large-Scale-Change.pdf?ext=.pdf))
- Unlocking the Power of Collaboration: How to Develop a Successful Collaborative Network in and around Higher Education (<https://sr.ithaka.org/publications/unlocking-the-power-of-collaboration>)



# Thank you!

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## Friendly reminders

- Teagle's Pathways to the Liberal Arts RFP:  
<http://www.teaglefoundation.org/Grants-Initiatives>
- Additional information on "How We Grant" :  
<http://www.teaglefoundation.org/Grants-Initiatives/How-We-Grant>
- Look out for the forthcoming paper from Ithaca S+R in early 2020!