

Bard

ADDRESSING THE CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY THROUGH GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORKS

OVERVIEW

Bard College, with its partner Central European University, will expand its international network and extend the reach and impact of its unique curricula and programs, enabling faculty and students to engage in the critical thinking, debate, and civic engagement we consider key to addressing critical societal challenges. This global liberal arts network will be the first international university system not defined by a single nation or political institution. It will operate across borders and be characterized by student-centered teaching, facilitated in real time by technology and interpersonal connection.

MISSION AND GOALS

Bard's mission as a private institution operating in the public interest has led it to create a network of traditional and nontraditional higher education programs premised on the best traditions of liberal education. Bard's innovations range from its distinctive undergraduate liberal arts curriculum and its focused graduate programs to its programs designed to reach underserved communities. Bard aims to improve student outcomes, cultivate engaged citizens, reinforce democratic principles, and improve lives and livelihoods on a global scale by increasing access to higher education. Bard will accomplish these goals by expanding programs to new partners and across its existing educational network, which includes:

- Bard Early Colleges (currently in Baltimore; Cleveland; Washington, D.C.; Newark, New Jersey; Hudson, New York; New Orleans; and New York City)
- International partnerships and programs (Central European University in Vienna, Bard College Berlin, Al-Quds Bard College for Arts and Sciences in East Jerusalem, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences [Smolny College] in Russia, Fulbright University in Vietnam; American University of Central Asia in Bishkek)
- Bard Prison Initiative
- Bard Microcolleges in local libraries and community organizations
- Educational programs for refugees
- Undergraduate and graduate programs based at its main campus in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

Bard has demonstrated that by acting institutionally as engaged citizens, colleges and universities can enhance learning, increase engagement, and reach underserved populations across borders to help provide the tools necessary to support civil society and democracy. This connection is supported by research showing that the Bard early college model, for example, is effective in positioning young people to succeed in higher education and that a robust undergraduate education can be achieved across the socioeconomic spectrum, leading to successful graduate study and careers. Based on the results seen across the Bard network, we've concluded that employing the underlying principles of civic engagement in higher education accelerates democratic values.

IDENTIFYING EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES

Bard will identify key populations for expansion of its work with both traditional and nontraditional partners, such as libraries and community organizations. The impact is global in scope yet intensive and personal, whether in a U.S. prison or a refugee camp abroad. The common thread is improving the critical thinking and communication skills necessary to pursue academic credentials and civic participation.

The Bard network is formally connected through a scaffolding of organizational structures, partnership agreements, and, in most cases, common accreditation. The liberal arts curriculum and the Bard degree are the common threads creating a resilience among our projects enduring not just years, but often decades. Ideas and practices based on curricula, teaching methods, and civic engagement strengthen and nourish the network and generate innovations and initiatives. The approach to institutional engagement, in turn, expands the boundaries of the network. For example, faculty from Smolny work in several Russian institutions, from Kaliningrad to Siberia, promoting student-centered learning, while faculty at Al-Quds Bard work with multiple Palestinian secondary institutions and refugee teachers in Jordan to help further core institutional practices.

SCALING THE PROJECT

With funding of **one million dollars**, Bard would develop more network classes, which unite Bard students and faculty with partners across the globe. Bard would also expand opportunities for short- and long-term student exchanges and participation in international alliances and civic engagement projects. Bard College could, for example, expand its debating societies across the international network, the early colleges, and the Bard Prison Initiative.

Funding of **five million dollars** would enable the creation of new avenues for faculty work across network institutions and international exchanges; curricular innovation and research projects; and support of new civic engagement projects for students on national and international scales, connecting them both virtually and through conferences and internships.

Funding of **ten million dollars** creates an even more robust platform for blended learning and teacher training to spaces beyond the typical classroom, such as in refugee camps, diverse cultural institutions, community-based organizations such as libraries, and prisons and other communities most often excluded from the university experience. It allows Bard to extend the scope of its international activities, particularly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.



The Bard High School Early Colleges are public-private partnerships in six cities in the United States. Students receive a high school diploma and a tuition-free Bard College associate's degree in four years.



Al-Quds Bard College for Arts and Sciences. Out of approximately 4,000 universities and colleges in the United States, Bard College is the only one that has a dual degree undergraduate program with a Palestinian university.



The Bard Prison Initiative, founded in 2001 by a Bard College student, has become a full-fledged College initiative. BPI has granted 550 degrees and become a national leader in higher education for incarcerated students

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