

# Who are the Millennials?

## Nine Types of Millennial Students: Where They Are, What They Want, and How to Serve Them

Millennials compose a growing number of seats in continuing and professional education programs, but despite common stereotypes, the generation is far from one-dimensional. Use the matrix below to align your marketing strategy, program offerings, and student services with the student segments most likely to enroll in current and future programs.

- 1 Determine a Personal Trait
- 2 Determine a Professional Trait
- 3 Identify Your Millennial Student

### PRACTICAL

- > Attracted to structure, job stability, and clear-cut promotion opportunities
- > Drawn to large organizations or established professions (medicine, law, education)

### CREATIVE

- > Values the flexibility of self-employment over the accountability of 9–5 work
- > Wants ample time to pursue other professional or personal commitments

### OPPORTUNISTIC

- > Has the confidence (and disposable income) to address business opportunities in their region or field
- > Wants to leave a lasting legacy on industry, community, or family

### ASPIRATIONAL

- > Makes the personal, academic, and professional decisions most likely to ensure financial success
- > Grew up in a middle class or working class household, but optimistic about the future

Values a stable, long-term career in an established field or company with lock-step opportunities for advancement; wants to achieve and sustain financial independence

- ✓ **FIND ME IN**  
Areas with large college-educated, middle class populations (Midwest, Mid-Atlantic states)
- ✓ **COURSES OF INTEREST**  
Leadership, Project Management
- ✓ **DESIRED PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES**  
Content applicable to current role and next promotion

### Company Women

Finds a structured corporate environment detrimental to personal and professional growth, opting to “be their own boss” through freelance and contract-based projects

- ✓ **FIND ME IN**  
Large metropolitan areas with no shortage of potential clients
- ✓ **COURSES OF INTEREST**  
Digital Media, Event Planning
- ✓ **DESIRED PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES**  
Mix of creative and business-focused content to navigate self-employment

### Corporate Opt-Outs

Drawn to the high-risk, high-reward world of start-ups; sees an unfilled niche in their industry or thinks they could do a better job than the competitors

- ✓ **FIND ME IN**  
Cities full of risk-taking business partners and investors (San Francisco, Austin, New York)
- ✓ **COURSES OF INTEREST**  
Entrepreneurship, Design Thinking
- ✓ **DESIRED PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES**  
Accelerated completion time to launch venture before competitors

### Start-Up Moguls

### PHILANTHROPIC

- > Prioritizes meaning—not money—when selecting a profession and donates time to important causes
- > Grew up in an upper-middle class household where parents could fund a liberal arts education and international travel

Pursues roles in corporate wellness, diversity, sustainability, or socially conscious investing at mission-driven companies, when finances require them to choose private-sector work

- ✓ **FIND ME IN**  
Growing cities with socially conscious populations (Seattle, Portland, Denver)
- ✓ **COURSES OF INTEREST**  
Corporate Social Responsibility, Diversity and Inclusion
- ✓ **DESIRED PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES**  
Opportunity to interact with (and interview with) mission-driven companies

### Mission-Driven Business Leaders

Makes a living off of creative self-employment or other flexible opportunities; uneasy with working for “big business” in a traditional 9–5 environment

- ✓ **FIND ME IN**  
Creative enclaves (Brooklyn, Los Angeles); industrial cities with a low cost of living (Detroit, Pittsburgh)
- ✓ **COURSES OF INTEREST**  
Graphic Design, Web Design, Creative Writing
- ✓ **DESIRED PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES**  
Required portfolio to recruit clients, despite lack of professional experience

### Corporate Skeptics

Identifies opportunities for nonprofit organizations that address unmet needs in their community or in the world; inspired by volunteer work and international travel

- ✓ **FIND ME IN**  
Socioeconomically and ethnically diverse communities (Philadelphia, Minneapolis)
- ✓ **COURSES OF INTEREST**  
Social Entrepreneurship, Sustainability
- ✓ **DESIRED PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES**  
Built-in mentorship component to gain access to social networks and donors

### Nonprofit Leaders

### TRADITIONAL

- > Places relationships with family over professional and educational pursuits
- > Stayed close to home for college or opted out of college for military service or full-time employment

Seeks employment in stable organizations and industries to support a growing family; prioritizes roles with generous benefits packages and opportunities for advancement

- ✓ **FIND ME IN**  
Areas with large immigrant populations or large religious communities
- ✓ **COURSES OF INTEREST**  
Management, Finance, Allied Health
- ✓ **DESIRED PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES**  
Flexible, part-time format that fits alongside personal and professional commitments

### Breadwinners

Wants to earn additional income, pursue a personal passion, or ease themselves back into the workforce via flexible, part-time work that fits alongside personal commitments

- ✓ **FIND ME IN**  
Areas with a low cost of living for single-income families
- ✓ **COURSES OF INTEREST**  
Interior Design, Blogging
- ✓ **DESIRED PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES**  
Self-paced, asynchronous programs that don't detract from family responsibilities

### Income Supplementers

Inherits or creates a small business that provides employment to friends and family and an investment to pass on to children or other relatives

- ✓ **FIND ME IN**  
Rural areas and communities with strong family ties
- ✓ **COURSES OF INTEREST**  
Conflict Resolution, Estate and Trust Planning
- ✓ **DESIRED PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES**  
Personal coaching sessions that apply course content to unique family dynamics

### Small Business Owners

