

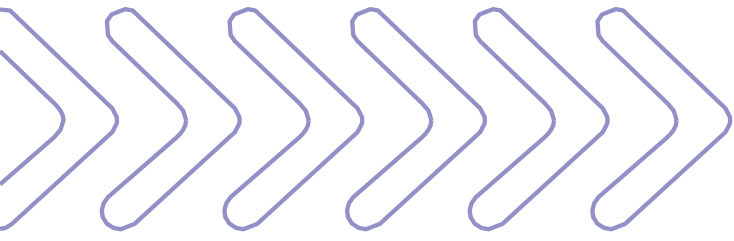


PLAYBOOK

# HBCU Engagement

Preserving value at institutions which bring talented Black Americans to an equitable economy, culture and society.

January 2022



For over 183 years, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have contributed substantially to the Black community, the Black middle class and the country as a whole. However, they continue to be underfunded, under resourced and undervalued. It's time to change that. HBCUs need sustainable solutions. In addition to more equitable federal and state funding, they need the support of and collaborations with corporate America. Working together, we can succeed in preserving the value these institutions bring not only to Black Americans, but to the economy, our culture, and our society as a whole.



# EDUCATE

# Table of Contents

<b>Who We Are</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Playbook Overview</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Purpose</i>	6
<b>The Playbook is/The Playbook is not:</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>HBCU Landscape</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Problem Statement by Focus Area</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>Funding (Infrastructure, Endowment, R&amp;D Spending)</i>	8
<i>Economic/Wealth Gap</i>	9
<i>Talent &amp; Pipeline</i>	9
<b>Business Case</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>Build &amp; Leverage Your Talent Pipeline</i>	10
<i>Improve Retention</i>	10
<i>Be an Industry Evolution Influencer</i>	10
<i>KPI Improvement</i>	11
<i>Improved Cultural Dexterity</i>	11
<i>DEI Thought Leadership</i>	11
<i>Corporate ESG Change Driver</i>	11
<i>Become A Market Leader</i>	11
<b>Why Culture Matters</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Maturity Continuum</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Playbook Solution Sets: INVEST-EMPOWER-ADVOCATE</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>INVEST</b>	
<i>Getting Started</i>	14
<i>Strategic Giving Aligned to Your Philanthropic Mission</i>	15
<i>HBCU Matching Funds Programs</i>	15
<i>Directed Giving</i>	15
<i>School Directed Giving</i>	16
<i>Black Professional Organization/Association Directed Giving</i>	16
<i>Foundation Directed Giving</i>	16
<i>Community Development Directed Giving</i>	16
<i>Specific R&amp;D Collaborations/Fellowships</i>	16
<i>Corporation + HBCU Curriculum Development</i>	16

# Table of Contents

## **Playbook Solution Sets: INVEST-EMPOWER-ADVOCATE** *(continued)*

<i>Employee Volunteer Day Programs</i>	17
<i>Funding Endowments</i>	18
<b>EMPOWER</b>	
<i>Soft Skills Development</i>	19
<i>Establishing A Presence on Campus</i>	20
<i>Internship Programs</i>	20
<i>Apprentice Programs</i>	21
<i>Mentorship Programs</i>	22
<i>Board Service</i>	23
<i>Leveraging Alumni Talent</i>	23
<i>HBCU Faculty and Administrator Development</i>	23
<i>Continuing Education</i>	24
<i>Recruiting Students for HBCU's</i>	24
<b>ADVOCATE</b>	
<i>What's Next - Getting Started</i>	24
<i>Why policy advocacy matters:</i>	25
<i>Federal &amp; State Policy Advocacy Considerations</i>	26
<b>Roadmap to Federal Policy Advocacy: Infographic</b>	26
<b>Goals and KPIs</b>	27
<i>Establishing Goals for Success</i>	27
<b>Making the Commitment</b>	27
<b>Becoming an HBCU Champion - Act Now!</b>	28
<b>Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)</b>	29



## About Us

**Who We Are:** CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion represents our country's largest CEO- driven business commitment to advancing diversity and inclusion (D&I) in the workplace; CEO Action for Racial Equity encompasses more than 100 of CEO Action for D&I's signatory organizations.

**Our Mission:** We identify, develop, and advocate for scalable, sustainable public policies and corporate engagement strategies that addresses systemic racism and social injustice.

**Our Vision:** We advocate for change that will help to eliminate longstanding gaps in access and equity that limit opportunity for Black Americans. Closing these gaps will improve our economy, our society, and the future of all Americans.

## Background



Throughout much of the 19th century, a number of states made it illegal for individuals of African descent to attend college.<sup>1</sup> Still, two decades before the Civil War, the first **HBCU** (Historically Black College or University) was founded in Pennsylvania, with the stated purpose of providing higher education to freed slaves.<sup>2</sup> From the start of the Civil War through 1900, more than 90 such institutions were established around the country—

primarily to train teachers, preachers and other leaders of the Black community.<sup>3</sup>

In the decades that followed, most HBCUs shifted their focus to more traditional academics in scholarship and critical thinking, while also sponsoring journals and conferences to showcase Black intellectual thought.<sup>4</sup>

Notable 20th century graduates of HBCUs include the writer and historian W.E.B. Du Bois; journalist and activist Ida B. Wells; educator, author and Presidential adviser Booker T. Washington; and the great social activist and Civil Rights leader, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.<sup>5</sup>

1 U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. "Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Higher Education Desegregation." ed.gov. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/hq9511.html>

2 Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf), "Historically Black Colleges and Universities" TMCf.org, <http://www.tmcf.org/history-of-hbcus/>

3 Smithsonian: National Museum of African American History & Culture, "5 Things to Know: HBCU Edition" <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/5-things-know-hbcu-edition>

4 Smithsonian, "5 Things to Know: HBCU Edition"

5 Smithsonian, "5 Things to Know: HBCU Edition"

## Background (continued)

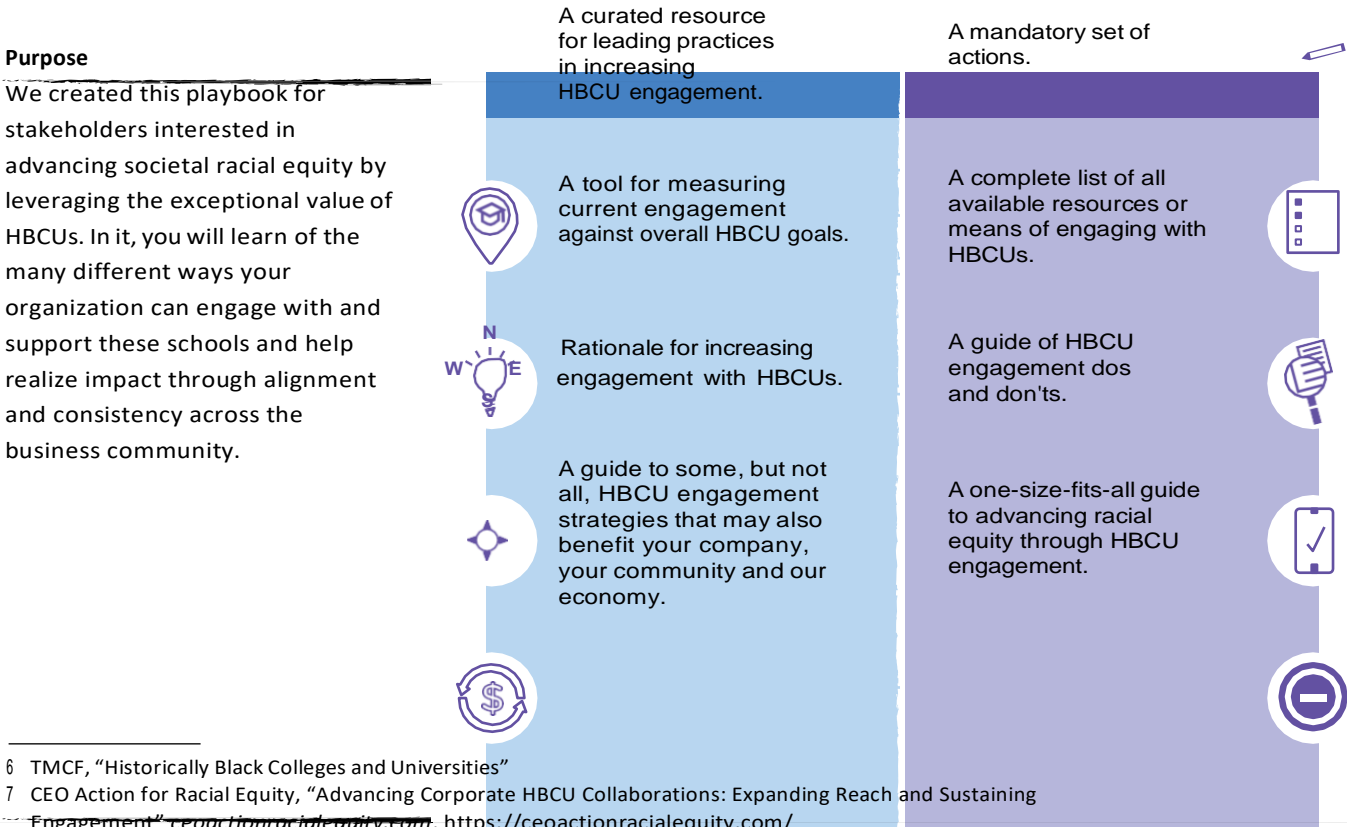
In Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965, Congress officially defined an HBCU as a school of higher learning, accredited and established before 1964, with a principal mission of educating Black Americans.<sup>6</sup>

## Current State of Play

For over 183 years, Historically Black Colleges and Universities have contributed substantially to the Black community, the Black middle class and the country as a whole. However, they continue to be underfunded, under resourced and undervalued. It’s time to change that. It’s never been an issue of quality. It’s an issue of funding and sustainable support. Now is the time to help elevate HBCUs to their rightful place.

To survive and thrive for future generations, HBCUs need sustainable solutions. In addition to more equitable federal and state funding, they need collaborative action and support from corporate America. Working together, we can succeed in preserving the value these institutions bring not only to Black Americans, but to the economy, our culture, and our society as a whole.<sup>7</sup>

## Playbook Overview



<sup>6</sup> TMC, “Historically Black Colleges and Universities”

<sup>7</sup> CEO Action for Racial Equity, “Advancing Corporate HBCU Collaborations: Expanding Reach and Sustaining Engagement” [ceoactionracialequity.com](https://ceoactionracialequity.com/), <https://ceoactionracialequity.com/>

## HBCU Landscape

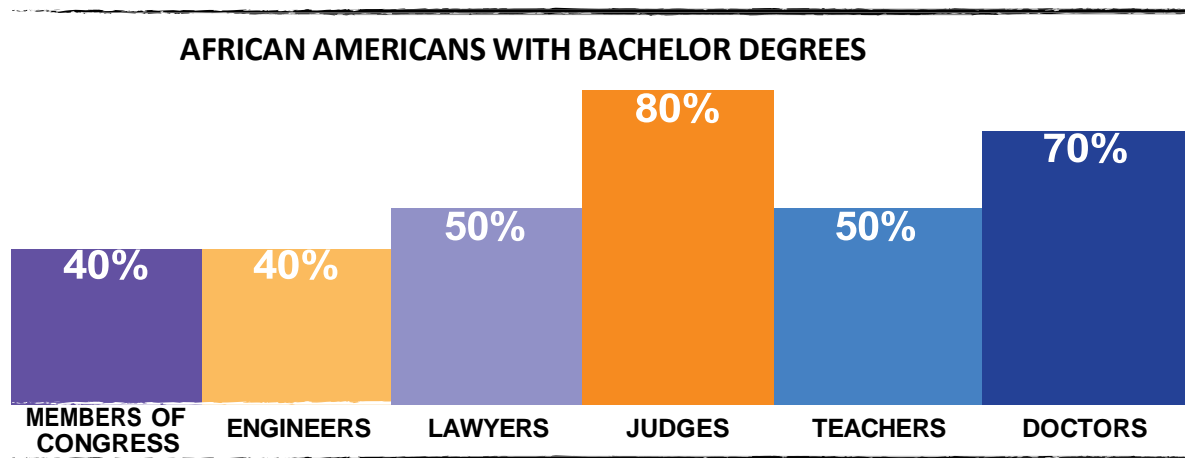
HBCUs play a pivotal role in the education of people of color, and in the vitality of our society at large. Although HBCUs comprise only 3% of the country’s colleges and universities, they enroll 10% of all African American students—turning out almost 20% of all African American graduates.<sup>8</sup> In terms of economic value, they contribute approximately \$15 billion annually in GDP, while generating nearly 135,000 jobs for their local and regional economies.<sup>9</sup>

The value of HBCUs, therefore, extends far beyond the students they educate. In fact, every dollar spent by HBCUs creates \$1.44 worth of productive activity as it moves through local, regional, and national economies.<sup>10</sup>

Despite their undisputed value, HBCUs continue to struggle from the impact of low endowments and historically inequitable funding at the federal, state and local level.<sup>11</sup>

Unlike generously endowed primarily white institutions (PWIs), HBCUs rely heavily on tuition dollars.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, nearly one in four HBCU students comes from a low-income family (thus requiring substantial financial aid for enrollment) compared to less than one in ten students at PWIs.<sup>13</sup>

Because HBCUs are mission-driven and committed to providing access, they cannot raise tuition costs as a means of offsetting losses due to financial divestment, economic volatility, or policy changes. It is noteworthy that despite financial hardship and limited resources, HBCUs have awarded approximately a quarter of the bachelor’s degrees earned by Black students



Source: [https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/Social-Mobility-Report-FINAL.pdf?\\_ga=2.250851777.677912616.1640030856-142393298.1603823796](https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/Social-Mobility-Report-FINAL.pdf?_ga=2.250851777.677912616.1640030856-142393298.1603823796)

8 United Negro College Fund (UNCF). “HBCUs Make America Strong” uncf.org, [https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/HBCU\\_Consumer\\_Brochure\\_FINAL\\_APPROVED.pdf?\\_ga=2.132769934.146987761.1635443826-618748471.1635443826](https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/HBCU_Consumer_Brochure_FINAL_APPROVED.pdf?_ga=2.132769934.146987761.1635443826-618748471.1635443826)

9 UNCF, “HBCUs Make America Strong”

10 UNCF, “HBCUs Make America Strong”

11 Williams, Krystal L. and Davis, BreAnna L., “Public and Private Investments and Divestments In Historically Black Colleges and Universities”, *acenet.edu*, <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/public-and-private-investments-and-divestments-in-hbcus.pdf>

12 Williams and Davis, “Public and Private Investments and Divestments In Historically Black Colleges and Universities”

13 Natheson, R., Castro Samayoa, A., & Gasman, M. (2019). *Onward and upward: Income mobility at Historically Black Colleges and Universities*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Center for Minority Serving Institutions.

## HBCU Landscape *(continued)*

in science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) over the past twenty years, giving thousands of young Black Americans critical paths to the middle class.<sup>14</sup>

Today, HBCUs face multiple challenges that threaten not only their academic and cultural integrity, but indeed their existence. Over the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a disproportionate blow to these institutions, which lacked the cushion of surplus funding to weather the economic impact.

To survive and thrive for future generations, HBCUs should secure and implement sustainable solutions. Along with more equitable government funding, they need the collaborative action and support from corporate America. Working together, we can play an important role in helping to close the racial wealth gap in the United States. A recent study found that addressing the racial wealth gap today could add \$5 trillion to the US economy over the next few years.<sup>15</sup> Preserving these institutions is critical— not only for Black Americans, but for our economy, our culture, and our society as a whole.

## The Issues



### Lower endowments, higher needs and costs

The average HBCU endowment is one-eighth that of the average PWI, a significant gap between HBCU and PWI endowments: “For the 2020 Fiscal Year, there were 110 universities that had an endowment in excess of \$1 billion with Harvard leading the way with a \$40 billion endowment. No HBCU was able to meet the threshold for inclusion.”<sup>17</sup>

Lowered endowments and revenues have caused large infrastructure disparities between HBCUs and PWIs in deferred building, campus amenities, systems, and tech spending in updates and maintenance. For example, some HBCUs lack broadband internet access across campus, including in dorms.<sup>18</sup>

On average, HBCUs have a deferred maintenance spend of \$46 million in areas that include research facilities, dorms, and lecture halls. Nearly half of all HBCU campus building space needs to be updated, restored, or replaced.<sup>19</sup>

14 UNCF. “HBCUs Make America Strong.” <https://uncf.org/news/hbcus-make-america-strong>

15 Citi GPS: Global Perspectives & Solutions, “Closing the Racial Inequity Gaps”, citi.com, [https://ir.citi.com/NvIUkHPilz14Hwd3oxqZBLMn1\\_XPqo5FrxsZD0x6hhil84ZxaxEuJUWmak51UHvYk75VKeHCMI%3D](https://ir.citi.com/NvIUkHPilz14Hwd3oxqZBLMn1_XPqo5FrxsZD0x6hhil84ZxaxEuJUWmak51UHvYk75VKeHCMI%3D)

16 TMCf, “Historically Black Colleges and Universities”

17 Thomas, Filmore IV. “2020 Was a Historic Year for HBCUs, Yet The HBCU Wealth Gap Likely Increased.” *Medium.com*, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-05-27/advancement-initiative-wants-to-steer-hbcu-endowments-into-venture-capital/>. Accessed 29 October 2021.

18 Charles, Safiya “ASU, HBCUs call for more funding to cover costs of transition from classroom to online learning.” *Montgomery Advertiser*, <https://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/story/news/2020/05/05/alabama-state-university-hbcus-funding-technology-broadband-high-speed-internet-classroom-online/3078527001/>. Accessed 8 December, 2021.

19 United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), “Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Action Needed to Improve Participation in Education’s HBCU Capital Financing Program”, [gao.gov, https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-18-455.pdf](https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-18-455.pdf)





## For graduates: A Giant Wealth Gap

Compared to PWIs, HBCUs serve more low-income students, meaning that many graduate with crippling student loan debt. This further increases the wealth gap between Black and white Americans.

In fact, Black college students graduate with twice the debt of their white counterparts (\$52K vs. \$28K).<sup>20</sup> 63% of students at HBCUs rely on Parent PLUS loans.<sup>21</sup>

With 3.5 million STEM jobs for the U.S. to fill by 2025,<sup>22</sup> and an average starting salary difference of 30% between STEM and non-STEM college graduates,<sup>23</sup> corporate engagement and support of HBCU STEM programs, students and graduates will go a long way toward closing the wealth gap.

Supporting Reference: [How HBCU’s Can Accelerate Black Economic Mobility](#)



## Talent & Pipeline: Missed Opportunities

The fact that Black employees are underrepresented across corporate America can be attributed in large part to limited corporate recruiting efforts.

This hurts both corporations, which are missing out on a considerably skilled potential talent pool, and Black graduates, who are deprived of opportunities.

Corporate recruiters who do seek out HBCU talent tend to target only the top three-to-five schools, thus excluding students at the remaining 96+ HBCUs.

Even when HBCU students are successfully recruited, they too often find themselves in corporate cultures ill-equipped to provide the resources needed to support their retention and success.

<sup>20</sup> Scott-Clayton, Judith and Li, Jing, “Black-white disparity in student debt more than triples after graduation” [brookings.edu, https://www.brookings.edu/research/black-white-disparity-in-student-loan-debt-more-than-triples-after-graduation/](https://www.brookings.edu/research/black-white-disparity-in-student-loan-debt-more-than-triples-after-graduation/)

<sup>21</sup> Business Wire, “Student Freedom Initiative Inaugurates Launch at HBCU Campuses Across U.S.” [businesswire.com, https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20210830005380/en/Student-Freedom-Initiative-Inaugurates-Launch-at-HBCU-Campuses-Across-U.S.](https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20210830005380/en/Student-Freedom-Initiative-Inaugurates-Launch-at-HBCU-Campuses-Across-U.S.)

<sup>22</sup> Emerson, “Emerson Survey: 2 in 5 Americans Believe the STEM Worker Shortage is at Crisis Levels”, [emerson.com, https://www.emerson.com/en-us/news/corporate/2018-stem-survey](https://www.emerson.com/en-us/news/corporate/2018-stem-survey)

<sup>23</sup> Deming, David J. and Noray, Kadeem. “STEM Careers and Technological Change.” [https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/ddeming/files/demingnoray\\_stem\\_sept2018.pdf](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/ddeming/files/demingnoray_stem_sept2018.pdf) (September 2018.)

## THE PROBLEM

Despite HBCUs' positive impact on the U.S. economy and our nation overall, these institutions face continued financial hardship stemming from inequitable funding at the federal and state levels.

### HBCU’s have faced years of compounded inequity in:

- > Federal/State Funding
- > Financial Independence
- > Growth & Sustainability
- > Freedom in Curriculum Development
- > Engagement & Support from Corporate America
- > Infrastructure Support



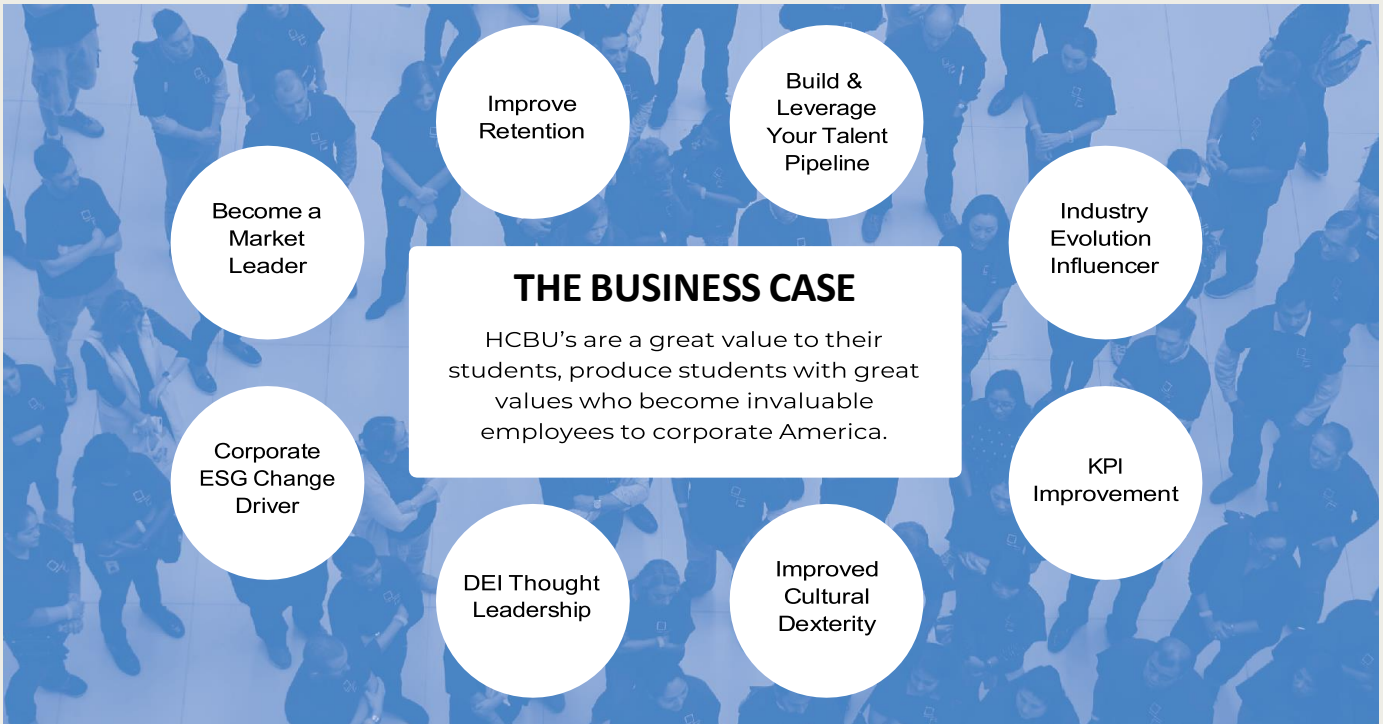
**46%**  
HBCU building space that needs to be replaced



**2X**  
Average debt for black students after 4 years of college

“If America allows black colleges and universities to die, it will be the worst kind of discrimination and denegration known in history”

— The late Dr. Benjamin E. Mays,  
former Moorehouse College President



## The Business Case

**More major companies are engaging with HCBUs and are recruiting greater numbers of HBCU grads than ever before. Based on many studies, there's a strong business case to be made.**

*In a challenging economy, innovation is a prime asset for every corporation. The diversity that results from recruiting HBCU talent drives innovation across your organization, while also making good on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and corporate social responsibility commitments. This is important at a time when stakeholders and the media are scrutinizing corporations for disparities between talk and action.*

*Likewise, today's top talent wants to connect with organizations that share their values. In the next section, we'll explore more fully the business case for engaging with HCBUs.*

**Build and Leverage Your Talent Pipeline** Engaging with HCBUs is a win/win. Your organization receives the benefit of motivated, high-caliber employees, along with the robust vitality of a diverse culture. Likewise, HBCU

graduates get career and life opportunities they would otherwise not have had.

### Improve Retention

Even after the hiring and onboarding phases, integrating diversity candidates into a homogenous work culture requires thoughtful and intentional action. This is where collaborating with HCBUs can help. With their experience, these schools can offer your leaders advice on leading practices for fostering a culture that embraces, rather than alienates, Black talent. Developing authentic relationships with HCBUs will also help you discover and explore other mutually beneficial collaboration opportunities.

### Be an Industry Evolution Influencer

Until recently, HCBUs have been largely under the radar of corporate America. Even today, many corporations do not yet fully recognize the value these institutions provide, and the positive impact their graduates have made on American business and culture.

When you work with an HBCU, your company becomes an industry evolution influencer.

What's that? A front runner in brand diversity and corporate culture; and a role model for shaping the future of American enterprise.

### **KPI Improvement**

Research consistently confirms the benefits of diversity in the workplace. A 2017 study by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) identified diversity as a key driver of innovation. Diverse leadership teams, it found, produce 19% more revenue as a result of innovation. This is not surprising, since organizations with diverse workforces develop more relevant products in tune with customers' changing needs. A study of venture capital teams, noted that teams of diverse collaborators were better at the creative thinking that's essential for thriving in a volatile, competitive environment.

Here's more information on the relationship between diversity, innovation and financial success.

<https://www.bcg.com/en-us/publications/2018/how-diverse-leadership-teams-boost-innovation>

<https://hbr.org/2018/07/the-other-diversity-dividend>

### **Improved Cultural Dexterity**

With a solid HBCU engagement strategy, corporations develop cross-cultural leading practices that advance "soft skills," such as emotional intelligence and interpersonal communication. In the process, they strengthen the organization-wide cultural awareness that makes a workforce more sensitive to implicit bias and open to learning about others. These skills equip leaders, employees and their adjacent customers and markets to thrive— even in unpredictable business climates.

### **DEI Thought Leadership**

As is true for building any authentic relationship, the HBCU engagement process requires investment. You should be willing to familiarize yourself with all HBCUs can offer your business, along with the inequity-driven challenges and obstacles these school face. Likewise, you should

be open to assessing and improving diversity, equity and inclusion strategies within your business. By establishing relationships with HBCUs, your company can stand out as a DEI thought leader. In turn, the HBCU graduates you hire will contribute their insight and share their experience.

### **Corporate ESG Change Driver**

When you deepen your engagement with HBCUs, you enhance your business's **ESG** (Environmental, Social, and Governance) strategy. "There's a growing body of evidence to suggest that stocks of companies that meet high standards for environmental, social and governance factors (ESG) are actually likely to outperform the market"<sup>24</sup>

Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Black Americans, businesses need to focus on initiatives within an ESG strategy, including those that support minority populations. Across corporate America, recruiting, recognizing, and rewarding diverse talent and the institutions that educate them is now a requisite, not an option, for competitiveness, innovation, and profitability.<sup>25</sup>

### **Become A Market Leader**

In addition to exposing weaknesses across our systems and institutions, the COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated numerous paths the business community can take to help shape a more equitable future.

When you raise your HBCU engagement to the next level— from recruiting only to broader collaboration and support in areas like infrastructure, curriculum development, internships, and mentorship—you position your company as a leader: respected, sought after and looked up to as a model for years to come.

<sup>24</sup> Heimer, Matthew. "Doing Well by Doing Good: 5 Stocks to Buy for 2019" *fortune.com*, <https://fortune.com/2018/12/05/best-stocks-esg-2019-walmart-abbott-merck/> (December 5, 2018)

<sup>25</sup> Wiley, Rusty, "Why The ESG Spotlight Should Be On Diversity and Inclusion in 2021" *forbes.com*, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2021/03/23/why-the-esg-spotlight-should-be-on-diversity-and-inclusion-in-2021/?sh=37c43d53399d>

## Why Culture Matters

Launching a successful HBCU engagement strategy calls for first exploring your organization's culture in order to recognize and address deficits that could make HBCU students or alumni feel undervalued, unwelcome, or misunderstood.

Here HBCUs can help by providing actionable guidance at every level of your organization. It's critical that all employees understand the importance of the engagement strategy to the ongoing success of the business. Committing to this work will help increase HBCU talent retention, and also exert a positive impact on business outcomes.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: 10 Lessons From 231 CHROs](#)



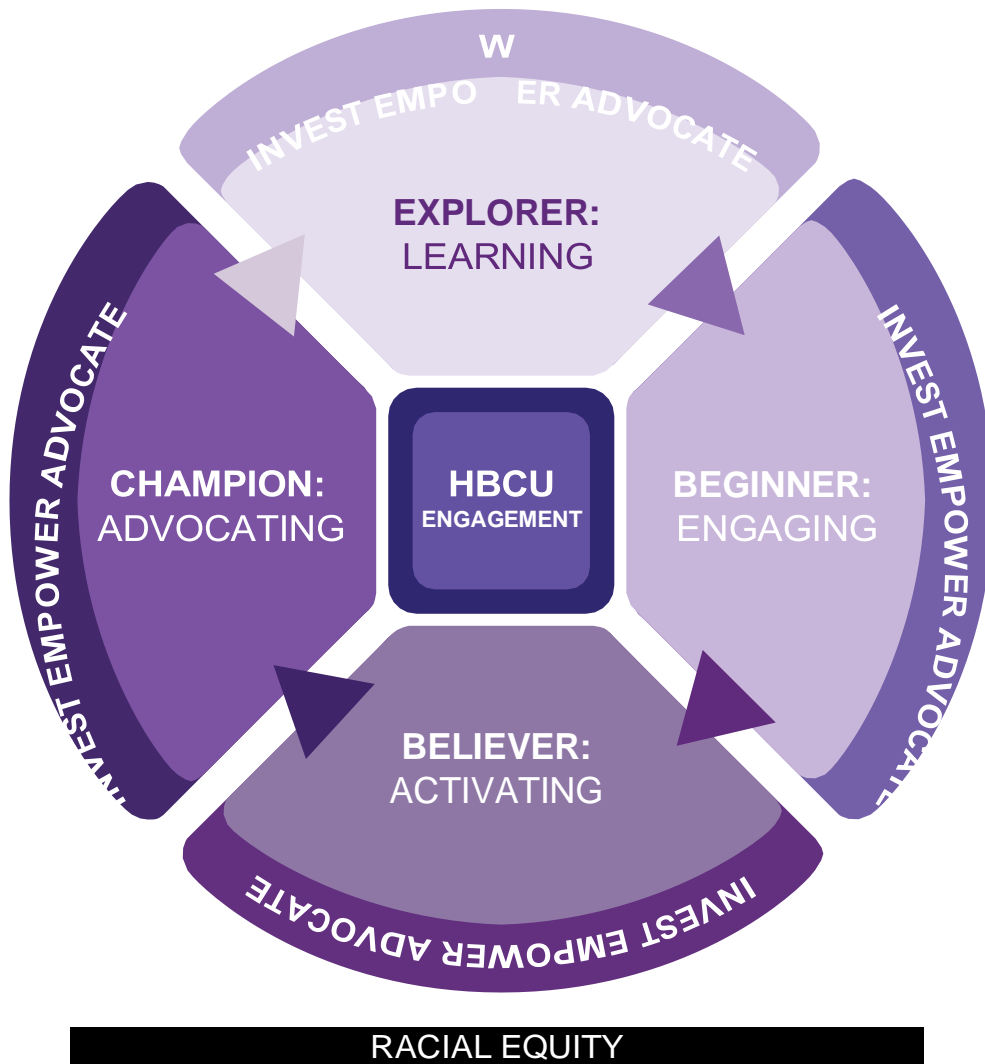
### SUSTAINING THE HBCU

- Minimizes tuition increases
- Provides scholarship support
- Facilitates investment in infrastructure needs
- Offers protection against decreases in state and federal funding
- Provides high-quality services at a lower student cost than otherwise feasible
- Supports other factors that contribute to institutional quality, such as faculty positions, medical research, and libraries

# Maturity Continuum

Once you've assessed your organization's culture for its readiness to sustain HBCU talent, it's time to identify the starting point of your HBCU engagement journey. As you consider next steps, please take the time to review the maturity continuum below, engaging critical internal stakeholders to participate in assessment and planning.

If you're just starting out, you'll find resources here to help you design a strategy that's of mutual benefit to both organizations. If you're further along the continuum, you'll find ideas for deepening your relationship and doing even more. For example, if you already have a strong recruiting relationship, you might consider collaborating in curriculum development or mentoring. Likewise, if you're already heavily invested in one or more HBCUs, consider becoming an HBCU policy advocate at the federal, state or local level.



# Playbook Solution Sets:

## INVEST - EMPOWER - ADVOCATE

### Getting Started



Rising college costs are having the greatest impact on low-income students. This creates multiple challenges for already under-endowed HBCUs. Because these institutions disproportionately enroll first-generation and low-income college students, they invest more than their PWI counterparts in need-based aid.<sup>26</sup>

Beyond financial aid, these institutions have other pressing needs. Decades of structural racism have resulted in inequitable government funding, along with traditionally low corporate support and investments. Unlike many PWIs, many HBCUs compete while experiencing significant resource-constraints.

When companies create and sustain a college-to-corporate pipeline, we make sure HBCU students have access to good jobs across corporate America. This benefits the graduates, the companies that hire them, and HBCUs that prepared them to become valuable assets to our companies.

It's time for the business community to consider investing in HBCUs not only in recruiting and hiring, but also in their infrastructure, curriculum, and surrounding communities. The more we bolster the sustainability of HBCUs, the better off they—and our businesses—will be.

Below we explore several strategic HBCU investments: **Strategic Giving**

**Aligned to Your Philanthropic Mission HBCU Matching Funds Programs**

**Directed Giving**

- **School Directed Giving**
- **Black Professional Organization/Association Directed Giving**
- **Foundation Directed Giving**
- **Community Development Directed Giving**
- **Specific R&D Collaborations/Fellowships Corporation +**

**HBCU Curriculum Development**

- **Employee Volunteer Day Programs Funding**

**Endowments**

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<sup>26</sup> Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf), "Historically Black Colleges and Universities" TMCf.org, <http://www.tmcf.org/history-of-hbcus/>

### Strategic Giving Aligned to Your Philanthropic Mission

Consider aligning your company's philanthropic giving to areas of expertise and corporate social responsibility commitments. By working closely with HBCUs, your foundation or corporate responsibility team can establish on-campus or in-the-community programs consistent with your existing pillars of charitable giving and support.

Here are some examples of successful alignment between a corporation's mission, values, and inherent strengths and Strategic HBCU Giving:

- [Apple teams up with HBCUs to bring coding and creativity opportunities to communities across the US - Apple](#)
- [IBM Establishes First Quantum Education and Research Initiative for Historically Black Colleges and Universities - Sep 17, 2020](#)

### HBCU Matching Funds Programs

Through employee **matching gifts**, you can engage your entire organization in making meaningful donations to HBCUs. Most often, companies launch an internal campaign, pledging to match or better the total contributions of employees before implementing a matching funds program, it's recommended to engage with the HBCU recipient to get insight into specific needs that can help you shape the language of your "ask".

Typically, employees submit donation forms to employers, who finalize the matching process with their contributions. Once informed of the donation amount some HBCUs issue a similar matching challenge to their alumni. If your organization employs HBCU alumni, this is another great way to engage them.

Corporate guidelines can vary from company to company. Some develop creative approaches, such as offering employees additional vacation days for donations equal to one day's salary. Likewise, while some employers match employee donations dollar-for-dollar, others expand their giving by doubling or even tripling the amount that comes in.

**Fundraising match programs** are similar to matching gifts, in that employers will match (or better) employee contributions along with funds raised by (e.g.) targeted walks, runs, cycles, and other special events. Across the giving cycle, funds raised in targeted campaigns go directly to HBCUs. Below are some examples of companies with Matching Gift Programs:

- [The New York Life Foundation | New York Life Foundation Matching Gift Program & Employee Giving from Bank of America Our Commitment to Making the World Better | Huber Employee Engagement | Voya.com](#)

### Directed Giving

Your organization can create impact through directed giving to a particular institutional program or initiative. Establishing a relationship with HBCU leaders will help you identify the areas in most need of support. Alternatively, you can leverage Black professional organizations or associations that focus on advancing Black talent. Many of these groups already have chapters at HBCUs, or collaborate with nonprofits like the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, United Negro College Fund, or National Association For Equal Opportunity In Higher Education. They can help with everything from establishing a relationship with an HBCU to

distributing resources to these institutions and their surrounding communities. Below, you'll find examples of directed giving:

**School Directed Giving** - on campus initiatives include:

- [Google announces \\$50 million in grants for HBCUs](#)
- [Alabama Power Gifts Stillman Grant for Critical Technology Needs](#)
- [Johnson C. Smith University awarded \\$1 million grant from Wells Fargo](#)

#### **Black Professional Organization/Association Directed Giving**

Many [Black professional organizations](#) or associations include HBCU students and alumni. Collaborating with these groups gives your organization access to diverse, experienced talent.

- [Cummins Inc. and the National Society of Black Engineers Launch \\$1.5 Million STEM Diversity Program](#)

#### **Foundation Directed Giving**

*Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf)*

- [Boeing leads the way in HBCU-Corporate partnership cultivation](#)
- [Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Citi Foundation Announce Partnership to Provide Career Readiness Support to HBCU Students](#)
- [Wendy's and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund Partnership](#)

*United Negro College Fund (UNCF)*

- [RB AND LYSOL PARTNER WITH THE UNCF \(UNITED NEGRO COLLEGE FUND\)](#)
- [CVS Health Foundation establishes \\$5 million college scholarship for Black and Latinx students pursuing health care careers | CVS Health](#)
- [UNCF Establishes \\$1M MetLife Foundation Scholarship Program | UNCF](#)

*Guild Education*

- [Chipotle Expands Debt-Free Degrees To Include HBCU - Oct 7, 2020](#)

#### **Community Development Directed Giving**

- [Microsoft awards Philander Smith College \\$300,000 for Community Skills Grant Program](#)
- [THEI Announces Partnership With TDOC and Lane College](#)

#### **Specific R&D Collaborations/Fellowships**

- [Bristol Myers Squibb - UNCF, Bristol Myers Squibb Announce Second Cohort of the Ernest E. Just Postgraduate Fellowship and Extension of Partnership Through 2026 \(bms.com\)](#)

#### **Corporation and HBCU Curriculum Development**

Collaborating between HBCUs and business leaders of forward-thinking organizations can lead to innovative, sustainable solutions for these institutions. Often the relationship involves direct interaction between the business and a professor, dean, or a particular discipline or department, such as business or engineering. Through interaction, organizations get to identify student talent, and help to improve curriculum development.



Among many other possibilities, a pairing program can bring together a college leader and corporate leader for the purpose of exploring synergies of benefit to both organizations. The corporate leader can learn more about the academic leader’s vision of the HBCU’s future, including outstanding gaps and programs they hope to expand. The more you know, the better your company can contribute to the HBCU’s competitiveness and long-term sustainability.

Engaging at one level will provide other opportunities to build authentic relationships that blossom over time. Below are some examples of curriculum development:

- [Apple Faculty Fellows](#) is a long-time champion of HBCUs, Apple is establishing two innovation grants to support HBCU engineering programs. These grants will help HBCU Colleges of Engineering develop their silicon and hardware engineering curriculum in collaboration with Apple’s experts. Through mentorship programs, Apple is also assisting in curriculum development, the enhancement of lab spaces, and the support of HBCU educators pursuing R&D.
- In its effort to collaborate successfully with HBCUs, Salesforce has created [HBCUforce](#), which benefits companies and colleges in three ways: through interactive, complementary workshops that introduce faculty and students to Salesforce; by facilitating student interest groups to sustain engagement; and by guiding colleges and universities through the training and certification required for faculty members to teach a CRM or Salesforce-related course.

### **Employee Volunteer Day Programs**

Another way to support HBCUs is by launching an employee Volunteer Day program. Many companies offer employees a specified number of paid hours—from one day to 40+ hours a year—to volunteer with a program of their choice.

Volunteer Day programs with HBCUs can increase your company’s brand awareness on campus. Your employees get to know students and faculty—which helps them to identify talent and identify further engagement opportunities. Whether your company already has a Volunteer Day program or you’re thinking about starting one, we encourage you to include HBCUs in your planning.



## Funding Endowments

The average HBCU endowment is one-eighth the size of the average PWI. This means that HBCUs have far fewer reserves to fall back on in the face of economic downturns and decreased investment from alumni, foundations, and corporations. Many HBCUs are struggling financially – they are both more tuition-dependent than PWIs and more committed to educating a student body in need of financial aid. A direct contribution to an HBCU’s endowment fund can have a powerful impact on the sustainability of these valuable institutions, helping them weather the winds of economic volatility, while providing a steady stream of income that:

- Reduces tuition increases
- Provides scholarship support
- Facilitates investment in infrastructure needs
- Offers safeguards against decreases in state and federal funding
- Provides high-quality services at a lower student cost than otherwise feasible
- Supports other factors that contribute to institutional quality, such as faculty positions, medical research, and libraries

Despite woeful under-funding, under-resourcing, and a historic lack of interest by corporations, HBCUs have continually over-performed in supplying talent to corporate America. When you create sustainable long-term relationships with HBCUs, you help to develop and support this critical talent pipeline.

As a corporate endowment donor, you have a choice. You can contribute to a general endowment fund or initiate (and name) a unique scholarship endowment fund. Contributions to endowments, departments or for specific buildings or programs allow you to remain involved with the college over time, continually contributing to the institution’s ongoing sustainability and success.



(Source: Afro.com) information as of 12/2021

## Act: What's Next



### EMPOWER

Because building a robust diversity pipeline is essential to the future of American enterprise, what's good for HBCUs and their graduates is also good for your company.

Consider these guidelines and programs:

[Soft Skills Development](#) [Establishing a](#)

[Presence on Campus](#) [Internship Programs](#)

[Apprentice Programs](#) [Mentorship](#)

[Programs](#) [Leveraging Alumni Talent](#)

[HBCU Faculty and Administrator Development](#) [Continuing Education](#)

[Recruiting Students for HBCUs](#)

### Soft Skills Development

While many of the programs recommended in this playbook focus on the development of “hard skills” of value in the workplace, “soft skills” are equally critical to success.

It is a common misconception that already-strapped HBCUs have the resources to prepare their students for the workplace. As you develop your HBCU engagement strategy, please make sure you give HBCU students, faculty and administrators opportunities to develop soft skills around:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Networking
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Professionalism

For example, a recent collaboration between Capital One and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund led to the creation of the “[Build to Best](#)” [HBCU Early Talent Program](#). This program targets 100 rising HBCU sophomores, preparing them early for post-graduation corporate careers. The program encompasses skill development and career readiness that helps students bridge the gap between the familiarity of the HBCU environment and the cultural expectations they're likely to encounter in new workplaces across corporate America.

## Establishing a Presence on Campus

Traditional HBCU engagement focuses on campus recruitment through career fairs. But without intentionality, this kind of in-and-out interaction rarely leads to authentic or lasting relationships between corporations and HBCUs.

Consider first establishing a strong presence on campus among students, faculty and administration. When students feel they already “know” your company and feel good about your brand, they’ll be more likely to engage and will want to learn more.

Beyond providing a critical pipeline to diverse talent, HBCUs are also your potential customers. For example, an HBCU may be looking for a financial services company to help manage their endowment. The more deliberate and authentic your relationship, the greater the likelihood of uncovering unanticipated opportunities to work together.

Here are some ideas for building out your campus engagement and recruiting strategies:

- Create targeted recruiting strategies for HBCUs
  - To amplify impact, you’ll want to develop a cohesive strategy for HBCU engagement across business units and internal functions within your company
- Discuss and share leading practices with other companies
- Focus on decreasing the turnaround time on:
  - The feedback loop with students
  - Relationship development
- Establish your company’s brand on campus
  - Attend career fairs
  - Explore renting HBCU facilities and rooms for corporate events and meetings
  - Make an effort to get to know faculty and administrators



## Internship Programs

Through internship programs, you can collaborate with the school’s Career Center in workshops, classroom visits, job fairs, on-campus interviews, networking events and, most importantly, connecting interns with their first corporate employment experiences. A strong presence on campus increases brand awareness, making your company more attractive

to top talent. For ideas on how to get started, reach out to internship organizations such as [INROADS](#) and [HBCU Connect](#), which have established presence on HBCU campuses.

However you structure your program to get the most out of your efforts, you should commit to the engagement. Setting specific and measurable goals is recommended. You may decide in advance on the percentage or number of HBCU internships you’ll offer to increase reach and provide meaningful opportunity. Likewise, you may consider creating scholarships targeted to specific demographics or areas of concentration or creating reciprocal internships through Giving and Funding programs.

This allows you to offer particular value to Black students in niche fields such as patent law, actuarial sciences, or architecture, where they have been long underrepresented. In this way, your organization can help enhance the likelihood of HBCU graduates getting jobs in high-paying fields.

Wherever your organization currently stands on its HBCU engagement continuum, it's important to remember that these organizations are ready, willing, and eager to work with you.

- Organizations like the Thurgood Marshall College Fund have established programs you can connect with, including The National Black Talent Bank— a talent resourcing repository of uniquely talented Black students. As noted above, INROADS and HBCU Connect offer similar resources to connect with Black talent.
- [Boeing, participates in an executive leader speaker series at South Carolina State University, in which company representatives speak to students on a variety of topics spanning general career advice, “a day in the life” preview and explanations of expectations of hiring managers.](#)
- PwC hosts an annual Faculty Forum, attended by more than 100 faculty and staff from over 30 HBCUs, to update HBCU representatives on the latest capabilities companies are looking for in new hires.<sup>27</sup>

### Apprentice Programs

Through holistic pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, your company can recruit and engage students in developing

the technical, professional, and personal skills needed to sustain careers in your workforce. You can call on professional and personal development collaborators to help you develop these programs. And always remember: the more meaningful programs are mutually beneficial for your company and the students you bring in.



Here are just a few of the benefits for students:

- **Income-generating work:** Apprentices become paid employees, producing high-quality work while acquiring skills aligned with your company's upcoming needs.
- **Apprenticeships combine on-the-job and classroom learning,** which rounds out traditional education with real-world experience and skills.
- **Credentials/Certifications:** At the successful completion of the program, you can issue student apprentices a portable, nationally recognized credential that can be presented in their subsequent job searches and used to create opportunities for career growth.

Assigning a full-time dedicated program manager is an effective way to create a successful program. Both the [Department of Labor \(DoL\)](#) and your state's [Apprenticeship Agency \(SAA\)](#) can offer [models](#) and collaborations to help you establish these programs. The DoL offers a customizable template-based approach to implementation.

How It Works:

- A hybrid learning model features a combination of work-based, classroom and online learning, including certification in professional skills and development aligned with your

<sup>27</sup> PwC, “Leading with trust, transparency, and purpose”, 20, <https://www.pwc.com/us/en/about-us/purpose-and-values/assets/fy21-pwc-purpose-report-full-report.pdf>

company's needs. This holistic model exposes students to professional work environments, while preparing them to meet organizational expectations.

- Along with valuable business skills and job certifications, apprentices are coached by experienced leaders in organizational norms and culture, professional ethics, time management, relationship management, effective communication, workplace etiquette, diversity in the workplace, building trust, managing outside stressors, and emotional intelligence.
- Apprentices who have completed program requirements are well prepared to enter the workforce. They make great full-time employees!

### **Mentorship Programs**

Many companies think of mentorship in terms of student needs only. But mentorship also offers peer-to-peer opportunities with HBCU faculty and administration. Consider:

- For students: With the guidance of mentors, students explore career paths, pursue needed skillsets, and enter the workforce with greater insight and understanding. Corporate- HBCU mentorship programs give students direct access to opportunities, and to expand professional networks for future employment.
- For companies: Your top talent engages with students likely to join your workforce, helping them to identify goals and paths based on their interests and your company's needs. In this way, mentees receive valuable guidance and coaching, while mentors expand their own knowledge and leadership skills. Direct access enriches your talent pipeline, while giving students critical professional exposure early in their college careers.
- For Faculty and HBCU Leaders: Peer-to-peer mentoring helps HBCUs implement curriculum that's relevant and up-to-date, while keeping business leaders informed on new, business- relevant research and information. Your company helps to shape a culture-readiness and onboarding program that sets students up for professional success.
- Mentors can range from recent graduates and entry-level employees to senior leaders at your company. The relationship is more effective when students have a say in the matching process. Some may prefer a mentor who is closer in age and newer to the workforce, who can offer insight into the school-to-work transition. Others may prefer a seasoned professional with experience in a particular discipline or field.
- Third-party organizations that may be able to provide you with the information you need to implement a mentorship program include [HBCU Hub](#), [TMCF](#), [UNCF](#), [HBCU First](#), [National Cares Mentoring Movement](#)

### Mentoring Program Guidelines:

- Participation is voluntary.
- Companies should carefully select and match mentors to students, faculty, and administrators, based on mutual interests and goals, needs and skills.
- Mentors should have a genuine desire to engage and the willingness to commit enough time to provide a meaningful experience.
- Mentors can come from every level of your company and stage of their career. They can include HBCU alumni, top talent, successors, and emerging talent.
- The more meaningful mentor-mentee experiences happen when the relationship meets the students' expressed interests and goals. (Ask!)

- A typical mentoring relationship goes on for about a year. Still, the professional relationship often continues to provide value beyond the scope of the program.
- A quality mentorship program will identify potential internship opportunities for mentees.
- Mentorship programs should include built-in survey mechanisms that help you measure impact and value for both mentors and mentees

### **Board Service**

Because board service offers benefits both ways for participants, many HBCUs have invited corporate leaders to serve on their boards. This gives HBCUs access to perspectives from top corporate leaders who can provide guidance for the creation of sustainable solutions to longstanding HBCU challenges. Likewise, leading corporations get direct-line access to many assets, including talent, of HBCUs.

### **Leveraging Alumni Talent**

The HBCU alumni talent pool offers a valuable diversity pipeline for filling more senior talent needs. HBCU alumni also make terrific recruiters, who can help you to foster HBCU relationships and get closer to DEI goals.

As you engage with HBCU alumni, consider:

- Alumni as developers of corporate talent
- Alumni developed in leadership skills and more
- Alumni and company supporting the development of HBCUs, HBCU faculty, HBCU staff

A great way to engage HBCU alumni talent is by contacting the HBCU Alumni Office of the institution you'd like to work with. You may also have local alumni networks in your area for potential recruiting events and information sessions.

### **HBCU Faculty and Administrator Development**

By investing in the development of HBCU faculty and administrators, you help strengthen the institution and its talent pipeline. You can play a direct role in shaping academic curriculum that aligns closely with emerging skills and the kinds of experience that will be valuable to your company in coming years.

Use the examples below to evaluate the resources and training your company can offer HBCU faculty and administrators:

- [SEI partners w/UNCF to offer PD to HBCU faculty](#)
- <sup>1</sup> [Collaborate with the HBCU Faculty Development Network](#)
- [Support organizations like H.E.L.F. \(the Higher Education Leadership Foundation\) which works to allow HBCU leaders to “lift as they climb” by providing learning and mentoring opportunities for these individuals](#)
- [As part of its Community Education Initiative, Apple is supporting Clark Atlanta University with equipment and ongoing professional development to become the pre-eminent HBCU C2 community center to bring coding and creativity to Atlanta.](#)

### Continuing Education

Strategic Education, Inc (SEI) is an organization that is leveraging the value of sponsoring continuing education and certifications for HBCU students and faculty. According to SEI CEO, “At SEI, we’ve invested in innovation and reimagined our role as not just an education provider, but an enabler of economic mobility—to ensure that our graduates have the skills and tools to succeed professionally.”

Consider investing in continuing education at an HBCU.

[Sophia Learning Platform available to HBCU faculty and staff in partnership with UNCF](#)

### Recruiting Students for HBCUs

Through HBCU recruitment strategies, the business community supports the continued health and success of these institutions. HBCUs graduate the majority of Black STEM professionals and executive leaders, so it’s in the interest of corporate America to take notice and get involved. The United Negro College Fund and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, both subject matter experts in this space, have successfully launched initiatives corporations can use to expand recruiting efforts and execute on a broader scale.

Examples of programming and leading practices in this area:

[CYBER.ORG Launches K-12 HBCU Feeder Program to Grow/Diversify the National Cybersecurity Workforce](#)

[UNCF K-12 Education Fellowship Program](#)

[UNCF Best Practices from HBCU’s to the K-12 Sector](#)

### Act: What’s Next



In this playbook, CEO Action for Racial Equity has laid out paths of HBCU engagement through internal corporate strategies, rather than policy.

We’d be remiss, however, if we didn’t use our platform to acknowledge the broader environment in which these schools exist and struggle to survive.

HBCUs can benefit from companies that create authentic relationships with the schools which may include the corporate engagement strategies listed above but may also include being advocates for the institutions. HBCUs would benefit significantly from corporate America’s willingness to address longstanding inequities, particularly the critical issue of government funding. As companies determine their HBCU engagement strategy, they should consider leveraging their relationships and influence in working toward public policy change in addition to the corporate engagement strategies described above.



### Why policy matters:

1. Federal, state and local funding makes up the largest share of HBCU funding:
  - “Public four-year HBCUs rely more heavily on federal, state, and local appropriations, grants, and contracts as a source of total revenue than do public four-year non-HBCUs (54 versus 38 percent, respectively). Private gifts, grants, and contracts represent a lower proportion of total revenue at HBCUs than at non-HBCUs, just 1% of revenue at public 4-year HBCUs and 17% of revenue at private 4-year HBCUs”<sup>28</sup>
2. Decades of structural inequities have resulted in historic underfunding of these institutions:
  - Although federal funding to HBCUs has increased over the last decade, the rise is not sufficient to meet institutional needs. “Across federal agencies during 2013, excluding the Department of Agriculture, HBCUs received 3% or less of each agency’s total investment in institutions of higher education. These funds (\$172 million), although seemingly substantial, are shared across roughly 100 different HBCUs and are unevenly distributed to only a small subset.”<sup>29</sup>
  - The state of Maryland recently reached a \$577 million settlement in a lawsuit alleging that the state provided inequitable resources to its four HBCUs.<sup>30</sup>
3. While some of these schools are finally beginning to receive more equitable funding, they continue to face significant financial challenges caused by historic underfunding.
  - “According to a report by the Government Accountability Office, HBCUs have an average of \$46 million in deferred maintenance backlogs, or repairs that weren’t performed when they should have been or were scheduled and delayed. That number is even higher at some colleges
    - North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, N.C., has a backlog of maintenance repair projects worth about \$133 million, while North Carolina Central University in Durham, N.C., has over \$200 million in deferred building maintenance”<sup>31</sup>

For HBCUs, long-term sustainability and success is incumbent upon increased, permanent funding from state, local and federal sources, along with corporate giving, and sustained relationships between corporate America and HBCUs.

We encourage you to learn more about these issues, join the conversation, and become a true advocate for HBCUs.

<sup>28</sup> The National Academies of Sciences Engineering Medicine (NAP), “Minority Serving Institutions: America’s Underutilized Resource for Strengthening the STEM Workforce” (2019) Chapter: 4 MSI Investment and Returns on Investment, [nap.edu, https://www.nap.edu/read/25257/chapter/6#83](https://www.nap.edu/read/25257/chapter/6#83)

<sup>29</sup> NAP, “Minority Serving Institutions: America’s Underutilized Resource for Strengthening the STEM Workforce”

<sup>30</sup> Shwe, Elizabeth, “Maryland Settles HBCU Federal Lawsuit for \$577 Million”, [marylandmatters.org, https://www.marylandmatters.org/2021/04/28/maryland-settles-hbcu-federal-lawsuit-for-577-million/](https://www.marylandmatters.org/2021/04/28/maryland-settles-hbcu-federal-lawsuit-for-577-million/)

<sup>31</sup> Gravely, Alexis, “A Push to Improve HBCU Infrastructure”, [insidehighered.com, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/05/26/bipartisan-bill-would-provide-federal-funding-infrastructure-projects-hbcus](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/05/26/bipartisan-bill-would-provide-federal-funding-infrastructure-projects-hbcus)

## Federal & State Policy Advocacy Considerations

Organizations that represent HBCUs such as [Thurgood Marshall College Fund](#), United Negro College Fund, and National Association for [Equal Opportunity in Higher Education](#) actively maintain policy advocacy resources and highlight priority areas of need. Leverage these and other national and local organizations to guide your policy advocacy strategy. Some examples federal policy areas of focus may include

- Increasing Pell Grant award amounts and expanding availability
- Increasing infrastructure investments
- Enhancing R&D capacity by increasing grant award amounts for laboratory facilities on HBCU campuses
- Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965
- Advocating for follow through of commitments to HBCUs

State governments should support HBCUs by:

- Recognizing the efficacy and relevance of HBCUs from a social, cultural, and economic perspective
- Equitable distribution of funds designated for Higher Education on the state level
- Building unique public and private collaborations
- Exploring alternatives to enrollment-driven and performance-based funding formulas
- Enacting legislation to increase non- recurring and recurring funding to both public and private HBCUs

# ROADMAP TO HBCU POLICY ADVOCACY

## ASSESS CURRENT HBCU POLICY LANDSCAPE

*Understanding the "Why"*

As an advocate for HBCUs, it's critical that you educate yourself on the history of HBCUs and assess the current environment of policies that impact HBCUs on a Federal, State and Local level.

## IDENTIFY HBCU ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

*Identifying "Who"*

This is not a path you have to take alone. Identifying HBCU advocacy organizations is a critical component of the path to policy. These organizations can help as you begin to identify policy priorities for your organization. Continue fostering your relationships with HBCUs.

## IDENTIFY KEY INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

*Aligning the "What"*

Identify a team within your corporation to lead your HBCU policy advocacy efforts. It's important that all internal stakeholders are aware of what you want to accomplish as a corporate advocate for HBCUs.

## IDENTIFY MORE MEANINGFUL WAYS TO ENGAGE

*Planning the "How"*

Select impact mechanisms that work for your organizations. There are many ways to make an impact: writing letters to officials, lobbying, meeting with representatives, testifying, etc. As you work to identify the best way to engage, make sure that you are leveraging your external HBCU relationships in the process.

## IMPLEMENT POLICY ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

*Starting the "When" and "Where"*

Once you've identified the most effective advocacy options for your organization, now is the time to let your support for HBCU's be heard. Stay in tune with what's happening on the Federal, State, and Local level so that you are ready to activate when HBCUs need you.

Thurgood Marshall College Fund <https://www.tmcdf.org>

United Negro College Fund <https://www.uncf.org> National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education <https://www.nafeoneation.org>

**HBCU Advocacy Organizations**

## Goals and KPIs

### Suggestions for Establishing Goals for Success

Before setting goals and accountability measures for your HBCU engagement strategy, make sure you have first thoroughly assessed where your organization stands on its DEI journey. What are its capabilities? Its strengths and weaknesses? Which areas need addressing and improvement?

Meaningful collaborations require more than “checking the boxes.” They call for self-awareness, organizational investment, company-wide support, and the authentic commitment of business leaders.

Here are a few suggestions for getting started:

- Define the “why” of your desire to pursue a strategic collaboration with HBCUs. For example:
  - Increase diversity hires
  - Invest in diverse innovation
  - Support the economic development of the community
- Define the optimal outcome of a strategic collaborative relationship. For example:
  - Increase company recruiting at smaller or lesser known HBCUs
  - Increase HBCU recruiting by (e.g.) 20%
  - Increase collaborations with HBCUs by 15%
  - Increase corporate giving to HBCUs by 10%
- Make sure the selected engagement is achievable and sustainable for your organization
- Identify key internal stakeholders and keep them informed and engaged throughout the process

With the implementation of any new program, you can expect challenges and even bumps along the way. As organizations decide which HBCU to support, they should make subsequent decisions with fairness and consistency. Choosing a school should be a strategic decision, involving all relevant stakeholders and with clear-eyed attention to commitments in funding and leadership. Even the most well-intentioned program, if poorly funded or lacking leadership, is likely destined to fail - a loss in reputation to the company and in opportunity to the school.

Of course, employers want to hire top talent for their company. Both skills and diversity should be priorities, especially since diversity brings competitive advantage through creative thinking and greater productivity through higher employee morale.

## Making the Commitment

There is no denying that the American workforce is more diverse. Now more than ever, it’s essential for the business community to engage the Black community. While we’ve outlined many ways of going about this, intentionality and commitment are key.

HBCUs offers first-generation college students new paths to equity, access, and inclusion. They give

American women and men the education and training to bring value to their employers, while infusing the workforce with the kind of diversity that sparks innovation and growth. Across corporate America, their participation is critical to driving economic impact and social change.

HBCUs, long underfunded by federal, state and public sources and often overlooked by the business community, have been inordinately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. They need—and deserve—our collective help. By nurturing and sustaining these schools and their graduates, we can give long-overdue opportunity to talented, well-prepared Black Americans, while increasing the vitality of our organizations and our competitiveness as our nation.

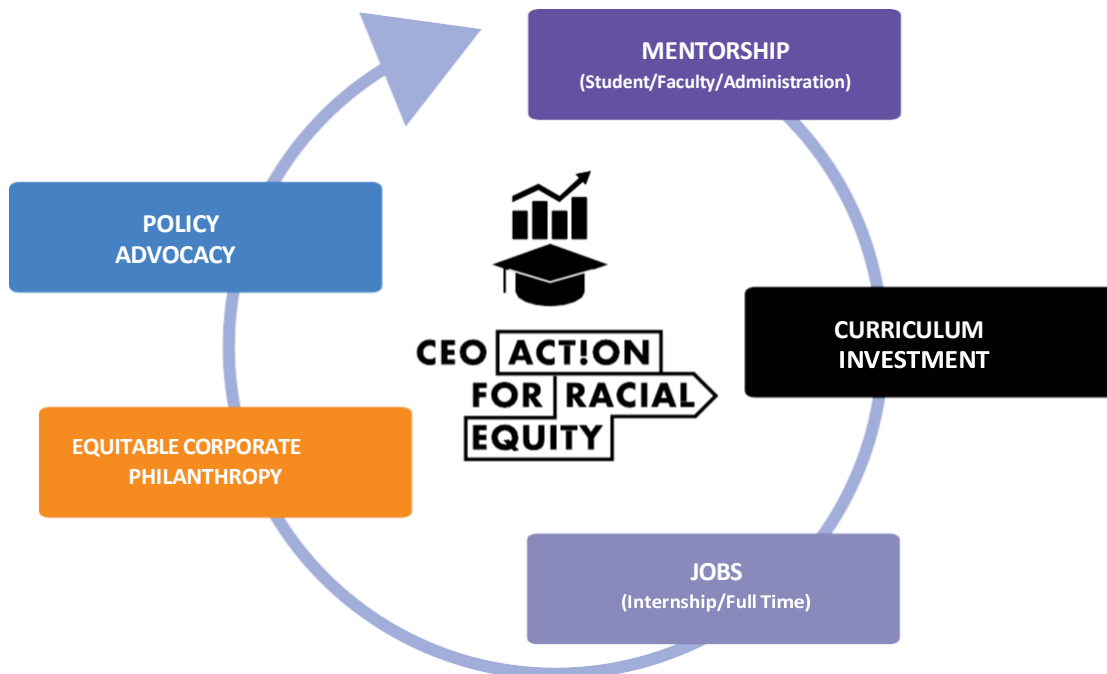
**We urge you to:**

## Become an HBCU Champion - Act Now!

As a CEO Action for Racial Equity Signatory HBCU Champion, you'll commit to educating yourself on the history of HBCUs, as well as their needs, in light of the current landscape in which they operate, on a national and local level.

Once you have absorbed the history and issues, you can begin to align and refine your HBCU engagement strategy - making sure it's actionable, sustainable, and mutually beneficial to the school and your company.

HBCUs offer great educational and cultural value - to their students and their communities, to the future of American enterprise, and to the viability of our nation overall. Let's join together to do our part — as corporate collaborators — to enable their robust viability and the value they bring for generations to come.





## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q.** *Why have we chosen to focus our efforts on HBCUs as opposed to predominantly Black institutions, minority serving institutions, or simply Black students at PWIs?*

**A.** HBCUs were founded with the singular mission of educating Black students, at a time when doors were closed to them at most colleges and universities. While these schools have, over the years, played a vital role in shaping Black leaders and professionals, scientists, artists and writers, their very existence is threatened by inequitable funding, when compared to non- HBCU counterparts, at the state, local and federal level. HBCUs continue to play a critical role in educating Black Americans—enrolling 10% of all Black American students and turning out almost 20% of all Black American graduates<sup>32</sup> while providing vibrant environments that preserve Black culture. Critical to our mission of improving the quality of life for our nation’s 47+ million Black Americans is working to preserve the rich history of these institutions and enabling their future through sustainable growth.

**Q.** *HBCUs have been in the national spotlight recently, with news of donations and recruiting and engagement efforts by major corporations. Haven’t HBCU funding issues been addressed?*

**A.** It’s true that the most high-profile HBCUs have experienced an uptick in private giving. There have also been examples of some success in remedying disparities in public funding to HBCUs. However, these successes have not reversed the impact of 150 years of financial inequity. On average, HBCUs carry \$46 million in deferred maintenance costs alone.<sup>33</sup> Today, many HBCUs remain on the brink of financial collapse and are facing the potential of losing their accreditation or having to close their doors.<sup>34</sup> We encourage our signatory companies to look beyond the three or four most well-known HBCUs, to help all 101 HBCU institutions realize long-term strategies in funding and support.

**Q.** *I’ve read about a number of initiatives in the HBCU space — even organizations competing for talent. Why should we initiate or expand our efforts to engage with HBCUs?*

**A.** HBCU engagement is more than hiring talent. It’s an investment in the community. The engagement strategies laid out in this playbook are designed to highlight the importance of having all internal stakeholders aligned and involved. Success with these institutions calls for interaction beyond just one or two departments within an HBCU. For a truly sustainable relationship, all internal stakeholders should be a part of the process.

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<sup>32</sup> [United Negro College Fund \(UNCF\)](https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/HBCU_Consumer_Brochure_FINAL_APPROVED.pdf?_ga=2.132769934.146987761.1635443826-618748471.1635443826). “HBCUs Make America Strong” uncf.org, [https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/HBCU\\_Consumer\\_Brochure\\_FINAL\\_APPROVED.pdf?\\_ga=2.132769934.146987761.1635443826-618748471.1635443826](https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/HBCU_Consumer_Brochure_FINAL_APPROVED.pdf?_ga=2.132769934.146987761.1635443826-618748471.1635443826)

<sup>33</sup> GAO, “Action Needed to Improve Participation in Education’s HBCU Capital Financing Program”

<sup>34</sup> [Smith-Barrow Delece](https://hechingerreport.org/many-hbcus-are-teetering-between-surviving-and-thriving/) (2019, October 23). Many HBCUs are teetering between surviving and thriving. *Hechinger Report*. <https://hechingerreport.org/many-hbcus-are-teetering-between-surviving-and-thriving/>



**Commitment to racial equity  
takes all of us.**



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