



WASHINGTON WORKFORCE ASSOCIATION

# WASHINGTON STATE ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Built on local Workforce solutions.

# On the heels of the pandemic, Washington state is experiencing a workforce gap - a gap that must be addressed with targeted funding.

As the economy remains uncertain, the work of the Local Workforce Development Boards to meet the needs of employers and job seekers is growing.

Employers continue to struggle finding qualified talent to fill the more than 179,000 vacant jobs across the state, including thousands in critical industries like Healthcare, Education, Manufacturing and Hospitality Services.

### THE NEED IS GROWING

- We have over 142,422 unemployed workers.
- Employers have more than 179,000 job openings.
- Workers are finding it increasingly difficult to return to the workforce due to lack of childcare and the rising costs of housing, food and basic necessities.

## MAKING AN IMPACT

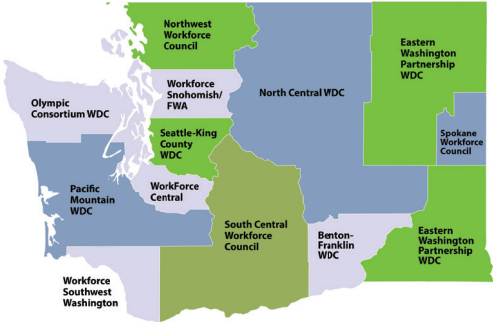
**Local Boards are a success story. We invest in people.**

Local Workforce Development Boards (Local Boards) and the Washington Workforce Association (WWA) are key parts of the solution to fill the workforce pipeline and support employers with their workforce needs.

### LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS IMPACT

STATEWIDE 2020/21

- Local Boards have a 74.7% placement and retention rate, matching job seekers with good-paying careers and actively working on talent acquisition for employers.
- Local Boards served over 15,000 employers.
- Local Boards served 78,000 workers.



## BUILDING ON SUCCESS

We recommend a strategic state investment in a \$50 million Workforce Impact Fund.

A \$50 million state investment each year will empower Local Boards with flexible funding that brings local solutions directly to job seekers and employers.

### The state Workforce Impact Fund would:

- **Significantly expand employer engagement.** Increased Local Board capacity to build and sustain meaningful partnerships with employers, allowing regions to convene key stakeholders to develop and expand services that most effectively serve local businesses.
- **Expand investment in highly-skilled, job-ready individuals.** Increasing resources for skills-based training that lead to measurable gains and credential attainment would increase the employability of those served – especially disadvantaged populations.
- **Intensify focus on and outreach to priority at-risk and underserved populations.** In-community engagement is the most effective way to make a meaningful connection to underserved populations.
- **Expand work-experience and earn-and-learn opportunities.** Work experience and cost of training are significant barriers to job seekers re-entering the workforce. State investment in regional sector engagement will allow Local Boards to provide resources to cultivate, develop and fund work-experience and earn-and-learn opportunities.

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## THE WORKFORCE IMPACT FUND WILL FILL GAPS

A \$50 million local Workforce Impact Fund, focused on 3 broad, proven workforce strategies to transition Washingtonians into good jobs.

### Boost Job-Seeker Supports

This means providing paid internships, paid community service work, stipends, and other income supports in conjunction with occupational training and placement into middle-income career opportunities. Services include: paid internships, cohort-based occupational training, training stipends, scholarships, registered pre-apprenticeship programs, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, and registered apprenticeships.

### **Increase Local Service Capacity**

Local Boards have a scalable, big-tent approach that connects the strengths of local community-based, education, business and other partners with services offered through the public workforce system. This broad approach will be implemented through established networks of local partners that provide start-to-finish career coaching services including outreach, referrals to skill development and training opportunities, and referrals to wraparound support services that enable participation and success.

### **Connect Wrap-Around Supports**

Wrap-around supports, including childcare, housing, and behavioral health support, are needed to enable people navigating poverty to participate in programs that will help them reengage in the workforce. Local Boards need additional capacity and investment to ensure access to supports and services that put people on the path to economic security.

## **IMPACTING LIVES**

Local Workforce Development Boards, with \$50 million state investment each year, can serve more employers and job-seekers. By the numbers:

**6,400** – Number of additional employers served

**4,000** – Number of additional people placed in good jobs

**4,000** – Number of additional people trained to fill the workforce pipeline

## **LET'S MAKE AN IMPACT**

Washington's public workforce development system, made up of 12 local business-led workforce development boards representing nearly 15,000 businesses and serving nearly 78,000 Washingtonians every year is the frontline system capable of delivering an equitable economic recovery for our state. We stand ready to continue to serve the needs of our local communities, making effective public investments in solutions that work.

The Workforce Impact Fund is an investment in the local economic ecosystems that support families and employers across our state.