



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is the CCUSA Innovation Challenge?

The CCUSA Innovation Challenge (Challenge) is a program meant to encourage member agencies to explore bold, innovative service-delivery solutions in Workforce Development that have the potential to alleviate, reduce or eliminate poverty.

The Challenge celebrates the transformative power of innovative thinking within the Catholic Charities network. It is an opportunity for our agencies to be recognized for leading in their communities through precedent-setting, game-changing programs and initiatives.

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### When was the Challenge announced?

The Challenge was announced by Sr. Donna Markham, OP, PhD, CCUSA President and CEO, at the 2022 CCUSA Annual Gathering in Baltimore, Maryland. All rules, expectations and application materials were made available at that time.

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### Where can information about the Challenge be found?

The Challenge material can be found online at [CCUSAINNOVATES.ORG](https://www.ccusainnovates.org).

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### Who can apply for the Challenge?

The Challenge is open to Catholic Charities member agencies or community partnerships in which a Catholic Charities member agency is the lead.

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### What type of programs will be considered?

Submissions must meet CCUSA's commitment to alleviate, reduce and prevent poverty as detailed in the Challenge submission packet available for download at [CCUSAINNOVATES.ORG](https://www.ccusainnovates.org). Innovative/new ideas and programs in workforce development must be achievable, replicable, sustainable and scalable. The size or budget of the agency will not be heavily weighted in the evaluation process.

### How many program ideas can an agency submit?

Only one Challenge submission per organization will be accepted.

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### How is an agency's submission transmitted to CCUSA and officially entered?

All submissions must be made through the entry portal at [CCUSAIinnovates.org](https://CCUSAIinnovates.org).

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### What is the prize?

Three prizes (in total) of \$333,333 each (\$1 million total) will be awarded to the small, medium and large Catholic Charities agency with the best Workforce Development innovative idea.

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### What are the important dates/deadlines?

- Submission deadline for completed applications: Friday, February 10, 2023, at 11:59 pm ET
- February 11 – March 19, 2023: Judges review and score entries, then select finalists.
- Spring Gathering, March 20–22, 2023:
  - Three finalist agencies from each of three categories (small, medium and large) will be notified during the Spring Gathering.
- March 23 – June 30, 2023:
  - Finalists prepare “Big Idea” video pitches
    - Videos must include: Project description, impact and why finalist should be selected
    - Length: 90 seconds or less
- July 1 – September, 2023:
  - Video will be promoted online.
  - Online voting by general public (a percentage of overall judging criteria)

- September 2023: CCUSA Annual Gathering in Cleveland, Ohio
    - Finalist teams will present live pitch during second day of CCUSA Annual Gathering.
    - Online voting of pitch by audience members through CCUSA Annual Gathering App (a percentage of judging criteria)
    - Scoring of pitch by judges (a percentage of judging criteria)
    - Winners will be announced on final day of CCUSA Annual Gathering.
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### What is required of finalists and winners?

Any Catholic Charities agency that submits an application certifies and agrees to the following if chosen as a finalist on March 19, 2023:.

#### **Finalists:**

- Once notified of selection as a finalist, the organization will prepare a “Big Idea” video pitch that will be promoted online and used for voting by general public
- Finalist teams will present a live pitch during the Annual Gathering 2023. Those attending will have a vote and judges will rate the pitches.

#### **Winners:**

- Between October 2023 and October 2024, winners will be partnered with a research institution or individual who will help the agency measure the impact of their “Big Idea”
- At the 2024 Annual Gathering, winners will present on what is working and provide opportunities for cross-learning and feedback on their projects.
- At the 2025 Annual Gathering, winners will present reports on their projects, including lessons learned, metrics identified, total impact and feasibility of replication.
- At the 2026 Annual Gathering, successful “Big Idea” lessons will be promoted or possible replication and advocacy purposes.

Additional questions?

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