



The Heckscher Foundation for Children Issues \$3 Million Heckscher Foundation Challenge to New York Colleges, Community-Based Organizations, and Employer Partners to Meet Education and Workforce Needs

NEW YORK (January 18, 2023) – Almost three years after record-high unemployment rates due to the COVID-19 pandemic, New York-based employers are now finding it difficult to fill jobs even while the unemployment rate remains higher than the country’s average. There is a serious misalignment between the skills of the unemployed and available jobs in New York. Employers and educators alike are eager to find ways to address these gaps.

Today, the Heckscher Foundation for Children announced the \$3 million Heckscher Foundation Challenge to inspire New York colleges, community-based organizations, and employers to address rapidly changing education and workforce needs. The Heckscher Foundation Challenge will support innovative partnerships between employers and New York colleges and/or community-based organizations that meet workforce needs in New York, boost employment, and increase earnings outcomes among young adults under 25 years of age.

The Heckscher Foundation Challenge seeks to support partnerships that provide students with a clear path from education to meaningful careers, whether through traditional college-based programs or alternative pathways. The Challenge is particularly focused on serving first-generation students and those who face the greatest barriers to economic opportunity.

“We are looking for innovative and actionable partnerships that move the needle on economic mobility for New York youth,” said Peter Sloane, CEO of the Heckscher Foundation for Children. “We know that partnerships between employers and educational institutions and/or CBOs are necessary if we want to see long-lasting, scalable outcomes for youth. These programs will address generational poverty by changing the career trajectory for young people across New York.”

About the Challenge

Colleges and community-based organizations are invited to submit proposals with an employer partner or partners to address local workforce needs in New York. Heckscher will support partnerships that lead to measurable student outcomes focused on employment, economic stability, and fulfillment of purpose. Grants will be given for the implementation of a plan with a designated employer partner. Internships or apprentice-like programs will not be considered for funding unless an employer partner makes specific commitments to providing full-time employment to program participants based on objective criteria, such as satisfactory completion of training milestones or other proof of necessary skills mastery. Read more about the Heckscher Foundation Challenge and apply at <https://heckscherfoundationchallenge.org/>

About the Heckscher Foundation for Children

The Heckscher Foundation for Children uses venture philanthropy to fund innovative, results-driven programs and partnerships that level the playing field for underserved youth. Its grants focus primarily on education, including college access and persistence, workforce training and jobs access, and arts education that improves achievement in the classroom. Learn more at heckscherfoundation.org.

