

## 2025 Leah Meyer Austin Award Rubric

This document is provided to guide Leah Meyer Austin Award applicants in preparing a strong submission package that will highlight your institution’s achievements. The guide includes criteria and rubrics that application reviewers at ATD will use to score the merits of each application. We encourage you to review these rubrics and criteria as you prepare your application to help ensure that you have provided all the information reviewers are looking for.

### Section 1: Contact Information (no rubric items in this step)

### Section 2: Data Template and Overall Metrics

- Data Template: upload the template to the application (no rubric items)
- Overall Metrics

This section of the application requires colleges to identify **three overall metrics** from their data template and provide an in-depth analysis of each. Please craft narratives that describe the improvements the college has made over the course of three years and clearly connects these outcomes to specific interventions, especially those implemented as part of your ATD work. Each of the three overall metrics (two leading/momentum, one lagging/milestone) will be reviewed using the following rubric:

**To what degree did the college provide a strong narrative that demonstrates the institution’s success on the overall metric with a clear link between specific actions the institution has taken and the success the institution has experienced?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
No explanation of how institutional changes were connected to improvement on this outcome was provided.	The narrative includes descriptions of actions taken at the institution but there is no explanation as to how the actions may have influenced this metric.	The narrative includes descriptions of actions taken, but the argument for how these actions influenced the metric outcome is weak.	The narrative includes descriptions of actions taken and provides a solid argument as to how these actions may have improved this metric.	The narrative includes descriptions of actions taken and provides a clear argument with evidence as to how these actions influenced this metric.

### Section 3: Equity Metrics

**Metrics where the equity gap was improved will be reviewed using the following guidelines:**

A strong response links actions to the student population who saw improvement. For instance, if the outcomes for part-time students improved and the applicant narrowed the gap between part-time and full-time students, we expect the narrative to make an argument for how the institution’s actions made a difference for part-time students specifically (not just all students generally).

Note: Colleges should show improved equity gaps on two separate metrics for two distinct groups. Colleges are welcome to submit up to 5 equity metrics to demonstrate their equity work. Each equity metric will be reviewed using the following rubric:

**Using the guidance above, to what degree was the institution successful at improving the equity gap on this equity metric?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
No explanation of how institutional changes were connected to improvement on this outcome was provided.	The narrative includes descriptions of actions taken at the institution but there is no explanation as to how the actions specifically helped the indicated student population improve.	The narrative includes descriptions of actions taken, but the argument for how these actions specifically helped the indicated student population improve is weak.	The narrative includes descriptions of actions taken and provides a solid argument as to how these actions may have improved this metric for the indicated student population.	The narrative includes descriptions of actions taken and provides a clear argument with evidence as to how these actions influenced this metric the indicated student population.

## Section 4: Benchmarking

To what degree does the institution utilize benchmarking in their student success goals?

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
Narrative does not address goals/benchmarks for outcomes.	Narrative lists goals/benchmarks without compelling reasons for selecting these priorities.	Narrative discusses goals/benchmarks with some reasoning as to selection.	Narrative clearly lists the goals/benchmark for student outcomes and how data or other criteria guided setting the benchmarks and how they align to the strategic plan.	Narrative clearly lists the goals/benchmarks for student outcomes and how data, ICAT, and/or strategic planning guided setting the benchmarks and how they align to the strategic plan.

## Section 5: Narrative Questions

This section asks applicants to provide several narrative answers regarding additional aspects of the college’s student success strategy. These narratives are meant to complement the successes you demonstrated on the data template and in the prior metrics sections.

The Leah Meyer Austin Award annually recognizes an Achieving the Dream Institution that has demonstrated outstanding progress in designing a student-focused culture that permeates all levels and structures of the organization. Successful institutions pursue a cohesive strategy comprising aligned, whole-college solutions that support and promote the success of all students, resulting in substantive and sustainable outcomes and institutional improvement. They take bold action to design policies, processes, and programs that reinforce each other to achieve the institution’s student success and equity goals. Leah Meyer Austin Award winners have dynamic and committed leadership who cultivate a culture of evidence, develop mindsets that empower faculty and staff to lead and engage in the work, and pay particularly close attention to the needs of underrepresented and underserved students.

**To what degree does the institution link their student success vision with their ATD activities and/or coaching and their strategic plan?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
Student success is not described as a vision or strategic priority.	The description of the student success vision is vague and unspecific.	Narrative outlines student success without connections to the ICAT capacities.	Narrative outlines student success AND references the ICAT capacities on which the college is focusing.	Narrative clearly outlines a strategic vision for student success AND references the ICAT capacities on which the college is focused and how these capacities shape the vision for student success.

**To what degree does the institution include specific priorities for this academic year (2024-25) and explain why these priorities were selected?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
Narrative does not address specific priorities.	Discussion of strategies is vague and unconnected to student outcomes.	Narrative discusses strategies and links some strategies to outcomes.	Narrative links strategies adopted to outcomes highlighted in the data template, but scale is unclear.	Narrative links strategies adopted to outcomes highlighted in the data template AND addresses scalability.

**To what degree does the college describe the strategies used to advance these priorities and how successfully they were adopted across the institution?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
Narrative does not include specific strategies.	Discussion of strategies is vague and unconnected to student outcomes.	Narrative discusses strategies and links some strategies to outcomes.	Narrative links strategies adopted to outcomes highlighted in the data template, but scale is unclear.	Narrative links strategies adopted to outcomes highlighted in the data template AND addresses scalability.

**Based on the student body at the college, to what degree does the college provide clear evidence that equity is central to the work?**

*It is expected that colleges are focused on providing equitable supports for historically minoritized students including Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Asian American Pacific Islander students unless there is a compelling case that in their communities, there are different racial or ethnic groups that need attention, e.g., Native students (dominant and minority tribes), Southeast Asian students, Refugees. Based on the student body at the college, is there clear evidence that equity is central to the work? Exemplary applications will include a clear description of work on racial disparities.*

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
No reference to equity is provided.	The narrative includes descriptions of actions taken at the institution but there are minimal references to the equity work at the college.	The narrative includes descriptions of actions taken and connects these actions to equity work at the college.	The narrative includes clear connections between student success work and equity. This means success work keeps equity at the center and equity is integrated in college processes, structure, and policy.	Equity is central. The narrative includes equity goals and clearly links the equity work to student outcomes. Equity is referenced across campus – administrative departments, advising, teaching, student events, etc. Racial equity is a focus of current and/or future equity work.

**To what degree does the institution demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and an established culture of evidence?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
College describes regular processes to collect and analyze data, but it is focused on one aspect of the institution or student outcomes.	College describes regular processes to collect and analyze data in multiple areas of the institution but lacks clear ways to use the data.	College describes regular processes to collect and analyze data AND use that data to adapt their work, providing a compelling example of the process. It is clear that parts of the institution value improvement and learning	College describes regular processes to collect and analyze data AND use that data to adapt their work, providing a compelling example of the process. It is clear they are an institution that values improvement and learning in multiple areas of the institution.	College describes regular processes to collect and analyze data AND use that data to adapt their work, providing a compelling example of the process. It is clear they are an institution that values improvement and learning in multiple areas of the institution including, but not limited to, administration, faculty, and advising.

**To what degree does the institution identify the challenges it faced and demonstrate how they addressed those challenges?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
Challenges were minimized or not present in the narrative.	Challenges are identified, but there are no clear steps that were taken or plan to be taken in the future to address the challenges.	Challenges are identified, along with steps taken or planned to address the identified challenge.	Challenges are identified, lessons described, along with steps taken or planned to address the identified challenge.	Challenges are identified using data or a review process, lessons described, along with steps taken or planned to address the identified challenge.

**To what degree does the institution support the vitality of the local community?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
Community engagement is unclear.	College describes minimal community engagement or examples are unclear.	College describes multiple ways the college engages with the community with concrete examples in one area (strengthening the high school to college path, fostering a college-going culture, aligning programs with local labor market demands).	College describes multiple ways the college engages with the community with concrete examples in two areas (strengthening the high school to college path, fostering a college-going culture, aligning programs with local labor market demands).	College describes multiple ways the college engages with the community with concrete examples in all three areas (strengthening the high school to college path, fostering a college-going culture, aligning programs with local labor market demands).

**To what degree is the institution fostering an inclusive climate and culture?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
College does not address campus climate/culture.	Campus climate or culture is mentioned in passing.	College mentions campus climate, but actions are unclear.	College identifies clear actions aimed at improving campus climate and/or how they collect data on campus climate.	Letter identifies clear actions aimed at improving campus climate and how they use data to measure success of these actions.

**Evidence of Institutional Transformation: upload the document to the application**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
Evidence section is missing.	Evidence shared is not connected to the narrative.	Evidence section leaves gaps in support for the full narrative application.	Evidence is clear and useful and supports application.	Exemplary- Evidence section is connected to student outcomes, clear, and relevant and complete.

**Section 6: President’s Letter of Support**

**To what degree does the President/CEO Letter of Support describe how the institution centers equity in its student success work?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
Letter does not address equity.	Equity is mentioned minimally.	Equity goals are shared, but not linked to action steps.	Letter shares equity goals for equity and links the work to student outcomes. Equity has clearly been centered within student success work.	Letter shares equity goals and clearly links the equity work to student outcomes and references structural racism. Equity is referenced across campus- administrative departments, advising, teaching, student events, etc. Racial equity is a focus of current and/or future equity work.

**Based on the President/CEO Letter of Support, to what degree has the college made progress on their equity work?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
Letter does not address equity.	Equity is mentioned in passing.	Progress on equity is described generally without specific examples.	Letter identifies progress in equity with examples of changes made OR outcomes.	Letter identifies progress in equity with examples of changes made AND outcomes.

**To what degree does the President/CEO Letter of Support address past and future contributions to advancing learning in the ATD Network as a LMA recipient?**

0	1	2	3	4 - Exemplary
Letter does not include past contributions to ATD.		Contributions are limited to DREAM.	Letter includes examples of contributions to ATD, primarily focused on attending ATD learning events (HSS Institute, Data Summit, Teaching and Learning Summit).	Letter includes examples of contributions to ATD beyond presenting at DREAM (e.g., presenting on ATD work at national conferences or panels; hosting other colleges to showcase their ATD work; mentored other ATD colleges).