

Washington Jobs Initiative

Good Jobs Challenge



Overview and Context

EDA's [Good Jobs Challenge](#) is making once-in-a-generation investments in high-quality, locally led workforce systems to dramatically transform America's communities. With a focus on equity, the program is expanding career opportunities for more Americans to reach their full potential and secure good-paying jobs while producing a skilled workforce to ensure the United States is prepared to innovate, compete, and succeed in a 21st Century global economy.

Washington State submitted a plan—Washington Jobs Initiative (WJI)—and won a \$23.5 million award to train 5,000 Washington residents and ensure that at least 3,150 are placed in jobs. WJI seeks to leverage existing Career Connect Washington partnerships and programs to meet this goal by 2025. WJI will offer competitive awards and invest in industry sector partnerships that provide training, embed paid work-based learning, and help Washington residents get onto a career pathway that leads to a good job with a family-sustaining wage.

Target Industry Sectors

1. Advanced Manufacturing & Aerospace
2. Clean Technology & Energy
3. Construction
4. Finance
5. Health Care
6. Information Technology & Cybersecurity
7. Life Science
8. Maritime
9. Education
10. Agriculture & Natural Resources

Goals

- 5,000 people receive education and training
- 3,150 people are employed in quality jobs
- Traditionally underserved populations are prioritized, including but not limited to women; Black, Latino, Indigenous and Native American, Asian American, and Pacific Islander individuals; and others who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic

Strategy

- **Equity focus:** Consciously recruit from traditionally underserved communities and those furthest from opportunity, and encourage employers to use skill-based hiring to improve and diversify their talent pipelines
- **Immediate employment:** Ensure participants earn a living wage during training and/or are immediately placed into jobs that provide a family-sustaining wage

- Industry partnerships: Leverage regional and industry leadership to convene and organize partners to close skill gaps, deliver training, and create good jobs
- Wraparound supports: Provide participants with wraparound support services to ensure equity in access and outcomes
- Earn and Learn: Implement Registered Apprenticeship and Career Launch programs, which provide paid work experience, credentials, and academic credit, to create pathways to good jobs

Tentative Timeline for 2023

May–June	RFP is released, and applications are submitted
August–September	Awards are granted and work begins

WJI Competitive Grants for Two Opportunities

WJI funding will support industry sector partnerships for either implementation, or design and implementation:

I. Implementation

- Must operate an existing program
- Recruit participants from underserved communities, including unemployed or underemployed individuals
- Provide demand-driven education/skills training
- Provide wraparound supports
- Place participants in jobs

II. Design & Implementation

- Employers identify hiring and skill needs
- Industry sector partnerships develop demand-driven strategies
- Design training model and curriculum
- Organize community partners to provide wraparound supports
- Develop strategies for closing equity gaps
- Recruit, train, and place participants

Design Principles

- Industry-driven and partnership-based: Awards will go to industry sector partnerships that have worked with employers on hiring needs.
- Comprehensive: Partnerships should be inclusive of employers and/or industry sector leaders, labor, K-12, higher education, community-based organizations, business, tribes, and others.
- Priority populations: Awards will prioritize underserved communities, including those disproportionately impacted the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Flexible: Awards and grant structure will allow for evolving industry needs to meet job outcomes.
- Catalytic: Awards may support relatively short-term investments to rapidly expand and accelerate training and job placement in response to the pandemic.
- Measurable: All partnerships will be required to measure progress over time to ensure funding is closing equity gaps and helping Washington residents obtain training, and secure good paying jobs.