

CASE STUDY: ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT COLLEGES OF ART & DESIGN

Helping 40 Colleges of Arts and Design Collect and Analyze Institutional Data

Alchemer helps the Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design gather benchmarking data and meet the needs of their members

The Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design (AICAD) is a consortium of 39 colleges of art and design throughout the United States and Canada. AICAD uses Alchemer Survey to collect a range of information from its member colleges, including institutional data as well as feedback about initiatives and events. AICAD also used Alchemer to survey members about priorities that inform strategic planning and the services that AICAD provides to its membership.

AGGREGATING MORE DATA FOR BETTER REPORTING

While AICAD cannot collect data about individual students, they do collect institutional-level data, for example, the number of students enrolled and their demographic profile, as well as acceptance rates, retention rates, and completion rates. "A big part of my responsibility is collecting institutional data, such as enrollment counts and student demographics from each of our member colleges, cleaning and organizing that data, and delivering it back to the membership in an easily accessible format," explains Joanne Kersh, Director of Research at AICAD. "Alchemer makes that easy. We use Alchemer as a data collection tool that lets people submit their institutional data securely and efficiently. It's easy for them and it's easy for me."

In the U.S., every institution that gets Federal funding; participates in Federal financial assistance program; or enrolls students who receive Pell Grants; must report their data to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). "Using Alchemer, we collect much of the same data that is federally required, but we make it easier for our schools to access it and use it for strategic decision making and planning," says Joanne. In addition to student data, AICAD uses Alchemer to collect information about faculty, such as their demographic composition and average compensation by faculty rank, which is also added to the database. "Since we are a very unique group of institutions, our member schools appreciate that they can use the data we collect to benchmark against their peers."

“We rely on Alchemer Survey to help us measure satisfaction and get feedback from the membership.”

Joanne Kersh,
Director of Research at AICAD

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EMPOWERING COLLEGES WITH RICH DATA

Once member institutions submit their data, Joanne cleans it and uploads it to AICAD’s online data portal. “When schools submit their institutional data, I download it and put it into a secure database,” says Joanne. “We give senior staff at each member college the ability to login to the data portal so that they can access and download the data they need.” By giving member schools access to the Association database, AICAD has distributed the ability for ad-hoc reporting to each college.

AICAD also uses this data to create reports that are of value to the entire membership. For example, “Every fall I do an enrollment trends report,” says Joanne. “This report has been particularly valuable over the last few years – through the pandemic and beyond. Additionally, we’re seeing a lot of challenges to enrollment at present.” Right now, higher education in North America is facing what is known as a “demographic cliff.” Declining birthrates in the early 2000s now translate into fewer young people of college-going age, thus, a drop off in enrollment. The pandemic exacerbated the situation, along with declining societal perceptions of higher education. “We understand that it’s really important to pay attention to these issues and provide useful reporting to the membership. So, I do an annual Enrollment Trend Analysis report,” explains Joanne. “If there’s broad interest in, and need for, a particular set of data or a particular analysis, then I’ll produce a report, but otherwise, there’s a lot of data in the portal for the schools to use and do their own analyses to meet their individual needs.”

REPORTING SATISFACTION FOR EVENTS AND SERVICES

AICAD also uses Alchemer to stay in touch with the many individuals at each of the 39 member institutions and get feedback about a range of issues. “AICAD organizes events and meetings for our members throughout the year, and we rely on Alchemer Survey to help us measure satisfaction and get feedback from the membership. We also routinely use Alchemer to create surveys that inform AICAD’s own strategic planning. We provide a variety of services to our member institutions, and we need to know if we are effectively meeting their needs. We routinely need to gather feedback from college presidents, faculty, deans, librarians, and more. Alchemer helps us efficiently gather a lot of information from a lot of people and produce clear, easy to interpret reports so that we can continue to successfully serve our membership.”

To learn more about the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD), visit <https://www.aicad.org/>



Call your account executive, or visit www.alchemer.com/education/ to learn more.

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