

MSU Denver Organization Info for Grants

02/05/2024

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## **MISSION, VISION & VALUES**

### **Vision**

To become the preeminent public urban university in the nation.

### **Mission**

To provide a high-quality, accessible, enriching education that prepares students for successful careers, post-graduate education, and lifelong learning in a multicultural, global, and technological society.

### **Role**

MSU Denver is a comprehensive, baccalaureate and master's degree granting urban university that offers arts and sciences, professional and business courses and programs to a diverse student population in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Excellence in teaching and learning is MSU Denver's primary objective. MSU Denver's diverse university community engages the community at large in scholarly inquiry, creative activity, and the application of knowledge.

### **Values:**

***Diversity*** - MSU Denver has been committed to diversity and inclusive excellence since its inception. This is evidenced by our efforts to embed systemic practices to achieve a high quality, culturally sensitive education; is reflected by our leadership, faculty, staff, and students; and is woven into the fabric of our University.

***Access*** - Inspired by the students we serve, many of whom are low-income or first-generation, our self-confident academic community breaks down traditional boundaries and takes responsibility for meeting the challenges of access to education in the 21st century.

***Entrepreneurship*** - We embody an entrepreneurial spirit that leads to agility, risk taking, and scrappiness which has framed our innovative approaches to delivering a wide range of academic disciplines, solving problems, and addressing community need.

***Respect*** - We boldly seek a climate of mutual respect and reflection that supports different beliefs and perspectives and promotes the open exchange of ideas. Because we respect everyone, communicate effectively, promote transparency, embrace dialogue, cultivate trust, and respect governance structures, we are consistently able to make decisions with a student-first mentality.

***Community*** - MSU Denver is an engaged urban university that promotes mutual relationships between the University and the community where we apply the intellectual strength of our faculty and the energy of our students to solve real-world problems. We have the ability to benefit the economic health, cultural health, and well-being of the community and promote the public good through the transformation of urban communities in metropolitan Denver.

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## **ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND**

Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver) is a public university serving an important and unique role in Colorado's higher education system. Established in 1965, MSU Denver has grown to become Colorado's leader in educating in-state undergraduates. To better meet Colorado's workforce shortages, MSU Denver has expanded in the last decade to offer Master's degrees in Business Administration, Professional Accountancy, Health Administration, Social Work, Teaching, Cybersecurity, Human Nutrition and Dietetics, and Science in Clinical Behavioral Health. The Master's degree programs augment the 85 major fields of study and 70 minors, 37 certificates, and 12 teacher licensure programs through the College of Business; School of Education; College of Letters, Arts and Sciences; College of Health and Applied Sciences; and School of Hospitality, Events and Tourism.

Initially started as an opportunity school, MSU Denver has a long tradition of providing education to individuals who may otherwise be excluded from higher education. MSU Denver is the leader in diverse enrollment among Colorado's four-year universities; by recruiting students intentionally, the University has ensured that the student population mirrors the ethnic demographics of the state. In March of 2019, MSU Denver qualified as a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) and gained the designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). MSU Denver enrolls the highest number of first generation and students of color of all four-year institutions in Colorado.

Throughout its 50-year history, MSU Denver has pushed the boundaries of what is possible in higher education. MSU Denver empowers Colorado's students to advance their lives and careers through high-quality, real-world education taught by noted academics, national experts, and industry professionals. MSU Denver alumni power the state economy with 95,000 work-ready graduates, of whom more than 80% live and work in Colorado. In the post-pandemic world, MSU Denver is uniquely positioned to be a leader among higher education institutions by providing Colorado's economy the workforce development necessary in order to rebound.

## **ORGANIZATION GOALS**

As society and the University continue to respond and adapt to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, MSU Denver is focused on helping students remain in school and persist with their education while keeping students, faculty, and staff safe. The administration, faculty, and staff have been worked diligently to help students adapt to online coursework and navigate the impacts that the pandemic has had on their personal lives. MSU Denver has a strong history of serving those from vulnerable and underserved communities and is committed to serving students from all backgrounds. The student population is comprised of 30% Hispanic/Latino, 46% students of color, and 56% first generation students. Before the COVID-19 crisis, 80% of students worked full or part-time. Thousands of students have been affected by work closures, layoffs, furloughs, and reduced work hours. This has a cascading effect on students' personal lives including food insecurity, healthcare, childcare, mental health, and other immediate needs.

In 2018, MSU Denver, in partnership with the Hope Center at Temple University, conducted a study of financial hardships among MSU Denver students. The results were startling: 44% of respondents were food insecure in the prior 30 days, 62% were housing insecure in the previous year, and 17% had experienced homelessness in the previous year. Since that study, many students have experienced reductions in work hours or have lost their jobs entirely due to the COVID-19 crisis, which is likely to cause an exacerbate rates of food and housing insecurity. The University has seen a tremendous increase in requests for help with everything from rent and utilities, to technology

needs such as laptops and internet service. MSU Denver continues to support students during this time through myriad student support programs, including the Student Emergency Fund, the Food Pantry, the Auraria Health Center, and the Counseling Center.

As a result of a 17% reduction in state funding and an anticipated decline in fall enrollment, MSU Denver will experience a \$14 million shortfall for fiscal year 2021. Departments across the institution have implemented efficiency savings through reduced operating budgets and voluntary early-separation agreements and furloughs, which included a 10% pay reduction through furloughs for the president, the vice presidents, general counsel, and academic deans beginning July 1. These efforts have brought over \$10 million in savings. To further decrease personnel expenses, the University is now exploring tiered pay cuts and further furlough scenarios.

MSU Denver has adopted a mixed-modality approach to classes for Fall 2020 to balance the safety of students, faculty, and staff with the core educational mission. The mixed approach will allow the university to offer high-quality classes both on-campus and online. MSU Denver has put into place protocols to safely accommodate as many in-person classes as possible. The University's Safe Return Work Group is fine-tuning the protocol for returning to campus for students, faculty, and staff.

### **CURRENT PROGRAMS (Chose 2-3 of these topics to highlight in grant proposal)**

MSU Denver is committed to supporting the recovery of Colorado's economy from the COVID-19 crisis. Academic programs focus on training future workforce and reskilling/upskilling community members to fill Colorado Top Jobs; jobs that are in high demand, pay sustainable wages, and are career focused. These programs connect students to careers and support them in leveraging their postsecondary education success in the workforce. The following are examples of key programs that facilitate this effort:

- The **Health Institute** at MSU Denver educates students from diverse backgrounds to become Colorado's future health professionals. The Institute's interdisciplinary emphasis prepares graduates for a wide range of careers and equips them with an essential combination of soft skills and cultural competence to best serve the state's diverse communities. The Health Institute is a collaboration among the following 10 areas at MSU Denver focused on health and wellness: Health Professions, Nursing, Human Performance and Sport, Nutrition, Human Services, Social Work, Biology, Chemistry, Psychology, and Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences.
- **Classroom to Career Hub (C2 Hub)** provides a strategic and holistic career development experience for students while cultivating effective and responsive programs to address workforce needs in Denver and beyond. C2 Hub brings together industry leaders and academic departments to create responsive, experience-based curricula that produce graduates whose skills match the demand of employers across Colorado's high growth sectors. Workforce partnerships emphasize experiential learning opportunities such as apprenticeships, co-ops, internships, practicums, and student-teaching experiences. These opportunities enable students to engage with employers in real workplace environments, putting education into practice while also creating a professional pipeline to local industry. C2 Hub also provides wraparound student services including intensive academic, career, and financial advising so that students will follow a job track from day one and sharpen

their financial literacy to decrease loan debt, removing a barrier to degree completion and making a significant dent in the attainment gap.

- **Cyber** operations involve a complex interplay between technology and human behavior. MSU Denver has taken a unique approach to meet the sociotechnical needs from the cyber industry by combining the Departments of Criminal Justice & Criminology, Computer Information Systems, and Mathematical and Computer Sciences to jointly create a multidisciplinary Cybersecurity Major, and both a Bachelor and Master of Science in Cybersecurity program. The programs combine advanced computer/information system knowledge of combating cybercrime, analytical skills to analyze and manage cyber threats and security, the understanding of human factor in cyber operations, as well as the adaptation of laws to create policies to investigate, prosecute, and to punish cyber criminals.
- MSU Denver developed the **Advanced Manufacturing Sciences Institute (AMSI)** in partnership with the State of Colorado, Lockheed Martin, and Hartwig, Inc. The AMSI is a state-of-the-art facility that integrates industrial design, civil, mechanical and electrical engineering technology, and computer science and computer information systems within a dynamic learning space. The AMSI exposes students and community innovators to the advanced additive and precision machine tools that drive advanced manufacturing in the U.S. and around the world.
- The **School of Hospitality** is a unique combination of a higher education classroom building, a teaching laboratory, a commercial hotel, and a conference center. The Hospitality Learning Center (HLC) was created through a partnership with Sage Hospitality and is the only such facility in Colorado, uniquely providing an on-campus, full-service learning laboratory. The HLC building includes the fully functioning and professionally managed SpringHill Suites Denver Downtown by Marriott International hotel; the J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation Conference Center; and 30,000 square feet of academic space that includes a light sensory analysis lab for wine, beer and spirits classes, a 72-seat student-run restaurant with five mixology stations, a 4,000-bottle wine cellar management lab, high-tech food demonstration theater, a tourism lab, and an events lab.
- The **Center for Professional Selling** within the College of Business prepares students for sales careers through real world selling experience, role play, interviews, networking events, national competitions, and other opportunities for students and sales professionals. MSU Denver was named one of the “Top Universities for Professional Sales Education” by the Sales Education Foundation, becoming the only university in Colorado to receive this prestigious recognition and one of fewer than 100 institutions nationally.
- Each summer, **Summer Science Programs** provide middle and high school students with access to engaging and research-based STEM experiences. MSU Denver collaborates with individual schools, school districts, teachers, and local organizations to recruit a diverse group of students that are typically underrepresented in STEM studies and careers to participate in summer science programming. The school districts served by the Summer Science Programs lack access to quality STEM programming and their students benefit from this additional support. The Summer Science Programs expose students to a variety of subjects throughout each session, including biology, chemistry, water/environment, computer programming and more. The programming promotes interest in STEM-related

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subjects by helping develop essential STEM skills, encouraging critical thinking and problem-solving skills, cultivating growth mindsets, and increasing interest in attending college.

- The **Center for Visual Art (CVA)**, founded in 1990, is MSU Denver's off-campus contemporary art gallery located in the Art District on Santa Fe in Denver. Focused on the human experience, CVA exhibitions and programs promote dialogue, reflection and experimentation. Bold exhibitions, innovative education programs, and entrepreneurial workforce development drive the CVA's mission to elevate the role of artists in their local and global communities and to provide quality, accessible art experiences for metro Denver. The CVA is committed to leveraging the creative capital of the University for the community and aligns with the University's strategic goal of engaging the community in scholarly inquiry, creative activity, and the application of knowledge. Exhibitions and programs at the CVA serve 24,000 visitors a year.

## **PROGRAM/PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

## **PROGRAM/PROJECT EVALUATION**

## **PROGRAM/PROJECT COLLABORATION**

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS/RECOGNITION**

MSU was named by *U.S. News & World Report* in 2019 as one of the most innovative universities in the West in recognition of its commitment to innovation by providing hands-on, real-world learning opportunities for students.

MSU Denver was designated a Hispanic Serving Institution in 2019 by the U.S. Department of Education for its commitment to education of Latino students. In the Spring 2020 academic semester, Hispanic/Latino students made up 30% of the student population and 46% of students identified as a minority.

MSU Denver is designated by *Insight into Diversity* as a Diversity Champion. The university is a leader in diverse enrollment among Colorado's four-year universities and has been named multiple times as one of the top 10 colleges and universities in America for diversity and inclusion efforts.

MSU Denver is Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) Accredited; only 5% of business schools worldwide have been accredited by the AACSB.

*Military Times* recognized MSU Denver in 2020 as a Best for Vets college serving more than 1,200 veterans.

## **INCLUSIVENESS**

One of MSU Denver's founding principles is to make a college education available to any student who wants to attend. The institution was created to be financially attainable and accessible to an increasingly diverse Colorado population. MSU Denver is a leader in diverse enrollment among Colorado's four-year universities and was named in 2016 by *INSIGHT into Diversity Magazine* as one of the top 10 colleges and universities in America for diversity and inclusion efforts. In 2018, the

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University opened the Center for Multicultural Excellence and Inclusion (CMEI) to promote racial equity and increase students' sense of belonging in order to positively impact academic outcomes. CMEI provides a safe and welcoming space, cultural programs, resources, mentoring support, and leadership opportunities and engages students by affirming/exploring identity, building community, and cultivating leadership.

In February 2019, the US Department of Education designated MSU Denver a Hispanic Serving Institution. MSU Denver has the proud distinction of serving more Latinx students than any other higher education institution in Colorado, with 5,132 Latinx students (30 % of the student population) enrolled in the Spring 2020 semester.

MSU Denver practices Inclusive Leadership which involves a variety of policy and advisory groups including the Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Council of Chairs, and Student Government Assembly. Inclusive leadership unites human capital by developing a team of leaders who promote new ideas and innovative strategies to resolve issues and advance the University's mission.

## **BOARD/GOVERNANCE**

The MSU Denver Foundation is governed a Board comprised of 29 members, including community business leaders, entrepreneurs, and alumni. Members serve three-year terms and are not term limited. Board members are expected to become members of the President's Society by making a minimum annual gift of \$1,000. The Foundation board meets six times per year.

The MSU Denver Board of Trustees is appointed by the governor, is responsible for University governance, and has authority for and control of its assets and resources. The board maintains an environment conducive to the discovery and dissemination of knowledge, provides necessary resources in an atmosphere that induces and honors excellence, and promotes equality of access.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

MSU Denver utilizes volunteers across campus is a myriad of roles. Students and community members often work side by side on events, programs, cultural events and community focused programming. Some programs within the University work with Advisory Boards or committees who help guide programming and provide community input into organizational decisions.

## **PLANNING:**

In January 2019, MSU Denver launched its Strategic Plan 2025 process. The 18-month effort produced goals and objectives that serve as touchstones on the path to becoming the leading public urban university in the nation. The Strategic Planning Team gathered data from more than 1,000 students, faculty, alumni, partners, and business leaders. Five strategic pillars were developed from this data. The team took into consideration adaptations for the post-pandemic environment, ensured strategic-plan pillars are still in alignment, and presented a new plan to trustees in December of 2020. This was approved and the new strategic plan went into effect in January 2021.

MSU Denver's Five Strategic Pillars are:

***Student Access and Achievement*** - MSU Denver attracts, develops, and graduates tenacious students who realize their goals and craft their futures. Regardless of where they have been, we

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meet them where they are and launch them to where they want to go. Through an affordable, flexible and holistic education we help students build essential skills grounded in a multicultural and global perspective that leads to graduation, followed by career and life success.

***Student-Centered Academic Excellence*** - MSU Denver prides itself on a richly talented faculty comprised of teacher-scholars. We deliver a relevant, rigorous and innovative academic experience. We empower our faculty to support our diverse students in growing as scholars, becoming leaders in their fields, and succeeding in their personal, professional and civic lives.

***Civic and Economic Catalyst*** - MSU Denver activates the talents and passions of our students, alumni, faculty and staff. As an Anchor Institution, our vibrant urban campus serves as a civic, economic and talent-rich catalyst to meet the opportunities and challenges facing Colorado and its diverse communities.

***Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*** - MSU Denver embodies diversity in all its rich representations and expressions. It is who we are. We commit ourselves to justice that provides a foundation for equity and inclusion. We mend internal and external inequities through a vibrant, healthy community.

***Organizational Agility and Sustainability*** - MSU Denver achieves agility by investing in our human talent. We improve our existing physical infrastructure with an eye toward environmentally sustainable practices, and a culture of continuous improvement. We accomplish sustainability by expanding revenue streams that diversifies and grows our academic offerings, endowments, partnerships to benefit our community.