

New Profit Invests in UDL Credentialing, Certification Effort

CAST, UDL-IRN partner to build capacity and support across the UDL field

Wakefield, MA —New Profit, a national venture philanthropy organization, has awarded CAST and its partner, the UDL Implementation and Research Network (UDL-IRN), \$100,000 to support the development and launch of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) K-12 school-level certifications as part of a larger multi-year UDL Certification and Credentialing Initiative (UDL-CCI). The award for the next year is part of a highly competitive grantmaking effort led by New Profit’s Reimagine Learning initiative to incubate ideas to advance the “learning revolution for diverse learners.”

CAST and the UDL-IRN launched the UDL-CCI field-change initiative in 2016 to stimulate and sustain best practices in education program design, product development, and classroom instruction. Universal Design for Learning, or UDL, is a research-based framework for developing student-centered environments. With the UDL-CCI, the partners are working to promote the adoption and use of the UDL framework to build capacity for personalized learning.

Key goals for the overall initiative include:

- ✓ Build up a library of learning resources and a global community through an online platform, [Learning Designed](#), to launch in beta form in the Fall, 2018.
- ✓ Develop and field test general and role-specific credentials to qualify individual educators in applying UDL to curriculum design and classroom teaching.
- ✓ Develop and test credentials to certify education technology developers and local education agencies and/or schools as examples of UDL best practices.
- ✓ Create a scalable, sustainable business model for *Learning Designed*, which will house the certification and credentialing programs.

“New Profit’s investment provides critical funding for us to finalize, pilot test, and launch the UDL Building-Level Certification for K-12 schools,” said CAST Chief Executive Officer Linda Gerstle. “New Profit’s ongoing commitment to our partnership is a great vote of confidence in the promise of UDL.”

About CAST: Founded in 1984, CAST is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to transform education design and practice until learning has no limits. CAST has earned international recognition for its innovative contributions to educational technology, classroom practices, and policies, especially by originating the Universal Design for Learning framework. CAST—Until Learning Has No Limits®

About the UDL-IRN: Founded in 2011, the UDL-IRN is a nonprofit organization that supports the growing work in UDL implementation and research both nationally and internationally. The IRN hosts an annual summit of researchers, educators, and product providers from multiple countries to foster innovation in UDL implementation and research. The IRN includes leaders from K-12, higher-education, research, and industry across five continents.

About New Profit: New Profit is a pioneering venture philanthropy organization founded in 1998 that invests in breakthrough leaders and initiatives that create transformative, sustainable social impact. For the past 20 years, New Profit has applied the venture capital approach in the social impact sector to catalyze innovation and drive systems change in early learning, K-12 education, workforce development, criminal justice reform, and more.