



ASSOCIATION OF  
PUBLIC &  
LAND-GRANT  
UNIVERSITIES



Coalition of  
Urban Serving Universities

## **Turning Points: From Setback to Success**

### ***An APLU Annual Meeting Competition***

*Supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*

#### **Request for Video Applications**

**Expression of Interest due September 2, 2016**

**Video Submissions due September 30, 2016**

### **The Challenge**

Success at scale means innovating, taking risks, and pushing boundaries. When you do that, things don't always work as planned. University leaders want to learn from those failures, but as public leaders, are often reticent about sharing them outside their own campus. Given the magnitude of challenges facing public higher education, finding ways to learn from setbacks and not repeat others' missteps is of growing importance.

### **Turning Points at the APLU Annual Meeting**

At the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities Annual Meeting on November 13 in Austin, Texas, APLU and the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities (USU) will host a fun and engaging session in which up to five institutions, chosen through a **video application**, described below, will detail their *Turning Points*. Institutions chosen to present at the annual meeting will each win \$5,000 and up to 12 other institutions will receive \$1,000 prizes based on the quality of their submission.

Based on the [Fail Festival](#) concept, developed in the international development community, *Turning Points* is a forum for universities to share how a failure or setback or misstep triggered a later success. The Fail Festival model features short, TED-like talks that are humorous in nature, outline key failures, why they happened, lessons learned, and how they turned them around. Here are a few examples of what these stories look like:

- **Business example:** Post-it notes were a failed attempt to create a new superglue, but have become a key office supply.
- **University example:** A university created a reclamation program to entice students who had stopped out of school to return. It failed. An analysis showed that those students stumbled with a particular math course, which reverberated through their college journey. Solution: Revise the math course, reduce the dropout rate.
- **University example:** Another university opened up registration online at midnight to facilitate student schedules. Courses filled up before morning. Low-income students who didn't have reliable access to the internet and could not sign up online got shut out of

courses they needed to complement their work schedules. Solution: Have later and earlier office hours on campus during registration period to widen access.

### **How to Submit**

**Only APLU and USU member institutions are eligible to apply.** Those APLU and USU member institutions interested in presenting at the APLU annual meeting should first submit a brief expression of interest to [sgarmise@aplu.org](mailto:sgarmise@aplu.org) with the name of the institution, the name of the turning point, 1-2 sentences explaining the turning point, and the name of the university representative who would present at the APLU annual meeting if chosen along with his/her contact information. **Expressions of interest are due by COB, Friday, September 2, 2016.** Up to three videos per institution can be accepted with each presenting a separate turning point story. Please note that an expression of interest must be received for each one. The purpose of the expression of interest is to determine the size of the national evaluation committee needed to assess the entries.

After the letter of intent is submitted, the next step is to develop and submit a 5-15 minute video that will serve as your application. When the video is final, entrants should provide a link to a Dropbox or similar file sharing site that APLU can use to download the final product. Send the link to Shari Garmise ([sgarmise@aplu.org](mailto:sgarmise@aplu.org)) by **September 30, 2016.**

The videos will be used to assess the quality of the presentation. **Up to five winners will be selected. Each will receive \$5,000** and be invited to present their *Turning Point* at the APLU Annual Meeting. Travel costs and registration fees will be covered by APLU. In addition, there will be up to 12 honorable mentions selected, each of which will receive \$1,000 prizes but **will not** receive travel support. All of those chosen for the \$1,000 or \$5,000 prizes will have their videos on display in the annual meeting exhibition hall.

### **Content Criteria**

The content in *Turning Point* videos must relate to advancing student access, success and completion. In other words, no research or invention failures are allowed. We strongly encourage presentations to adopt a light-hearted, even humorous, but constructive tone.

The video must cover the following points:

- 1) the problem and approach taken to address it;
- 2) what didn't work and why;
- 3) what you learned from it;
- 4) what emerged from it that supported student success; and
- 5) lessons applicable to other institutions.

Please note that **the technical quality of the video is not important, but the quality of the presentation is critical.**

### **What Video Format Should I Use?**

Please provide the video on one of the following formats: MP4 or QuickTime. If this is a problem, contact Shari Garmise, Vice President for the APLU Office of Urban Initiatives and the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities ([sgarmise@aplu.org](mailto:sgarmise@aplu.org)) as other options may be allowable.

### **Conference Call for Additional Information**

A conference call will be held on Thursday, September 8, 2016 at 3:00 pm EDT to answer any questions.

Call-in information

Dial-in number: (712) 775-7031

Participant access code: 722-159

### **Your video has been submitted. What happens next?**

A national committee comprised of public higher education leaders, using the criteria outlined above, will review all the videos and select up to five winners and up to 12 honorable mentions.

The winners will participate as speakers on a plenary panel on **Sunday, November 13 at 1:45** where they will each have 10 minutes to present their *Turning Points* story.

All winners and honorable mentions must sign an agreement with APLU, which grants APLU the permission to use the video. Upon signing it, the monetary award will be granted. Travel costs for the up to five winners will be reimbursed after the conference is completed.

Select videos may be used by APLU as marketing materials for the conference. All videos will be displayed in exhibition hall during the APLU annual conference.

APLU/USU will develop a brief white paper or infographic on the lessons learned from the *Turning Points* shared. After the conference, the videos may be put on APLU's YouTube page.

### **Any Questions**

Contact Shari Garmise, Vice President for the APLU Office of Urban Initiatives and the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities, at [sgarmise@aplu.org](mailto:sgarmise@aplu.org) or 202-478-6064.