Michelson Spark Grants Student Basic Needs Round
1. Overview of the Michelson 20MM Foundation
2. Discussion of Spark Grant Program
3. Review of Application Process
4. Highlights from Previous Awardees
5. Q&A
Our Funder

Dr. Gary Michelson

- Distinguished Board Certified Orthopedic Spinal Surgeon
- One of the most prolific inventors in the history of medicine, and the sole named inventor of more than 950 issued patents throughout the world
- Signer of The Giving Pledge
Michelson 20MM accelerates progress towards a more just world by investing in tech entrepreneurs, changemakers, and policy - to catalyze scalable innovations in the knowledge economy. We seek to activate humanity’s full potential through equitable educational and economic opportunities.
What we do

THE MICHELSON INSTITUTE FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Protecting innovations and creative work is more crucial than ever in today’s knowledge economy.

What is The Michelson Institute for Intellectual Property?
The Michelson Institute for Intellectual Property (Michelson IP) designs, tests, and shares a comprehensive collection of education offerings for the next generation of inventors, innovators, and entrepreneurs.

With insights from leading intellectual property specialists, our team develops world-class foundational resources on patents, copyrights, trademarks, and more – all at no cost.

What materials are available?

Interactive Ebook  
Online Course  
Video Series  
And more!

OUR REACH

120+ Colleges and Universities

8,000+ Learners on Udemy Course

25,000+ Students Across Campuses
What we do

Impact Investing

- Targeted investments in innovative edtech ventures
- Guiding principle is the belief that all students should have access to an affordable, equitable, and high-quality educational experience.
- Structured means of deploying capital to entrepreneurs and innovative startups working to reinvent the post-secondary and future of work sectors.
What we do

Educational Access and Success Initiatives

Open Educational Resources

The Michelson Open Educational Resources (OER) Initiative centers on promoting programs and policies that advance the proliferation and adoption of OER in order to improve the affordability of instructional materials, efficacy of faculty instruction, and equitable access to educational opportunities.

Smart Justice

The Michelson 20MM Smart Justice Initiative leverages higher education as a catalytic force for transforming the lives of justice-involved individuals, and reforming the justice system itself.

Digital Equity

The Michelson Digital Equity Initiative advances cross-sectoral efforts to bridge the digital divide for post-secondary students in California.
Student Basic Needs

The Student Basic Needs Initiative seeks to increase persistence and graduation rates through systems change, technological innovations, research, and policy that helps students meet their basic needs.
Spark Grant Program Overview

The vision: Fund highly impactful initiatives that would not be possible if they needed to wait through a traditional grant decision timeline.

The mission: Introduce an innovative, just-in-time grantmaking process to meet the urgent needs of organizations aligned with our focus areas.

The commitment: Make decisions on all applications within 15 business days of our call for proposals closing.

The timeline: This Student Basic Needs Grants funding cycle opens August 23 2021 and closes on September 13 2021
Spark Grant Program Overview

- The Spark Grant Program is available to United States-based non-profits. For this round of funding we have decided to focus our impact on organizations that are doing work in California. Organizations whose work does not impact California will be ineligible for this opportunity.

- We will not be funding initiatives that would result in direct assistance to students during this Michelson Spark Grant round, such as emergency student aid, laptops and hotspots for remote learning, or food and housing vouchers. While we realize there is a tremendous need among students for direct support, at this time we are leveraging our funding to effect broader systemic change.
Evaluation Framework
Dimensions of Evaluation

1. Baseline Criteria

2. Focus Areas Alignment

3. Potential Impact of Grant

4. Measurability of Impact

5. Long-term Organization Sustainability

6. Scalability of Project
Dimensions of Evaluation

1. **Baseline Criteria**
   - Grant ask is up to $25,000
   - Grant would cover a specific self-contained milestone focus
   - Accepted types of milestones: inflection points, things that may open up a new foothold with a partner (such as enabling a new partnership with a market leader), new proof of concept
   - Examples of milestone restrictions: general operating expenses (rent, utilities, server costs, etc.), ongoing inventory, general working capital
Dimensions of Evaluation

2. Focus Area Alignment

- Innovative efforts that help advance systemic solutions to support disproportionately impacted student populations better meet their basic needs. Efforts should focus on serving one or more of the following student population groups:
  - Current or former foster youth
  - Pregnant or parenting
  - Undocumented
  - Veterans
  - LGBTQIA
  - DACA

- Innovative efforts looking to scale solutions that tackle housing insecurity/homelessness among college students.
Dimensions of Evaluation

2. Focus Areas Alignment (cont.)

- Efforts that address implementation challenges for the distribution of emergency student aid funding, including better insights on how institutions of higher learning manage and distribute aid dollars and how these dollars impact student retention, persistence and graduation.

- Research on effective implementation of student basic needs centers/coordinators within the California Community College system.

- Innovative efforts focused on re-enrolling students who stopped out/dropped out during the Covid-19 pandemic due to basic needs challenges. These efforts should be able to scale across institutions and/or higher education systems.
Dimensions of Evaluation

3. Potential Impact of Grant

- How many individuals will the grant impact?
- Ideal case, what is the impact of the project?
- Worst case, what is the impact of the project?
- How likely is it that the project is successful?
- Existing Resources and Total Project Budget vs. Grant ask
4. Measurability of Impact

- How effective are the proposed metrics for measuring success for the project?
- How realistic is the proposed project impact?
- Project Timeline
5. Long-term Organization Sustainability

- Current Team and Partners
- Business Model
- Existing Resources and Revenue Streams
6. Scalability of Project

The Michelson 20MM Foundation seeks to fund macro level projects that are helping students persist and graduate by helping them meet their basic needs. We are looking to support systems level strategies that create impact at scale and inform public policy.

This can include but is not limited to initiatives, partnerships, programs, and models whose outcomes will have a regional or statewide effect on student basic needs or whose effect on student basic needs will be seen across systems of higher education.
Letter of Inquiries (LOIs)

- Portal will open on August 23 and remain open until September 13
- www.20mm.org/spark-grants
- Create an account
- Whitelist Submittable in your email client
- Communication will occur via submittable
- Technical issues go to support@submittable.com
Grant Committee

Phil Kim
CEO

Mayra Lombera
COO

Ryan Erickson-Kulas
Programs Director

Miguel Leon
Program Manager
Evaluation Process

- After LOI is submitted the Grant Committee will do an initial assessment.
- Within 6 business days you will be notified if your proposal is moving forward in the process.
- Proposals that advance will be asked to complete a full application.
- Full applications will be assessed and a follow up call will be scheduled with those that advance to the finalist stage.
- You will be notified of the Grant Committee decision within 15 business days of our call for proposals closing.
Evaluation Process

1. LOI is Received
2. Reject or Move Forward LOI Decision is Made
3. Full Application is Completed
4. Finalist Call Occurs
5. Final Decision Made
Past Student Basic Needs Grantees
The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS) is a trusted source of research, design, and advocacy for student-centered public policies that promote affordability, accountability, and equity in higher education.

Our grant supported research on how the pandemic has impacted students’ ability to afford college. Conducted among 875 students from across all higher education sectors in California, the study revealed that pandemic-related budget changes, and non-tuition costs in particular, have impacted students’ academic plans, making it more difficult for many students to even stay enrolled in school.
California State University, Long Beach is a public university in Long Beach, California. The campus is the second largest of the 23-school CSU system and one of the largest universities in the state of California by enrollment.

Our grant will support the development of a best practice model for family-friendly campuses via their Pregnant and Parenting Students Initiative. CSULB will then work with the CSU Chancellor’s office to help disseminate the training material to all CSU campuses as part of the CSU Basic Needs Initiative.
● The Southern California College Access Network (SoCal CAN) seeks to increase the rate at which underrepresented students access and complete post-secondary education.

● Our grant established a Let’s Go to College CA student fellowship. The fellowship includes paid opportunities for student leaders from priority regions in CA. The fellows are trained to raise awareness of SNAP benefits and educate the general public regarding the challenges students are facing meeting their basic needs largely due to the non-tuition costs of college.
Other Awardees
Highlights

THE MICHELSON 20MM
FOUNDATION
Round 1 - Our grant supported the development of a California Digital Financial Aid Awareness Toolkit highlighting best practices and strategies to drive increased completion rates of financial aid applications, specifically for low-income students and students of color.

COVID Round - Our grant funded a survey of students in California higher education about COVID-19 related resources and support they’re receiving from their institutions and their perceptions of the effectiveness of their institution’s strategies. The grant also supported a digital map that illustrates the higher education system’s response, including gaps in digital access and implementation of distance learning, which will drive policy change.

The Education Trust-West advocates for educational justice and high academic achievement of all CA students, particularly those of color and living in poverty.
U.S. PIRG Education Fund is an independent, non-partisan group that stands up to powerful interests in support of consumers.

Our grant funded a report analyzing the textbook industry’s new automatic billing framework, also known as “inclusive access”, which has been recently adopted by major textbook publishers.
The University of California, Irvine is a public research university in Irvine, California. UCI is one of the ten campuses of the University of California system.

Our grant will support a replicable demonstration project to establish the first University of California bachelor’s degree-granting program in a California state prison, an innovative pathway to higher education for justice-involved students.
The ASCCC was created for the promotion and advancement of public community college education in California. Our grant will produce training materials and modules for the first ever statewide training for the 250+ faculty teaching in prison settings culminating with a statewide training event in Fall semester of 2021.

FCCC is built to benefit, support, and enhance the missions of the California Community College system through support from a wide range of partner organizations and individual donations.
Questions?

ryan@20mm.org and miguel@20mm.org