

FAQ

Why was the CII developed?

The Corporate Inclusion Institute (CII) is based on the results of a study and accompanying white paper that were developed in Spring 2014 entitled “Elevating Corporate Performance with Chicago’s Rising Urban Talent.” This research and report was commissioned by Chicago United with the support of Tim Schwertfeger, Chairman Emeritus, Nuveen Investments, former Chicago United Board Chairman and founder of Chicago Scholars Foundation.

The study assessed perceived challenges, trends, opportunity areas and gaps regarding the career development of young urban talent and provided a framework for moving forward for Chicago-based companies. Interviews were held with a sample of Chicago employers, as well as people early in their careers, to obtain input on areas where development assistance was already in place and to determine where additional value and resources could be added. Based on the findings, Chicago United has crafted the CII to serve as the first-ever citywide business community talent development program. The institute supports young urban talent that is primarily “first to college and first to corporate” while developing the cultural fluency of mid- to senior-level managers.

What is unique about the CII and how does it differ from other development programs that have a diversity focus?

The main distinguishing elements of the CII are:

- **Comprehensive Learning Experience** – The CII provides assessments, academic sessions, learning and networking events, coaching, technology and mobile tools for communication and application.
- **Multiple Benefactors** – A comprehensive, dual-track learning experience is provided for more than one target audience. The CII focuses on building cultural fluency for both the early careerist and mid-level manager.
- **Multi-level Inclusion Cluster Concept** – Each cluster includes individuals at varying levels of the organization and provides an optimal support structure for participants. Clusters enhance the capacity for learning and culture change to be dispersed throughout the organization.
- **Cross-industry Cohorts** - Cohorts made up of individuals from different companies enables participants to benefit from cross-industry perspectives and approaches to problem solving.
- **Distinguished Faculty Pool from Top U.S. Universities** – The webcast platform enables participants to benefit from insights from thought leaders and experts nationwide.
- **Innovative Technology** – A mobile app will provide access and wrap-around support for all program components.

Who participates in the CII?

An Inclusion Cluster is made up of four individuals who fulfill distinct roles:

Fellow – an early-career young professional who is from a racially/ethnically diverse background.

Corporate Guide – acts as a coach to the Fellow. This individual is most likely a mid- to senior-level manager who does NOT have a direct reporting relationship with the Fellow. These two individuals will engage in academic and experiential learning on parallel tracks.

Direct Manager of the Fellow – participates in the Kick-off and Closing events to understand the Fellow's participation in the program and be a supportive resource in the work setting.

Executive Sponsor – participates in the Kick-off and Closing events. This individual helps set the vision for the cluster and encourages the team toward success.

How do we determine who participates in the program?

Individual participation depends on the organization's goals for diversity and development. However, leadership should keep in mind that they are making a substantial investment in this talent and should select individuals who demonstrate promise in their ability to provide a greater, ongoing contribution to the organization. At minimum, participants should meet the criteria set forth in the Profile and Expectations handout. Executive sponsors will be asked to consult with their Talent Management and Diversity & Inclusion staff to identify participants for the program. It might also be helpful to reach out to internal Employee Resource Groups for suggestions on individuals who show potential.

What type of assessments are used and who sees the results?

Fellows will complete an Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). Corporate Guides receive the IDI as well as an Emotional and Social Competence Inventory, which includes a 360° review. No one other than the participants and administrator will receive the individual reports. However, both Fellows and Corporate Guides will be encouraged to share the findings from their reports with each other during their coaching sessions and discuss the action plans they will put into place to address the results. Aggregate data from the cohort will be shared with all members of the cluster.

How does the coaching differ from what we might offer through our own mentor and coaching programs?

The coaching in the CII is anchored around the specific learning curriculum provided to participants. Each month, participants will receive coaching tips to help them transfer what they have learned to the workplace. Additionally, the coaching provided to Fellows is structured to help them learn effective ways to navigate the cultures of their organizations and add greater value. Coaching also provides Corporate Guides with the opportunity to hone their interpersonal skills.

How are the academic sessions structured?

Six academic sessions (three for Fellows and three for Corporate Guides) will be offered as part of the CII curriculum. Within the first six months of the program, Fellows and Corporate Guides will participate in separate academic sessions that take place concurrently at The Conference Center. Each academic session is three hours long and consists of two primary parts. In each room, participants will sit in on a presentation from a distinguished professor from one of the nation's leading academic institutions. Different, but aligned topics will be presented to the Fellows and Corporate Guides. These presentations will take place via live webcast and last for one hour. A facilitator will be in each room to coordinate interaction between the professor and attendees.

After the webcast presentations, the facilitator in each respective room will engage participants for about 1 ½ hours in discussion and activities related to how they can apply the principles from the lecture to their work settings. Time for breakfast and breaks will also be included within this three-hour timeframe using a common space within The Conference Center. During this time, Corporate Guides and Fellows will have an opportunity to network with each other.

How are the experiential workshops structured?

Two experiential workshops will be offered as part of the CII curriculum. Each experiential workshop is three hours long and consists of two primary parts. Corporate Guides and Fellows will attend a one-hour joint session presented by a thought leader in a specific topic area. This speaker will present on-site at The Conference Center. After the session, Corporate Guides and Fellows will convene separately in two break-out rooms for 1 ½ hours to focus on how the principles from the plenary apply to their specific roles within their respective organizations. A facilitator will be in each room to engage participants in related discussion, activities, and action planning. Time for breakfast, breaks and networking will also be included within this three-hour timeframe, using a common space within The Conference Center.

Where are the sessions being held? When?

All CII sessions will be held in downtown Chicago at The Conference Center at One North Wacker Drive, 2nd Floor. Academic sessions will be offered in months two, four and six. Experiential workshops will be offered in months three and five. The Kick-off and Closing Reception will take place in months one and nine, respectively. For the first cohort, sessions will take place on the second Friday of the month between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. For the second cohort, sessions will take place on the third Friday of the month at the same time.

What metrics are being used to determine the CII's success?

Assessment data will be collected at the beginning of the program to establish a baseline for the cohort and again at the end to see if higher scores for cross-cultural competency and emotional and social Intelligence are achieved. Additionally, we will track other data throughout the program to determine factors associated with participant success, such as level of activity in various components of the program, and retention in the program and with the current employer. Feedback also will be collected from participants' Fellows and Corporate Guides about the usefulness of coaching and application of principles from the learning sessions to the workplace. In the long term, we will be looking at such indicators of success as participant performance and mobility within their sponsoring organizations.

What is the monthly time commitment for the Fellow and Corporate Guide?

The average monthly timeframe commitment throughout the duration of the CII program nets out to five hours or less per month.

Months 1-6: During the first six months, the monthly time commitment for both Fellows and Corporate Guides will be approximately **four to five hours per month**. This can be broken down into attendance at learning sessions and events at three hours each, participation in coaching meetings – one hour each, and an estimated hour for other activities; such as, completion of the assessments in the first month, responding to feedback surveys and reviewing resources distributed through the Mobile App.

Months 7 – 8: During months seven and eight, Fellows and Corporate Guides can expect to spend **two to three hours a month** on CII activities. This includes continuing the one hour coaching sessions and setting time aside to leverage additional resources and tools provided on the Mobile App (e.g., podcasts).

Month 9: In the final month of the program, Fellows and Corporate Guides will spend approximately **four to five hours** on CII activities. One hour will be spent participating in their final coaching sessions. Approximately two hours will be required to complete a final IDI and/or ESCI assessment/debrief and final program evaluation survey, and two hours will be devoted to attending the Closing Reception for their cohort.