

Carnegie Foundation selects ASU for 2026 community engagement classification

This is 3rd time university has earned the distinction, reflecting its status as a socially embedded institution

By Emma Greguska, ASU News
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In an announcement that bolsters Arizona State University's reputation as a socially embedded institution, the American Council on Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching have selected the university for the 2026 Carnegie Community Engagement (CE) Classification.

The classification is bestowed upon institutions that have demonstrated a deep engagement with local, regional, national and global communities. ASU previously earned the distinction in 2006 and 2015.

"Higher education is a vital economic engine for us all. Our colleges and universities not only fuel science and innovation, they build prosperity in rural, urban and suburban communities nationwide," said Timothy F.C. Knowles, president of the Carnegie Foundation. "We celebrate each of these institutions, particularly their dedication to partnering with their neighbors — fostering civic engagement, building usable knowledge and catalyzing real-world learning experiences for students."

The CE Classification is awarded following a voluntary process of self-study by each institution wherein they submit materials describing the nature and extent of their engagement in the community.

ASU offers thousands of outreach programs throughout the state, making a difference in the lives of Arizonans by providing needed educational, cultural, legal and health care services. Through these programs, faculty members across all four ASU campuses and other locations take their research and teaching into the community,

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Learn more about social embeddedness at ASU at community.asu.edu.

leading to more relevant research, a vibrant educational experience for students and rich benefits for the people of Arizona.

In a letter of recognition, the Carnegie Foundation applauded ASU's "excellent alignment among campus mission, culture, leadership, resources and practices that support dynamic and noteworthy community engagement."

The CE Classification has been the leading framework for institutional assessment and recognition of community engagement in U.S. higher education for the past 19 years, with classification cycles in 2006, 2008, 2010, 2015, 2020, 2024 and, now, 2026.

In the 2026 cycle, 237 institutions — 157 public, 80 private — earned the CE Classification, joining the 40 institutions classified in 2024 for a total of 277 institutions that hold the designation. Of the institutions recognized in 2026, 48 are receiving the classification for the first time, while 189 have previously held it.

In a press release, the American Council on Education praised applicants for "deepening partnerships, leveraging community assets and addressing urgent societal challenges."

"The institutions receiving the 2026 Community Engagement Classification exemplify American higher education's commitment to the greater good," said Ted Mitchell, president of the American Council on Education. "The beneficiaries of this unflagging dedication to public-purpose missions are their students, their teaching and research enterprises, and their wider communities."

More information and the list of recognized institutions can be found in the American Council on Education's [formal press release](#).

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

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