



Building tomorrow's workforce, together.

Call for Applications: India-US Workforce Partnership Lab

Deadline: February 24, 2026

The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) is pleased to invite applications from ACCT member colleges to participate in the second cohort of the **India-U.S. Workforce Partnership Lab**.

Following a successful first year of the project, ACCT has been awarded a second grant from the Cognizant Foundation to support the development of partnerships between ACCT member colleges and higher education institutions in India. For this new phase of the project, ACCT will select **three U.S. colleges, each of which will be matched with an Indian partner institution**, and supported over the course of one year to develop initial collaborative activities and a sustained working relationship.

Content focus and deliverables

- ACCT welcomes applications from any academic or technical discipline, with the following stipulations:
 - Programs proposed for collaboration should be **workforce preparation-oriented**, with curricula geared toward practical application.
 - In alignment with Cognizant priorities, **training on the application of AI** within the chosen field should be a core component of the collaboration.
- Paired institutions will have considerable latitude to determine **their initial collaborative activities** once they begin their work together. Examples from past Partnership Lab participants include:
 - Joint webinar series featuring faculty experts from both institutions, open to all students and faculty.
 - Virtual exchanges and Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) projects.
 - Short-term student and faculty in-person exchanges, scaffolded by joint student projects before and after the in-person visits.
- The Lab is designed to establish **sustained partner relationships** and operating procedures that will allow participating institutions to build on initial activities. For example, previous Lab participants are working toward jointly designed and delivered courses, and badges and credentials, and additional faculty/student mobility.

Project activities

- Over the course of the year, the six institutions (3 U.S. community colleges, 3 Indian institutions) will participate in a series of virtual **partnership meetings**, designed and delivered by ACCT and Indian partner organizations to build institutional capacity partnerships, garner leadership buy-in, share good practices, and address challenges.
- The three U.S.-India institutional pairs will assemble **planning and implementation teams** composed of faculty and administrators to plan and implement collaborative activities. They will determine the specific curriculum focus, scale, scope, deliverables, and logistics. ACCT will provide coaching and support throughout the development process.
- The project will include a **visit of a delegation from each U.S. college to India** to visit respective partner institutions. Each delegation will include faculty, administrators, and leadership from the U.S. college. Dates will be determined by the participating institutions. Ideally, all three U.S. delegations will travel at the same time and participate in a full-cohort meeting at a central location.

Timelines, roles and responsibilities

- March 2026: Institution pairs selected and announced.
- March 2026: Identify a lead staff member and point person for the project, and **appropriate leadership and faculty/curriculum staff** to engage in program development and execution.
- April 2026 – March 2027: Participate in **(virtual) partnership meetings and topical webinars** with all six institutions. The project lead will be asked to participate in a meeting approximately once per month, with key faculty or senior leaders invited as deemed necessary by the project lead, depending on whether the meeting has a strategic or operational focus. In addition to full-cohort meetings, institution pairs will determine their own meeting schedules to plan their collaboration.
- Fall 2026: **U.S. delegation visits to India.** Timing is flexible and will be determined once the cohort is established.

Funding

Each participating U.S. college will receive a **stipend** of \$15,000 to defray the costs of program development and delegation travel to India.

Selection process

Selection of U.S. colleges will be based on both overall strength of the application (e.g., articulation of how AI competency will be addressed) and availability of an Indian partner institution with an aligned academic focus and curricula. Reviewers will evaluate applications holistically and aim to create partnerships between institutions with shared values and project vision in order to maximize opportunities for sustained collaboration.

To submit an application, please complete [this form](#). The deadline for applications is Tuesday, February 24, 2026.

ACCT membership is required to participate in this project.

For questions and additional information, please contact Robin Matross Helms, Vice President for Membership and Educational Services, at rhelms@acct.org. Thank you for considering this opportunity.