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All Colleges Must Reject the White House ‘Compact’

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The Trump administration this week [offered U.S. colleges and universities](#) preferential access to federal funding if they accept ideological conditions laid out in what the White House dubbed the “[Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education](#).” A few days earlier, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology – one of nine universities that were first approached with the offer on Oct. 1 – [rejected the compact](#) on the grounds that it would “restrict freedom of expression and our independence as an institution.”

All colleges and universities must follow MIT’s example and reject this compact. That’s because bowing to the demands of any government, political party or interest group in exchange for money undermines the highest values that U.S. universities teach and uphold. America’s global leadership in higher education rests on a commitment to academic freedom – independent scholarship, teaching and self-governance – as well as equal access to opportunity. These core principles ensure that we serve the public interest regardless of the political winds.