

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 08-22, Change 1
	DATE December 30, 2024

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS AND STAFF
LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS AND STAFF
AMERICAN JOB CENTER DIRECTORS
COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND TRIBAL COLLEGES
TRIBES AND TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS
STATE APPRENTICESHIP AGENCIES
ETA COMPETITIVE GRANTEES
JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
YOUTHBUILD PROGRAMS

FROM: JOSÉ JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ /s/
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Change 1 to Training and Employment Notice No. 08-22: Building Pathways to Infrastructure Careers – Framework for Preparing an Infrastructure Workforce

1. **Purpose.** To update Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 08-22, which promotes a framework for all workforce stakeholders, including infrastructure project leads, to engage the public workforce system in implementing the Investing in America (IIA) funding—which includes the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)—with strong workforce commitments and proven strategies that produce high-quality education, training, and employment opportunities for all workers. This update includes several more examples of grant programs which present opportunities for coordination between the public workforce system and infrastructure investments.
2. **Action Requested.** Workforce stakeholders may adopt the infrastructure workforce framework, share it broadly with other workforce stakeholders, and promote its adoption.
3. **Summary and Background.**
 - a. **Summary** – This updated notice provides additional information and technical assistance for the framework and reiterates the vision for the role of the public workforce system as a strategic partner in creating and supporting pathways to millions of good-paying infrastructure jobs with high labor standards, including the payment of prevailing wages and fringe benefits and the free and fair choice to join a union and collectively bargain, as the IIA projects continue to be awarded and implemented, most of which will continue for the next several years.

**EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20210**

b. Background – Congress passed, and the President signed into law, three pieces of legislation—collectively known as the IIA—which represent a once-in-a-generation investment in America’s infrastructure and competitiveness. These include:

- **ARPA:** Over \$1 trillion in programs and tax credits to continue many of the programs started by the CARES Act (2020) and Consolidated Appropriations Act (2021) by adding new phases, new allocations, and new guidance to address issues related to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic. ARPA also created a variety of new programs to address continuing pandemic-related crises, and fund recovery efforts as the United States began to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. Many ARPA funds remain available. The Department of Treasury awarded State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to state, Tribal, and local governments in 2021 and 2022, which units of government could obligate through December 31, 2024, and can be expended through December 31, 2026. While a substantial amount of ARPA funding for unemployment insurance was rescinded by the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, other ARPA funds remain available, including State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, and continue to have an impact.
- **BIL:** \$1.2 trillion in total funding over ten years to rebuild America’s roads, bridges, and rails; expand access to clean drinking water; , ensure every American has access to high-speed internet; address the climate crisis; advance environmental justice; and invest in communities that have too often been left behind.
- **CHIPS and Science Act:** \$280 billion over ten years to strengthen American manufacturing; ameliorate supply chain issues; and increase national security by investing in the research, development, and technology in industries including nanotechnology, clean energy, quantum computing, and artificial intelligence. This legislation also fully funds the CHIPS for America Act, providing \$52.7 billion for American semiconductor research, development, manufacturing, and workforce development.
- **IRA:** Nearly \$400 billion to substantially lower the nation’s carbon emissions by the end of this decade through clean energy investments delivered through a mix of tax incentives, grants, and loan guarantees for clean electricity and transmission, clean transportation, including electric-vehicle (EV) incentives, and more. This will help advance environmental justice for historically underserved populations by reducing pollution, improving clean transit, making clean energy more affordable and accessible, and strengthening resilience to climate change.

IIA is a historic investment in our nation’s infrastructure and our communities, and implementing these investments with integrity requires a readily available, well-trained, and highly skilled workforce. The current supply of infrastructure workers is insufficient to meet the need IIA presents; new investments in education and workforce training and pathways to high-quality jobs continue to be necessary to

implement IIA-funded opportunities offered by the Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Commerce (DOC), Department of Energy (DOE), Department of the Interior (DOI), Department of Education (ED), Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Department of Defense (DOD), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the General Services Administration (GSA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and other Federal agencies.

In addition to meeting growing labor needs spurred by the billions of dollars of in new IIA investments, there remains an urgent need to support diverse access to opportunity within the infrastructure workforce and talent pipeline. The IIA programs include multiple provisions—like local and economic hire provisions and new flexibilities for workforce development spending—which empower federal investments to support local infrastructure talent development and training. These investments present an opportunity for our nation and the public workforce system to ensure that new resources create pathways to good-paying jobs for all Americans: jobs where workers are paid fair wages and benefits; they have a voice in their workplace; and entry-level positions provide pathways to growing skills and career advancement.

Meeting the moment will require collaboration and innovation across silos in the public and private sector. The Department of Labor (DOL) provides this framework to encourage the public workforce system to engage in workforce development planning and training activities to attract, retain, and empower a diverse, qualified infrastructure workforce. The framework reflects three primary activities: partnership development, planning and procurement, and designing and delivering proven workforce strategies and programs.

- **Partnership Development:** Engage, convene, and link key demand side and supply side workforce partners positioned to support a comprehensive workforce plan across various project and sector needs.
- **Planning and Procurement:** Leverage local workforce partners' capacity to support planning activities and formulate strategies that meet project needs and advance equity in communities and for underrepresented workers.
- **Proven Workforce Strategies and Programs:** Design, deliver, and scale proven workforce strategies, programs, and practices with a track record for delivering and opening access to high quality training for diverse communities that include underrepresented workers.

4. Framework and Vision

Partnership Development.

Wherever possible, infrastructure project owners—namely, entities tasked with implementing IIA-funded projects, whether they are grantees, contractors, or otherwise—should strive to build meaningful, collaborative partnerships within the communities where infrastructure projects are based. Through these partnerships, projects and project

leads should strive to enable workers and employers to collaboratively improve community outcomes, achieve shared goals, and change systems through the creation of effective education and workforce training programs that will ensure workers build the skillsets necessary to fill and grow into locally available infrastructure jobs.

Federal investments in our communities and workers should spur coordinated action in sectors, including, but not limited to, those with dedicated IIA workforce training funds, to dramatically expand and accelerate the creation of such training programs. State and local governments, workforce boards, community colleges, non-profits and community-based organizations, foundations, labor organizations, provider and advocacy associations, industry associations, chambers of commerce, and other workforce stakeholders are critical additional partners to workers, worker organizations, and employers to ensure we have the training pathways we need for everyone to succeed—particularly women, people of color, young people, and those from disadvantaged or underserved communities.¹

- a. Strategic Partnerships and Engagement – Strategic partnerships are foundational to a comprehensive infrastructure workforce plan. Workforce system partners and infrastructure project owners should actively engage and partner with the community, especially disadvantaged or underserved communities, where the project is based early in the project planning process. This includes establishing communication channels that center diverse voices to identify communities’ needs. Developing key place-based partnerships with community stakeholders allows project owners and workforce development programs to not only understand, but directly target, the needs of a community and provide a greater range of tailored services as a result.
 - i. *Build diverse partnerships.* Partner roles and resources vary immensely; therefore, it remains best for infrastructure project leads to recruit an array of partners with different and overlapping strengths, weaknesses, resources, areas of expertise, and constituents. Marshalling the available resources, and developing effective strategies to deploy those resources, will require enlisting all stakeholders to address IIA-related talent pipeline needs.

Each strategic partner plays an essential role in preparing the workforce and addressing local, regional, and state-specific challenges. For instance, workforce board leaders are uniquely positioned to convene all the stakeholders of a workforce development system to align resources and efforts that lead to quality results for businesses and career seekers. This includes bringing together stakeholders such as employer/industry associations, unions, labor councils and labor-management partnerships, community colleges and education and training providers, community-based organizations, and various ETA competitive grantees, and designing and articulating a vision in the short- and long-term, such as through their State

¹ Definitions for “equity” and “underserved communities” are found in Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, Sections 2 (a) and (b)

Plans. Infrastructure project owners should reach out to, and develop partnerships with, state and local workforce board leaders *as soon as possible* in the life cycle of the project.

- ii. *Encourage high-road practices and employers.* Project owners and other stakeholders should pursue partnerships with organizations and coalitions that can help connect workers to good-paying jobs, including organizations that represent workers who are underrepresented in infrastructure jobs, so that these workers can be engaged in the design and implementation of infrastructure workforce investment strategies. Once engaged, workforce boards can help facilitate connections to high-road employers on behalf of project owners. Workforce stakeholders should also establish or deepen partnerships with local employers who offer high-quality, in-demand jobs. The Department recommends doing this in the context of a sector strategy, which means working with employers as a group to meet their collective workforce development needs.

DOL’s High Road to the Middle Class map² is designed to spotlight high road training programs—programs that implement demand-driven workforce strategies advancing job quality, equity, and worker voice—that can train America’s infrastructure, clean energy, and manufacturing workforce. By leveraging partnerships with both employers and labor, these programs deliver worker-centered and industry-driven training that is connected to employer needs and regional labor market demands for a skilled workforce. This map can serve as an important resource for employers, labor unions, federal grant recipients, public workforce system stakeholders, job seekers, and state, local, Tribal, territorial, and federal government partners to help them meet their workforce needs and develop new equitable pathways to quality jobs. ETA encourages the public workforce system and partners to use this map to develop and scale partnerships with high road training programs when applying for federal funding and implementing projects mobilized the IIA investments.

Spotlight: ETA has awarded the Amalgamated Transit Union an Apprenticeships Building America grant. This \$8 million grant, aimed at expanding, diversifying, and strengthening registered apprenticeship programs, will create equitable pathways into high-quality union jobs in critical sectors, including transit. The grant will also establish the National Center for High Road Clean Transit Careers. This new Center will address the urgent need for a national infrastructure that supports an high road approach to transit workforce development and will expand the Amalgamated Transit Union’s successful statewide infrastructure in partnership with California Transit Works!. The High Road Center will build economic opportunity and mobility for those who have been marginalized, disadvantaged, or denied opportunities, to mitigate and

² See <https://www.dol.gov/general/good-jobs/high-road-to-the-middle-class>.

support adaption to climate change, and to engage with high road employers to increase quality jobs.

iii. *Engage broadly with traditional and nontraditional stakeholders.* The IIA investments present many opportunities for infrastructure project leads to form partnerships, share labor market information and expertise, and shape workforce development activities to reflect proven workforce strategies and practices. For example, common public workforce system partners often include:

- **Federal Agencies and State, Local, and Tribal Governments** that develop and bid out projects, and in doing so, set the rules of the road;
- **Employers and Industry Associations** in the applicable industry and supply sectors that convey requirements for a skilled workforce and provide quality jobs;
- **Contractors** that bid on the projects from government and run the project delivery;
- **Workforce Development Boards and American Job Centers** that, through key partners, drive and align investments in workforce development across economic regions;
- **Unions, Local Labor Councils, and Labor-Management Partnerships** for the relevant trades that run Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs and, in some cases, define the terms of the workforce through collective bargaining agreements, including project labor agreements, with contractors;
- **Veteran Service Organizations** that assist veterans as they navigate intergovernmental resources and programs to ensure that veterans reintegrate into the civilian workforce and life after their military service;
- **National Apprenticeship System Registration Agencies** (including Offices of Apprenticeship and State Apprenticeship Agencies) that can provide technical assistance to industry on designing and approving Registered Apprenticeship programs (RAPs) or serve as conveners for apprenticeship partners and stakeholders, such as employers, labor, and education and workforce providers;
- **Job Corps Centers** that provide combined academic and career technical training to underserved youth and young adults ages 16 to 24, preparing them to enter emerging and in-demand careers;
- **Youth-Serving Organizations** and youth providers that offer a variety of workforce development opportunities (e.g., paid and unpaid work experiences, summer employment opportunities, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships, job shadowing, on-the-job training opportunities);

- **Community Colleges and Education and Training Providers** that may operate relevant training programs and will be essential for the development of programs responsive to emerging workforce needs;
- Four-year colleges and universities—in particular, **Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Minority-Serving Institutions, and Hispanic-Serving Institutions**—often in consortia with other adult education and postsecondary education institutions; and
- **Community-Based Advocacy and Provider Organizations and Worker Centers** that may offer pre-apprenticeship and workforce development opportunities and are critical partners to support the recruitment and success of women, Black and Brown workers, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and other communities historically excluded from high-quality employment opportunities and pathways.

Stakeholder engagement does not need to be linear. In fact, broader cross-collaboration of stakeholders within a sector strategy is seen as a best practice approach to align public and private resources to address talent needs. Sector strategies establish partnerships of multiple employers within a critical industry to bring together education, economic development, workforce systems, labor organizations, and community organizations that identify and collaboratively meet the workforce needs of that industry within a regional labor market.

As part of sector-based workforce investments, the public workforce system and key stakeholders should promote best practices that create and expand training programs to support long-term careers in the infrastructure sector. Through better alignment of education, training, and employment services among public agencies, career pathway systems hold the promise of increasing the number of workers in the U.S. who gain the industry-recognized and academic credentials they need to work in the most in-demand occupations in infrastructure.

Spotlight: The State of Michigan is using partnerships across the State to prepare an infrastructure workforce. In April 2024, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed Executive Directive 2024-1³ to help train 5,000 new infrastructure workers by January 1, 2030. These workers will each earn an industry-recognized certificate or credential or receive on-the-job training. By May 1, 2025, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity will establish a statewide strategy to meet infrastructure workforce development goals, such as creating clear pathways for target

³ See <https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/news/press-releases/2024/04/29/gov-whitmer-signs-executive-directive-to-train-infrastructure-workers#:~:text=Today's%20executive%20directive%20will%20help%20train%205%2C000%20new%20infrastructure%20workers,meet%20infrastructure%20workforce%20development%20goals>

occupations, skillsets, and priority populations. Each worker receiving training from an educational entity will be issued an industry-recognized certificate or other industry-recognized credential, such as through Registered Apprenticeship. The Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity is coordinating with other state departments and agencies, including the Michigan Department of Transportation; the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy; and the Michigan Infrastructure Office. The agency will also gather data to determine where to increase workforce capacity and how to allocate investments among existing high-performing programs.

- b. Access and Job Quality as Shared Priorities – Advancing shared job quality and access remains critical in building a skilled infrastructure workforce. State and local governments, workforce boards, state apprenticeship agencies, community colleges, non-profits, foundations, labor organizations, and industry associations are critical additional partners to workers, worker organizations, and employers to ensure we have the training pathways we need for everyone to succeed—particularly women, people of color, and those from disadvantaged communities. These strategic partnerships should engage key stakeholders and implement a process for informing workforce strategy design and gathering feedback from communities on the responsiveness of these investments to the needs of underrepresented workers and underserved communities. Another strategy includes engaging philanthropies interested in workforce, job quality, and infrastructure investments on how they can support and amplify the Department’s efforts including by supporting States, Tribes, and localities to use funding available to advance equitable workforce development strategies.

Planning and Procurement.

Planning for infrastructure projects takes a substantial amount of time, and partnerships that have been formed between workforce system partners and infrastructure stakeholders should be deep throughout this planning period. Workforce system partners should have three specific priorities in mind during the planning process:

- Understand the types of jobs that are going to be created and the skills needs (including emerging skills and relevant industry-recognized credentials that may be needed to enter those jobs).
 - Build quality jobs and quality training into project planning and project bids, as well as a focus on hiring a diverse workforce.
 - Determine funding sources that can be leveraged for workforce development needed to support infrastructure projects
- a. Understand the Jobs That Are Going to Be Created and Skills Needs – Workforce system partners and infrastructure project leads should engage in strategic planning with community partners and use data to inform decision-making. For example, the WIOA State and local plans can offer insight on state and local workforce priorities, assets, and goals, and may already include a baseline of information for an

industry's workforce plan. The Economic Development Administration's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy or CEDS can support linkages between, for example, a transportation workforce plan and broader federally supported economic development efforts, and the Department of Energy's Office of State and Community Energy Programs has already begun to work with State Energy Offices to identify the near-term and future workforce needs for clean energy technologies to be deployed under IIA. In examining the various infrastructure workforce needs, it may be useful to think about sequencing employment placement opportunities—as in determining when skilled workers are needed for various phases of the projects—versus building a comprehensive pipeline of skilled apprentices and workers at one time.

Economic and labor market information (LMI) can inform strategies and policies around which industries, occupations, skills, and credentials are necessary for an infrastructure workforce. LMI informs both immediate response and ongoing efforts during this rapidly changing economic environment, and partners must work closely with the LMI Directors within their states to understand the current and growing needs of their economy. To support LMI engagement and alignment, the Department of Labor has supported an LMI Data User Insights Academy, convened by the Labor Market Information Institute and Projections Managing Partnership, to provide a process and space for state LMI agencies and LMI data users to collaboratively improve awareness, access, and utilization of LMI to generate insights and make decisions related to statewide and regional economic growth, development, and mobility. The Academy's cohort learning model promotes the sharing of knowledge, experience, resources, and insights across states as each team of LMI producers and users plan and act to improve data access and use in their own state alongside others doing the same. To foster greater connectivity, strategic coordination, and implementation of training and employment efforts for an infrastructure workforce, we encourage the strategic partners to capitalize on the efforts and learnings of the Academy and to broadly share LMI about what jobs are available, what skills are in demand, and what training and industry-recognized credentials are most likely to have strong employment outcomes. The Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration has a data hub page that provides public data and tools from LMI analysis, such as the Sector Wage Analysis Tool⁴ that can support such efforts. This sharing of information will assist workforce system customers and jobseekers to make data-informed career decisions.

Workforce system partners should also gather qualitative information about the workforce needs from past projects, while also engaging employers, unions, chambers of commerce, and transportation authorities for insight on current and future workforce needs. Workforce system partners should seek to gain knowledge about both jobs and training pathways, including whether Registered Apprenticeship slots are available. For example, workforce system partners could

⁴ See <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/eta.owi.dnptta/viz/SectorWageAnalysis/PublishedTool>

prepare an asset map of key workforce services, benefits, and resources within the community to determine available assets to leverage and gaps to fill.

- b. Build Quality Jobs and Quality Training That Reaches Underserved Communities into Project Planning and Project Bids – One fundamental consideration involves workforce partners and other entities receiving IIA funding for infrastructure-related projects to prioritize connecting a diverse pool of workers, including those from underrepresented and underserved communities, to good jobs by investing in high-quality education and training opportunities, and appropriate wrap-around supportive services.

These investments should continue to focus on connecting underserved communities—including, but not limited to, Black, Indigenous, and people of color; LGBTQ+ individuals; women; immigrants; veterans; youth and young adults; individuals with disabilities; individuals at or below the poverty line; individuals in rural communities; individuals without a college degree; individuals with or recovering from substance use disorder; individuals with limited English proficiency; individuals without a high school credential/equivalency; and justice-involved youth and adults—to high-quality education and training opportunities that lead to high-quality and well-paid career pathways in infrastructure sectors. Additionally, states and cities should prioritize funding and partnerships with high-quality programs with a proven track record of connecting workers to good jobs, ensuring the inclusion of nontraditional and underserved communities in their outreach efforts, graduating diverse cohorts of workers, existing ties to community and worker organizations, and outcomes-driven (as opposed to outputs-driven) program evaluations and accountability metrics.

State and local infrastructure stakeholders can continue to work good jobs and equitable workforce development into their project bids. These entities issue a request for proposals or RFP when they want to fund a project and, in that request, they can use several strategies to encourage the creation of good jobs and equitable workforce development strategies, including:

- i. *Apprenticeship Utilization Requirements.* One method of encouraging equitable workforce development strategies like pre-apprenticeships and RAPs in infrastructure projects is by establishing minimum threshold requirements. For instance, some states require that a portion (generally 10-20%) of all work on publicly supported construction projects is completed by apprentices in RAPs. This requirement not only encourages the use of best practice workforce strategies on infrastructure projects but is aligned with good jobs because of the wage standards built into RAPs, relative to journey-level workers. Apprenticeship utilization policies are an effective tool for increasing the number of RAP opportunities. Apprentice utilization policies are also a way of articulating the need for quality jobs and for the inclusion of a diverse workforce that includes women, people of color, people with disabilities, youth, and veterans. Read more about how

Washington State⁵ and cities like Portland, Oregon⁶ used apprenticeship utilization in local projects through the links above. The IRA offers enhanced tax benefits for a range of clean energy projects to taxpayers that ensure Davis-Bacon Act prevailing wages are paid to workers on such projects, and that registered apprentices are utilized, in accordance with the Inflation Reduction Act. The IRA provides increased credit or deduction amounts for taxpayers who satisfy certain prevailing wage and apprenticeship requirements regarding the construction, alteration, or repair of certain clean energy facilities or properties, projects, or equipment. By satisfying these requirements, taxpayers can generally increase the base amount of the credit or deduction by five times⁷.

- ii. *OFCCP Participation Goals in Construction Trades.* An additional method of encouraging equitable workforce development strategies is encouraging efforts to meet the minimum level of established participation goals for women and minorities in the construction trades. Project bids should make it clear that all contractors and subcontractors which hold any Federal or federally assisted construction contract in excess of \$10,000 are required to make good faith efforts to meet the goals of 6.9% of construction hours being performed by women, and goals that vary based on geography for construction work hours and for work performed by people of color. More information can be found at <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ofccp/Construction/files/ConstructionTAG.pdf>, particularly on pgs. 18-19.
- iii. *Local and Economic Hiring Preferences.* Another method of encouraging equitable workforce development strategies and good jobs within the community of the IIA-funded project is local and economic hire, which can be written into funding announcements for competitive grants. These provisions require that a certain percentage of workers hired for the project be sourced from within the community the project is based in or from economically disadvantaged communities in the area. Preferences can be for people living in disadvantaged census tracts or people with certain barriers to employment, like not having postsecondary education. Local and economic hiring preferences are a way to encourage hiring of populations that are economically disadvantaged and underrepresented in infrastructure jobs. Local and economic hiring preferences create an incentive to reinvest in the community where a project takes place and promote the effective and efficient delivery of high-quality projects with a readily sourced local workforce. Communities might consider including race and gender as individual characteristics within a local hire provision if they have, among other things, identified a manifest imbalance in traditionally segregated job categories, with a design to break down patterns of segregation and to open

⁵ See https://lni.wa.gov/licensing-permits/apprenticeship/_docs/AUR2020.pdf

⁶ See <https://www.portland.gov/businessopportunities/equity-contracting>

⁷ See <https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/prevailing-wage-and-apprenticeship-requirements>

employment opportunities for the targeted groups in jobs from which they have traditionally been barred. Read more about local hire and frequently asked questions at

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/construction/hiringpreferences/qanda060822/>.

- iv. *Project-Specific Agreements*. Public entities and workforce stakeholders implementing IIA-funded projects may enter into project-specific pre-hire collective bargaining agreements to support workforce quality, promote safety and stability, ensure investments benefit the local economy, and help guarantee on-target and on-budget completion of projects.

For instance, project labor agreements (PLAs) establish wages, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment across the entirety of a project. PLAs are a common and cost-effective way to reduce uncertainty in the contracting process, increase efficiency and coordination on projects, support contractor access to skilled workers, improve worker safety and health outcomes, and prevent labor disputes, delays, and disruptions on projects. Where underutilization exists, PLAs can also help establish diversity goals; diverse pipelines through the inclusion of local hiring goals and/or requirements for good faith efforts to hire and retain workers from historically underserved groups, which could include people of color, women, veterans and people with disabilities; and funds for training and wrap-around services, especially for women, people of color, and other workers from underrepresented groups. For example, one PLA in Boston embedded funding to launch the Care That Works pilot childcare program.⁸

Community benefits agreements (CBAs) are agreements signed by community benefit groups and a developer, identifying a range of community benefits the developer agrees to provide as part of the development, in return for the community's support of the project. CBAs may include benefits such as minimums for local hiring, percentage goals to use local suppliers, encouraging the construction of new facilities, techniques, and the establishment of job training.

Community workforce agreements (CWAs) are a specific type of PLA that incorporate the labor standards, pre-hire provisions, no strike/no lockout clauses, and alternative dispute resolution procedures found in most PLAs and also include provisions that address other broader community specific goals. In addition to traditional labor standards described above, CWAs (or PLAs containing community workforce provisions) also often focus on equitable workforce development and building new career ladders into the building trades.

- v. *Vendor/Contractor Accountability*. States and locals tasked with awarding IIA competitive grant funding should adopt rigorous screening methods,

⁸ See <https://carethatworks.org/>

quality metrics, and accountability measures to vet prospective vendors and grantees. “Responsible bidder” programs are commonly used by states and require companies to prequalify before bidding on public projects. In addition to the standard review of company integrity, financials, and experience, stakeholders should also consider a review of, for example, safety records, compliance with wage laws, certified payroll records, and RAP agreements to verify a company’s use of high road workforce practices. Finally, there is an additional benefit to also asking bidders to disclose minimum wages that are to be paid of all categories of workers.

vi. *Wage and Worker Standards.* All stakeholders involved in the development and execution of infrastructure projects can and should uphold high standards where IIA funds are expended, including by supporting the staff and resources necessary to carry out enforcement of these standards. Establishing and maintaining robust worker protections is essential, as is adequately funded oversight and enforcement to maintain these fundamental rights. Notably, workplace violations and poverty wages not only disadvantage and exploit workers, but also externalize actual project costs (e.g., fair, family sustaining wages) onto the social safety net. States and localities have many options—like requiring bidders to submit hiring plans for local and underrepresented workers in advance of the project start—to establish wage and worker standards, as well as mitigate future noncompliance.

c. Determine Funding Sources That Can Be Leveraged for Workforce Development Needed to Support Infrastructure Projects – Numerous recurring and non-recurring funding opportunities can be leveraged to multiply the opportunity presented by and impact of IIA investments as they apply to workforce development. Where possible and in the process of planning for infrastructure projects, workforce system partners should talk with stakeholders about what kinds of funding might be available to support workforce development. In partnering with regional, state, and local public workforce system partners, infrastructure project leads may have the opportunity to braid IIA funding with federal Departments’ formula funding, and discretionary grant program funds. To help communities access grant opportunities and information about funding and projects to date, visit [Build.gov](https://www.build.gov). Additionally, stakeholders can find information on public and private investment across states and territories on [Invest.gov](https://www.invest.gov).

i. *Department of Labor Initiatives and Investments.*

Infrastructure Learning Community (ILC). To help communicate IIA funding and implementation opportunities to the public workforce system, ETA has launched the ILC⁹. The goal of the ILC is to foster a collaborative

⁹ See <https://ilc.workforcegps.org/>

environment for funding recipients from across the federal government that are leading, supporting, scaling, or developing initiatives funded through IIA. Hosted on DOL's TA website, WorkforceGPS, the ILC is a:

- Centralized hub of information and resources related to IIA funding and implementation opportunities;
- Collaborative environment to connect funding recipients and stakeholders working on IIA-related projects;
- Forum to deliver TA from subject matter experts on preparing the public workforce system for the jobs created and supported through IIA investments. This will include engaging local workforce boards, engaging unions, and understanding labor market information.

A wide range of stakeholders may benefit from engaging with the ILC, including nonprofits, institutions of higher education, workforce development entities, labor unions and worker organizations, economic development entities, Native American Tribal Governments, state/local government entities, employers, industry/trade associations, and intermediaries. Email ILC@dol.gov with questions.

Department of Labor Formula Funds. ETA administers core formula funding authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. States and territories receive formula funds to support workforce development activities for unemployed or underemployed youth, adults, and dislocated workers based on a formula that takes into account key statistical data on unemployment and poverty. Formula funds are distributed from states to local areas to support workforce development activities. These programs provide career and training services to millions of job seekers through services like job search assistance, workforce preparation, and career development services. In addition to serving individual job seekers, these programs help businesses find the skilled workers they need by referring qualified job seekers, filling job orders, and through tailored work-based learning strategies. These services are available to workers and businesses through a national network of over 2,000 American Job Centers. This network and the broader workforce system present ample opportunities for infrastructure project owners and other workforce system partners to collaborate and align strategies and funding to develop the infrastructure talent pipeline.

Department of Labor Competitive and Discretionary Investments. For more information about grant funding, see www.dol.gov/grants.

- 1) **Apprenticeship Investments.** The Department's Registered Apprenticeship investments support ongoing efforts to expand and modernize Registered Apprenticeship by expanding the number of programs and apprentices, diversifying the industries that utilize RA, and increasing access to and completion of apprenticeships for underrepresented populations and underserved communities. This includes:

- a) Industry Intermediary Contracts¹⁰. As partners of DOL’s Office of Apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship Industry Intermediaries are integral stakeholders in the effort to expand the number of RA opportunities across industries throughout the U.S. These partners increase awareness through industry outreach, connect employers and labor organizations with workforce and education partners, and provide technical assistance to launch and expand RA programs.
- b) State Apprenticeship grants and Apprenticeship Building America Grants.
 - 1. **Building State Capacity to Expand Apprenticeship through Innovation** grants support statewide RA program expansion through a two-tiered funding system that provides states with maximum flexibility to address local apprenticeship needs while enhancing the focus on employer engagement, performance, and positive outcomes for apprentices.
 - 2. **State Apprenticeship Expansion** grants to States to increase the number of apprentices in RA programs and to ensure that apprenticeship is a viable career path for youth, adults, and career seekers, as well as a valuable workforce development strategy for businesses. These grants also aim to support and encourage RA program diversification, including increasing the diversity of apprentices and growing apprenticeship across industry sectors and to support the integration of RA programs into state workforce development, education, and economic development strategies and programs.
 - 3. **Apprenticeship Building America** grant recipients will work with various partners to support and develop the RA ecosystem. These grants aim to strengthen and modernize the RA program system, increase equity and accessibility in program delivery to apprentices, bring the RA model to more industries, and improve RA program completion rates for under-represented populations and underserved communities.

¹⁰ See <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/investments-tax-credits-and-tuition-support/registered-apprenticeship-industry-intermediaries>

- c) Registered Apprenticeship Technical Assistance Centers of Excellence¹¹. In partnership with DOL’s Office of Apprenticeship, the Registered Apprenticeship Technical Assistance Centers of Excellence (RA TA Centers) serve as resources to stakeholders throughout the RA system. To support RA program expansion and modernization, the RA TA Centers provide technical assistance services on a national level in critical areas identified below to boost the Registered Apprenticeship system. The RA TA Centers include:
1. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility RA TA Center – Jobs for the Future (JFF). This RA TA Center provides strategies and customized support to employers, education providers, intermediaries, and government entities to drive diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in Registered Apprenticeships.
 2. Data and Performance and Best Practices RA TA Center - The Council for State Governments (CSG). This RA TA Center 1) conducts data analysis, 2) creates data visualizations that aid in decision-making, 3) provides one-on-one TA to grantees in data collection, preparation, and submission and 4) develops resources that promote Registered Apprenticeship alignment and expansion.
 3. Strategic Partnerships and System Alignment RA TA Center – Safal Partners. This RA TA Center accelerates national scaling of apprenticeship by building and sustaining partnerships that support system alignment with the nation’s workforce and education systems.
 4. Occupations and Standards RA TA Center - Urban Institute. This RA TA Center develops Registered Apprenticeship Program frameworks (competency-based, hybrid, and other innovative models), national Registered Apprenticeship Program standards and supports industry in meeting Registered Apprenticeship Program design

¹¹ See <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/investments-tax-credits-and-tuition-support/registered-apprenticeship-technical-assistance-centers-excellence>

and development requirements. Visit [ApprenticeshipStandards.org](https://www.apprenticeshipstandards.org) to view the Registered Apprenticeship Standards Library for examples of program standards by industry and occupation.

Information on these investments, their areas of focus, services to provide, and more are available on [apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov).

- 2) **Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO) grants.** REO grants assist returning citizens re-enter the workforce through for activities that prepare justice-involved and out-of-school youth and young adults for employment, with a priority for projects serving high-crime, high poverty communities. Among the specific initiatives under REO are:
 - i. **Growth Opportunities (GO) Grants.** The GO grant initiative supports the placement of youth and young adults (18-24 years, in-and-out of school) with justice system involvement into paid work experiences aligned with their career and educational goals, and provides funding for services, such as mentorship, legal assistance, and transportation that will support participation and success. These grants aim to help youth avoid violence and build conflict resolution skills, introduce and prepare youth for the world of work, help youth identify career interests and attain skills and good work habits, and provide income to youth to start them on the path of earning living wages.
 - ii. **Pathway Home Grants.** Pathway Home grants provide states, local governments, and non-governmental organizations the resources needed to improve employability outcomes for adults during the reentry process from incarceration. The Pathway Home grants include reentry services to eligible participants while still incarcerated in prisons and jails and continue comprehensive services post-release.

The public workforce system should consider how to engage re-entering and justice-involved individuals to build their workforce pipeline in order to meet the labor needs of infrastructure investments.

- 3) **Strengthening Community Colleges (SCC) Training Grants.** SCC builds the capacity and responsiveness of community colleges

to meet the skill development needs of employers and equitably support students in obtaining good jobs in in-demand industries. Funded projects focus on accelerated learning strategies that support skill development, rapid reskilling, and employment through targeted industry sectors and career pathway approaches; address equity gaps to increase access to postsecondary education; and advance partnerships with Minority-Serving Institutions like Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Tribal Colleges and Universities. Many SCC grantees are building curriculum and accelerated career pathways programs for infrastructure careers.

- 4) **Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) Grant Program.** The WANTO program provides technical assistance to employers and labor unions to encourage employment of women in apprenticeable and nontraditional occupations. Historically, in addition to providing job skills training for women through pre-apprenticeship programs, WANTO grantees have also provided ongoing trainings for employers and unions on creating a more supportive environment and culture for women to succeed in these careers. Lastly, WANTO grantees have set up support groups, facilitated networks, and provided supportive services for women to improve their retention in both pre-apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships. Pre-apprenticeships funded by WANTO grants are considered quality programs with a particular focus on outreach, recruitment and retention of underrepresented communities.
- 5) **Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC) Initiative.** WORC aims to help rural communities create and promote new, sustainable job opportunities in competitive industries, particularly in regions that have suffered significant job losses in the energy extraction industry. WORC also aims to create economic mobility, address historic inequities for underserved and underrepresented communities, and produce high-quality employment for rural workers. WORC grantees can be key partners to build an infrastructure workforce in rural communities. WORC's focus on job training for economic areas impacted by the energy transition is particularly well aligned to potential IIA-funded renewable energy project labor needs.
- 6) **Indian and Native American Programs (INAP).** INAP grantees work to provide quality employment and training services to tribes, tribal organizations, Alaska Native entities, Indian controlled organizations and Native Hawaiian organizations serving unemployed and low-income Native Americans, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians. These programs are designed to support

employment and training activities in order to develop more fully the academic, occupational and literacy skills; make individuals more competitive in the workforce; and promote economic and social development in accordance with the goals and values of such communities. Graduates coming out of INAP grantee training programs include Native American workers moving into new career fields and Native American youth entering employment. Partnering with INAP grantees can be an opportunity to build and diversify a local infrastructure workforce.

- 7) **YouthBuild.** The YouthBuild program is a community-based alternative education program for youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who left high school before completion, adjudicated youth, youth in and aging out of foster care, youth with disabilities, and other disadvantaged youth populations. YouthBuild simultaneously addresses several core issues important to low-income communities such as affordable housing, education, employment, and leadership development. YouthBuild programs must provide construction training and work on low-income housing in their communities, and they may also offer additional in-demand industry training (Construction Plus) to align with local in-demand occupations and provide more placement opportunities for youth who choose not to pursue construction careers.
- 8) **Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs (H-1B) Grant Program.** This program aims to fund public-private partnerships to develop, strengthen, and scale promising and evidence-based training models in H-1B industries and occupations critical to meeting the goals of IIA investments and to maximize the impact of these investments. The U.S. needs a proficient workforce to fill the good-paying jobs created by this historic investment, and this grant program will train job seekers in advanced manufacturing; information technology; and professional, scientific, and technical services occupations that support renewable energy, transportation, and broadband infrastructure sectors. The DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program represents a down payment for the future skilled workforce needs that are being developed through IIA investments by investing in the development and expansion of the workforce partnerships that will be needed to build equitable pathways to good infrastructure jobs.
- 9) **Critical Sectors Job Quality Grant Program.** This program aims to fund public-private partnerships to improve job quality and increase the availability of good jobs in the care, climate resiliency, and hospitality sectors. Although the care, climate resiliency, and hospitality sectors support a variety of jobs critical to a growing and

vital economy, these sectors have offered lower-wage jobs historically. These jobs often have fewer worker protections, less flexible schedules, and less stability, making it harder for employers to attract and retain workers. By increasing the availability of better jobs in critical sectors, the grants will promote upward mobility for workers and their families and make businesses more competitive globally.

- ii. *Department of Transportation Formula Funds.* The BIL’s expansion of allowable use for transportation programs, for example, presents a particular opportunity for state and local workforce development boards. The BIL allows states to obligate funds from four programs authorized by the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) toward workforce development activities. Crucially, Section 13007 (Workforce Development, Training, and Education) in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law gives states the added flexibility to fund workforce development projects like apprenticeship and vocational schools. States can choose to dedicate funds for workforce development and at what level; BIL’s new flexibility has no maximum nor minimum expenditure level. Additionally, workforce activities are eligible for 100% federal share, while most other formula program activities are only eligible for 80% federal share. Allowable uses now include support for pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeship programs as well as career opportunities for on-the-job training and supportive services. It also expands the allowable uses of these funds to include engagement with workforce development boards and for activities around addressing workforce gaps and developing the surface transportation workforce.

In addition to transportation infrastructure, the public workforce system and its stakeholders should look at the strategic opportunities for preparing an infrastructure workforce skilled in clean water, broadband, clean energy, mine reclamation, climate, the care economy, and others. For additional details regarding these opportunities, please see Attachment I.

- iii. *Department of Transportation Competitive Funds.* Project owners can apply for federal funding for their highway, transit, rail, or port projects. For many of these competitive grants, workforce development – including supportive services – that supports jobs on the project, is an eligible expense, meaning that project owners could write workforce budgets into their application to the U.S. Department of Transportation. As written in the FAQs for RAISE grants¹², funding can be used for the costs of short-term training and to support staff that are helping to find workers for the project. For the full list of RAISE grantees through 2024 and project descriptions, see <https://www.transportation.gov/policy-initiatives/build/awards-2009-2024>.

¹² See <https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-application-faqs>

In addition, some DOT grant programs specifically allow for workforce projects or have dedicated funding for workforce development and supportive services.

- 1) **Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program.** This program funds projects that improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of intercity passenger and freight rail, and can be used to directly support workforce development for the rail industry.¹³
- 2) **The Port Infrastructure Development Program.** These projects fund improve the safety, efficiency (including electrification), and reliability of port infrastructure, which includes workforce development and retraining of port workers as allowable uses of funding.¹⁴
- 3) **Low-No Program.** The Low-No Program provides funding to state and local governmental authorities transitioning to zero-emission bus fleets and also provides a 5% set-aside for workforce development needed to train new and upskill current workers on new vehicles. The FY22 FTA Bus and Low- and No-Emission Grant Awards provided \$1.66 billion in grants to transit agencies, territories, and states across the country to invest in bus fleets, facilities, and workers.^{15,16}
- 4) **Nationally Significant Freight & Highway Projects.** This program funds multimodal freight and highway projects of national or regional significance to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of freight and people in and across rural and urban areas. Eligible projects will improve safety, generate economic benefits, reduce congestion, enhance resiliency, and hold the greatest promise to eliminate supply chain bottlenecks and improve critical freight movements.¹⁷
- 5) **National Infrastructure Project Assistance (MEGA).** The MEGA program supports large, complex projects that are difficult to fund by other means and likely to generate national or regional economic, mobility, or safety benefits. Eligible projects include highway, bridge, freight, port, passenger rail, and public transportation projects of national or regional significance. Per the law, 50% of

¹³ See <https://railroads.dot.gov/grants-loans/competitive-discretionary-grant-programs/consolidated-rail-infrastructure-and-safety-2>

¹⁴ See <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/ports/port-infrastructure-development-program>

¹⁵ See <https://www.transit.dot.gov/lowno>

¹⁶ See <https://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/fy22-fta-bus-and-low-and-no-emission-grant-awards> for a list of awards.

¹⁷ See <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/infra-grant-program>

funds are available for projects above \$500 million in total cost, and 50% are available for projects between \$100 million and \$500 million in total cost.¹⁸

- 6) **Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program.** While smaller communities receive grants from a wide number of grant programs, the Rural program is dedicated specifically to projects in rural areas. Eligible projects for Rural grants include highway, bridge, and tunnel projects that help improve freight, safety, and provide or increase access to agricultural, commercial, energy, or transportation facilities that support the economy of a rural area.¹⁹
- 7) **Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program.** This program was created by BIL to strategically deploy publicly accessible electric vehicle charging and alternative fueling infrastructure in the places people live and work – urban and rural areas alike – in addition to along designated Alternative Fuel Corridors. Program investments will make modern and sustainable infrastructure accessible to all drivers of electric, hydrogen, propane, and natural gas vehicles. This program provides two funding categories of grants: (1) Community Charging and Alternative Fueling Grants (Community Program); and (2) Charging and Alternative Fuel Corridor Grants (Corridor Program). The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides \$2.5 billion over five years for this program to strategically deploy electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and other alternative fueling infrastructure projects in urban and rural communities in publicly accessible locations, including downtown areas and local neighborhoods, particularly in underserved and disadvantaged communities.²⁰

iv. *Department of Energy Investments.*

Some Department of Energy grant programs specifically allow for workforce projects or have dedicated funding for workforce development.

- 1) **Clean Energy and Manufacturing Workforce Training and Technical Assistance Awards.** The Clean Energy and Manufacturing Workforce Training and Technical Assistance Awards fund new industrial training and assessment centers, as part of the Industrial Assessment Centers network, across the United States to train students and incumbent workers for high-quality careers in clean energy, energy efficiency, and advanced

¹⁸ See <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/mega-grant-program>

¹⁹ See <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/rural-surface-transportation-grant-program>

²⁰ See <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/cfi/>

manufacturing, and to help small and mid-sized manufacturers save money, reduce energy waste, and improve productivity.²¹

This program aims to support community and technical colleges; trade schools; union training programs (including labor-management training programs); apprenticeship readiness, apprenticeship, and internship programs; and their employer and workforce system partners through planning awards of up to \$200,000, execution awards of up to \$2,000,000, and cohort awards of up to \$7,000,000.

More information on the Industrial Assessment Centers Expansion and Building Training and Assessment Centers selectees can be found online at <https://www.energy.gov/mesc/industrial-assessment-centers-iac-expansion-and-building-training-and-assessment-centers-btac>.

- 2) **Training for Residential Energy Contractors Program.** This program makes \$200 million available to state energy offices so they can train, test, and certify residential energy efficiency and electrification contractors. States can partner with nonprofit organizations to develop and implement these programs. Also known as the State-Based Home Energy Efficiency Contractor Training Grants, these awards will deploy innovative, effective, and equitable workforce development programs to train workers to make homes healthier and more energy efficient. The Department of Energy will issue the funding through formula and competitive grants.^{22,23}
- 3) **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program.** The Department of Energy launched this \$8.8 million competitive program to assist local governments and Tribes not eligible for formula grants in implementing strategies to improve energy efficiency and conservation. This investment, funded by BIL, seeks to support communities in making significant progress towards their clean energy goals. Twelve applications were selected and announced on Oct. 12, 2023. Selected applications span a range of topic areas and geographies, include 68 partner organizations, and will serve a total of more than 80 communities nationwide.²⁴
- 4) **Weatherization Assistance Program.** This program reduces energy costs for low-income households by increasing the energy efficiency

²¹ See https://www.energywrx.org/opportunities/doe-clean-energy-and-manufacturing-workforce-training-and-technical-assistance-awards-iac-program?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery#info-description

²² See <https://www.energy.gov/scep/training-residential-energy-contractors-grants-formula>

²³ See <https://www.energy.gov/scep/training-residential-energy-contractors-grants-competitive>

²⁴ See <https://www.energy.gov/scep/energy-efficiency-and-conservation-block-grant-eeecbg-program-competitive-awards#:~:text=The%20U.S%20Department%20of%20Energy%20%28DOE%29%20launched%20the%20implementation%20strategies%20to%20improve%20energy%20efficiency%20and%20conservation>

of their homes, while ensuring health and safety. It is the nation's single largest residential whole-house energy efficiency program. The program provides core program funding to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Native American Tribes, and the five U.S. territories through formula grants. Once the Department of Energy awards the grants, the states, tribes, and territories contract with roughly 700 local organizations nationwide that use in-house crews and private contractors to perform the weatherization services for low-income families.

v. *Department of Commerce Competitive Funds.*

Some Department of Commerce grant programs specifically allow for workforce projects or have dedicated funding for workforce development.

- 1) **Good Jobs Challenge.** The Good Jobs Challenge, funded through ARPA, invested \$500 million to train and place 50,000 workers in high quality jobs over the next three years. Launched in 2021, the Economic Development Administration program targets underserved populations across the country and provides wraparound services that overcome barriers to work, like career guidance, transportation, and childcare. To date, Good Jobs Challenge grantees in 31 states and 1 territory have trained more than 11,000 people and placed 3,000 workers into good jobs. In FY24, Commerce secured an additional \$25 million to continue the program.²⁵
- 2) **Build Back Better Regional Challenge.** The Build Back Better Regional Challenge, funded through ARPA, is investing \$1 billion to develop and strengthen 21 regional industry clusters, boosting economic recovery from the pandemic. This includes \$270 million in workforce funding. The total federal funding is matched by more than \$300 million of local investment and leverages support from over 450 private sector and 27 labor unions or workers organizations.²⁶
- 3) **Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs (Tech Hubs).** The Tech Hubs program will strengthen U.S. economic and national security by investing in geographically diverse regions across the country with the potential to become globally competitive in the technologies and industries of the future in the next decade — thereby ensuring good jobs start, grow, and remain in the United States. Thirty-one designated Tech Hubs were announced in October of 2023, all of which are competing for 5-10 implementation awards averaging \$40-\$70 million each that will be announced Summer 2024 (total of ~\$500 million). With these funds, eligible activities include workforce training and support services. All Tech Hubs

²⁵ See <https://www.eda.gov/arpa/good-job-challenge>

²⁶ See <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/american-rescue-plan/build-back-better>

consortia include a labor or workforce training organization in their membership.²⁷

- 4) **Recompete Pilot Program.** The Recompete Pilot Program will invest an initial \$200 million in areas where prime-age (25-54 years) employment significantly trails the national average, with the goal to close this gap through large, flexible investments. Eligible activities include workforce development and wraparound services to connect people to good jobs.²⁸
- 5) **The CHIPS for America Program.** The CHIPS for America Program will invest \$39 billion to incentivize companies to invest in facilities and equipment in the United States. The current proposed investments include \$193 million for workforce development activities in nine states, the largest U.S. investment in sectoral partnerships for a single industry. Proposed CHIPS-funded projects are expected to support over 115,000 good jobs for Americans in both the construction and manufacturing sectors.²⁹
- 6) **Regional Alliances and Multistakeholder Partnerships to Stimulate Cybersecurity Education and Workforce Development (RAMPS program).** The RAMPS program is preparing Americans for quality jobs in cybersecurity through multistakeholder workforce partnerships of employers, schools, and institutions of higher education, and other community organizations.³⁰
- 7) **Climate Ready Workforce.** Through the Climate Ready Workforce program, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is awarding \$50 million in competitive grants to train and place workers in good jobs that enhance climate resilience. Following the model of the Good Jobs Challenge, grantees will develop employer-led sectoral partnerships that will craft training programs with support services essential to open to door to historically underserved communities and individuals.³¹
- 8) **Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program.** The BEAD Program provides \$42.45B to expand affordable and reliable high-speed Internet access in all states, territories, and Washington, D.C. As Louisiana has already demonstrated, states and

²⁷ See <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/regional-technology-and-innovation-hubs>

²⁸ See <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/recompete-pilot-program>

²⁹ See <https://www.commerce.gov/news/press-releases/2023/02/biden-harris-administration-launches-first-chips-america-funding>

³⁰ See <https://www.nist.gov/news-events/news/2024/03/ramp-your-program-apply-cybersecurity-education-and-workforce-development>

³¹ See <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/how-we-work/topics/crw/>

territories have the flexibility to allocate BEAD funding to educate and train workers for high-quality broadband installation jobs.³²

9) Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program. The Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program is a \$1.25 billion grant program that is funding annual grant programs in Fiscal Years 2022 through 2026. This program develops and implements digital inclusion activities and Digital Equity projects. The program is open to certain entities, such as political subdivisions of states, Native Entities, nonprofits, community anchor institutions, local educational agencies and workforce development organizations.³³

vi. *National Science Foundation Competitive Funds.*

Some NSF grant programs specifically allow for workforce projects or have dedicated funding for workforce development.

1) **Regional Innovation Engines (NSF Engines).** The NSF Engines program supports the development of diverse regional coalitions to catalyze and foster innovation ecosystems—which may include the public workforce system and other workforce development stakeholders— across the U.S. NSF Engines will advance critical technologies, address pressing national and societal challenges, and foster regional talent.³⁴

2) **Experiential Learning for Emerging and Novel Technologies (ExLENT).** The ExLENT program supports inclusive experiential learning opportunities that provide cohorts of diverse learners with the skills needed to succeed in emerging technology fields. Awards fund learner support and program development at a pilot program scale. Through this program, NSF seeks to expand career-enhancing experiential learning opportunities; promote cross sector partnerships between organizations in emerging technology fields and those with expertise in workforce development; and develop a workforce aligned with regional emerging technology competitive advantages and needs.

vii. *Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Investments.*

Some EPA grant programs specifically allow for workforce projects or have dedicated funding for workforce development.

1) **Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund.** This program ran three competitions designed to feature strong labor outcomes. National Clean Investment Fund recipients, for example, will have members of labor unions on their governing boards, will evaluate investment decisions based on job quality goals, and will make market-building

³² See <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-programs/broadband-equity-access-and-deployment-bead-program>

³³ See <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-programs/digital-equity-act-programs>

³⁴ See <https://new.nsf.gov/funding/initiatives/regional-innovation-engines>

investments in workforce development programs. Solar for All grantees will make investments in workforce training programs, including pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs, to build a robust and diverse solar workforce. Unlike a typical grant program, where a federal agency provides funding for a particular project, EPA has provided grants to eligible states, Tribes, territories, municipalities, and non-profit entities that will ultimately provide the financial and technical assistance communities need to successfully deploy tens of thousands of projects in communities across the country.³⁵

- 2) **Climate Pollution Reduction Grants.** This program consists of two stages: Planning Grants and Implementation Grants. With Planning Grant funding recipients submitted Priority Climate Action Plans in 2024, many of which included strong analysis sections evaluating how their greenhouse gas reduction measures will impact their workforce, as well as opportunities to create high-quality jobs through the climate transition. This type of workforce analysis was an optional component of the action plans recipients submitted and will be required of all grantees with their final Comprehensive Climate Action Plan due to EPA in 2025. For Implementation Grant funding, applicants could request funding to be used for high-quality workforce development activities tied to proposed measures that reduce greenhouse gas pollution.^{36,37}
- 3) **Clean Ports Program.** The Clean Ports Program consists of two subprograms: the Climate and Air Quality Planning Competition and the Zero Emission Technology Deployment Competition. The Climate and Air Quality Planning Competition subprogram is poised to fund climate and air quality planning activities at U.S. ports. Stakeholder collaboration and communication, including workforce planning analysis, was an eligible activity under this program. The Zero Emission Technology Competition will provide funding for zero-emission port equipment and infrastructure at ports. It also supports safety planning, operational planning, workforce planning, and protocol development as eligible costs under this program.³⁸
- 4) **Environmental Justice Climate Corps.** EPA is partnering with AmeriCorps to create an Environmental Justice Climate Corps. The program will support more than 250 AmeriCorps members nationwide, opening doors for people to serve in careers that benefit disadvantaged and other low-income communities. This program

³⁵ See <https://www.epa.gov/greenhouse-gas-reduction-fund/frequent-questions-about-fund>

³⁶ See <https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/climate-pollution-reduction-grants>

³⁷ See <https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/priority-climate-action-plans-states-msas-tribes-and-territories>

³⁸ See <https://www.epa.gov/ports-initiative/cleanports#about>

aims to recruit participants from communities disproportionately impacted by environmental justice challenges and seeks to recruit individuals with an interest in environmental justice careers.³⁹

viii. *Department of the Interior Competitive Funds.*

Some DOI grant programs specifically allow for workforce projects or have dedicated funding for workforce development.

1) Tribal Electrification Program. This program will provide financial and technical assistance to 23 Tribes to connect homes to transmission and distribution that is powered by clean energy; provide electricity to unelectrified Tribal homes through zero-emissions energy systems; transition electrified Tribal homes to zero-emissions energy systems; and support associated home repairs and retrofitting necessary to install the zero-emissions energy systems. The program will also support clean energy workforce development opportunities in Indian Country.

ix. *Department of Education (ED) Competitive Funds.*

Some ED grant programs specifically allow for workforce projects or have dedicated funding for workforce development.

1) Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). AEFLA provides \$714 million annually to states to award competitive grants to local programs that provide adult education and literacy services. These services may include integrated education and training programs that combine occupational training with basic skills instruction and teach basic skills and English in the context of careers.

2) Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

The Perkins Act awards \$1.4 billion annually to states to expand and improve career and technical education (CTE) in secondary schools and community colleges. States determine the split of funds between secondary and postsecondary education programs. CTE programs are an important element of educational and workforce development systems. They can introduce students to careers as early as middle school, support attainment of academic and career skills, help students learn about career pathways and attain credentials needed for careers in in-demand, high-wage fields, provide high-quality work-based learning opportunities, assist students in the transition from secondary education to postsecondary education and jobs, and help adults gain new skills and credentials needed to advance in their careers or pursue new career paths.

³⁹ See <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-launches-nationwide-environmental-justice-climate-corps>

x. *Joint Office of the Departments of Transportation and Energy Competitive Funds.*

Some Joint DOT/DOE grant programs specifically allow for workforce projects or have dedicated funding for workforce development.

- 1) **Ride & Drive Funding Opportunity Announcement:** On January 19, 2024, the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation announced \$46.5 million for 30 projects in 16 states and Washington, D.C. to boost EV charging performance, resiliency, and reliability; support equitable access to clean transportation solutions; and grow the clean energy workforce.⁴⁰
- 2) **Communities Taking Charge Accelerator:** On April 16, 2024, the Joint Office published a \$54 million funding opportunity Topic areas in the Joint Office’s FY 2024 funding opportunity to expand community e-mobility access and provide clean reliable energy and drive the creation of accessible, good-paying jobs. The deadline for submission was July 16, 2024, and reviews are ongoing.⁴¹

Finally, community and local-level involvement at the forefront of infrastructure project planning is paramount. The direct knowledge of a community’s needs, vulnerabilities, gaps, resources, and talent represented by workers and employers together at the table is critical to the successful implementation of IIA projects, including ensuring that such projects reach those who have for too long been left behind. By building out a strong, national network of place-based partnerships, we can ensure that federal funding is tied to meaningful outcomes—for instance, successful infrastructure projects and inclusive, broad-based economic security through good union jobs for members of communities who need them the most.

Proven Workforce Strategies and Programs.

The public workforce system and key stakeholders should align infrastructure projects and funding with proven workforce development practices, so that training and services link workers and communities to high-quality jobs. State and local agencies should leverage new funding flexibilities to invest in infrastructure training programs targeted to underrepresented workers (including pre-apprenticeship programs), with an emphasis on covering supportive services and living expenses while supporting equitable training access, retention, and completion.

The Department encourages employers to hire apprentices in RAPs, infrastructure project leaders and funders to sign project labor agreements and encourages workforce programs to collaboratively fund the classroom training and any supportive services to help participants finish their pre-apprenticeship programs. To promote transparency and institutionalize these infrastructure workforce strategies, stakeholders should document and disseminate best practices and profiles of success in national, State, and local efforts

⁴⁰ See <https://driveelectric.gov/files/ride-and-drive-foa.pdf>

⁴¹ See <https://driveelectric.gov/communities-taking-charge>

that are addressing barriers to access to, and retention and progression in, high-quality jobs in infrastructure.

- a. Quality Pre-Apprenticeship – A pre-apprenticeship program⁴² is defined as a set of strategies designed to prepare individuals for entry into a RAP. Pre-apprenticeship programs differ from internships, job shadowing, externships, and co-ops, which may also offer individuals an opportunity to experience firsthand a profession or practice, but do not always engage in practical and applied experiential learning. Training and Employment Notice (TEN) No. 23-23, *Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Programs*⁴³, (i) describes the scope and characteristics of quality pre-apprenticeship programs; (ii) identifies how pre-apprenticeship programs can increase access to RAPs for all Americans, including those historically underrepresented and underserved in RAPs; and (iii) provides examples of quality pre-apprenticeship programs in diverse settings. Specifically, this guidance states that a quality pre-apprenticeship has a partnership with one or more registered apprenticeship programs that assists in placing individuals who complete the pre-apprenticeship program in a registered apprenticeship program.

In addition, strategies that increase pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship opportunities for underrepresented or underserved populations facing significant barriers to employment, both in the general and in the apprenticeship labor force, should be considered. Some examples include:

- Strong recruitment strategies focused on outreach to one or more populations underrepresented in local, state, and national RAPs; and
- Educational and pre-vocational services as well as design of instruction and training that reach underrepresented populations to assist them in overcoming barriers for entering and succeeding in RAPs. These include career and industry awareness workshops, job readiness courses, English for speakers of other languages, foundational skills instruction and Adult Basic Education, financial literacy seminars, and math tutoring.⁴⁴

⁴² As noted in 20 CFR part 681.480, a pre-apprenticeship is a program designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in an apprenticeship program registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.)(referred to in this part as a “registered apprenticeship” or “registered apprenticeship program”) and includes the following elements: Training and curriculum that aligns with the skill needs of employers in the economy of the State or region involved; Access to educational and career counseling and other supportive services, directly or indirectly; Hands-on, meaningful learning activities that are connected to education and training activities, such as exploring career options, and understanding how the skills acquired through the coursework can be applied toward a future career; Opportunities to attain at least one industry-recognized credential; and a partnership with one or more registered apprenticeship programs that assists in placing individuals who complete the pre-apprenticeship program in a registered apprenticeship program.

⁴³ See <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/ten-23-23>

⁴⁴ Additionally, pre-apprenticeship expansion efforts include, but are not limited to, the following: Growing the pre-apprenticeship model into in-demand industries and occupations, including and within clean energy, construction, technology, cybersecurity, manufacturing, and transportation and other occupations and industries in the critical supply chain; Expanding on the use of the pre-apprenticeship model in the WIOA and other workforce or education programs that can lead to RAP and other career pathways that lead to RAP enrollment; Increasing support of pre-

- b. Registered Apprenticeship Programs – A Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) is an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway validated by the U.S. Department of Labor where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally-recognized credential.⁴⁵

RAPs have a proven track record of producing strong results for both employers and workers. RAPs offer access to hundreds of occupations, in high-growth and emerging industries. As such, workforce system partners should support the development and expansion of RAPs and pre-apprenticeship in infrastructure and transportation occupations, with incentives and accountability for program uptake and serving underrepresented populations. Strategies such as mapping RAPs in the applicable local areas for in-demand occupations can provide valuable information regarding opportunities for new program development and existing programs, as well as support pathways into RAPs through pre-apprenticeship that advance equitable goals. Workforce system entities can also play a critical role in expanding RAPs to address infrastructure workforce gaps by serving as industry intermediaries, apprenticeship hubs, or even as the sponsor of Registered Apprenticeship programs.

RAPs are a proven model of job preparation, registered by DOL or a DOL-recognized State Apprenticeship Agency, which employ workers and combine paid On-the-Job Learning (also referred to as On-the-Job Training) with Related Instruction to progressively increase workers' skill levels and wages. RAPs are also a business-driven model that provide an effective way for employers to recruit, train, and retain highly skilled workers. RAPs allow workforce partners, educators, and employers to develop and apply industry standards to training programs, thereby increasing the quality of the workforce and workforce productivity. RAPs offer job seekers immediate employment opportunities that pay sustainable wages and offer advancement along a career path as they complete their training. Moreover, establishing and enhancing RAPs in the continually expanding infrastructure and clean energy sectors offers the opportunity to increase the labor participation of nontraditional or underserved groups, including women, people of color, people with disabilities, and veterans.

apprenticeship stakeholders and customers in their diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility efforts by actively working to support EEO efforts and the recruitment of underrepresented populations and underserved communities. These efforts can also include extending pre-apprenticeship for new populations and into new communities, including rural and urban neighborhoods; and Building on existing pre-apprenticeship efforts already in place to maximize the use of resources and minimize the duplication of efforts, ultimately ensuring the core customers of the apprenticeship system are served efficiently.

⁴⁵ RA and RAPs are authorized under the National Apprenticeship Act of 1937 (29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.), and implementing regulations located at 29 CFR Part 29 (Subpart A) and 29 CFR Part 30. The Department's Office of Apprenticeship, in conjunction with State Apprenticeship Agencies, registers programs for federal purposes, ensures that RAPs meet applicable federal and state laws and regulations covering RAPs, issues certificates of completion to apprentices, encourages the development of new programs through outreach and technical assistance, protects the safety and welfare of apprentices, and ensures equal employment opportunity for apprentices.

RAPs combine an educational or instructional component with a paid work-based learning component.⁴⁶ Upon successful completion of all phases of work-based learning and related-instruction components, Registered Apprentice completers receive industry-recognized certificates of completion leading to long-term career opportunities. In addition to a commitment to equal opportunity and inclusion, new programs must conform with federal and state laws and regulations covering RAPs and include the following key elements: direct business involvement; structured on-the-job learning/training; Related Instruction; progressive wage increase; and a national industry recognized credential.

Spotlight: Several communities are utilizing RAPs to meet the workforce needs of incoming infrastructure investments. The Baltimore region⁴⁷ has a burgeoning offshore wind industry, and the Maryland Department of Labor won a Good Jobs Challenge award to support the industry’s growth by implementing a new apprenticeship model in partnership with multiple employers and seven unions. Through the Augusta, Georgia Workforce Hub⁴⁸, Augusta Technical College, in collaboration with the Savannah River National Laboratory, announced it will enhance its Nuclear Engineering Technology program curriculum, supported by a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Energy’s Minority Serving Institutions Partnership Program. The initiative includes establishing a new apprenticeship program at the Savannah River National Laboratory; adding modules for radiation control and protection; and engaging high school students early through site visits, hands-on learning experiences, and a summer internship program.

- c. Industry/Sector Partnerships and Sector Strategies – Utilizing sector strategies is one of the most effective approaches to align public and private resources to address the talent needs of employers. Sector strategies establish partnerships of multiple employers within a critical industry that brings together education, economic development, workforce systems, and community organizations to identify and collaboratively meet the workforce needs of that industry within a regional labor market. As part of sector-based workforce investments, the public workforce system and key stakeholders should promote best practices that create and expand training programs to support long-term careers in the infrastructure sector. Career pathways are often developed within an industry sector and developed as part of a larger sector strategy. Career pathways systems offer an effective approach to the development of a skilled infrastructure workforce. Through better alignment of education, training, and employment services among public agencies, career

⁴⁶ RAPs are registered through the DOL’s Office of Apprenticeship or a DOL recognized State Apprenticeship Agency. Each RAP, with approval of the Registration Agency, sets its own apprentice to journeyworker guidelines for supervision within the parameters of 29 CFR 29.5(b)(7).

⁴⁷ See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/05/16/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-announces-strategies-to-train-and-connect-american-workers-to-jobs-created-by-the-presidents-investing-in-america-agenda/>

⁴⁸ See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/01/23/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-highlights-new-commitments-toward-equitable-workforce-development-in-advanced-manufacturing/>

pathway systems hold the promise of increasing the number of workers in the U.S. who gain the industry-recognized and academic credentials they need to work in the most in-demand occupations in infrastructure.

In September 2024, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) released an updated Sector Strategies Framework (TEN No. 08-24, *Release and Availability of Updated 2024 U.S. Department of Labor's Sector Strategies Framework*⁴⁹) to guide national, state, and local practitioners in their efforts to launch and implement effective sector strategies. The Framework is intended to advance knowledge and support the development, scaling, and sustainability of sector strategies. It provides workforce system practitioners with a clear picture of the concepts and elements essential to the successful implementation of sector partnerships and sector strategies. The Framework, shaped by sector strategies research and consultation with experts and practitioners, identifies crucial elements and components essential for effective sector strategies.⁵⁰ Sector strategies are a critical model for addressing workforce and talent development needs at a regional scale, while advancing career opportunities in good jobs and promoting economic mobility for workers, job seekers, and learners. Sector strategies represent an industry-driven, community-supported, and worker/learner-focused approach—a proven model that engages industry with workforce partners strategically to address workforce development needs effectively.

Spotlight: Columbus, Ohio⁵¹ is utilizing a sector strategy to address their infrastructure workforce needs. Columbus has emerged as a center of investment across a variety of industries—including in semiconductor manufacturing, clean energy, and transportation. In partnership with Intel, the Ohio Semiconductor Collaboration Network is developing curriculum for two-year pathways—including dual enrollment models—to semiconductor technician roles, to be shared across the nearly two dozen community colleges in the state. The city of Columbus pioneered a model to diversify construction Registered Apprenticeships, which is now being replicated elsewhere in the nation through a Department of Labor-funded partnership between TradesFutures and the National Urban League. Through the Columbus Workforce Hub, Columbus State Community College announced that it will work with allies across the state to quadruple the number of students trained for engineering technology jobs over the next five years.⁵²

- d. Labor-Management Partnerships – These strategies describe partnerships between labor (e.g., employee representation, usually through a union) and management, or

⁴⁹ See <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/ten-08-24>

⁵⁰ See <https://businessengagement.workforcegps.org/resources/2024/08/21/17/35/2024-Sector-Strategies-Framework>

⁵¹ See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/05/16/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-announces-strategies-to-train-and-connect-american-workers-to-jobs-created-by-the-presidents-investing-in-america-agenda/>

⁵² See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/10/06/fact-sheet-to-launch-investing-in-america-tour-the-biden-%E2%81%A0harris-administration-kicks-off-sprint-to-catalyze-workforce-development-efforts-for-advanced-manufacturing-jobs-and-careers/>

the employer, where the two entities collaboratively develop education and training programs that both meet the employer’s need for a skilled talent pipeline and meet employees’ needs for good jobs at quality wages with opportunities for skills development and career advancement along a pathway.

- e. Project Labor Agreements – PLAs are collective bargaining agreements between building trade unions and contractors which govern the terms and conditions of employment for a given construction project and can play a unique role in local workforce development, as discussed in Section 4(b)iii. PLAs assure a supply of skilled workers and provide for projects to be completed without labor disputes (and any related delays). In addition, PLAs can promote workforce development by including local hire and disadvantaged worker provisions, along with apprenticeship utilization requirements. And by working with local building trades councils, labor unions, contractors, and the impacted communities early in the process, PLAs can be designed to meet the unique workforce development needs of any community. See DOL’s Project Labor Agreement Resource Guide⁵³ and DOL’s Worker Organizing Resource Knowledge Center (WORK)⁵⁴ for tools, resources, and technical assistance on promoting good jobs.

Spotlight: Funded by BIL, Baltimore, Maryland is replacing the 150-year old Baltimore and Potomac Tunnel.⁵⁵ This project will address the largest rail bottleneck on the Northeast Corridor between Washington, D.C. and New Jersey, while creating good-paying union jobs, improving reliability, lowering commuting times, and enhancing safety and resilience. The program is expected to generate 30,000 jobs, including approximately 20,000 direct construction jobs, most of which do not require a college degree. A project labor agreement has been signed between Amtrak and the Baltimore-DC Building and Construction Trades Council, which is a local affiliate of North America’s Building Trades Unions (NABTU), to ensure the first phase of the project creates good-paying, union jobs. Additional agreements include:

- A project kickoff agreement signed by the State of Maryland and Amtrak includes a \$450 million commitment from the state’s transportation agency for the tunnel replacement project, and
- An agreement between Amtrak and NABTU that ensures Amtrak’s large civil engineering construction projects controlled by Amtrak will be performed under union agreements. Those agreements will address points such as wages, benefits, working conditions, avoiding work disruption, and promoting diversity and veteran hiring in the construction trades. With this agreement, Amtrak and NABTU will not face labor-related delays in the planning and contracting of major projects; contractors and subcontractors share Amtrak’s commitment to paying fair wages and benefits; and Amtrak

⁵³ See <https://www.dol.gov/general/good-jobs/project-labor-agreement-resource-guide>

⁵⁴ See <https://www.workcenter.gov/>

⁵⁵ See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/01/30/fact-sheet-president-biden-kicks-off-major-baltimore-rail-tunnel-project-funded-by-bipartisan-infrastructure-law/>

and NABTU can move forward with Bipartisan Infrastructure Law-funded projects with efficient labor-management relations.

- f. Supportive Services – Other proven practices include providing supportive services and reviewing lessons learned from infrastructure-related pilot programs. Supportive services are essential to enabling individuals to access and complete training programs. For additional information on supportive services, see TEN No. 12-21, *Practitioners Guide to Supportive Services*.⁵⁶

- i. *Basic needs and cash assistance.* For many workers, particularly people with low incomes and/or little savings or assets, participating in education and job training is a costly opportunity. Many training programs are full-time, which means people cannot both participate in training and maintain outside work for pay. A sudden loss of income—like losing shifts or your job due to new time constraints—can financially destabilize individuals and families.

Employers/training providers should provide—or at least connect participants to—basic needs assistance to mitigate financial instability and enable them to persist in and complete training programs. Assistance can take the form of direct cash payments, fresh groceries or grocery gift cards, and/or connection to and navigation through the local safety net program application processes. Beyond this step, and to better enable workers of *all* income levels to enroll and participate in workforce training and benefit from the economic mobility completing a program can provide, employers/training providers should pay worker-learners for all time spent in a training program.

- ii. *Transportation assistance.* Accessible, reliable transportation ensures all workers are able to arrive to their worksite on-time every day. Yet many workers lack reliable transportation, whether due to costly car maintenance or limited, inaccessible public transportation. A costly car repair could easily prevent someone from attending a training program. Because of this, a best practice for training providers is to provide transportation assistance to education and training participants—whether through gas cards, emergency funds that participants can access to cover sudden costs, or by directly providing transportation for participants to and from the worksite.
- iii. *Childcare assistance.* Many parents of young children simply cannot participate in education and job training without consistent, reliable, and affordable childcare. Subsidies are limited, wait lists are long, and many childcare providers do not provide care at non-standard (before 9am or after 5pm) hours, so employers or partners looking to engage parents of young

⁵⁶ See https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN_12-21.pdf

children in workforce training should consider how to support this need, either through direct funding, vouchers, connecting with community providers through partnership, or establishing an on-site child care option available to training participants and workers.

Spotlight: Funded through BIL, the Pittsburgh International Airport began construction on their Terminal Modernization Program, adding parking, upgrading TSA security screening areas, and adding new passenger and baggage check-in areas. This construction project required an increased skilled workforce at the airport. To respond to the lack of quality childcare facilities and to break down barriers to entering—or staying—in the workforce, the Allegheny County Airport Authority partnered with the Learning Care Group⁵⁷ to develop and operate the La Petite Academy⁵⁸, the first employee-dedicated childcare facility at the airport. The onsite childcare center is serving 60+ children ages six weeks through five years.

Other examples⁵⁹ of states expanding commitments to care and other supportive services for workers include:

- **Oregon** is announcing it will expand its investments to support construction workers across the state—building on its successful Highway Construction Partnership program. For over a decade, the program has leveraged Federal Highway Administration formula funds to support construction apprentices with supportive services, including covering childcare costs of up to 7 percent of household income (or up to \$2,500 per child each month).
 - The state will invest \$7.5 million in the new Oregon CHIPS Childcare Infrastructure Fund, expanding the Highway Construction Partnership model to fund supportive services and childcare for workers in the semiconductor supply chain.
 - Oregon Department of Transportation will double its workforce investments from Federal Highway Administration formula funds using new flexibilities from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, creating a new \$1 million program to enable women returning from incarceration to directly transition into highway apprenticeships upon release.

- **New York’s** state Department of Transportation and Department of Labor are collaborating closely to ensure that workforce development and supportive services are available for transportation projects in Syracuse and Buffalo. The state is leveraging a \$5 million Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training (QUEST) grant from ETA to expand childcare access, legal

⁵⁷ See [https://www.learningcaregroup.com/news/learning-care-group-prepares-to-open-new-child-care-site-at-pittsburgh-international-airport-\(pit\)/](https://www.learningcaregroup.com/news/learning-care-group-prepares-to-open-new-child-care-site-at-pittsburgh-international-airport-(pit)/)

⁵⁸ See <https://flypittsburgh.com/workforce-development/childcare-center/>

⁵⁹ See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/04/17/fact-sheet-on-one-year-anniversary-of-president-bidens-care-eo-the-biden-harris-administration-celebrates-new-progress-toward-providing-care-and-other-supportive-services-for-workers/>

services for drivers' licenses, and other necessary supportive services for workers looking to join the I-81 project workforce. The project includes a first-in-the-nation local hire initiative of 15 percent, which aims to give opportunity to Syracuse's most disadvantaged neighborhoods, including the same communities that have been divided by this highway for decades.

- **Massachusetts** will seek to invest \$20 million in a Workforce Training System that will help align child care, education, job training, and employment opportunities in Western Massachusetts' Springfield and Holyoke—two communities with predominately residents of color—through the U.S. Economic Development Administration's Recompete Pilot Program⁶⁰, authorized by the CHIPS and Science Act.
- **Maryland's** state Department of Transportation, in support of the Baltimore Workforce Hub⁶¹ and the state's workforce development efforts, is allocating an unprecedented \$24 million of federal funds over six years to support transportation infrastructure workforce in the state. This initiative, developed in partnership with Maryland Department of Labor, will help Marylanders enter good jobs in the transportation sector through increasing access to resources, occupational training, and critical wraparound services including quality affordable childcare. This will complement and leverage the state's historic investment of over \$300 million in fiscal year 2025 for childcare scholarships to make high-quality childcare more affordable.
- **Washington** tripled investment in its Pre-Apprenticeship and Supportive Services (PASS) grant program, providing \$6 million in the 2021-2023 period to colleges, labor unions, and workforce organizations that are helping individuals get into Registered Apprenticeship programs, including by providing care and other supportive services to participants. Since 2015, the program has served nearly 2,800 participants, of whom 20 percent are women, 13 percent are Black, 32 percent are Hispanic, and 9 percent are Native American. The state is now expanding this successful model to maritime workforce training.

Programs such as the Highway Construction Workforce Partnership⁶² brought together the highway industry and the workforce development community to identify, train, and place individuals into transportation careers. The partnership demonstrates the importance of, first, focusing on the needs of a local area as opposed to working off of national trends and, second, early and continued engagement with multiple partners (e.g., highway construction industry, trade groups, state Departments of Transportation, tribal agencies, state and local

⁶⁰ See <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/recompete-pilot-program>

⁶¹ See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/11/13/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-holds-workforce-hub-convening-in-baltimore-announces-commitments-to-train-and-hire-local-residents-to-support-major-infrastructure-projects/>

⁶² See https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/innovativeprograms/centers/workforce_dev/hcwp/pdfs/hcwp_playbook.pdf

workforce development boards, other state, city, and local government agencies, and local community groups) at the outset of a project to define goals, coalesce resources, and align strategy. For additional information on the Highway Construction Workforce Partnership and associated toolkit for implementation, see Attachment I.

An Economy for All Workers.

A critical priority for IIA investments is to create good-paying jobs with high labor standards that offer workers prevailing wages and the free and fair choice to organize a union and collectively bargain. These are jobs that community members, especially those who have historically been underserved and excluded from economic opportunity, can and should fill.

Creating equitable opportunities and job quality are at the core of this framework for ensuring a skilled infrastructure workforce, and essential in the workforce system's ability to attract and retain the necessary diverse skilled workforce. Advancing equitable opportunities and job quality in an infrastructure workforce means developing education, training, and career service strategies, in partnership with both workers and employers, that better address and promote equitable recruitment, service design, implementation, and support services—and prevents displacement of the incumbent workforce. As a result, workforce strategies can better provide both equitable access and equitable outcomes for all, including underserved communities, seeking access to infrastructure employment and training opportunities.

- a. Good Jobs Principles – Good jobs are the foundation of an equitable economy that lifts up workers and families and makes businesses more competitive globally. They allow everyone to share in prosperity and support local communities and the entire U.S. economy. Workers know the value of a good job that provides stability and security for them and their families. All work is important and deserving of dignity. Many companies recognize that providing good quality jobs—that make them an employer of choice—creates a clear competitive advantage when it comes to recruitment, retention, and execution of a company's mission.⁶³

The Departments of Labor and Commerce partnered to identify key elements of a good job, including principles around recruitment and hiring; benefits; equity and inclusion, empowerment and representation, job security and working conditions, organizational culture, pay, and skills and career advancement. ETA published guidance on how these principles apply to the public workforce system in TEG1 07-22, *Increasing Employer and Workforce System Customer Access to Good Jobs*.⁶⁴

Spotlight: Since the release of the Good Jobs Principles, some municipalities and communities have adopted these principles by tailoring them to their own unique local context. For example, Pittsburgh announced the Pittsburgh Good Jobs

⁶³ See <https://www.dol.gov/general/good-jobs/principles>

⁶⁴ See <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/tegl-07-22>

Principles⁶⁵, a regional equity framework that advances good jobs for local residents across the Pittsburgh region, especially workers from disadvantaged populations, in order to build a safe, welcoming, and thriving community for all. At the time of the announcement (November 2023), forty-one local businesses and organizations, seven unions, three elected officials and two authorities had committed to upholding the Pittsburgh Good Jobs Principles.

In working towards these strategies, workforce system partners can identify which jobs provide livable wages of at least \$15 an hour, employment benefits, work environments free of discrimination, and opportunities for advancement while examining which population groups experience inequities in access to and participation in workforce preparation programs that lead to these high-quality jobs. Based on this information, workforce system partners can then adapt policies and practices to provide real opportunities for those underserved communities to enter good-paying careers and help to ensure that people can afford to fully take advantage of improved transit, access to broadband, clean energy, better roads, and other infrastructure upgrades in their communities.

The Good Jobs Initiative⁶⁶ focuses on providing workers with easily accessible information about their rights, including the right to form a union and bargain collectively; engaging employer stakeholders as partners to improve job quality and workforce pathways to good jobs; supporting partnerships across federal agencies; and providing technical assistance on grants, contracts, and other investments intended to improve job quality. Recent Good Jobs Initiative publications include a toolkit on skills-based hiring.⁶⁷ ETA offered a Job Quality Academy for 16 teams across the country to assist communities in identifying, prioritizing, and implementing action plans based on job quality principles and strategies. The Job Quality Starter Pack, built on lessons from the Job Quality Academy, is available to any community to improve the quality of jobs in their community.⁶⁸

- b. Engaging Underserved Populations in High-Quality Training and Workforce Pathways – America’s future growth and prosperity depend, in part, on ensuring that all workers, especially those from underserved communities—including, but not limited to, people of color LGBTQ+ individuals, women, immigrants, veterans, youth and young adults, individuals with disabilities, individuals at or below the poverty line, individuals in rural communities, individuals without a college degree, individuals with or recovering from substance use disorder, individuals with limited English proficiency, individuals without a high school credential/equivalency, and justice-involved youth and adults—have multiple pathways to high-quality, good-paying jobs that can support a middle-class life. The economy must work for all workers.

⁶⁵ See <https://pittsburghpa.gov/press-releases/press-releases/6266>

⁶⁶ See <http://www.goodjobs.gov/>

⁶⁷ See <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OPA/GoodJobs/Toolkit/skills-first-starter-kit.pdf>

⁶⁸ See <https://dwg.workforcegps.org/resources/2024/02/01/21/01/Job-Quality-AcademyI1>

The BIL presents ample opportunity and resources to begin to intentionally address entrenched inequities in our education and workforce systems, and build equitable pathways to economic opportunity for workers, their families, and entire communities. Notably, underserved people and communities have diverse needs which are best understood and addressed through place-based partnerships, as discussed above in Section 3. Building upon that foundation, best practices and strategies to improve equal opportunity and job quality in infrastructure workforce development projects include:

- **Communicating a dedication toward promoting equal opportunity and access** by developing relationships with recruitment sources that will create a pipeline of diverse talent.
- **Investing in short-term bridge programs**, like pre-apprenticeship, that foster job readiness and allow workers to build their skills and familiarity with work in a particular sector before enrolling in a job training or apprenticeship program.
- **Expanding access to and participation in apprenticeship** programs for nontraditional apprenticeship populations and underserved communities, like women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as discussed in this webinar:
<https://www.workforcegps.org/events/2022/05/02/19/00/Incorporating-DEI-Increasing-Diverse-Populations-in-Scaling-Apprenticeship-Programs>.
- **Integrating education and training** for workers with limited education, helping to contextualize academic concepts into their real-world, on-the-job applications for ease of uptake and mastery.
- **Compensating worker-learners for their time spent in training** to better enable people with low incomes and people with family care responsibilities to fully participate in training without compromising their economic security.
- **Funding support services** that enable people with barriers to work to fully participate in required education and training that leads to paid work. Such supportive services might include linkages to community services; assistance with transportation; assistance with child care and dependent care; assistance with housing; assistance with educational testing, books, fees, certifications, etc.; reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities above and beyond those that are legally required; legal aid services; referrals to health care; needs-related payments that allow individuals to participate in training; and assistance with appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear.
- **Reviewing data on participant access**, such as evaluating applicant flow data and workforce demographic data, to help identify any potentially discriminatory barriers that may exist.
- **Eliminating pre-employment screening questions about past convictions** which preemptively limit the employment opportunities for justice-impacted

youth and adults, as discussed here: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Incarceration-to-Employment-Strategy.pdf>.

- **Properly classifying workers as employees.**
- **Paying all workers at or above prevailing wages**, including fringe benefits.
- **Ensuring that workers are aware of their employment rights.**
- **Distributing workplace rights notices to workers**, in addition to the legally required notice posting.
- **Developing workplace safety and health management systems.**
- **Promoting and upholding workers' free and fair choice to join a union.**

Leveraged Resources.

There are myriad public and private financial and in-kind training and support resources that the workforce system can weave or braid together to fully meet the needs of individuals seeking infrastructure-related workforce services. Leveraged resources can come from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, businesses, industry associations, labor organizations, community-based organizations, education and training providers, and/or federal, state, and local government programs. Workforce system entities should consider ways to continue to leverage the American Rescue Plan Act's Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds program to build and improve capacity of educational programming. For example, Ramsey County, Minnesota and Erie County, New York⁶⁹ leveraged the funds to support child care assistance and remove barriers to participation for workers pursuing education and training programs. Leverage existing workforce funding from WIOA to offer supportive services to help individuals access and stay in training. At a minimum, the workforce system should be aware of other federally funded infrastructure resources from across government. Attachment I provides a wealth of resources regarding IIA, other federal infrastructure investment opportunities, and workforce development resources.

Spotlight: The state of Pennsylvania has strategically leveraged federal funds to implement a solution that meets local needs to prepare their infrastructure workforce. In July 2023, Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro signed Executive Order 2023-17⁷⁰, creating the Commonwealth Workforce Transformation Program, which provides workforce development grants to ensure companies, contractors, unions, and others who are working to build Pennsylvania's infrastructure have the skilled workforce they need. The program allows organizations doing important infrastructure work funded by BIL or IRA to receive up to \$40,000 for each new worker they train. The Commonwealth will reserve at least three percent of all funding it receives from the IIJA and IRA to fund workforce development and on-the-job training, meaning that as much as \$400 million could be used for workforce training in Pennsylvania over the next five years. This model initiative will be the largest infusion in funding for workforce training in Pennsylvania history and could support as many as 10,000 new jobs.

⁶⁹ See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/07/12/fact-sheet-white-house-announces-over-40-billion-in-american-rescue-plan-investments-in-our-workforce-with-more-coming/>

⁷⁰ See <https://www.oa.pa.gov/Policies/eo/Documents/2023-17.pdf>

5. **Inquiries.** Please direct inquiries to the appropriate ETA regional office.
6. **Reference.**
See Attachment I for a list of all references used in this document and other helpful resources.
7. **Attachment(s).**
 - Attachment I: References and Resources List