



# THE EXCEL PROJECT

*Excellence in Entrepreneurial Learning*

## Welcome to the EXCEL Report Release Celebration

Thank you for joining us to celebrate the release of the Excellence in Entrepreneurial Learning (EXCEL) research report. This release marks the conclusion of two years of discovery about entrepreneurship instructional services in Baltimore for learners aged 16 to 29.

The event offers an interactive walkthrough of the EXCEL report's structure and contents, as well as an opportunity to network and share thoughts with EXCEL stakeholders. During the event, you will:

- Receive the "Welcome to the EXCEL Report Release Celebration" and "A Guide to EXCEL" documents.
- Pick up food and drinks located in the Center for Strategic Entrepreneurship (CSE), Room 050, and then proceed to the data walk journey, which starts just outside the CSE to your right.
- Move along the walk, reading the EXCEL report background information before reaching the central part of the College of Business Atrium where data cards are located. Background information includes:
  - A description of the EXCEL Research Project
  - Instructions for the data walk experience
  - A summary of the research methods
  - A list of participating organizations and demographic data
  - Acknowledgements of the research team, advisory board, and other support personnel
  - A project timeline
- Transition to the center of the College of Business Atrium to explore data cards featuring findings, recommendations, implications, and future aspirations of the report. You will:
  - Be met by a researcher or advisory board member ready to answer questions and engage in discussion.
  - Move through numbered data card stations that include information about the seven areas of findings:
    - structure
    - partnerships
    - methods
    - effectiveness measures
    - challenges
    - trauma-informed approaches, and
    - beyond the launch.
- Turn your attention to the podium at 6:15 p.m. to hear remarks from the EXCEL principal investigator, Coppin State University leadership, Annie E. Casey Foundation leadership, advisory board members, youth researchers, and public officials.

Thank you again for joining the EXCEL journey!

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## A Guide to EXCEL

### What is EXCEL?

Excellence in Entrepreneurial Learning (EXCEL) is a follow-up research project to the 2017 Annie E. Casey Foundation report, "Reshaping Workforce Development in Baltimore: Ensuring Community Voice and Expertise Guide Us." This 2017 report revealed that teens and young adults in Baltimore, ages 16 to 29, "crave entrepreneurship and resources to build businesses that are free from discrimination and benefit their communities."

The EXCEL research is a landscape analysis of entrepreneurship instructional programs serving the same demographic studied in the 2017 report. Thirty-five organizations participated in this innovative design, which included traditional interviews, questionnaires, and observations. These methods helped describe program models, success metrics, stakeholder value, trauma-informed approaches, and support for learners beyond launch. Additionally, the design assessed each phase of the study to discover more effective approaches to studying youth entrepreneurship.

### What is the anticipated value of EXCEL?

- **Focusing on learning competence:** Prioritizing learning competence over successful entrepreneurship to counter the false narrative of guaranteed success. We believe better learners will become our best entrepreneurs.
- **Achieving thought-leadership:** Building a body of knowledge in urban youth entrepreneurship that is globally transferable.
- **Improving research approaches:** Enhancing methods for studying youth entrepreneurship.
- **Providing funders with success metrics:** Offering metrics that improve evidence-based returns on investments.
- **Addressing trauma:** Tackling the trauma of poverty and racism by emphasizing the strength of learning competence.
- **Influencing public policy:** Shaping policies related to young entrepreneurs as economic catalysts.
- **Engaging young entrepreneurs:** Finding new ways to engage young entrepreneurs for greater social and economic impact and establishing a framework of continuous improvement through applied research.

### How do I get the most from my EXCEL journey?

- **Digest the report:** Spend time understanding the comprehensive report, which is meant to inspire additional questions.
- **Share feedback:** Your feedback will help improve the delivery of entrepreneurship instructional programs and the way we study them.
- **Support participating organizations:** Encourage participation in the EXCEL network by supporting the many organizations providing instructional services beyond the initial 35.

### What's next?

- **EXCEL Community Conversations:** These events will provide opportunities for all stakeholders to engage in dialogue and contribute to the design of future efforts. The first conversation is tentatively scheduled for July 10th.
- **Subscribe to the EXCEL mailing list:** Visit [www.GreaterSpacesandPlaces.com](http://www.GreaterSpacesandPlaces.com) to receive notifications about upcoming activities.
- **Refer other organizations:** Encourage other organizations to participate in future studies.

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