

SCHEV Fund for Excellence and Innovation Overview

The Fund for Excellence and Innovation (FFEI) was established during the 2016 legislative session to focus on two primary activities: (1) **stimulate collaborations** among public school divisions, community colleges and universities and to **expand affordable student pathways**; and (2) **pursue shared services** and other efficiency initiatives at colleges and universities that lead to measurable cost reductions.

FFEI serves as a testbed for innovative projects and collaboration among institutions and educational organizations. In the most recent years, the competition focused on innovative pilots supporting the goals of Virginia's strategic plan for higher education and the Administration's higher education priority areas.

Projects Funded through 2025:

2025 – Virginia State University in collaboration with Northern Virginia Community College and Brightpoint Community College are working to develop **open education resources** for broad use by educators and students at all levels, creating the potential for significant impact in the Commonwealth and nationwide. They are also working toward alternative pathway options through offering **stackable micro-credential programs** and **enhanced high school dual enrollment options**.

2024 – George Mason University, Bridgewater College, James Madison University, Roanoke College, and University of Virginia; Old Dominion University and Suffolk County Public Schools; Virginia Commonwealth University, Goochland County Public Schools, and Henrico County Public Schools – will help address Governor Youngkin's ED 5 and EO 30 (2024), by **creating pathways for opportunities in artificial intelligence**.

2023 and 2022– Modeled after University Innovation Alliance to rapidly pilot, assess and scale interventions to identify institutionally created barriers to student success and introduce evidence-based methods of removing those barriers.

2023 - Danville Community College and Averett University; George Mason University and Northern Virginia Community College

2022 - Patrick & Henry Community College and Ferrum College; Radford University and New River Community College; UVA Wise and Mountain Empire Community College

Proposal foci from 2023 and 2022 include: designing/improving academic pathways in multiple disciplines; student persistence programs; building institutional capacity to better support transfer; reverse transfer agreements; proactive transfer advising; processes for tutoring assistance; and hiring of and development for student success coaches.

2021 – **New open educational resources** were acquired by the Virtual Library of Virginia, providing access to all 39 of VIVA's public institutions.

2020 – University of Virginia and the Virginia Community College System built a **transfer portal** and capacity for **remote learning technology assistance**, respectively.

2019 - James Madison University, Old Dominion University, Radford University, Virginia Commonwealth University, University of Mary Washington, University of Virginia, and Wytheville Community College developed **transfer pathways** and **academic program maps** between two- and four-year institutions. Additionally, ODU focused on improving **social mobility**.

2018 - Brightpoint Community College, Old Dominion University, Patrick & Henry Community College, Piedmont Virginia Community College, and Reynolds Community College all focused on **implementing or expanding pathways that support cost savings to students**, particularly for underrepresented populations (e.g. dual enrollment, early college, Z degrees).