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Nurturing America's Growth in the Global Marketplace Through Talent Development

An Interim Report on the Evaluation of Generations II and III of WIRED

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Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development Initiative seeks to foster economic transformation in regions facing challenges from global competition and changing economic conditions. When the Initiative began in late 2005, the economic conditions across the country were relatively good compared to those in the recent recession. Nonetheless there was a growing concern about the ability of the United States to remain competitive in the 21st Century economy. Major reports from the National Academies,[1] the Council on Competitiveness,[2] the Business Roundtable,[3] the National Association of Manufacturers,[4] and others pointed out that growing competition from nations such as China and India, coupled with the long-term energy crisis, posed threats to our nation's continued prosperity and global economic leadership. To maintain our competitive edge in the global economy there was a need to promote innovation and commercialization, which would fuel economic growth and job creation. However, in order for the U.S. to thrive in this innovation economy it was essential to have a workforce with the knowledge, skills, and know-how needed by U.S. companies.

The U.S. Department of Labor recognized that this was a national challenge, but noted that the solution could not be achieved by government alone. Instead, it would require a concerted effort among the many different entities that constitute a regional economy, including educators, workforce and economic development organizations, non-profit and philanthropic organizations, entrepreneurs, companies, and workers. By working together, and harnessing their collective resources, economic growth and prosperity could be achieved for all.

The global recession that has developed in the past two years has only increased the need for workforce innovation in economic development and the importance of bringing diverse organizations in communities together to collaborate for economic stability and workforce growth.

In February 2006, the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) announced the 13 recipients of $15 million grants to promote regional engagement and transformation. These grantees are referred to as the Generation I regions. Thirteen additional regions (Generation II) received $100,000 planning grants and, after completion of their implementation plans, received $5 million grants from ETA in January 2007. An additional 13 regions (Generation III) were announced in June 2007, with $5 million grants for each region.

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[1] National Academies, National Academies' Committee on Science, Engineering and Public Policy, Committee on Prospering in the Global Economy of the 21st Century, *Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future* (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2005).

[2] Council on Competitiveness, *Innovate America: National Innovation Summit and Report: Thriving in a World of Challenge and Change* (Washington, DC, 2004).

[3] Business Roundtable and 14 other Business Organizations, *Tapping America's Potential: The Education for Innovation Initiative*, (2005. <http://www.businessroundtable.org>

[4] National Association of Manufacturers, *Looming Workforce Crisis: Preparing American Workers for 21st Century Competition,* (2005. <http://www.nam.org/s_nam/index.asp>

Unlike previous grant recipients, Generation III sites were required to have a local workforce investment board (WIB) play a lead role in the grant-funded activities.

Evaluation Design and Data Collection

The evaluation team for the Initiative includes four organizations. The evaluation of the 13 Generation I grants is being done by Berkeley Policy Associates in partnership with the University of California at San Diego. The evaluation of the 26 Generation II and III grants is being conducted by Public Policy Associates, Inc. in partnership with W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. Both evaluations are multi-year studies that focus on strategies, implementation activities, collaborative experiences, and performance.

The evaluation of Generations II and III of the Initiative focuses on three main areas:

- The strategic goals and program strategy
- The program design and implementation plan
- The collaborative experiences of economic development, education and workforce development, and employer partners

The data for the evaluation comes from a variety of sources, including stakeholder interviews, focus groups, round-table discussions, and observations during two rounds of site visits. The first round, which was conducted during the summer of 2008, included interviews with an array of regional partners representing the public workforce system, K-16 education, economic development organizations, employers, state and local government, and the philanthropic sector. A second round of site visits, to be conducted in late 2009 - early 2010, will focus more heavily on sustainability and effectiveness of activities. The evaluation also includes a stakeholder survey that will gauge collaboration, leadership structures, and partner engagement in Initiative activities. Administrative records from the regions—along with extant data from public economic, education, innovation, commercialization, and labor market sources—are being reviewed throughout the evaluation.

The evaluation culminates with a Final Report. This document is the Interim Report, focusing on the initial findings of the first round of site visits and other data collection. Because of the early stage of implementation, at the time of the site visits many of the regions were focused on the development of partnerships, governance arrangements, and the design of decision-making processes, and had not yet implemented key components of their action plans. Future stages of the evaluation will seek to measure the effectiveness with which the regions implement their activities and regions' success in achieving their regional outcomes.

Summary Findings

To achieve regional economic transformation, the regions each must put in practice a unique strategy to engage key stakeholders and marshal common resources toward a new way of doing business. Collaboration among these stakeholders may well determine the success of the Initiative. There are nine major dimensions of collaborative arrangements in the regions that will be considered through the evaluation. Summary findings according to each dimension are provided below.

Context for Collaboration

Each region entered the Initiative with its own historical, geographic, political and cultural characteristics which, together, have a substantial influence on how stakeholder organizations approach collaboration. For example, the geography of a region can effect how easy or difficult it is to hold face-to-face meetings among key stakeholders, the attitudes that stakeholders in rural and urban settings have about competition with one another, the manner in which organizations and individuals handle ongoing communications, and the ease of access to institutions of higher education. Understanding contextual factors is important for understanding the dynamics that led to each region's strategy and approach to implementation.

Seven of the 26 Generation II and III regions experienced extensive collaboration before joining the Initiative; site visits to these regions revealed multiple examples of pre-existing collaboration involving different partners. The partner groups that most often interacted were the community colleges, industry, and WIBs. Still, bridging across the many partner groups required for real collaboration presents a challenge for the regions in nearly every case.

Geographic and cultural diversity within some regions limited prior collaboration. Disconnects between urban centers and outlying areas were some of the most serious obstacles to past collaboration. In 15 of the 26 regions, state government had played a central role in attempting to bridge these gaps and establish regionalism as a priority. At the local level, however, such investment in regionalism was rare, and may help to explain the minor role local government continued to play in efforts to transform regions and regional operating procedures.

Regions that crossed multiple political jurisdictions faced special challenges. Four of the 26 regions crossed two states, and one crossed three states. All regions spanned from three to 36 counties. Competing economic interests may have limited collaboration across political boundaries, particularly competition to attract new companies, generate tax revenue, and create new jobs in a given location.

Governance

Leadership and joint decision-making are considered key elements for success of any broad-based initiative. To be effective, collaborative efforts require leadership from key individuals, an appropriate governance structure, and a decision-making process that is accepted by key stakeholders.

A common vision and alignment of goals and activities among the region's leadership facilitates effective action, and is associated with "interlocking leadership" structures. The six regions that were rated by the evaluation team as having both a high degree of connection within their leadership and a high degree of recognition of a common vision are expected to enjoy greater success in implementing their plans.

Organizational structures varied across regions. Leadership groups highlighted in the regions' organizational charts ranged from 15 to 70 partner representatives, with executive groups varying in size from 5 to 20 members. Most of the regions appear to have created collaborative governance structures, with shared leadership and decision-making integrity. However, several are challenged to create structures that may be necessary to achieve the desired collaboration.

The decision-making structures emphasized the collaborative nature of these initiatives. Rather than being bureaucratized, there were multiple rings of leadership, with core leaders serving as the intellectual center and energy for the initiative. A second ring of leaders are actively engaged but do not have final authority for committing resources. A third ring includes individuals who lead particular aspects of the implementation plan, such as a sector-specific project. Oftentimes, these leaders are the chairs of the implementation work groups.

The ways in which the leadership in the regions operated within and across these rings of leadership varied. In a few regions, the decision-making was concentrated with one or two core leaders, and thus the leadership rested heavily in the central circle. In other regions, the core leaders (staff and others) played more of a facilitator role and decisions tended to be made by consensus of the leadership group which, as stated above, might include dozens of members. In these cases, the core leaders saw their key contributions as keeping the initiative organized, bringing information to the leadership group, and administering the decisions of the group.

Most of the regions developed working groups on specific topic areas, which allowed greater geographic representation and actively engaged representatives of partner organizations. In some cases, these groups are formed to operate largely independently of one another, while still reporting back to the overarching leadership group that handles the administrative and "big picture" issues. In other regions, the task teams are more interdependent. Depending on how these groups operate in practice, they can either provide an efficient means for conducting the work while allowing for enhanced stakeholder participation, or they can recreate silos present within the region and diminish the collaborative nature of the region.

If every decision must be vetted with and approved by every stakeholder, few decisions can be made. On the other hand, if every decision is made by only a small core of leaders, the rest of the stakeholders feel alienated. Based on the site visit data, most regions have struck a functional balance between the imperative for action and the need for inclusion.

Few states appear to provide strategic leadership to the regions. States could be helping the regions to align with state workforce strategies, leveraging resources, generating broader public support for the Initiative, and attracting more partners to the regions. In addition, informed decision-making has not yet been well-integrated into the regions. Even the most capable leaders are handicapped without information about what is working and what is not.

Effective Engagement

Partner engagement may be essential to achieve successful outcomes. Engagement can be measured through the extent to which businesses in the region's targeted industry or key decision-makers in partner organizations are knowledgeable and involved in collaborative efforts.

Because the first round of site visits occurred early in the regions' implementation of their strategic approaches, it is premature to gauge the strength of partner engagement in the regions. The second round of site visits will provide a much clearer indication of the extent of engagement of the key partners.

At the time of the first round of site visits, partnerships with stakeholders in the region had begun and, in many cases, regions had made progress in accepting the paradigm of regionalism. The partnerships included important personnel from education and training organizations, as well as economic development bodies, but there was less evidence of strong collaborative ties with the private sector and local and state government.

The entity housing the region's activities appeared to be the most significantly engaged collaborator. In addition, community colleges were highly involved. In general, regions did not appear to be paying attention to the value proposition for participants; they tacitly assumed that if an organization is represented by a participant then that organization is fully committed to the goals of regional collaboration and that individual is fully committed to the collaboration.

Those companies that have been involved in collaborative efforts in the Generations II and III regions have had a variety of opportunities to provide input and suggestions about how to transform the public workforce system in a way that will promote regional growth in the future. Whether working at a strategic or operational level, industry representatives have been involved in identifying opportunities for establishing and strengthening targeted sectors, establishing strategic and operational goals, creating and strengthening regional partnerships, and overseeing the transformation of the service delivery system.

Planning

The planning process—through which the regions develop goals and strategies for implementing collaborative approaches for promoting regional coordination—produces outcomes that have a positive impact on the ability of each region to successfully create and direct activities for regional transformation. Establishing goals and strategies that are reasonable in their fit with local resources and attainable in their scope is expected to be a necessary requirement for implementing regional innovations.

For most regions, planning began before the Department of Labor initiated this demonstration; with at least half of the regions having already adopted at least some of the goals of pre-existing development plans. In most regions, planning was an ongoing process that revolved around regularly scheduled stakeholder meetings and the creation of planning sub-groups made up of local WIB directors, educators, or industry councils.

The planning process was still the dominant activity at the time of the site visits in the summer of 2008. Two regions did not appear to have moved beyond the planning stage although planning was still going on within the other 24 regions, which had launched or were planning to launch activities designed to accomplish their goals by the end of 2008. Thus, regions from both generations appeared to be at all stages of the planning process.

Asset mapping, a structured process of identifying and cataloguing regional assets (human, financial, institutional, and natural) that can be incorporated into a development effort,[5] was conducted by most of the regions, but these exercises were not necessarily conducted in order to identify the most appropriate goals for their region. Asset mapping was conducted for a variety of reasons, predominantly to confirm target industries and goals that had already been chosen and, in some cases, to drive goals and strategies to be adopted by the regions. Most of the regions contracted with consultants or university research institutes to conduct asset mapping activities, and most of the asset maps were fairly straightforward analyses of workforce, industry, and demographic assets within the region. Only a few regions conducted surveys, performed gap analysis, or engaged in other kinds of data gathering.

Communication

Effective communication is presumed to be necessary for effective collaboration. Internal communication promotes a common vision of the goals and strategies of the collaboration. External communication can increase public awareness and support, and catalyze institutional changes that may involve individuals or entities outside of the collaboration.

Collaborative partnerships engaged in implementing regional strategies communicate for several reasons. Of the implementation plans available for review, eight outlined processes to keep partners and stakeholders up-to-date on details of the initiative. Ten of the implementation plans available discussed the need to have a procedure in place to disseminate information about accomplishments and success stories to both internal and external audiences. Eight included specific plans to reach out to external audiences and educate them regarding the work of the partnerships in their regions, and eight implementation plans specifically mentioned outreach to the business community. A fairly wide range of communication methods was proposed, including the use of Web sites, meetings, e-mail, and conference calls.

Across the sites, stakeholders indicated that they valued and expected clear, concise, and timely communications. In most cases, the regions delivered. Where such communications did not exist, interviewees tended to demonstrate a lack of knowledge, a lack of buy-in, or both. The use of paid staff members or consultants dedicated to communications appeared to improve the quality and timeliness of communication efforts.

Use of Data

Economic development outcomes may be affected by the extent to which appropriate data are used to understand the nature of the challenges and opportunities that face a region, to map economic development and talent development systems and to identify the key participants and

[5] Council on Competitiveness, *Asset Mapping Roadmap: A Guide to Assessing Regional Development Resources*, U.S. Department of Labor, (2006). <http://www.doleta.gov/wired/files/Asset_mappingroadmap.pdf>

institution in those systems, to identify and shape potential strategies, and to monitor the performance of the collaboration as it moves from planning to implementation. To be most useful, data must be current, presented succinctly, and incorporated into the decision-making process.

An examination of the background documents, proposals, and implementation plans suggested that most of the regions targeted industries based on the partners' common knowledge of the existing industrial structure in the region, and confirmed these selections with data. Only a small number of regions appeared to systematically analyze available data on employment or business formation in order to choose target industries.

For the most part, regions seemed to take regional asset mapping seriously. Ten of the 26 regions (split about equally between generations) had completed asset mapping and were using the results for planning activities. The asset mapping in most of the remaining regions was in process or being planned. In only two regions did there seem to be resistance to the activity as unnecessary or redundant. As the evaluation unfolds, monitoring of the extent to which regions consider their assets and resource challenges in strategic planning will continue.

The regions listed expected outcomes and metrics for the activities in their implementation plans. A review of these metrics revealed considerable variation in their usefulness and measurability. As the evaluation progresses, attempts to identify any correlation between the specificity and measurability of the metrics and the region's progress toward transformation will continue.

Most regions indicated that they were just initiating their activities and had invested little effort to date in monitoring progress or outcomes. Nevertheless, the regions suggested that they intend to do that monitoring over time.

Resources and Sustainability

Sufficient resources and long-term strategic planning are relevant for regions to meet the goals of the Initiative and realize regional economic transformation. The adequacy of resources and the sustainability of those resources beyond the initial investment are important factors in regions' long-term effectiveness.

Although some regions' budgets were not available or did not provide sufficient detail, there was a great deal of variability between regions in the proportion of grant resources allocated to innovation, subgranting, and entrepreneurial programming, with Generation II demonstrating slightly more emphasis on this area based on planned allocation. Moreover, ETA data from April 2008 indicates that Generation II regions had leveraged more additional funding from the original grant.

The budget plans that were submitted by each region along with their implementation plan do not necessarily line up with the emphasis placed on entrepreneurship activities. One of the primary reasons for this is that some regions were more focused than others on leveraging resources from federal agencies (Economic Development Agency, Agriculture, and Small Business Administration), universities, and private investors (angel investors, corporate

foundations) to supplement WIRED funds. As a result, the total level of investment in entrepreneurship programs is actually higher than the budget figures suggest.

The regions are allocating between one-fourth and one-third of their grant funds towards startup and administration expenses, including funds for program executives, administrative staff, accounting, and, in some cases, administrative fees to state government. In several cases, all or most of the salary of key project managers are being paid with grant funds, which may make it more difficult to maintain these staff, and the energy they bring to the initiative, in the longer term.

While three regions have not identified any particular means to sustain momentum, seven regions have identified three or four strategies. Strategies identified by regions have focused on financial, structural, and operational mechanisms. Examples include a) leveraging funds and using multiple funding streams (including in-kind contributions and program-specific funding sources, b) requiring subgrantees to obtain matching funds, and submit sustainability plans, c) establishing projects that could generate their own revenue, d) establishing non-profit status that would allow them to pursue grant funds, e) supporting or expanding existing activities, f) establishing a special committee to spearhead sustainability efforts, g) documenting success, and h) building capacity of existing staff to continue after grant funds ended. The effectiveness of these strategies will be better understood over time.

Activities

The regions are conducting a variety of activities intended to achieve the objectives laid out in their implementation plans. The success of the regions hinges to a considerable degree on the success of these activities: recruitment into the activities, effective administration of the activities, and outcomes of the activities.

In most regions, the launch of the initiative took longer than anticipated. Often, completing the ETA process of approval of the implementation plans was cited as a contributing factor. Many grantee personnel and some of their ETA liaisons expressed considerable frustration regarding what they saw as a process fraught with bureaucracy and delay. Apart from ETA's approval process, many regions took longer than expected to fully form their leadership groups and to staff up their projects. These delays had a cascading effect on the rollout of other activities.

Effective collaboration may increase the potential for transformational results. Those receiving high scores for collaboration also tended to have a higher likelihood of activities being transformational. While the data are very preliminary, this pattern supports a central assertion of the Initiative's multi-step conceptual framework[6] that emphasizes the importance of collaboration in achieving regional transformation.

Within the broad framework, regions were given great flexibility in shaping their approaches. The regions documented their plans for these activities in their proposals, implementation plans,

[6]ETA's multi-step conceptual framework for the Initiative maintains that regional transformation can be achieved through a systematic process of identifying the regional economy, forming a core leadership group, conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, creating a shared identity and economic vision, devising strategies, and leveraging resources and implementing.

and quarterly reports. Such activities were funded by the grant investment, other sources, or a combination thereof.

A wide range of activities are being conducted, including developing sector-based workgroups and business councils, developing new or updating existing curriculum to meet current and future industry needs, delivering training primarily to incumbent workers in targeted industries, strengthening worker pipelines for targeted industries through post-secondary education, stimulating and supporting entrepreneurship, and creating administrative infrastructures to support collaboration and administration of grant activities.

Providing training for high-growth industries, high school-to-career assistance, and entrepreneurial training are the predominate activities being planned by both Generation II and Generation III regions. Training programs that are designed for the needs of targeted industries and entrepreneurial training appear to be easier to initiate than other planned activities. This could be because most regions have post-secondary institutes or community college that offer technical training for business and small business assistance centers.

There are differences in the planned activities between the Generation II and III regions. In particular, three of the Generation II regions plan to establish business incubators, research or manufacturing centers and/or infrastructure improvements, including site development, while none of the Generation III regions have such aspirations. These differences may reflect the longer planning process given to the Generation II regions and may also reflect the broader focus of the unsuccessful proposals these regions submitted for the initial round of funding.

Leveraged funds, which varied from just a few thousand dollars to more than one million dollars, were used for a variety of purposes, including covering program-related costs that do not meet the allowable cost requirements for the Initiative's H1-B funds, extending the reach of the program strategy to include students less than 15 years old, expanding a program strategy to cover a broader geographic area, supporting implementation of programs that were researched and developed through the Initiative, covering gaps in funding that arose for Generation II regions, and supporting greater participation in training programs by dislocated workers.

While the evidence is preliminary, it appears that in many regions, activities are underway that would not have occurred without the ETA investment. In most regions, key stakeholders reported that new relationships had been formed that crossed the traditional boundaries of workforce, education, economic development, and business.

Social Networking

An underlying assumption of the Initiative is that by bringing the right parties to the regional economic development planning table, new relationships will develop. Social networks may help regions discover new opportunities for transformation, build support for action among key stakeholders, and identify and activate the region's resources to take advantage of these new opportunities. Social networks also can provide a way to measure the progress regions have made in such areas as engagement, governance, and communication. The first phase of social network data collection allows for only a preliminary analysis of social networking information, but these data provide a useful baseline for future evaluation.

Many regions have successfully built new networks—or made use of pre-existing networks—that cross organizational boundaries and that involve individuals at multiple levels in the organization. More than three-quarters of all connections in the regions were between organizations of different types.

A region's previous success in creating links between different types of organizations may be related to the perceived strength of its social network. If a pre-existing social network in a region is perceived as one of the region's strengths it may reduce the urgency of efforts to bring new organizations into the fold, resulting in a network with fewer links that spanned different types of organizations. In contrast, a broader outreach effort—and the strong cross-organizational ties that resulted from it—may be driven in part by the perceived lack of a solid preexisting network.

Different types of organizations play varied roles in the regions. Local WIBs tend to be more central to a region's network than other types of organizations, and are slightly more important to Generation III regions, where their involvement was mandated. Individuals at businesses and educational institutions were less central to their region's network.

The structure of a regional network may be a key factor in how efficiently a region communicates and how well it responds to the loss of key individuals. Tightly woven, dense networks—those that make use of a higher proportion of their possible connections—facilitate rapid and efficient communication because each individual in the network has more ties with which to reach out to others in the network. Eight of the regions were considered dense or very dense, and some regions were dependent on only a small number of individuals for most of their ties to key stakeholders. As regions proceed with their funded activities and build more ties within their communities, the regional networks are likely to become somewhat less dense and somewhat more balanced. This growth may reduce the efficiency of the network, in favor of greater sustainability.

Conclusions and Next Steps

Several broad themes came to light during the first year of data collection and analysis.

- Regions are generally succeeding in building broad-based collaboration, with positive implications for regional transformation.
- The idea of regionalism seems to be taking hold within the regions, overcoming a history of intra-region competition.
- Regions have conducted a good deal of research and planning, but this work has not always been well-integrated into economic development strategies and goals.
- The lack of key individuals in leadership positions may be holding back progress in some regions.
- Regions are taking only small steps toward innovation, at least at this early stage in the Initiative.
- Several regions have focused on sustainability as a key concern, but it is too soon to tell how effective sustainability practices will prove to be.

- Regions have shown the capacity to adapt to changing economic circumstances, an attribute that probably has become more important in the midst of the global recession.
- Some regions are beginning activities that have the potential to be transformational, while others have been more cautious.
- There appear to be only minor differences between generations of grantees in terms of the challenges faced and progress made.

Transforming a regional economy is a challenging and potentially long-term endeavor. As the regions progress, and the evaluation continues, the research team will focus on identifying important changes over time, and, ultimately, on judging the overall effect of the Initiative. Key outstanding issues include the influence of collaboration on systems and institutions, the extent to which the workforce system has been transformed, the level of innovation brought about in regional economies, the effect on targeted industries, and the success of regions in reaching their planned outcomes.

I. Introduction

A. Background

> *Complacency is a disaster these days, but (it) is a relatively minor issue for us. Better execution of our innovation initiative is our challenge.*
> -from *A Sense of Urgency*, by John Kotter[7]

The U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development Initiative is an ambitious effort to fuel economic transformation in regions of the country that are in economic transition because of foreign competition, large-scale worker dislocations due to plant closings, and/or natural disasters. The Initiative was launched in late 2005 amidst growing concern about the ability of the United States to remain competitive in the 21st Century economy. Major reports from the National Academies,[8] the Council on Competitiveness,[9] the Business Roundtable,[10] the National Association of Manufacturers,[11] and others pointed out that growing competition from other nations, coupled with the long-term energy crisis, posed threats to our nation's continued prosperity and global economic leadership.

The emergence of a new, global economy presented both opportunities and challenges. To prosper in this new economy, more and more companies were seeking ideas for new, innovative products and services that could be successfully marketed around the world.[12] Yet, it also introduced a whole new level of competition that acted as a powerful incentive for companies to focus on increasing productivity and cutting costs.[13] For example, companies that once used supplier networks located within the boundaries of a given state or region were finding that they could buy the necessary goods and services outside the country at a substantially reduced cost.[14] In addition, companies were under continuing pressure to invest in new technologies that could be used to enhance business processes and accelerate production.

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[7] Kotter, John, *A Sense of Urgency*, Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2008.

[8] National Academies, National Academies' Committee on Science, Engineering and Public Policy, Committee on Prospering in the Global Economy of the 21st Century, *Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future* (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2005).

[9] Council on Competitiveness, *Innovate America: National Innovation Summit and Report: Thriving in a World of Challenge and Change* (Washington, DC, 2004).

[10] Business Roundtable and 14 other Business Organizations, *Tapping America's Potential: The Education for Innovation Initiative*, July 27, 2005. <http://www.businessroundtable.org>

[11] National Association of Manufacturers, Looming Workforce Crisis: Preparing American Workers for 21st Century Competition, September 2005. <http://www.nam.org/s_nam/index.asp>.

[12] Feldman, Maryann P. and Albert N. Link, eds. *Innovation Policy in the Knowledge-Based Economy*. Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001.
Llerena, Patrick and Mireille Matt. Innovation Policy in a Knowledge-Based Economy: Theory and Practice. Berlin: Springer, 2005.

[13] Friedman, Thomas L. *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the 21st Century*. (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2005).

[14] Dunning, John H. *Regions, Globalization, and the Knowledge-Based Economy*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

In this dynamic and competitive economic environment, having a globally-competitive workforce was of paramount importance.[15] One of the immediate challenges facing the workforce system was helping existing and recently laid-off workers to upgrade their skills in order to make a successful career transition from the low-skill jobs that manufacturing companies were moving off-shore to reduce labor costs. There was a growing demand for workers that had the ability to integrate and apply academic, technical, and practical knowledge and skills,[16] yet the education achievement data that was used to bolster the national calls for action revealed that the U.S. was falling behind other countries in terms of student proficiency in mathematics and science. Furthermore, there were insufficient numbers of graduates in engineering, computer science, and information technology[17] to meet the needs of existing companies.

In response to these global trends, the Initiative was launched to support regional efforts "to transform those economies and enhance their global competitiveness through talent development."[18] The transformational goal is captured in the following quote that envisions the development of:

> *An integrated education, workforce and economic development system, supported by entrepreneurial attitudes and highly skilled people, which leads to a dynamic economic platform that offers greater prosperity to regional citizens*.[19]

Much has changed since then. The economic downturn that was underway in selected sectors and concentrated in some geographic areas of the U.S. in early 2007 has quickly become a recession of global proportions. The periodic layoffs that once were common practice in the auto industry have spread to other sectors and have grown into massive, long-term layoffs, and major plant and company closings and mergers. In several instances, these events have in turn caused smaller supplier firms to close.[20] The disasters that hit the financial/ banking sector have made it difficult or impossible for companies to obtain traditional loans from financial institutions for new development projects, and, in some cases, for covering basic operating costs. Current and prospective angel investors have watched their financial resources evaporate as the stock market and/or real estate values have plunged.[21] Even philanthropic organizations have suffered because their investment portfolio values are highly dependent upon the stock market.[22]

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[15] National Research Council (U.S.) Committee on Workforce Needs in Information Technology. *Building a Workforce for the Information Economy*. Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2001.

[16] Porter, Michael. "Workforce Development in the Global Economy." Presentation made at the InterAmerican Development Bank, Washington, D.C., November 2002. <www.gwit.us/global.asp#main>

[17] National Academies, *Rising Above the Gathering Storm*, pg. 80.

[18] U.S. Department of Labor, Solicitation for WIRED Generation III, SGA/DFA PY-06-09, February. 2007.

[19] Council on Competitiveness, "COMPETE: WIRED Regional Leadership Training Seminar – Transformation," Spring/Summer 2008, slide 28. <http://tinyurl.com/ybbl9r4>

[20] Julianne Pepitome, Bloody Monday: Over 65,500 Jobs Lost, CNNMoney.com, January 30, 2009.

[21] See for example Tom Foremski, "Are Angel Investors in Trouble," Silicon Valley Watcher, April, 2008.

[22] See for example, Kristin Heim, "Recession squeezes even philanthropies of Gates, Allen" The Seattle Times, January 14, 2009. <http://tinyurl.com/8jax3x>

The fear and uncertainty that defines the current recession has had a considerable impact on communities across the country, as well as around the world. They have created a set of conditions that make it much more challenging, yet all the more important, to address workforce development issues and emerge from the recession quickly and convincingly. Thus, while the underlying economic conditions have changed since the Initiative was first announced, the need for and potential benefits of having an integrated education, workforce, and economic system remain substantial and may, in fact, be instrumental to economic recovery.

It is in this context that the interim findings of the evaluation of local efforts to initiate regional transformation are presented. This Initiative melds together three strands of thought about effective workforce and economic development policy. First, it acknowledges the importance of workforce (i.e., talent) development in overall economic development. The skills, knowledge, and abilities of human resources are a key factor necessary for a dynamic economy. Second, it supports the role of collaboration and intermediaries in workforce and economic development, education, philanthropic and financial communities. The "old-fashioned" system of siloed programs based on eligibility criteria with very little coordinated planning or operation did not serve well the needs of jobseekers needing training, nor employers needing skilled workers, nor communities needing to provide a skilled talent pool to support area companies. Seamless systems effectively fashioned together by all stakeholders and facilitated by an intermediary can achieve better outcomes for both sides of the labor market, and thus the overall regional economy. Third, the Initiative recognizes the fact that the national economy is an aggregation of regional economies that vary in resources and other assets as well as economic performance. For regions that face particularly difficult challenges, the grant funds are intended as a catalyst for the development of regionally-appropriate collaborative activities.

The allocation of grant funds to support comprehensive efforts to invigorate regional growth at the local level is an innovative approach in the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) full employment and training policy arsenal. The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and its predecessors tended to be supply-side programs. Mainly targeted on nonemployed individuals, these programs tended to provide job search assistance or training that was thought to facilitate labor market entry or reemployment. In retrospect, JTPA was a step in the direction of collaboration as it ushered in significant private sector leadership at the local level. However, it operated in an environment of multiple programs with different emphases and clientele, and had varied and limited success in engaging the private sector or effectively serving the needs of jobseekers.

The Workforce Investment Act (in concert with a work-first paradigm shift in TANF) brought about wide-scale program integration under the aegis of workforce investment boards (WIBs). The silos began to disappear. Furthermore, as Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs have matured, incumbent worker support has become a key programmatic element to enhance the competitiveness and productivity of local economies. Policy makers have recognized the importance of developing the skills of incumbent workers in the overall area of economic development.

This Initiative relies on a market-driven strategy; rather than dictating a specific process or approach, ETA has given local areas an incentive to work together to derive the best strategies to

develop a joint vision and coordinated efforts to promote workforce development that will translate into economic growth.

B. ETA's Investment Strategy

These investments are seed funds intended to serve as a catalyst for regional collaboration among stakeholders in the public, private, and non-profit sector. These stakeholders or their intermediaries are expected to pursue innovative approaches for integrating and transforming the education, workforce, and economic development organizations into an effective system for talent development.

Three Generations

To date, three rounds (generations) have been funded with H1-B[23] dollars. This funding stream is linked to fees paid by employers for work visas for non-U.S. citizens that have been hired for high-skill, high-demand occupations for which no qualified U.S. residents can be found. For the first round, referred to as the Generation I regions, more than 90 proposals were submitted, and 13 were selected for funding. An additional 13 regions that were not selected in that first round were invited to participate as "virtual" regions, which included a small planning grant and an opportunity to participate in a national learning network developed by ETA to support the Initiative. In early 2007, these sites were designated as Generation II regions with additional funding that totaled $5 million over three years. These regions also had an opportunity to work closely with ETA staff to develop innovative approaches to linking education, workforce, economic development and others. The third generation of regions was selected via another competitive bidding process.[24] Like the Generation II regions, these newly selected sites were slated to receive a total of $5 million from ETA.

Certainly $5 million dollars is a substantial amount of money. However, it pales in comparison to the total amount of money that is at play in a regional economy. The intent of ETA was not to reduce the size and scope of the grants from the first round to the second and third rounds to limit their activities, but to encourage regions to leverage additional resources, financial and in-kind, from a wide range of regional stakeholders. In order to achieve the long-term transformation that was envisioned, the active participation of regional stakeholders and the alignment of their combined resources would be essential.

Required Partners

The solicitations for grant applications emphasized the importance of regional collaboration and the need to make the group inclusive enough to drive economic transformation in the region, including stakeholders representing employers, state and local government agencies, economic development organizations, education and training providers, local WIBs, foundations, and any other organizations deemed to be critical to achieving the goals of transforming regions to

[23] H-1B fees are authorized under Sec. 414 (c) of the American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-277, title IV) as amended by P.L. 108-447 (codified at 29 U.S.C. 2916a).
[24] U.S. Department of Labor, Solicitation for WIRED Generation I, SGA/DFA PY 05-04). November, 2005;and Generation III, SGA/DFA PY-06-09, February. 2007.

facilitate growth. Recommended partners were "change agents representing an array of key interests, including government, academia, business, community development, entrepreneurship, and the philanthropic community."[25] It is important to note that the involvement of local WIBs and One-Stops changed from being optional for Generation I regions to being a requirement for Generation II and III regions, at increasing levels of engagement and authority. Generation II regions were required to have representatives from the workforce system as key partners while for Generation III, workforce boards were *required* to play the lead role in each region.

Sector Focus

It was expected that these stakeholders would take an active role in developing and overseeing the implementation of a regional strategy and action plan, and could use the grant funds to target the needs of an industry or sector that was projected to experience significant growth. Tables 1 and 2 provide a list of the regions in Generations II and III and the industry sectors that were selected.

[25] U.S. Department of Labor, Grant Solicitation for WIRED Generation I, p. 10. <http://www.workforceatm.org/sections/pdf/2005/WIRED%20Submission%20Guidelines.pdf>

Table 1: Generation II Regions and Sectors*

Industry Sector	Appalachian Ohio	Arkansas Delta	Central/Eastern Puerto Rico	Delaware Valley	Northern California	Northern New Jersey	Rio Grande Valley	Southeast Michigan	Southeastern Wisconsin	Southwestern Connecticut	Southwestern Indiana	Tennessee Valley	Wasatch Range/Utah	**Total Regions /Sector**
Advanced manufacturing		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		10
Aerospace/defense							X							1
Agribusiness					X									1
Nanotechnology												X		1
Chemicals and plastics											X			1
Creative arts/entertainment						X								1
Energy/alternative energy		X			X			X			X			4
Financial services									X	X				2
Health care			X			X				X				3
Homeland security								X						1
Information technology	X		X		X					X		X		5
Biotechnology/life sciences			X	X		X		X		X	X	X	X	8
Logistics/transportation		X				X	X				X			4
Retail						X				X				2
Water Resources									X					1
Total Sectors per Region	1	3	4	2	4	5	3	4	3	6	5	4	1	

*Data for this table came from available implementation plans submitted by the regions.

Table 2: Generation III Regions and Sectors*

Industry Sector	Central Kentucky	Central New Jersey	Greater Albuquerque	Minnesota Triangle	North Oregon	Pacific Mountain Washington	South-Central and Southwest Wisconsin	South-Central Idaho	South-Central Kansas	Southeast Missouri	Southeastern Mississippi	Southeastern Virginia	Southern Arizona	**Total Regions/Sector**
Advanced manufacturing	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			9
Aerospace/defense			X										X	2
Agriculture/agribusiness/food processing				X			X							2
Biotechnology/life sciences	X	X		X	X		X							5
Composites/advanced materials science									X					1
Construction			X			X		X						3
Energy/alternative energy	X		X	X		X				X				5
Health care	X						X			X				3
Homeland security													X	1
Human resources	X													1
Information technology													X	1
Logistics/transportation/ warehousing	X									X		X		3
Modeling and simulation												X		1
Optics			X											1
Skilled trades							X							1
Tourism										X				1
Utilities							X							1
Total Sectors per Region	6	1	5	4	2	3	6	2	1	5	1	2	3	

*Data for this table came from available implementation plans submitted by the regions.

Allowable Activities

According to the Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA), grant funds could be used to pay for a potentially wide range of activities, as long as they were directly related to the activities included in each region's implementation plan. General categories of activities include:

- talent development related to entrepreneurship and small business development; purchasing equipment to train job seekers and workers for high-growth occupations; development and implementation of model activities to build core competencies and train workers;
- identifying and disseminating career and skill information;
- developing or purchasing regional data tools or systems to deepen understanding of the regional economic landscape and labor market; and

- integrated regional planning such as increasing the integration of community and technical college activities with activities of businesses and the public workforce investment system to meet the training needs of business.[26]

In other words, as long as the activities were directly related to the region's targeted sector(s) and consistent with the implementation plan, the regions could reach out to and recruit employers to get involved in the Initiative, conduct market research related to the growth of targeted industry sectors, occupations, and training needs, procure equipment necessary for training purposes (with prior approval from ETA), cover the costs of curriculum development and training (instructors, space, supplies, but not actual time spent in training) for new and incumbent workers, provide information on project goals and activities to the public, and hire consultant services to provide technical and professional advice.

Activities that could not be funded with the H1-B funds[27] used for the Initiative included things related to general economic development, such as:

- public infrastructure improvements
- product research and development
- inventory acquisition
- general business capitalization or expansion
- revolving loan accounts

Promoting Regionalism

One of the primary objectives of this Initiative is to promote regional approaches to addressing workforce and economic development issues. The Initiative was built on an assumption that the dynamics of the economy are best understood and addressed at the regional level. As a consequence, the solicitation was not prescriptive in terms of the configuration of the regions, other than to say that they were required to consist of contiguous counties and were permitted to cross state boundaries. The expectation was these regions would not necessarily conform with existing political jurisdictions or municipal boundaries.[28] Similarly, there was an expectation that each region would focus its efforts on a limited number of industry sectors that were deemed to be important to the regional economy, but it was left to the proposers to create a rationale to support the sectors that were named as targets in each proposal.

In the interest of seeing that each region maximized the opportunity afforded to them under the grant, ETA provided a range of supports that included a designated ETA staff person that would serve as a single point-of-contact for assistance in addressing any issues that might arise in the region. Furthermore, in addition to the national learning network mentioned earlier, ETA provided a limited amount of additional funds (maximum of $60,000 per region) for any additional technical assistance needs.

[26] SGA/DFA PY-06-09, p. 6. Additional information about the specific goals and activities of each region in Generation II and Generation III is included in Appendix A of this report.
[27] WIRED Initiative "Uses of H1-B Funding Revenue," (2007. <http://www.bio-one.org/content/Downloadables/WIRED%20Allowable%206!15!07.pdf>
[28] U.S. Department of Labor, SGA/DFA PY-06-09, Q&A, <http://tinyurl.com/cvdgyh>

One of the major activities associated with the Initiative was the requirement that all sites create a comprehensive, detailed implementation plan that would summarize the region's goals, activities, and approach to measuring success. Regional leaders worked in conjunction with ETA leads to complete this document and submit it to ETA for final review and approval.

C. Evaluation of ETA's Investment Strategy

The evaluation team for the Initiative includes four organizations. The evaluation of the 13 Generation I grants is being done by Berkeley Policy Associates in partnership with the University of California at San Diego.[29] The evaluation of the 26 Generation II and III grants is being conducted by Public Policy Associates, Inc. in partnership with W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. Both evaluations are multi-year studies that focus on strategies, implementation activities, collaborative experiences, and performance.

The goal of the evaluation is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation and cumulative effects of WIRED strategies on regions. This includes how these strategies facilitate transformation in regional economic and talent development systems.

The evaluation of this Initiative is a multi-year study that includes the following general categories of investigation:

- **Strategic Approach, Implementation, and Institutionalization:** These research questions focused on the strategies that were developed to address regional needs, the extent, nature, and impact of collaboration on regional partners, the extent to which funds from other sources were aligned and leveraged, and sustainability plans.

- **Innovation and Capacity Changes:** These research questions focus on efforts to identify and address barriers to innovation and industry growth, and efforts to create a talent development system to that supports economic and business development, the effectiveness of the initiative in building training capacity in the region for the targeted sectors, and the measureable benefits for workers and job seekers.

- **Economic and Labor Market Effects:** Here the research questions examine the ongoing changes in the regional economy and labor market, and the extent to which the regional initiatives contributed to job creation, education attainment, and business growth.

[29] The evaluators for Generations I, II, and III are working collaboratively. While there are some differences between the evaluations in terms of the analytical framework being used to organize the findings, the team has taken steps to ensure that there will be adequate data for cross-generation comparisons, such as aligning research questions, data collection methods, site visit protocols, etc. The evaluators are also planning to collaborate on portions of the final report for the Initiative.

- **Cross-Generational Comparisons (Across Generations I, II, and III):**[30] The final set of research questions seek to understand whether key differences between the Generations, i.e., grant amounts ($15M v. $5M), role of Local WIBs (leader or partner), requirements for LWIB involvement, etc. contributed to different strategies, goals, and outcomes.

Primary data sources include survey data and site visit data, each of which will be collected at two points in time for each region. The site visit data include key stakeholder interviews, focus groups, round-table discussions (facilitated group discussions), and observation. The surveys will collect participation information from regional stakeholders to gauge the extent of collaboration, leadership structure, effectiveness, and partner engagement in the regional partnership. The secondary data sources will include administrative data from the regions and numerous public economic, education, innovation, commercialization, and labor market data sources.

For the Generation II and III evaluation, the first round of site visits, which was conducted during the summer of 2008, included interviews with an array of regional partners representing the public workforce system, K-16 education, economic development, employers, state and local government, and the philanthropic sector. A second round of site visits will be conducted in late 2009 - early 2010 and will focus more heavily on sustainability and effectiveness of activities.

This evaluation will follow the development and operation of the regions over the entire three-year period of the Initiative. The evaluation includes three reports (the first interim report follows the first round of site visits, a second interim report will present the results of a baseline analysis of extant data and the findings of a stakeholder survey, and a final report). This document is the first Interim Report, which addresses early phases of planning and operation of the Generation II and III regions. The second interim report will be prepared in late 2009. The final, comprehensive evaluation report will be prepared in late 2010.

D. Baseline Data

This report presents important baseline information regarding the status of the regions. In most cases, the first round of site visits was conducted shortly after each region received ETA approval of their implementation plan. Because of the early stage of implementation, many of the regions were focused on the development of partnerships, governance arrangements, and the design of decision-making processes and had not yet implemented key components of their action plans. This report reflects the status of regional activities as of the summer of 2008.

[30] A complete list of research questions and detailed description of the evaluation methodology can be found in the Evaluation Design Report for the Evaluation of Generations II and III.

E. Organization of this Report

This report consists of four main sections.

- *Section I: Introduction*. This section described the context of the Initiative, the design of the Initiative, and the general approach for evaluating Generations II and III regions.

- *Section II: Theory of Change.* This section describes the Theory of Change that is used in this report to examine key components of the Initiative. It describes the nine key dimensions, which are then used in Section III to organize the presentation of the findings.

- *Section III: Keys to Success*. This section presents the findings of the first phase of the evaluation. It uses the Theory of Change as a starting point for discussing the experiences and lessons learned by stakeholders that participated in the first round of site visits.

- *Section IV: Summary and Next Steps.* The primary findings of the evaluation are summarized here and the next steps in the evaluation are described.

- *Bibliography*

- *Appendix A:* This consists of a matrix that lists the regions that are involved in Generations II and III and the goals and main activities that have been planned by each region.

II. Theory of Change

Evaluations are intended to assess the effectiveness of strategies designed to achieve stated goals. In the field of evaluation, the assessment examines the relationship between activities and outcomes, both intermediate and long-term. Typically, a Theory of Change (TOC)[31] is used to articulate the main components of a strategy and how those components contribute to the overall success of a given program or initiative.

The overall goal of the initiative is to position regions that are in economic transition due to foreign competition, large-scale worker dislocations due to plant closings, and/or natural disasters to take positive steps towards transformation in order to compete successfully in a global economy. To do so, regions must design and implement their own unique strategy for engaging regional stakeholders in the public, private, and philanthropic sectors in a collaborative effort to transform the workforce and economic development systems to make them more adept at responding to the dynamics of this new global economy.

The success of the Initiative is dependent upon the ability to establish and maintain collaborative engagement among key stakeholders, involving them in leadership, sharing information on financial and other resources, assessing regional status, needs, and opportunities, and making the entire region the beneficiary of grant-funded activities.[32]

Previous research conducted by Public Policy Associates, Incorporated[33] and the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research[34] has examined the formation and operation of workforce development initiatives that emphasize collaboration. The dimensions were originally identified in the course of a national evaluation of 50 U.S. Department of Labor demonstration projects that focused on skills shortages[35] and builds off of previous research on collaboration conducted at the University of Wisconsin-Extension in Madison and Workforce Learning Strategies.[36] This

[31] Weiss, Carol 1972. *Evaluation Research: Methods for Assessing Program Effectiveness*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall; Weiss, Carol 1995. "Nothing as Practical as Good Theory: Exploring Theory-Based Evaluation for Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families." In *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Concepts, Methods, and Contexts*, ed. James P. Connell et al. Washington, DC: Aspen Institute; Weiss, Carol, 1977, "Research for Policy's Sake: The Enlightenment Function of Social Research." Policy Analysis 3(4): 531-545.

[32] DOLETA, "Six Steps of Economic and Workforce Transformation Through WIRED," <,http://tinyurl.com/dmtjof>

[33] Padden, J., and Hewat, N. Public Policy Associates, Inc., *Evaluation of the Skills Shortages Demonstration Programs: Final Report*, U.S. Department of Labor, 2003. Hewat, Nancy, "Skills Partnership Self Assessment Tool." U.S. Department of Labor, 2003. Evaluating Collaboratives, University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension, 1998, Ellen Taylor-Powell, B. Rossing, and J. Geran, Evaluating Collaboratives, Reaching the Potential, University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension, 1998. Workforce Learning Strategies, Regional Skills Partnerships, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Adult Services, August 2000.

[34] Upjohn Institute, *Evaluation of the Michigan Regional Skills Alliances*, Mott Foundation, 2005.

[35] Public Policy Associates, Inc., Skills Shortages Demonstration Programs Evaluation, 2003.

[36] See for example, Ellen Taylor-Powell, B. Rossing, and J. Geran, *Evaluating Collaboratives, Reaching the Potential*, University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension, (1998) and Employment and Training Administration, Office of Adult Services, *Workforce Learning Strategies, Regional Skills Partnerships* (August 2000).

research suggests that these efforts to transform regional operations can be evaluated on nine major dimensions that have been considered critical for the operation and success of collaborative arrangements:

1. Context for collaboration
2. Governance and decision-making
3. Effective engagement among collaborators
4. Planning
5. Communication
6. Use of data
7. Resources and sustainability
8. Activities
9. Social networking

A brief description of these participation dimensions follows.

1. *Context for Collaboration.* An important element that may influence the effectiveness with which the regional strategies achieve their goals is the context or history of collaboration within the region. This includes the historical, geographic, political, and cultural characteristics which, together, have a substantial influence on how stakeholder organizations approach collaboration. Some regions may have had substantial success with precursor collaborative activities; other regions may have competitive boundaries which they need to break through.

2. *Governance and Decision-Making.* The governance/decision-making structure of an initiative comprises the agencies that house the grant and initiative leadership, the location within the agencies, staffing structures and experience, partner roles and responsibilities, and mechanisms that are established for flexible, but sound, decision-making.

3. *Effective Engagement among Collaborators.* Partner engagement may be a vital element for success. It can be gauged by measuring characteristics such as the percentage of the businesses in the targeted industry in the region that are involved (by number of firms and by employment), the extent to which key decision makers in the partner organizations are knowledgeable and involved, and the nature of the partner involvement. This involvement might range from having the funded activities be partner-driven to having partners in an advisory role to infrequent contacts.

4. *Planning.* The outcomes of the planning activities at the local/regional level are goals and strategies. The processes that are used to arrive at those outcomes may vary along dimensions such as who is involved in the planning, the extent to which data are used to drive the planning process, the length of time available for data collection, and the degree to which the outcomes are measurable. Presumably, the planning process will identify strategies that will be used to meet goals, and it will assign responsibilities to individuals or agencies for spearheading the strategies.

5. *Communication.* Communication may be a key factor in determining the success of the regional initiatives. Each region will have multiple types of communication needs. Each one will need to create awareness among the business community and will need to recruit employers as active participants. Each will need to communicate ongoing business items such as meeting times, agendas, and background materials for consideration by staff and decision-makers. Finally, the partners will need to report their plans and accomplishments to the public, to program administrators, and to all other stakeholders. Additional elements to examine are the extent to which communications are clear, timely, and appropriately disseminated.

6. *Use of Data.* The sixth dimension is the extent to which data are used to understand the nature of the challenges and opportunities that face a region, to identify economic development or talent development systems, to identify and shape potential strategies, and to monitor the performance of the collaboration as it moves from planning to implementation stages. To be most useful, data have to be current, must be presented in a succinct manner, and must be incorporated into decision-making processes.

7. *Resources and Sustainability.* Resource adequacy may be an important determinant of the effectiveness of the funded activities. The grant funds will be a key catalyst, but they may need to be supplemented by in-kind and cash resources from other sources in order to be most effective. In addition, sustainability beyond the initial investment will depend on finding adequate resources from partners or other funders.

8. *Activities.* Regions will develop implementation plans that explicitly state their objectives. The bulk of the work that regions conduct will then be through activities intended to achieve their objectives, whether directly funded by the grant or by leveraged funds. Thus the success of the region will hinge considerably on the success of the activities: recruitment into activities, effective administration of the activities, and outcomes of the activities.

9. *Social Networking.* Related to communication, increased social networking among the stakeholders may be a key success factor of the initiatives. An underlying assumption of the Initiative is that by bringing the right parties to the regional economic development table, new networks of relationships will develop, and that these networks will allow the regions to identify opportunities that might previously have been invisible and to better align and leverage the regional resources that make it possible to take advantage of such opportunities.

In summary, each region's performance in these nine dimensions should correlate with their success in achieving their goals. The primary hypothesis of this evaluation is that success is dependent upon the ability to establish and maintain collaborative arrangements among key stakeholders in the regions.

III. Keys to Success: A Cross-Cutting Examination of the Early Implementation of Regional Transformation Efforts

A. Context for Collaboration

Introduction

The contexts in which regions operate provide important background information to facilitate understanding of their initiatives. The overall approach followed by ETA is to allow regions to develop their own strategies and goals. The Theory of Change for this evaluation recognizes that historical, geographic, and political contexts will help to shape those strategies. For example, knowing whether regional partners have, at least in part, worked together on a prior effort or otherwise broken through organizational silos informs the analysis of the progress of regional collaboration. Other important contextual factors besides prior collaboration include the geographic boundaries of the region; demographic, economic, and political characteristics of the region; and the workforce development and economic development institutions in the region.

This section will first use extant demographic and governmental data to examine the demographic and political boundary characteristics of the regions. Next, it relies on the regions' proposals and implementation plans to enumerate the education, workforce development, and economic development institutions that exist in the regions. Finally, it relies on qualitative data gathered during site visits to discuss the extent to which regions had successful collaborations prior to the Initiative.

Analysis

Before examining the array of organizations, stakeholders, and partners involved in workforce and economic development activities prior to this region-wide opportunity, a brief summary of data on collaboration may be useful. Earlier collaboration activities were mentioned in the regions' proposals and discussed during the site visits. The resulting information on this history was cross-referenced and coded to categorize the degree of collaboration. The results are shown in Figure 1 below.

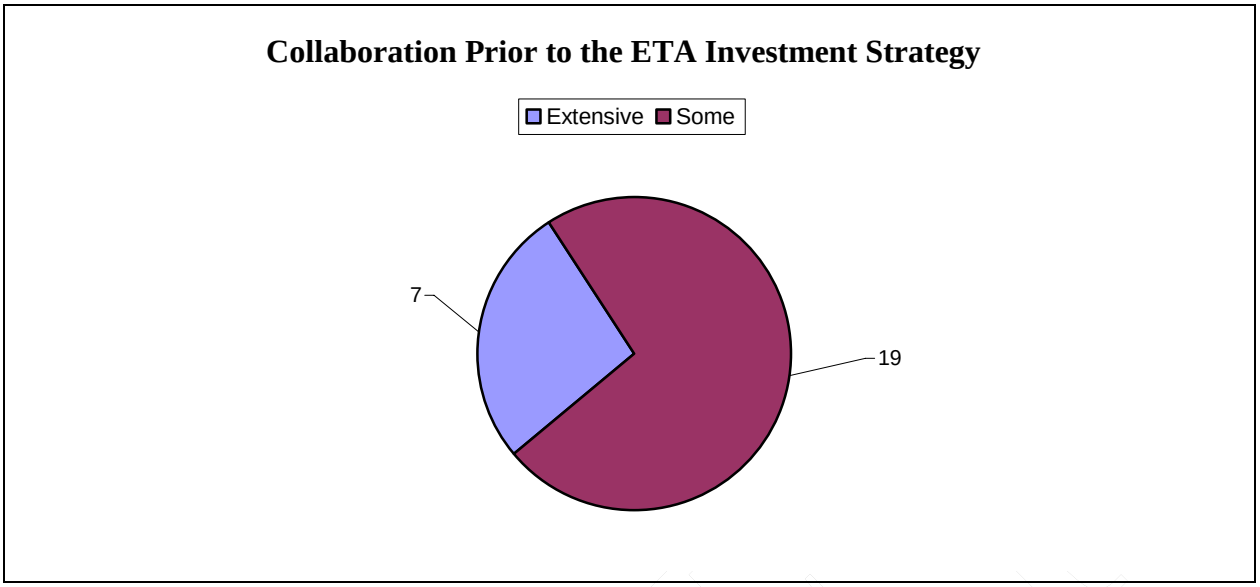

Figure 1 *Data for this figure came from available implementation plans submitted by the regions

Seven of the regions had multiple examples of collaboration, involving different partners. Nineteen regions had at least one instance of collaboration, but these usually involved a small group of partners. Most commonly, these partners were of the same group, such as multiple economic development organizations or multiple WIBs working together.

A few examples of these early collaborations include:

- The 20-year operation of an applied research grant partnership between the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority and area business.
- Southwest Indiana's effort to link Indianapolis and Evansville with an interstate highway expansion called Hoosier Voices for I-69.
- Kansas's Regional Economic Area Partnership, which began in the 1990s and brought together local governments to voice policy concerns affecting economic development and conduct joint actions of benefit to the region.
- Cooperative efforts in Southeast Virginia to address rapid response situations, in which plant closings necessitate immediate action by designated state government and One-Stop staff to assist dislocated employees by providing the information and services needed to obtain reemployment.

The results of the early collaboration, according to the regions' WIRED proposals, included regional data reports, workforce training, layoff aversion, business attraction, regional needs consensus-building, and other joint initiatives.

A confluence of closely interacting factors influences the ability of stakeholders and the organizations they represent to work together toward regional goals in the manner envisioned. The factors discussed in this section set the stage for collaboration and may help or hinder its progress.

Regional Characteristics

Geographic

A region's size or the level of isolation of its component parts may influence the quality and ease of collaboration within its borders. As shown in Tables 3 and 4, the regions vary considerably in terms of geographic size and population density.

Table 3: Geographic Characteristics of Generation II Regions

Name	Approx. Square Miles*	Population**	Population Density Per Sq. Mile	Major Cities (pop. 100,000-250,000)†	Major Cities (pop. 250,001-500,000)†	Major Cities (pop. 500,001 and up)†
Appalachian Ohio	14,320	1,632,468	114	0	0	0
Arkansas Delta	12,004	432,151	36	0	0	0
Puerto Rico	348	439,748	1,263	0	0	0
Delaware Valley	7,843	7,301,521	931	0	0	1
Northern California	40,007	1,920,315	48	0	0	0
Northern New Jersey	2,044	4,076,974	1,995	0	1	0
Rio South Texas	9,799	1,420,888	145	2	0	0
Southeast Michigan	5,923	5,070,239	856	0	0	1
Southeast Wisconsin	2,622	1,969,085	751	0	0	1
Southwest Indiana	3,579	422,336	118	1	0	0
Southwest Connecticut	1,290	1,950,398	1,512	1	0	0
Tennessee Valley	15,547	1,445,897	93	1	0	0
Wasatch Range Utah	9,152	1,821,268	199	1	0	0

*U.S. Census Bureau, "State and County QuickFacts" (2009), <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>.
**U.S. Census Bureau, "Population Estimates by County" (2006), <http://www.census.gov/popest/counties/CO-EST2006-01.html>.
†U.S. Census Bureau, "Cities and Towns, Population Estimates" (2006), <http://www.census.gov/popest/cities/SUB-EST2006.html>.

Table 4: Geographic Characteristics of Generation III Regions

Name	Approx. Square Miles*	Population**	Population Density Per Sq. Mile	Major Cities (pop. 100,000-250,000)†	Major Cities (pop. 250,001-500,000)†	Major Cities (pop. 500,001 and up)†
Central Kentucky	8,703	1,539,219	177	0	0	1
Central-Eastern New Jersey	1,772	2,244,830	1,267	0	0	0
Greater Albuquerque	21,938	1,009,149	46	0	0	1
Minnesota Triangle	25,131	703,677	28	0	0	0
North Oregon	5,733	2,098,394	366	0	0	1
Pacific Mountain Washington	6,932	457,528	66	0	0	0
South Central & Southwest Wisconsin	9,176	1,064,360	116	1	0	0
South Central Idaho	11,575	173,626	15	0	0	0
South Central Kansas	10,092	746,830	74	0	1	0
Southeast Missouri	7,437	401,599	54	0	0	0
Southeast Mississippi	10,817	778,841	72	0	0	0
Southeast Virginia	5,570	2,044,053	367	1	1	0
Southern Arizona	22,114	1,304,754	59	0	0	1

*U.S. Census Bureau, "State and County QuickFacts" (2009), <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>.
**U.S. Census Bureau, "Population Estimates by County" (2006), <http://www.census.gov/popest/counties/CO-EST2006-01.html>.
†U.S. Census Bureau, "Cities and Towns, Population Estimates" (2006), <http://www.census.gov/popest/cities/SUB-EST2006.html>.

The geography of a region can effect how easy or difficult it is to hold face-to-face meetings among key stakeholders, the attitudes that stakeholders in rural and urban settings have about competition with one another, the manner in which organizations and individuals handle ongoing communications, and the ease of access to institutions of higher education. According to interviewees, sparse population density or a lack of significant urban areas tended to affect collaboration efforts. As shown in the tables above, four regions in Generation II and six regions in Generation III contain no urban centers with a population greater than 100,000. During the site visits, interviewees in some of these regions cited large geographical expanses or rural isolation as historical impediments to collaboration. Most of these regions comprised large, predominantly rural areas with low population densities. For example, Minnesota Triangle's Renewable Energy Marketplace includes 36 counties covering a total of 25,131 square miles, with a total estimated population of 703,677.[37] The sheer distance between the small towns that dot the region is viewed by regional stakeholders as a challenge to forming a regional identity

[37] U.S. Census Bureau. "Population Estimates by County" (2006), <http://www.census.gov/popest/counties/CO-EST2006-01.html>.

because they do not have a history of working together. The driving distance, coupled with the harsh winter climate, has made it difficult for them to get to know and trust one another.

A somewhat different problem is present in regions with identifiable population centers that are separated by large expanses of land with limited rural settlements. For example, Tucson is the largest population center in the Southern Arizona region. There are large expanses of undeveloped land between Tucson and communities farther south (Nogales and Douglas) and southwest (Yuma). The Internet has made communications among the initiative partner organizations feasible; however, distance is still viewed as a challenge to collaboration and to creating a regional identity. Similarly, in Appalachian Ohio, the University of Ohio is located in a thriving college town and population center that is surrounded by rural, economically-depressed areas of Appalachia where residents do not have access to broadband. The extensive back-road driving that is necessary to meet with stakeholders in other areas of the region creates a barrier to collaboration, particularly during the winter months.

It should be noted that some of the individuals who mentioned their regions' geographic challenges believed that these efforts to increase collaboration in the region have the potential to help overcome the barriers of distance and to catalyze a sense of connectivity in their regions.

Political Boundaries

As shown in Table 5 and Table 6, each of the regions encompasses multiple political jurisdictions, ranging from three to 36 counties. At the low end of the scale, Southwest Connecticut covers a three-county area that includes Putnam and Westchester counties adjacent to New York City and Fairfield County in Connecticut. At the other end of the scale, Minnesota Triangle includes 36 counties.

Table 5: Number of States and Counties in Generation II Regions*

Name	Number of States	Number of Counties
Appalachian Ohio	1	29
Arkansas Delta	1	17
Puerto Rico	1	8
Delaware Valley	3	14
Northern California	1	16
Northern New Jersey	1	8
Rio South Texas	1	7
Southeast Michigan	1	9
Southeast Wisconsin	1	7
Southwest Indiana	1	9
Southwest Connecticut	2	3
Tennessee Valley	2	23
Wasatch Range Utah	1	8

*U.S. Department of Labor, "WIRED Regions" (2009), <http://www.doleta.gov/wired/regions/>.

Table 6: Number of States and Counties in Generation III Regions*

Name	Number of States	Number of Counties
Central Kentucky	2	26
Central-Eastern New Jersey	1	5
Greater Albuquerque	1	8
Minnesota Triangle	1	36
North Oregon	2	7
Pacific Mountain Washington	1	5
South Central & Southwest Wisconsin	1	11
South Central Idaho	1	8
South Central Kansas	1	10
Southeast Missouri	1	14
Southeast Mississippi	1	18
Southeast Virginia	1	24
Southern Arizona	1	4

*U.S. Department of Labor, "WIRED Regions" (2009), <http://www.doleta.gov/wired/regions/>.

A large number of counties may impede collaboration, but it is also important to understand the nature of the counties. For example, the agricultural producers across the 36 counties comprising Minnesota Triangle stand to benefit from the long-term success of the regional initiative. These producers can benefit directly from the expansion of the renewable energy sector in their areas and the growth and diversification of the regional economy through development of a cluster of renewable energy-related companies throughout the region. In this situation, the counties have a clear economic incentive for participating in a collaborative endeavor. Like the Renewable Energy Marketplace in Minnesota Triangle, South Central Kansas has one dominant industry cluster (aerospace manufacturing); however, most of its industrial facilities are concentrated in Sedgwick County, with additional facilities scattered in the surrounding counties. As a result, this region faces the challenge of convincing its outlying counties that a regional collaborative would not simply benefit Sedgwick County at their expense.

Political boundaries can take other forms as well. The Island of Puerto Rico is divided into 78 municipalities. Eight municipalities, each of which has its own mayor and local governance structure, were combined into a non-profit economic development consortium called INTECO through an executive order of the Governor of Puerto Rico in 2003. Working through the complexities of the relationships among these entities to form a regional identity and regional economic development strategy is part of this region's challenge.

Regions that encompass more than one state face additional challenges that are independent of the number of counties involved. For instance, Southwest Connecticut is one of several regions that involve more than one state. As shown in Tables 5 and 6, four of the 26 regions incorporate parts of two states, and one includes three states. On the west coast, the states of Oregon and Washington created a region that encompasses seven counties in northern Oregon and three counties in Washington, all of which comprise the labor shed for the North Oregon region. On the east coast, the Delaware Valley region, which encompasses 14 counties in the states of Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania and has a concentration of pharmaceutical and life sciences-related industries, is another example.

Working across state boundaries can be an inherent challenge, particularly in densely-populated regions. These challenges may be due to economic interests, particularly competition to attract new companies, generate tax revenue, and create new jobs in a given location. In the case of Southwest Connecticut, for example, the county-level economic development organizations that are part of the initiative have competed vigorously for years to attract Fortune 500 corporate headquarters to their respective communities.

As will be discussed later in this report, regions have dealt with these multijurisdictional challenges in several different ways.

Cultural Differences

Characteristics that can best be described as cultural exist within every region. A region's demographics, geography, economic bases, and other influences shape a region's culture over time. The extent to which a region represents a cohesive culture or crosses cultural boundaries can be a factor in its ability to pursue and attain its goals.

Primary among the cultural boundaries is the presence within at least seven regions of a rural-urban cultural divide. An urban area is often distinguished from surrounding rural areas by greater ethnic diversity, higher educational attainment, and lower unemployment. The central city is also often given more economic development attention, which causes some resentment among outlying communities. In the context of regional collaboration, concerns about equity arise. A history of this sort of discord can present a hurdle for all initiatives that seek to bring all of the areas together. For example, one region has over ten counties and is predominantly rural with the exception of two key cities. The core of the region (one of these cities) is heavily concentrated in state government and university employment, and contains most of the region's technology, professional services, and health care employers. In contrast, most rural counties in this area of the state are involved in farming and light manufacturing. While this region did have some collaboration prior to WIRED, the interaction remains tenuous and sensitive.

In another region with a similar cultural context, stakeholders in the area had been trying to link the urban center to the surrounding communities before this effort, to little effect. Their goal of improving the image of the region, in order to keep and attract more young workers and high-skill jobs, has not been entirely agreed upon. The city has dominated economic concerns for so long that the partners are having difficulty seeing commonalities across the region. These regions, and others with this dynamic, face a significant hurdle in order to build collaboration for joint activity.

Cultural boundaries are a factor for many of the regions. Finding unifiers across areas with sometimes very distinct interests and values can be a challenge, but some of the regions did manage to hold a common regional identity prior to this project, based in part on a shared culture.

Commuting Patterns

The prevailing commuting patterns of workers in targeted industries can be instrumental in convincing stakeholders that their interests are regional in nature. Indeed, worker mobility was

mentioned by some regions as a factor that contributed to their regional identities, although this defining characteristic for regions was mentioned infrequently. Only one Generation II region stated explicitly in its proposal that commuting patterns were a key part of its regional definition. For Generation III regions, it was mentioned more often, by 7 of the 13. These numbers are lower than might be expected, and it may be that regions did not include existing commuting linkages in their proposals. However, the absence of this may also indicate that many of the regions did not perceive these patterns as key to their regional identities.

For those who did mention commuting sheds, such as North Oregon —where a high level of worker migration existed within a region across county and state borders in both directions— partners readily recognized the importance of their shared workforce. As one interviewee noted during the site visit, "It is not uncommon to have to commute to earn a living." An acknowledgement of this common resource previously helped to motivate the cooperation of this region's partners on workforce and economic development issues. The overlap of workplace and living place, therefore, appears to have been an important, but less-acknowledged, factor for most of the regions as they began their initiatives.

Regional Partners

One of the hallmarks of this Initiative is the focus on engaging stakeholders from various organizations that have a stake in the transformation of their region, its economy, and its workforce. Partners come from the public and private sectors and from philanthropic organizations. They may be representatives of state and local government, education and training providers, workforce development agencies, companies that are currently doing business in the region, economic development organizations seeking to attract new companies to the area and to retain existing businesses, or a variety of other interested groups. Because of the diverse goals, needs, opinions, and history of prior interaction among these partners, establishing a set of common goals and levering their combined resources can be a challenging undertaking. However, this diversity is an important dimension of each region's context for collaboration.

WIBs/One-Stop Centers

One purpose of the Initiative is to transform the talent development systems in regions, and an important institution within those systems is the local workforce investment board and One-Stop system. The local WIBs and One-Stops within the region, then, are important contextual elements that influence the regional collaboration. Virtually all of the regions have at least some involvement with local WIBs and One-Stops.

In Generation II, involvement by the workforce system as a key partner in the collaboration was required and active engagement was encouraged, whereas in Generation III, local WIBs were required to play a lead role in each region. In three instances, the regional initiative was located in a state that had a single statewide WIB (Idaho, Indiana, and Utah). The remaining regions had at least one local WIB within the geographic area, and in many cases, more than one, although a region's initiative did not necessarily involve all existing WIBs in an active role. Table 7 shows the number of WIBs located within the regions and the extent to which they were active partners in the initiative.

Table 7: Local WIB Involvement

State	Number of WIBs in Region	Number of Active WIBs in Region
Ohio	9	2
Arkansas	5	3
Puerto Rico	3	2
New Jersey, Central	4	4
New Jersey, Northern	8	8
Delaware	16	13
Texas	3	3
Michigan	7	1
California	4	3
Wisconsin, Southeast	3	3
Wisconsin, SC/SW	2	2
Indiana	-	-
Connecticut	3	3
New Mexico	4	0
Kentucky	2	2
Tennessee	5	3
Utah	-	-
Minnesota	5	5
Oregon	6	5
Washington	1	1
Idaho	-	-
Kansas	2	2
Missouri	2	1
Mississippi	1	1
Virginia	3	3
Arizona	4	4

* Data for this table came from available implementation plans and site visit interviews.
** The type and intensity of activity varied considerably among the local WIBs.

As shown in Table 7, at the time of the site visit, 13 regions had the full participation of all local WIBs located within the region. Having more than one local WIB in a region may present challenges if these entities had little or no prior history of collaboration. In at least one region, however, prior collaboration was the norm, not the exception. The Southeastern Wisconsin region formed a regional collaboration of local WIBs under a grant from the State of Wisconsin in 2003.

The local WIBs and One-Stops are not always active partners in this Initiative. For example, in instances where the targeted industry and occupations require relatively high skills (e.g., biosciences, computer animation, engineering), some evidence suggests that there is less involvement of the local WIBs/One-Stops. Some individuals who were interviewed opined that the target populations were vastly different from the lower-skilled workers typically served by the local One-Stop. In two regions (Utah and New Mexico), the unemployment rates are so low

that the One-Stops were simply not in a position to provide any referrals or trainees for the targeted high-skill, high-demand occupations.

There is also a geographic mismatch between some of the regions and the local WIB/One-Stop service areas. For example, one region encompasses 17 counties and overlaps with five local WIBs, yet only one of the five local WIBs is totally within the region. In this and other regions with a similar mismatch, the local WIBs that are only partially included have sometimes opted to align themselves with different regional economic development areas instead.

In summary, the evaluation of activities funded and supported under the Initiative must recognize that the regions overlay a system of local WIBs and One-Stops that are often central to the workforce training system but not necessarily aligned with the region.

Business and Industry

Just as the regions have been established within a grid of local WIB service areas, they are also located in a local economy comprised of extant business and industry. Employers operate in a diverse and dynamic environment. Because of the demands on their time, employers are not always eager to get involved in outside activities. Previously, the options for employer participation in workforce and economic development across the regions tended to be limited to membership in local chambers of commerce, membership in sector-focused employer associations, involvement in local and/or state WIBs, and participation in employer advisory groups associated with technical education programs offered by local community colleges.

The majority of individual companies that are directly involved in these regional efforts are represented by company executives who either had an established reputation for being involved in workforce and economic development issues at the state and/or local level, or have had limited previous involvement in workforce development initiatives and little or no prior involvement with regional collaboratives. For example, in South Central Idaho, one of the leading company executives in the region had a longstanding reputation for being a major contributor to the regional economy, as well as being a member of the state WIB. In contrast, in South Central Kansas, many of the involved individuals came from smaller aircraft manufacturing companies that were encountering workforce shortages, which served as their impetus for engagement.

In the more expansive regions (see Tables 3 and 4), geography and industry characteristics previously led employers to narrow their focus and work with individual community colleges to obtain the requisite training. For example, in Southeastern Mississippi, where manufacturing companies are sprinkled throughout the rural, seven-county region, employers tended to have relationships with one of the three community colleges serving the region and, in some cases, did business with only a single trainer that met the company's skill standards. Geography also presented a challenge for the wind-turbine companies involved in the Minnesota Triangle. Because the turbines are dispersed across the entire region (25,131 square miles), employers have had limited connections to education and training providers and no previous experience collaborating with other companies in their sector.

Employers also have concerns that sharing information might jeopardize their company's competitive position. For instance, in Puerto Rico, it was reported that many large and small

pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers are in competition—competing for contracts, for the right to get patents for innovative techniques, and for the engineering graduates of local community college and university programs. Similar concerns are shared by employers in other industry sectors.

Overall, the employers that were recruited to participate in regional initiatives came with a variety of prior experiences with and assumptions about their role and the opportunities and limitations of collaboration. For employers that sought to be involved in earlier workforce development discussions, opportunities were available, although most of those opportunities were at a much smaller scale than was contemplated for this Initiative.

Education

Educational institutions at all levels are part of creating the workforce pipeline. Their role in any workforce development efforts prior to this Initiative and their relationships with other partners are key to understanding how a region might function in working together to transform the economic and workforce systems within its boundaries.

Community Colleges

In most regions, community colleges have long been involved in workforce development activities, often in collaboration with one or more of their future partners. However, the degree to which community colleges cooperated with each other varied. In at least three regions, community college collaboratives were present before this; these focused on sharing curricula and addressing workforce education needs without redundancies. For example, in the Arkansas Delta region, four community colleges came together to provide training for automotive and advanced manufacturing companies under a federal grant. In the Southeast Michigan region, nine community colleges had already formed a consortium to share best practices. In other regions, community colleges had not worked together regularly. A key reason for this is the adherence to separate service areas (defined by geographic boundaries). In the past this had resulted in unnecessary duplication of services. In other instances, it led to competitive behavior when determining which college would serve the needs of a company with a home office in one college service area and multiple operating sites spread across the region.

Aside from relationships with one another, community colleges traditionally have some interaction with industry. The colleges build employer input into their systems through sector-based advisory boards that help to inform their programs. However, the relationships between community colleges and their business communities are sometimes strained. Some business representatives interviewed during the site visits mentioned past difficulties in working with the community colleges on workforce development needs because customized training and curriculum changes could not move through the community college's process quickly enough to suit employers.

Universities

As a general rule, universities, unlike community colleges, have not historically been closely involved with workforce development, preferring to view themselves as providing liberal academic training. In addition, the universities have not tended to have strong relationships with two-year colleges or with their four-year college peers. As one university representative noted,

"Two-year schools are working more closely together and toward a central purpose. They have an academic side and a workforce development side."

In a few regions, prior engagement by universities in workforce issues existed. In one of these cases, collaboration is known to have been motivated by the chancellor's interest in addressing adult-learner needs and building the economy of the region. In recent years, universities have taken a growing role in promoting technology transfer, as demonstrated by an industry-university consortium, the focus of which has been on commercialization of research.

Within universities, silos also frequently exist. According to those interviewed during the site visits, the communication channels within a university tend to be narrow and have prevented departments from sharing information and building collaborative opportunities. In the case of one university that has become a partner in this initiative, for example, two representatives noted that they each had recognized the need for students in the sciences and those in the business school to be linked, but it was several years before they were able to make this happen within the university.

K-12 Schools[38]

As is the case with most universities, K-12 schools tend not to be involved in workforce development discussions. The accountability focus of No Child Left Behind has also drawn schools more deeply into academic concerns. Few would argue that K-12 students are irrelevant to the workforce pipeline, but there remains little emphasis on employability and career development within the schools.

Relationships between K-12 and business are rare. As reported during the site visits, it is common for business to view education negatively, and business is not engaged in solutions to pipeline concerns at this level. However, the lack of familiarity and understanding apparently go in both directions. According to one insightful interviewee, "Business and education lack a common language to speak about workforce development." An education representative from another region seemed to retort, "I've heard it said that educators live in a bubble, but industry has bubbles too." In yet another region, one education representative noted that "[Many in the region's school districts had] not even spoken to the business community before."

National policy makers and educational leaders have been concerned for a number of years about student preparation in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) areas. Some programs—Project Lead the Way, for example—existed in a few regions beforehand and reflect concerns at the K-12 level about STEM education and career skills.[39] Career and technical education (CTE) centers, connected to school districts, have been another opportunity for interaction with postsecondary institutions and business. South Central Kansas was particularly active in this regard. Thanks in large part to its significant aerospace-manufacturing presence, the region boasts mutually beneficial connections between K-12, technical schools, and industry.

[38] Due to the H-1B Visa funding, only students aged 16 and over can be served under the grant. With this in mind, K-12 references here and throughout this report are really focused on high schools with grades 10-12, the district level, or the intermediate school level.

[39] Project Lead the Way helps to inform high school students about engineering through hands-on projects and involves K-12 with the universities.

For example, the Wichita Area Technical College, which offers programs in aviation, manufacturing, and the skilled trades that directly qualify students for employment at companies in the region, allowed promising high school students to register for its courses. Additionally, the Wichita State University College of Engineering offered Project Lead the Way training for middle and high school teachers. The Wasatch Range of Utah had also done considerable outreach to middle schools, emphasizing the need to build the pipeline of workers. Overall, however, previous collaboration involving K-12 and other stakeholders seems to have been minimal across the regions.

Economic Development

Economic development agencies typically operate within discrete geographic service areas which, by their very nature, often work at cross purposes with agencies serving a similar function for nearby jurisdictions. In seven Generation II regions and six Generation III regions, local economic development agencies had rarely engaged in collaboration or data sharing and, in some cases, had worked in vigorous competition with one another. For example, in Southwest Connecticut, economic development organizations had competed vigorously for years with agencies in suburban New York to attract Fortune 500 corporate headquarters to their respective communities. South Central Kansas also exemplified this tendency. Throughout the region, counties and cities had invested in separate economic development programs, all of which were competing with one another to attract investment. In this region, the Initiative was perceived to be facilitating a transition toward a more cooperative approach to economic development in which all parties—urban, suburban, and rural—recognize the inefficiency of parochial economic development models and the benefits of communication, collaboration, and data-sharing among economic development agencies.

Historically, in marketing their areas, economic developers often have had close relationships with industry partners. However, economic development agencies have not typically had much interaction with workforce development agencies. In one region, stakeholders reported that economic developers previously focused their efforts on land development, sites, buildings, and tax subsidies. Since then, the initiative has fostered a shift in perspective that now sees workforce development as integral to regional economic development. In another region from Generation III, this historic disconnect manifested itself when economic development agencies felt left out of the initiative's leadership process before it was made clear that WIB leadership was a requirement for that round of grants. Even after this requirement was understood, some stakeholders felt that education and economic development should have been given key leadership roles in the region as well.

In six Generation II regions and seven Generation III regions, economic development agencies had previously formed multicounty partnerships with neighboring economic development organizations in the pursuit of a common agenda. In Rio South Texas, the McAllen Economic Development Corporation—itself representing five economic development agencies—joined forces with other economic development stakeholders in the region to form the Rio South Texas Economic Council to address common needs, especially the attraction of a new automotive assembly plant to the region. In Central Kentucky, significant collaborative work had occurred for years between Jefferson County and southern Indiana; however, the structure of Kentucky's

economic development process, organized into Area Development Boards, had explicitly favored individual counties over regional interests.

In summary, while economic development agencies in one-half of the regions previously had demonstrated parochial behavior, the other half had transcended local agendas to participate in regional collaborative efforts. Even among regions whose economic development agencies demonstrated a history of explicit competition, stakeholders indicated that progress was being made toward a regional mindset as a result of the initiative. This indicates that regionalism may be taking hold more readily among economic development agencies, perhaps as a result of growing awareness regarding the need for local economic developers to band together with their neighbors to foster competitiveness in a global economy.

Government

State

In at least seven Generation II regions and eight Generation III regions, state government previously played an important role in setting an agenda for regionalism through investments and initiatives to identify target industry sectors, foster collaboration, and stimulate workforce and economic development.

In several cases, the state governor or lieutenant governor was a driving force for this change. In Central New Jersey, for example, Governor Jon Corzine's economic development strategy became a rallying point behind which the state's education and workforce development agencies developed the Life Sciences Innovation Partnerships Institute (IPI), a regional life science consortium. IPI was initiated with state funding and, ultimately, provided the model for what would become Bio-1. In Greater Albuquerque, the state lieutenant governor joined industry and education entities on an executive advisory board that would form the basis of the region's leadership under the Initiative. In the Minnesota Triangle, state-level efforts to stimulate the growth of the renewable energy sector date back at least eight years to a previous administration. During this time, the sector has flourished in the region, which, according to interviewees, contains 85 percent of the renewable energy projects in the state. Minnesota's Governor Tim Pawlenty is also a strong renewable energy advocate. In 2006, Governor Pawlenty unveiled his Next Generation Energy Initiative, a set of specific goals for increasing renewable energy production, fostering energy conservation, and reducing carbon emissions.[40]

Another state-led effort helped to lay the groundwork for two regions in southern Wisconsin. Growing Regional Opportunities in Wisconsin (GROW) was launched in 2003 by the Governor of Wisconsin. It was designed to encourage the development of regional partnerships that would work together to foster education, workforce, and economic development. In the same state, the Regional Workforce Alliance—a collaboration of WIBs in the Milwaukee region—received a grant from the state in 2006 to create a regional workforce development plan, assemble a regional business services team, and analyze sources of public, private, and philanthropic funding for workforce development.

[40] Office of the Governor, "Governor Pawlenty Introduces Next Generation Energy Initiative," December 12, 2006. < http://www.governor.state.mn.us/mediacenter/pressreleases/2006/december/PROD007863.html>

Thus, several state government agencies had already worked to set agendas for regionalism. While term limits and changing administrations make it difficult to predict the future support of regionalism among these states, those which have had a head start in fostering collaboration may have an advantage over those whose state governments were less engaged in regionalism.

Local

In most cases, the site visits have indicated modest previous participation by local government agencies in regional efforts. At least five regions demonstrated some evidence of substantive participation by local government officials in a regional collaborative effort. In Southwest Indiana, the "Vision 2000" economic development effort brought city and county government officials together with private industry to set a common course for economic development in a four-county area that is located within the borders of the current region. In Southeastern Wisconsin, local elected officials have a critical role in the board of the regional Milwaukee 7 organization. The board consists of the seven highest elected officials in the region, along with 14 representatives of area business and industry. In Central-Eastern Puerto Rico, the mayor of Caguas was identified by several stakeholders as a powerful unifying force for his region prior to involvement in this initiative.

Regardless of the previous level of regional collaboration among local government agencies, several regions emphasized during the site visits that connecting with local elected officials was an important goal, particularly with regard to the sustainability of their efforts. For example, South Central Kansas has worked hard to build trust and ownership among officials in the communities surrounding Sedgwick County. This effort is especially important given the region's history of competition for industrial investment, as noted in the Economic Development section above.

In summary, the concept of multijurisdictional collaboration seems relatively new to most local government agencies in the regions. It appears that, in most cases, no forum existed for them to come together prior to WIRED. As noted in the Political Boundaries section above, the limited history of collaboration among local communities may denote the challenge of transcending differences in local regulations and approval processes in pursuit of a common agenda. It may also reflect the difficulty of adopting a regional perspective at a time when local communities are competing with neighboring cities and counties for jobs and investment. The lack of participation by local officials in earlier initiatives is not necessarily an indicator of their participation now or in the near future. While it is likely that regions with a history of local cooperation and buy-in will have a head start, even local communities without a history of regionalism may step up to embrace common agendas. Regardless of their histories, regions that work with local officials to sell the benefits of regionalism, build strong communications networks, and cultivate trust are likely to be the most successful at winning long-term local involvement.

Other Partners

Aside from WIBs, business and industry, educational institutions, and economic development agencies, some regions have taken advantage of additional institutions located in their areas. Many regions had major governmental or nonprofit research facilities. For example, the Greater

Albuquerque region houses Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia Laboratories. Huntsville, Alabama, home of the Tennessee Valley region, houses the Hudson Alpha Institute for Biosciences. Other regions housed foundations that invested in the region. An example is the Southeast Michigan region, home to the Hudson Weber Foundation, which invests heavily in workforce development initiatives in that area.

These experiences with collaboration facilitated early communication among partners and probably helped the regions to move forward with conceiving and implementing their plans.

Communications

Current data sources make it difficult to assess what communication methods were most prevalent among these regions before the initiative got underway; however, comments from site visit interviewees indicate that formal and informal communication methods operated together in varying combinations to set the stage for collaboration. For example, stakeholders in Rio South Texas reported having benefited from a blend of previous formal organizational partnerships and informal collaboration. They attributed the strength of these intertwining relationships to the fact that the regions had once had so few resources that existing organizations had to partner and collaborate to simply survive. In South Central Idaho, much of the business that occurs in the region is done through informal networks that have been in place for years. When there is a need, the network can be tapped to find a solution, access a service, etc. Stakeholders attribute the recent economic success of the area to these networks and believe that these relationships are getting stronger because of this collaborative effort. On the other hand, this region was lacking in formal communication channels among the workforce development, education, and economic development communities. There was a great need for these groups to get together around workforce needs, but no forum existed to discuss those needs. According to stakeholders, this initiative with the new partnerships is now helping to provide that forum.

On the other hand, even regions with few geographic barriers and greater technology access reported communication gaps prior to WIRED. In these regions, interviewees reported that their communications—both formal and informal—tended to occur within well-defined silos. For example, Northern New Jersey, one of the most densely populated regions, reported that its WIBs and One-Stops had rarely communicated with one another prior to the initiative. This was also the case in Delaware Valley, whose WIBs had never communicated or collaborated across state lines before and are now meeting regularly. This initiative was explicitly credited with facilitating this communication.

In summary, while some of the regions previously had laid a more solid communications groundwork than others, few appear to have taken a coordinated approach to communication. Given that many regions have either retained communications consultants or added communications specialists to their staff, this approach should result in stronger and more effective communication.

Summary Observations

- The diversity of the regions in terms of population, number of counties, and other similar geographic characteristics indicates that the regions will likely face challenges with pulling together partners for collaboration. The disconnections between the urban centers and the outlying areas were some of the most serious barriers to past collaboration.

- The geography of a region can effect how easy or difficult it is to hold face-to-face meetings among key stakeholders, the attitudes that stakeholders in rural and urban settings have about competition with one another, the manner in which organizations and individuals handle ongoing communication, and the ease of access to institutions of higher education.

- In most cases the regions had not reached across geographic boundaries to the extent expected or anticipated. As also shown by the finding that only seven regions had extensive previous collaboration, the regions were required to put energy into building their connections early on.

- The partner groups that most often previously interacted were the community colleges, industry, and WIBs. However, there were also some examples of collaboration within groups, such as higher education, economic development, and K-12. As a result, bridging across the many partner groups envisioned for real regional collaboration presents a challenge for the regions in nearly every case.

- In 15 of the 26 regions, state governments had played a central role in establishing regionalism as a priority. This encouragement for regional efforts is likely to have been a valuable asset for the regions with state support. At the local level, such investment in regionalism was rare, and may help to explain the minor role local government continues to play.

B. Governance and Decision-Making

Introduction

This section addresses key ingredients for the success of any broad-based initiative: how the initiative is led and how decisions are made. To be effective, collaborative efforts require leadership from key individuals, an appropriate governance structure, and a decision-making process that is accepted by key stakeholders.

The Theory of Change guiding this evaluation states that:

> *The governance/decision-making structure of a region-wide initiative comprises the agencies that house the grant, the location within the agencies, staffing structures and experience, partner roles and responsibilities, and mechanisms that are established for flexible, but sound, decision-making.*

Successful regional collaboration requires leaders who are attuned to the interests and needs of the initiative's stakeholders. It is not uncommon in a large-scale initiative for competing views to result in tension between various approaches to governance and decision-making processes. Some leaders push for simple, expeditious processes that may involve only a few stakeholders, and some prefer fully-inclusive, but sometimes slower, processes. The leaders of an initiative must find a balance that is responsive to stakeholders and results in progress for the initiative.

As described in the prior section, many of the regions are building on prior collaborative efforts. These initiatives are involving new stakeholders and addressing new transformative issues. As a result, the regions are juggling a variety of perspectives and priorities represented among the business, workforce, education, and economic development partners who come to the table. They also, in some cases, come from different cultures with different experiences about initiative organization and leadership. Finding common ground among these interests is one of the central challenges facing the regions, particularly given the scope of the new partnerships and goals.

Analysis

Several key areas of the regions' governance and decision-making structures were examined to identify patterns and lessons on structural configurations, leadership, regional vision, the integrity of the decision-making processes, governance supports, and changes that were made to the structures or approaches as the regions began their implementation stage. What follows is the summary of the analysis of the data for each of these. The data sources for this section include the regions' approved implementation plans and data and observations from the 26 site visits.[41]

[41] As of February 2009, 23 of the regions' implementation plans had been approved. Of these 23 implementation plans, the final two became available too late to be incorporated into all of the analysis conducted for this interim report.

Governance Structures

For the 26 regions, an organizational chart is available within the regions' implementation plans. For those few that did not have approved plans in time for this report, one was created by the site visit team to reflect the current configurations of responsibility levels and linkages. In reviewing the charts, commonalities were found in the basic structures devised, the numbers of members of groups at different levels, and the responsibilities of the levels. A typical organizational chart included the fiscal and administrative agents (and sometimes a state office) at the top of the hierarchy, followed by a leadership group, an executive group, and multiple implementation groups.[42] All regions also had one or more staff. The organizational chart, below, is from the Tennessee Valley region (Generation II) and shows this standard organization.[43]

The sizes of the various groups in these structures varied.[44] The leadership groups ranged in size from 15 to 70 partner representatives. The executive groups ranged in size from five to 20. The number of members of either of these groups seemed, to the site visit teams, to depend on the number of regional partners engaged. Some regions were also conscious of including representation from all counties in the region, resulting in larger groups.

The staff committed by partner organizations or hired specifically to carry out the plans developed under the initiative also ranged in number; some regions only had one central staff person, while others had six or more. Typically, there is a project director and a project manager, with some administrative support.

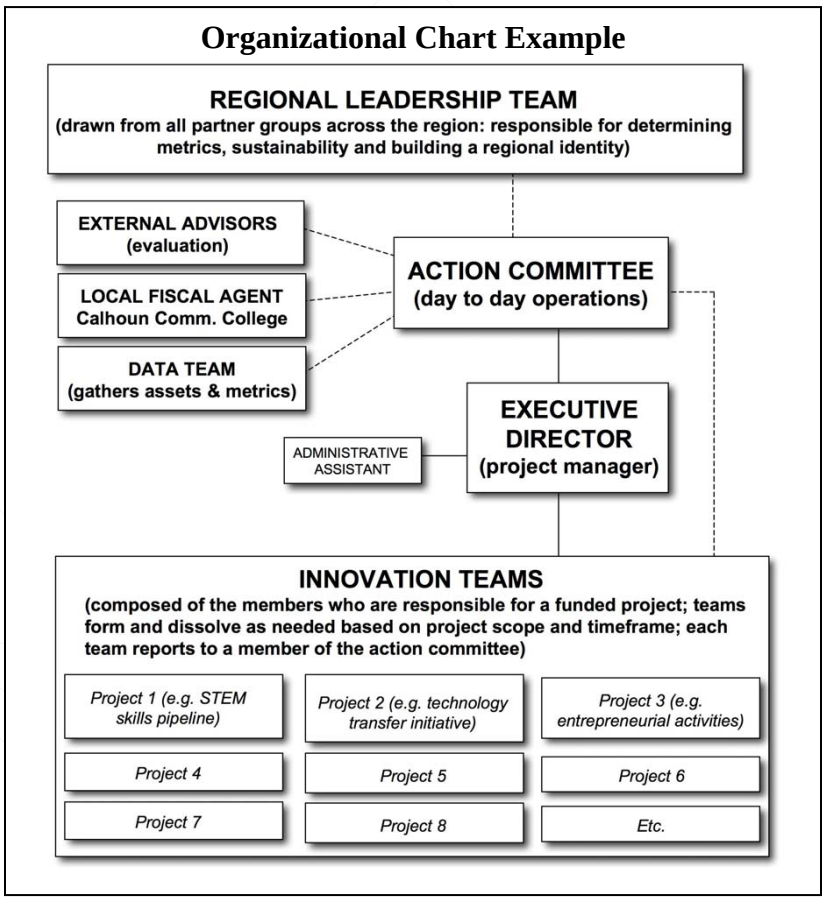

Figure 2
Source: Tennessee Valley region

[42] States were required to serve as the official grantees. The administrative and fiscal agents are sometimes a state office, but can also be one of many types of organizations (workforce investment board, college, etc.), depending on the leadership of the region.

[43] The chart shows that external advisors are acting as evaluators. The region's original plan was to have external evaluators specific to the region. At the time of the site visit, this aspect of the chart had not been implemented, not did it appear that it would be.

[44] The names for these groups also varied. There was considerable overlap of titling across regions, but sometimes the same name is used for different types of groups. For instance, the "steering committee" in one region might be the leadership group, but in another region, the executive group is called the "steering committee."

The lines of authority in the organizational charts indicate that the project staff report to the leadership group or directly to the fiscal/administrative agent. The staff members across the regions are expected to lead directly or indirectly by coordinating efforts and enacting day-to-day oversight. The implementation groups work somewhat independently usually, but are overseen by a higher level, as represented in the figure above. In general, most decisions are made in a collaborative fashion by either the executive or leadership groups, with approval of decisions vetted with the other. The project staff were also found to make decisions, but to varying degrees in terms of scale or impact. More on the leadership of the regions follows later in this section.

On paper, these structures appear static and linear, but in reality, the fact that they are populated by individuals means that there is more complexity inherent in them, particularly given the collaborative, regional requirement of this initiative. As found in a study of Collaborative Regional Initiatives (CRIs) in California, the structures must pull together many stakeholders in a way that is sensitive to the regional context, and the "relative degree of success depended in considerable part on the fit between their overall strategy and agenda, the region's needs, and its political culture."[45] Thus, the similarities among the regions' organizational charts are misleading. In practice, the leadership approach, individual actions, decision-making process, and supports of a given region occur in ways that are not captured on these charts.

Leadership

Because leadership forms such an essential part of how a region—or any other group—will function, it was examined closely for this report. Also, because of the limitations of the information in the organizational charts, the site visit data was used to construct another way of looking at the leadership of the regions. The illustration below aims to represent the multiple rings of possible leaders in a region, or its "circles of leadership." [46] The core leaders, located at the center of the region's work, are those individuals who are the intellectual centers of and energy sources for the initiative, and whose opinions carry the most weight. The next ring out are those individuals who participate actively in the region's leadership, but are not the final decision-makers. In the third ring are those individuals who play leadership roles in the region by spear-heading a particular element of its plan,

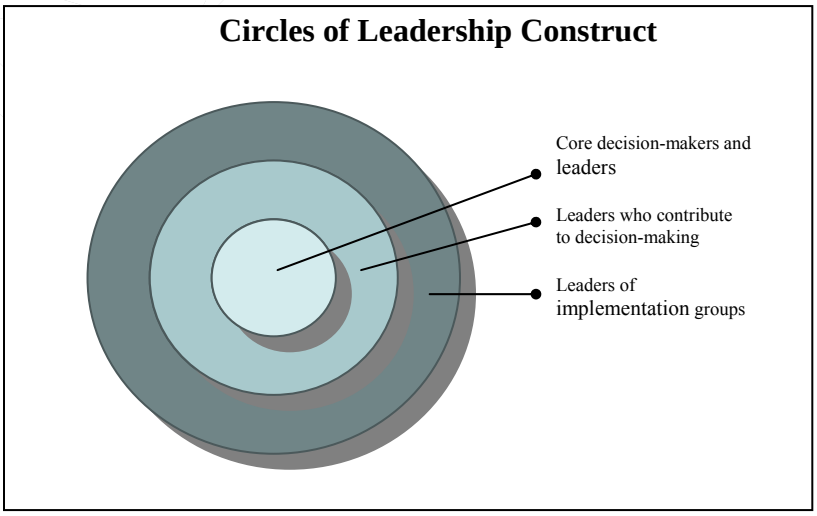

Figure 3

[45] Judith Innes and Jane Rongerude, "Colla
Governance Gap," Institute of Urban and Regional Development, University of California, Berkley, (November 2005): iv.

[46] The construct in Figure 3 presents a common leadership structure that was observed during the site visits and documented in site visit summary notes.

such as a sector-based project. Oftentimes, these leaders are the chairs of the implementation groups. Beyond these rings lay the members of the regions' implementation groups who help to carry out focused activities and other interested (but peripherally involved) partners. Some of the regions had distribution lists that included hundreds of individuals, and the majority of these would fall outside these circles.

The ways in which the leadership in the regions operated within and across these circles varied. In a few regions, the decision-making was concentrated with one or two core leaders, and thus the leadership rested heavily in the central circle. For instance, one region's leadership group chairperson was the main decision-maker, and this centralized control was found to exclude others' ideas about how the region should function and resulted in some discontentment with the progress being made. In another region, two individuals had a clear vision about what they wanted to accomplish, and they had the organizational clout to achieve it. They wanted to avoid the political wrangling and group indecisiveness that they foresaw with collaboration.

In another region, a small *ad hoc* group, composed of four-to-five individuals from a contractor and partner organizations, with the support of a project manager, ended up carrying out most of the duties and decision-making required. Here, the leadership was slightly more collaborative, but still was controlled by a small number of partners and staff.

In other regions, the core leaders (staff and others) played more of a facilitator role and decisions tended to be made by consensus of the leadership group which, as stated above, might include dozens of members. In these cases, the core leaders saw their key contributions as keeping the initiative organized, bringing information to the leadership group, and administering the decisions of the group. By helping to guide the leadership group in decision-making, they were the drivers of implementation without directing it. This approach seems more in keeping with a collaborative structure.

A common governance feature of many of the regions is sector-based or issue-oriented groups focused on the regions' goals (third circle of leadership). In some cases, these groups are formed to operate largely independently of one another, while still reporting back to the overarching leadership group that handles the administrative and "big picture" issues. In other regions, the task teams are more interdependent. Depending on how these groups operate in practice, they can either provide an efficient means for conducting the work while allowing for enhanced stakeholder participation, or they can recreate silos present within the region and diminish the collaborative nature of the region. For example, one region had established two larger task teams divided by "supply-side" and "demand-side" partners. Soon, the leadership of the region found that this approach resulted in ineffective communication among partners; so the region decided to restructure the teams by project (issue-focus), which allowed partners to communicate more readily.

In reviewing the structures created by the regions, the site visit teams also found that by having some membership overlap across the groups many of them had strategically embedded opportunities for leaders in the various circles to interact and share in the decision-making process. As determined by the site visit teams, eight of the regions had such "interlocking

leadership" linkages throughout their structures.[47] An additional 17 had at least some interlocking leadership in their structures; one region could not be classified. Figure 4 illustrates the general concept of this interlocking leadership strategy.

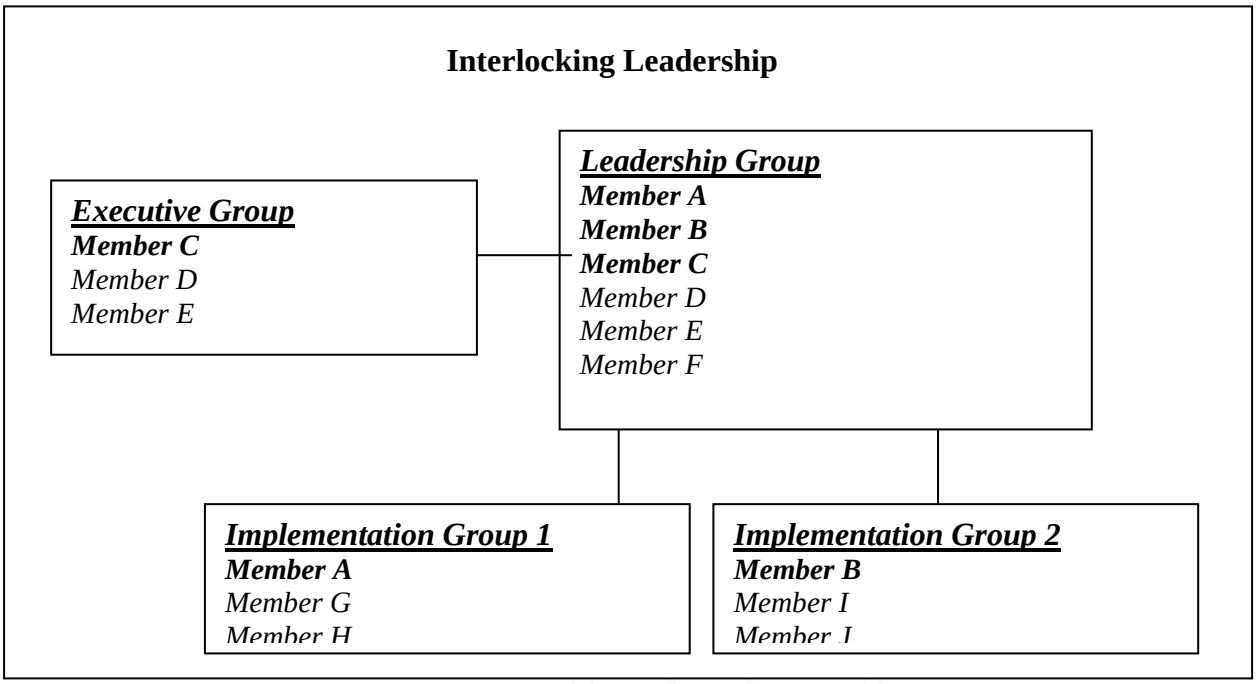

Figure 4

Southwest Indiana is one of the regions with full interlocking leadership. Several members of its leadership group also served on the regional workforce board (Indiana's version of a workforce investment board), and each of the region's workgroups were led by members of the leadership group. The chairpersons of the leadership group also worked closely with the region's key staff.

The advantage of such interlocking leadership is the ability to communicate through individuals across groups, or levels of the structure. This includes communication about the regional vision, approaches to decision-making, and the decisions that are ultimately made at the various levels. In the case of Southwest Indiana, for example, the workgroup chairs could bring issues back to the leadership group and the leadership group could hear first-hand accounts of the work underway in the workgroups. The potential danger of interlocking leadership is that the membership may overlap too much, excluding others from participating in the decision-making process at their appropriate level. Some regions with interlocking leadership experience this issue. However, overall, it seems that this strategy lends itself to collaborative work, as also discussed in Ferren and Stanton.[48]

[47] Terminology drawn from: John B. Miner, *Organizational Behavior 1: Essential Theories of Motivation and Leadership*. M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2005.
[48] Ann S. Ferren and Wilbur W. Stanton, *Leadership Through Collaboration*. (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 30.

Vision

A common vision is another key element of the governance of a region. Through the proposal process, a general vision for what a region wanted to accomplish, and why, was constructed. As the regions came together after receiving grant funds, they then had to create an implementation plan, which required further consideration of their goals and desired outcomes. As noted by one interviewee from the Southeastern Wisconsin region, the initiative has helped the regional partners to construct an "encompassing vision" that leads them to "think of other communities [in the region] when you do your work." The regions went about gathering input to their visions differently, with some relying on only a few individuals and others going through a multistep input-gathering process. By the time of the site visits in the summer-to-fall of 2008, the regions had, in one way or another, defined their visions. However, the site visit teams determined through the interviews and the implementation plans that some stakeholders had greater common understanding of their region's vision than others, even within the same region. This is of concern since the lack of a common vision could result in difficulties as a region attempts to reach its goals; if not everyone involved sees the same end goals, the activities conducted may not be focused in a coordinated direction. The site visit teams considered whether a common vision existed in each of the regions and to what extent. Of the 26 regions, ten were found to have a common vision across their partners, 12 shared a common vision across most of the partners, and three were found to be lacking a clear common vision. One of the region's vision understanding could not be categorized. Thus, the majority of the regions have at least a good start on buy-in to a common vision.

When the extent of interlocking leadership and common vision were cross-referenced, interesting findings emerged. Table 8, below, displays these results.

Table 8: Presence of Common Vision and Interlocking Leadership, 2008*

	Interlocking leadership across levels	Some interlocking leadership	Extent of interlocking leadership unclear	Total
Common vision across partners	6	3	1**	10
Common vision across most partners	2	10	0	12
Vision not shared	0	3	0	3
Extent of shared vision unclear	0	1	0	1
Total	8	17	1	26

* Data for this table came from available implementation plans and site visit interviews.
**This region was experiencing extensive changes at the time of the site visits, and so, the site visit team did not feel comfortable categorizing them at this point.

Most significantly, six of the eight regions with full interlocking leadership also had a common vision shared among the staff and the partners. The other two such regions had common visions across most partners. For the ten regions with a common vision across partners, six had full interlocking leadership and three had some interlocking leadership. This suggests that the two

are correlated. This finding also suggests that there is an important emerging lesson here for the regions: where interlocking leadership can be established, the vision for the region appears to be shared more readily across the leaders, staff, and eventually by those on the periphery of the governance structure. With a common vision and shared leadership, the regions may be positioned to affect change more successfully.

Of course, collaborative efforts are complicated endeavors, and as such, there is more to successful governance than just a common vision and shared leadership. The integrity of the decision-making process is also key.

Integrity of the Decision-Making Process

The elements examined here that contribute to the integrity of this process are transparency, inclusiveness, and openness. In this context, transparency means that "the rules, priorities, and values on which you based the decision-making process are readily transparent to others."[49] Inclusiveness refers to the involvement of stakeholders in the process. As Thomas states, "The additional time spent decision-making can save time later . . . The various actors, by virtue of being involved in the early decisions, are more likely to support and even expedite implementation."[50] Openness is another part of a successful decision-making process and here means "confronting and dealing jointly with issues."[51] Below, each of these elements is explored in the context of findings from the visits to the regions.

Decision-Making Transparency

Having a clear, organized approach for making decisions, changes to work plans, and other steps requiring strategic decisions that are communicated and understood by others with the project is important to regional collaboration. The process of deciding on and making subgrants highlights this issue well as some regions had more transparency in their subgranting decisions than others. In the Central New Jersey region, decisions about subgrant funding were made in a pre-planned, structured process. In this region, the call for proposals was issued to a comprehensive list of organizations, and an application form and review plan was created in advance. During the review stage, the emphasis was on those projects that supported the first-priority goals of the region, reinforcing the region's vision. Here, clear communication across the governance structure helped to support understanding.

In at least two regions, such decisions were not clear to many of the stakeholders in terms of process and the reasons for the decisions. In one of these regions, it seemed that decisions were made by individual leaders early on; the region created a review subcommittee of its main leadership group only soon before the site visit. This grantmaking process was called "one of the mysteries" by a site visit interviewee in this region, demonstrating the confusion still remaining after the change was made; others in the region who felt left out of the process conveyed their resentment of the process during the interviews. In another region, the amount of WIRED funds and the rollout plan for the funds were not clear to some stakeholders interviewed. In this case, this lack of clarity led to expectations which were out-of-line with reality.

[49] J. Edward Russo and Paul J.H. Schoemaker, *Winning Decisions*. (New York: Random House, 2002), Pg. 153.
[50] John Clayton Thomas, *Public Participation in Public Decisions* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995), Pg. 32.
[51] Graeme Salaman, ed., *Decision Making for Business*. (London: SAGE Publications, 2002), Pg. 206.

Overall, however, the regions seemed to have accomplished transparency in their decision-making. As each region continues to move forward, key decisions about WIRED projects, operations, and other major topics are yet to be made; early observations suggest that transparency may be essential to collaborative governance.

Decision-Making Inclusiveness

The governance of a large, complex regional initiative involves many individuals, and finding the right roles for each of them to play can be challenging. If every decision must be vetted with and approved by every stakeholder, few decisions can be made. On the other hand, if every decision is made by only a small core of leaders, the rest of the stakeholders feel alienated. Based on the site visit data, most regions have struck a functional balance between the imperative for action and the need for inclusion. For instance, in the South Central Kansas region, it was reported that all of the needed stakeholders from education, workforce development, and economic development were represented on its leadership group, and that they were pleased with the degree of inclusion. Here, the leaders were exercising authority consistent with their positions and within the agreed-upon decision-making process. Effective inclusion meant that all key stakeholders were involved in appropriate ways and at appropriate times in decisions that are relevant to them.

Openness of the Decision-Making Process

A region's openness to input from its partners regarding its operations and decisions is another indication of its process integrity. Those structures that can welcome and respond to criticisms and concerns from its members (even those outside the leadership circles) are more likely to overcome barriers to progress and constructively deal with disagreement or misunderstanding.[52]

One region, for example, was able to cope with collaboration difficulties among its WIBs by acknowledging the issues and addressing them. All three WIBs continue to be actively involved in the region's efforts by participating in the leadership and executive groups. Another region's central partners noted that they did not always agree on their projects—coming as they do from academia, government, and industry—but they talked about their viewpoints before making a decision. As a result, this region reported having a high level of partner satisfaction. Several other regions also dealt well with criticisms of their structures or operations.

For this to work, the communication must flow in two directions—from the center of the region's structure's core outward and vice-versa. The Pacific Mountain Washington region has addressed this need by hiring sector "coordinators" that are charged with building industry membership and input for the region. These individuals are positioned to share information from the core leadership to the partners, and from the partners to the core leadership.

In general, the regions have taken steps toward, or achieved, decision-making integrity. This achievement, however, has not occurred without some hard work on the part of partners and

[52] The benefit of conflict management to collaboration is discussed in "Want Collaboration? Accept—and Actively Manage—Conflict" by J. Weiss and J. Hughes in the *Harvard Business Review*, March 2005, pp. 93-101.

staff. As the regions move forward, they will need to continue to be conscious of the importance of building transparency, inclusiveness, and openness into their processes.

Governance Supports

Through the site visits, several governance supports emerged that are of key interest to the evaluation. First, the issue of balance arose when examining the interaction and leadership roles of the staff in comparison to the partners in the regions. Second, the leadership role played by the states was a focus of analysis because of the requirement that the states have at least an administrative connection to the regions, although some went much farther. Third, the means the regions used to monitor progress and make informed decisions were examined to determine how the tools and procedures supported governance. Each of these is explored in more detail below.

Staff-Partner Balance in Leadership

The site visit teams observed quite different approaches to striking a balance between the roles of the staff and partners. These approaches fell into three categories: staff-dominant, partner-dominant, and partner-leadership with staff support. Of the 25 regions that could be categorized, most fell into either the staff-dominant model or partner-leadership/staff support model.

- In the *staff-dominant* model, the staff of a WIRED region is the main decision-maker, with input coming from the other regional leadership infrequently or to a limited extent. An example of this sort of situation is a region that had heavy staff support from the workforce system. The partners engaged in this region did have some influence, but staff tended to set initiative direction and control communications. Overall, 12 regions appeared to fit this model.

- In the *partner-dominant* model, partner representatives are the main decision-makers, with limited staff contribution. A region with this situation had a partner chairperson that drove the initiative heavily. Two regions appeared to fit this model.

- In the *partner-leadership/staff support* model, the staff identifies emerging issues, develops options, and briefs and prepares partner leaders, but the partners make the decisions. Once decisions are made, the staff executes them. The staff also helps to build and maintain momentum. For example, one region has staff that supports the leadership team of partners by monitoring progress, making suggestions, and organizing next steps. The partners in this region take ownership of the initiative, however, and are heavily involved in setting direction, decision-making, and problem-solving. Ten regions appeared to fit this model.

As discussed above, the ability of the regions' governance structures to accommodate multiple leaders and effectively execute their plans are important considerations in a collaborative effort such as this one. Over time, there may be changes to the regions' placement in these models, but for now it seems that they are leaning heavily on staff for leadership. This may be partly because the regions are in the early phases of their startup and implementation. During the next round of site visits, this balance will be examined again.

State Leadership Role

The states, as the official recipients of the grant investments, are also potential supports to the governance of the regions. Overall, two patterns have emerged as to state involvement. One is that a state is quite involved in the operations of and the direction-setting for the region, and the other is that a state has only peripheral involvement in the region, mainly for grant administration purposes—the minimum connection required. The site visit teams assessed the degree of the states' roles in the regions. Approximately half of the regions had state involvement that was both administrative and strategic (14), with the remainder being administrative only (12). In the instances where states played the former role, state representatives from the Governor's Office, workforce development, or economic development agencies are engaged on a regular basis in the leadership of the region. In addition, the state may support the region by providing labor market data and complementing grant funds with state initiative funds. Some states are also helping to facilitate collaboration among regional partners.

In the administrative-only capacity, states are largely disconnected from the region, other than acting as a pass-through for the grant funds, and to provide some review of reports (e.g., the implementation plans) due to ETA.

The reasons one state may opt to be a leader for a region, while another chooses not to, are unclear at this time. The degree of centralization at the state level does not necessarily indicate the type of role that the state will play in the WIRED region.

Informed Decision-Making

The tools and methods a region implements to track and report progress also support its governance. As the Central/Eastern Puerto Rico region has done, this might include having task teams monitor and report on outcome measures on a quarterly basis. In this region, this information is reported to the leadership team as well, which is responsible for assessing program effectiveness. Another region, Northern New Jersey, has created a thorough financial management process. In this region, a financial manager reports quarterly to the leadership team, providing updates on the status of each of the region's project efforts. The report is color-coded so reviewers can easily identify issues. This level of detail is made possible by the use of a subreport form across projects. Such processes and expectations are needed to permit detailed tracking of progress over time and let leadership know where intervention might be needed. This supports integrity within the structure by assigning indicators of actual progress of the implementation.

To date, unfortunately, the above regional examples are not common. Most regions are monitoring expenditures and general project implementation status, but the site visit teams saw little evidence that this information was being widely shared outside the leadership circles.

Changes in Planned Governance Structures

As might be expected, not all of the regions have found their initial plans for governance to be appropriate in practice. Some regions have experienced dramatic reorganizations at either the top or lower levels of their structures. In one region, a planned steering committee, located structurally above the executive director, met only once. Instead, there is now a program management team, which works on a daily basis with the director. Thus, the scope of the central

leadership has shrunk. In several other regions, the number of staff to support the initiative has been expanded to go beyond the planned project manager position. In one case, a WIB coordinator and four site coordinators (assigned by sector) were added.

The lower levels of the structures have been more problematic for the regions. Fairly commonly, regions have not been able to establish some of the sector-specific or issue-specific groups as planned. This was usually due to delays in implementation or shifts in regional priorities that occurred in all regions. Most regions still plan to form these groups, and are not permanently derailed, however, and one has extensively reorganized at this level. This region originally divided its partner participants into either supply-side or demand-side groups, but found this approach prevented the needed communication across partners, so the region created instead "task teams" that allowed partners to work together on key issues.

In addition to these changes, the governance structures of the regions have seen less participation than anticipated. In regards to governance, this absence of partners can impede the building of a common vision that will guide collaborative action. The broader implications of reduced participation will be addressed in the next section of the report.

Summary Observations

- The correlation between full interlocking leadership and a broad understanding of a regional vision is significant for understanding future success of the regions in achieving their goals. The six regions that were rated as having both a high degree of connection within their leadership and a high degree of recognition of a common vision are expected to enjoy greater success in implementing their plans.

- Many states appear to be missing an opportunity to provide strategic leadership to the regions. States could be helping the regions to align with state workforce strategies, leveraging resources, generating broader public support for regional transformation, and attracting more partners to the regions.

- Informed decision-making is not well-integrated in nearly all of the regions. Even the most capable leaders are handicapped without information about what is working and what is not.

- Most of the regions appear to have created collaborative governance structures, with shared leadership and decision-making integrity. However, there are several that could improve substantially on this front.

C. Effective Engagement among Collaborators

Introduction

Collaborations are well-defined relationships entered into by two or more organizations committing to a structure with shared responsibilities and shared resources and rewards. Collaborative activities are undertaken in order to achieve mutually-beneficial, common goals.[53] Pisano and Verganti[54] categorize collaborations intended to achieve innovation into four types differentiated by governance and openness of participation. The collaborations observed in the regions generally have a flat governance structure and are closed (participants are selected). Pisano and Verganti refer to these collaborations as consortia.

The Theory of Change suggests that the success of the regional transformations envisioned for this Initiative is likely to be correlated with how effectively collaborators are engaged. Measures of effective engagement include:

- The extent to which the collaboration is representative of the key organizations in the region and is geographically representative.
- The extent to which participants are decision-makers in their organizations.
- The extent to which the collaboration has participants who can and will invest significant time and effort into activities and meetings (doers).
- The extent to which the participants commit to a common purpose.
- The extent to which partners/collaborators bring resources, especially fungible, monetary contributions, to the table.
- Attendance at meetings or other functions where collaborators meet.

Representation

Representativeness is important in a collaboration for several reasons. First, the power of collaboration to achieve its goals comes from the energies and commitments of the participants, and having key constituencies missing will mean a lower energy and commitment level. Second, collaborations benefit from having the input and perspectives of a diverse set of individuals, and if an important group or subregion is missing, then the collaboration loses the benefit of the thinking of that area or group. Third, a missing entity may interpret its absence as deliberate and may sabotage or disparage the collaboration's efforts. Resources may be necessary to undo the damage or right the bad publicity.

Decision-Makers and "Doers"

Mattesich[55] indicates that a factor related to the success of a collaboration is having multiple layers of participation. He states, "Every level (upper management, middle management, operations) within each partner organization has at least some representation and ongoing involvement." The upper management of organizations is necessary in order to commit

[53] Mattessich, Paul W. September 2005 presentation based on *Collaboration: What Makes It Work?* Paul W. Mattessich, Marta Murray-Close, and Barbara R. Monsey. Saint Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 2004.
[54] Pisano, Gary P. and Roberto Verganti. "Which Kind of Collaboration Is Right for You?" *Harvard Business Review*, (December 2008).
[55] Mattessich 2005.

resources to the effort and to bring their political and community influence. However, individuals in these roles may not have the time to invest in meetings or activities. Therefore, it is necessary to include middle management or other levels of staff as "doers."

Common Purpose

Collaborations form in order to bring organizations together to achieve goals thought to be unachievable without joint commitment. The goal(s) set by the group are more likely to be met if all the partners have explicitly agreed upon a common purpose. With this effort, each area is working toward a common purpose of regional transformation. For the most part, the regions have accepted the paradigm of regionalism. Regionalism is defined to mean the belief that resources need to be shared throughout a region in order to maximize the chance of success/transformation and that any success in a region is a "win" for everybody.

Resource Investment

The regions have funds from ETA, and they are leveraging those funds in many creative ways. A measure of engagement is signaled if a partner brings resources (other than their own time) to the effort to leverage the grant funds.

Attendance

A final indicator of engagement is the attendance rate of the partners. Given how busy decision-makers may be, and given the ability to receive information electronically, attendance may not be a vital indicator. Exemplary attendance in the early stages of the initiatives may indicate excitement over the availability of grant funds and the opportunity to influence the development of regional goals and how funds will be allocated to achieve them. As the initiatives continue, exemplary attendance by the partners may reflect a sense of accomplishment, particularly if the investments made through the initiative are demonstrating evidence of success. In making a decision about attendance, it is assumed that decision-makers weigh costs and benefits. If meetings were not interesting or not achieving outcomes, these individuals would likely not attend. The next few paragraphs will address the extent to which these measures of engagement were observed during the site visits. A few summary observations follow these analyses.

Analysis

In general, the types of organizations that would be expected to participate in the collaborative activities within the regions are postsecondary education (public or private), K-12 education (public or private), economic development, state government, local government, public workforce system (WIB, welfare-to-work, vocational rehabilitation, Job Service), employers, employer organizations, foundations, and research organizations. Gauging the effectiveness of the collaborations requires dissecting the organizational participation along several dimensions.

- Are all of the key organizations in the region involved?
- How many individuals from an organization actively participate in activities designed to transform the region?
- Who from the organization participates?
- Are they decision makers?
- Can they command resources?
- Have they brought resources (cash or in-kind) to the table?

- Do(es) the individual(s) seem committed to regional transformation; i.e., is their attendance regular?
- Are the collaborators involved in the governance structure or activities of WIRED or both?

Representativeness

Regions have a general feeling that the collaborations that have been developed are quite representative. In fact, many regions felt that one of their successes or transformations was the convening of all of the key constituents of the workforce development, talent development and economic development systems in the region. Out of the 26 regions, interviewees in 24 lauded the success of the collaboration in getting all of the key individuals involved. The following statements were typical of those made to site visitors:

> *[The Initiative] really brought key players together to focus on a purpose. Before we had pockets . . . through this, everyone has come together to achieve group expertise.*
>
> *Bringing the economic development and workforce development organizations together has been transformative. Before WIRED, only in a couple of instances would you see ED [economic development] and WD [workforce development] collaborate and that is only because one had money.*

Although it was clear that regions had formed effective collaborations, for the most part, it appears that work remains in terms of achieving full representativeness. During the site visits, interviewees were asked to name any groups that they felt were not represented adequately in their regions' collaborative relationships.

Table 9: Groups Noted in Response to Question: "Are there organizations that are not included in your region's activities?"

Underrepresented Group	Total # of Mentions*	# of Regions with Responses
Business/Employer	48	18
K-12	29	13
Local/State Government	11	7
Other	10	9
WIBs/Workforce System	10	6
Four-Year Universities	6	6
Economic Developers	6	5
Postsecondary/Higher Education**	6	4
Technical/Community Colleges	5	4
Foundations/Philanthropy	5	3
Angel Investors/Venture Capitalists	4	3

* Table entries come from post-interview analyses of site visitor notes and there were variations in the responses. Consequently, statistical analysis was not possible.

**Group descriptions came from the interviewees so in some cases Community Colleges and Universities could not be broken out separately.

The responses suggest a clear perceived need for greater representation from the business community and/or employers. Twice as many individuals (48) in all regions stated that there needed to be some or increased representation from this group in the regional collaborations than from any other group. In addition, the need for increased representation of the business/employer community was voiced in 18 of the 25 regions where data was available. The comments made by interviewees were not necessarily targeted at any specific employer group, but referred in some instances to a specific sector or size of business (i.e., large/small). Some respondents felt that the lack of representation of the business/employer community may hamper efforts to collaborate region-wide.

It is not clear to what extent the apparent underrepresentation of employers is an issue. In all but three of the regions, employers from targeted industry sectors are represented on a regional governing board, which typically also includes representatives from all of the other major stakeholder groups (i.e., education, workforce, government officials, etc.).

Despite efforts to actively engage large companies, most of the regions had difficulty doing so. Notable exceptions are Southeastern Virginia where an executive of a large corporation co-chairs the initiative; Southeast Michigan, where the Detroit Regional Chamber is the convener; and Southwestern Connecticut, where a separate regional executive council has been formed explicitly to provide a forum for corporate leaders to discuss common workforce and economic development issues.

Competition among companies in a common industry sector does not seem to be a barrier to collaboration for the regions. One possible reason for this is that corporate interests were often represented by leaders of relevant employer and industry associations. For example, in addition to having employer representation on its governing board, the Southeast Missouri strategy involves employers in sector-focused working committees, employer/community college learning networks, and industry-specific summits.

Another possible reason for the limited conflict among employers is that this Initiative is fundamentally different from typical workforce development grant projects that provide customized training. Instead, it has a broader emphasis on developing and improving workforce and economic development programs and service delivery systems. For example, in Pacific Mountain Washington, employers have substantial representation on the board and also participate in four industry panels that have been formed to improve communications between employers and community colleges.

The group that received the second highest number of references to a need for greater organizational involvement or representation was the K-12 community. In total, 29 individuals referred to this group in 13 of the regions. This group was closely followed by local/state government (11 references, 7 regions), and a catch-all "other" category (10 references, 9 regions).

Somewhat surprisingly, mention was made in six regions of the need for greater WIB/workforce-system representation despite the fact that all but two regions reported having meaningful

involvement of at least one WIB. In at least some of the regions where multiple WIBs were involved, steps had been taken to promote collaboration and partnerships among them. In the Northern New Jersey region, a regional consortium of WIBs and One-Stop operators was formed to integrate workforce delivery and to discuss policy and operational issues related to their roles and activities in WIRED. In Southwestern Connecticut, a full-time coordinator was assigned to work with the WIBs, and a WIB Collaborative was established as a separate entity within the organizational chart. Nevertheless, some comments made by individuals during the site visits regarding the WIBs and other groups clearly illustrate the need for more involvement, at least in some regions.

It therefore appears that there is still a need and a desire to bring underrepresented partners into the process. However, these comments should be set against the large number of individuals who stated that representation from the groups that should be at the table was sufficient and who praised the regions' program managers for the work they had done in bringing partners together.

Regionalism as a Common Purpose

The literature suggests that effective collaborations require explicit acceptance of a common purpose. For these regions, that purpose is an acceptance of regionalism. Respondents to site visit interviews in 21 of the 26 regions noted an adaptation towards regionalism. They made comments such as the following:

> *[This initiative] has transformed the willingness of the region to work together . . .*
>
> *[There is a] potential for it to be really regional; to break away from the mindset of "this is mine" . . . In this region in the past, we have usually worked locally.*

To be clear, some regions admitted that it was difficult to achieve full consensus on regionalism. Comments such as the following indicate the struggle:

> *[Progress on regionalism comes] in fits and starts. Some things we work well together on, and some we don't. Hard to get over the territorialization that each segment brings to this.*
>
> *Challenges to operating like a region? Geographically, it is a challenge. Everyone has their own idea about what their region is, so there will be a challenge getting past that.*

The regions are generally working toward a common commitment to regionalism, but stakeholder organizations did not necessarily share a common understanding of the nature of the workforce challenges facing the region. For instance, in one region, employers in the manufacturing sector were very dissatisfied with the quality of the students who, following graduation from high school, were coming to their companies seeking employment. Employers complained that these individuals had bad work habits, did not come to work on time, did not attend work on a regular basis, had a poor work ethic, and had limited problem-solving skills. Local school district leaders responded by pointing out the recent increases in academic achievement scores in their district. School leaders also pointed out that the students seeking

employment at local manufacturing companies were not necessarily representative of all students in the district.

Differences in individual goals and objectives among stakeholders can also present challenges to collaboration, as in the case of Southeastern Mississippi's Momentum. Individual employers in the manufacturing sector reported that they desperately needed worker-training programs and were frustrated by the long delays in implementation. However, the designated chairperson of the Momentum activities was focused on having a sound and rigorous planning process that would ensure that the grant investment funds were used wisely. To that end, the chairperson mandated a planning process requiring community colleges to submit detailed business plans that must be reviewed and approved by the Chairperson prior to the release of grant funds for any purpose. It is possible that a sound and rigorous planning process will lead to better results in the longer term. In the short-term, however, the needs of employers had not been met.

In general, even in regions that are struggling with vestiges of competitiveness, it appears as though this undertaking has successfully inculcated the idea of regionalism.

Number and Distribution of Participants

In the discussion above, it is suggested that having multiple layers of participants from collaborative organizations is an indicator of effective engagement. This nuance seems not to have registered with the regional project directors. No comments were gathered by site visitors about the number of individuals from an organization or the collaborators' positions in their organization. The general impression was that if someone from an organization was present, then it was presumed that the entire organization was committed to the effort. The following paragraphs provide a picture of the regional partners.

Of the ETA-approved implementation plans available at the time of our analysis, 20 indicated that the region had a four-year university or college actively involved in the collaboration.[56] In only one region, however, was a central administrator of one of these institutions involved. In most other cases, departments or individual faculty were conducting a funded activity. All of these regions had two-year colleges involved (in fact, four of the Generation II regions were housed at a community college facility).[57] In seven of the regions, at least one community college president was actively involved in the governance structure as well as having grant-funded formal training taking place on campus.

In all regions, K-12 education was involved to some extent. Rarely, however, were central administrators involved at all in the governance structures. Across all of the site visits, we interviewed only three school superintendents, and in one case, neither that individual nor any students were directly involved in a grant-funded activity. Most of the involvement of K-12 occurred in the area of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) projects. Project Lead the Way (PLTW) was the primary activity in four of the regions. Another program that was being promoted in three regions was "Dream It Do It," which is a pre-manufacturing curriculum.

[56] One region's implementation plan seemed to indicate that there was at best a minimal linkage to a four-year university. This region was counted in the 20.

[57] Again, one of the regions seemed to have minor linkage to its two-year colleges.

Economic development organizations at both the state and local level are typically lean in terms of the number of staff persons. The regions usually had an individual from the state's economic development office as a partner, but the individual was often a regional representative and had few, if any, resources to add to the activity. The regions were typically quite successful in attracting local economic developers. Seventeen of the regions with an available implementation plan had a local economic developer in a governance role. These individuals brought a demand-side perspective and often were able to use the region's strategic, collaborative approach and related activities as part of the sales pitch to new employers.

The ETA grants were set up to have a department of state government as the fiscal agency and grant monitor. But in many of the regions, individuals from the agency with fiscal responsibilities or from other state departments also were active participants in the governance structures. Sixteen regions out of 19 for which the information was available had at least one employee from a state agency (and often more than one) on the governance board. In many of these regions, the state government participant(s) was an agency director.

The key partners in regions seemed to be of two minds about the involvement of local government officials as collaborators. Some regions had such individuals involved; but other regions had no involvement by local politicians. In seven regions, the governance structure included a mayor or county official; but local public officials were not primary in any of the regions.

In the Generation III regions, staff members from the public workforce system were the drivers and most engaged collaborators. (Note that in two of the regions, the state workforce board was the administrator of the grant.) Typically, the governance structure included several individuals from the Workforce boards and agencies, and in six out of seven of the Generation III regions for whom we had rosters, these individuals included the agency director(s). As might be expected, since the SGA did not require specific leadership or co-leadership from the workforce system, the public workforce system was not as effectively engaged in collaboration in the Generation II regions.

Representatives of employers who were involved in partnerships tended to be CEO/executives if the company was small, and tended to be a training officer or HR officer if the company was a larger company. Often, the employers who were engaged were also on the WIB. In general, these private sector individuals were solidly engaged in the collaborations but were not dominant in the process. Most of the regions involved employer associations (16) in addition to having some individual employers. For these associations, it was generally the executive directors who were "around the table."

Foundations or research organizations were also partners in some of the regions. In the five regions that had these types of organizations, a single individual from the organization is in the leadership structure. In general, these organizations are important to the collaborative efforts because they often have invested supplemental funds.

Additional Resources as a Signal of Engagement

Grant funding has often been used to leverage other funding, and this section of the report focuses on resources contributed by collaborators. The evaluation team hypothesizes that regions will be able to accomplish more and be more successful in achieving transformation if their collaboratives include some partners who have become so engaged in the process that they invest their own resources. Bringing supplemental resources to the effort should be seen as a sufficient, but not necessary, signal of partner engagement.

Perhaps not surprisingly, we found only a few instances where a partner brought additional resources to the regional efforts, other than their own time commitments.[58] Some examples include a region where corporate partners donated $19,000 for sponsorship of a competitive activity and an additional $25,000 for prize money. In another region, a member of the region's Executive Team is president of a foundation, and this individual arranged for funding of $60,000 per year for a Web site and other innovative technological tools.

Attendance

The regions have adopted several different governance structures. For example, some regions had leadership councils; others had executive boards. Attendance at meetings of these groups *may* denote collaborators' level of engagement. A hypothesis of the evaluation is that poor attendance probably signals low levels of engagement, whereas regular attendance may or may not be associated with high levels of engagement. Many WIBs have rules about poor attendance; however, we encountered only two regions where attendance was even considered. The by-laws of one organization indicated that members of the leadership team who missed three consecutive meetings would be asked to step down. The bylaws of the other organization had a similar clause except that the limit was only two meetings: however, members of the governance body were allowed to designate alternate attendees. For the most part, regions were just beginning to traverse their learning curves, and they apparently did not want to discourage individuals from attending and contributing to the group.

Summary Observations

The first round of site visits occurred early in the regions' implementation phase, and this made it difficult to gauge the solidity of the engagement of partners in the regional collaboration. The second round of site visits in 2010 will provide a much clearer indication of the extent of engagement of partners in the regional collaborations.

However, virtually all regions had begun at least an initial implementation of their projects. Partnerships with stakeholders in the region had begun and, in most cases, the paradigm of regionalism had taken hold. Furthermore, the partnerships included key personnel from talent development organizations (education and workforce development) as well as economic development bodies. There was less evidence of strong collaborative ties with the private sector and local and state government.

[58] This is not to discount the importance of the investment of individuals' time. In fact, in some of the 26 regions, we heard concerns about the time demands the Initiative was placing on some of its volunteer partners.

It appeared that the entities that housed the regions' activities were the most significantly engaged collaborators (staff-dominated model). In addition, community colleges, if they were not the location of the region's activities, remained highly involved. In general, regions did not seem to be paying attention to the value proposition for participants; it is tacitly assumed that if an organization is represented by a participant, then that organization is fully committed to the goals of regional transformation and that individual is fully committed to the collaboration.

The companies that have been involved thus far have had a variety of opportunities to provide input and suggestions about how to transform the public workforce system in a way that will promote industry growth in the future. Whether working at a strategic or operational level, employers and their representatives have been involved in identifying opportunities for establishing and strengthening targeted sectors, establishing strategic and operational goals, creating and strengthening regional partnerships, and overseeing the transformation of the service delivery system.

D. Planning

Introduction

Planning is the process by which the regions develop the goals and strategies for implementing successful workforce development innovations. The planning process is expected to produce outcomes that have a positive impact on the ability of each region to successfully create and direct activities for regional transformation. The establishment of goals and strategies that are both reasonable in terms of their fit with local education, workforce, and other resources, and attainable in terms of their scope, are expected to be key attributes necessary for implementing regional workforce innovations.

Every region has engaged in a number of planning activities. Some of these processes were required by ETA, such as the planning necessary to fulfill the original proposal requirements, creating an implementation plan to guide regional workforce development activities, and engaging in asset mapping to provide data on resources available that, in combination, could be used to move the regions' goals and strategies forward. WIRED regions also typically engage in other forms of planning that fit their own unique structures, such as long-term strategic planning or sub-group activity planning.

This section examines four major aspects of the overall planning process:

- Description of the major planning activities conducted within the regions
- Identification of regional partners involved in the planning process
- The use of asset mapping and other tools used in the planning process
- Ongoing planning activities and their relation to other activities in the region

In addition, based on our analysis of primary and secondary data, this section concludes with a number of general observations about planning as it has been employed by the 26 regions.

Planning Activities Conducted

Each of the regions has been engaged in at least two planning activities as part of their participation in this initiative: (1) preparation of the grant proposal that was submitted to ETA and (2) preparation of an implementation plan following the selection as a region. While these are the principal planning activities that have helped to shape the direction and character of the regions, some regions have conducted other planning activities and, in some cases, region-wide planning has continued as an ongoing activity. Asset mapping and the activities associated with the presentation and use of data have been important components of planning for some regions, and some of the regions have established ongoing planning activities by creating workgroups that represent an industry (such as an industry council) or workforce development interests within the region.

Proposals and Planning Partners

Planning activities during the proposal development phase typically involved an array of local stakeholders and partners along with representatives of state and local governmental agencies. As previously noted, all but one of the regions reported that stakeholders had engaged in

collaboration at some level prior to their selection as regions and, in some cases, even prior to their grant proposal efforts. Some of these experiences were built around responses to specific economic events such as the growth or decline of an important local industry.

- In Southern Arizona, for example, a consortium led by the workforce system has been operating in the region since the 1980s. It was formed in response to large-scale layoffs in the mining industry.

- Collaboration between workforce development and economic development agencies in Southeast Virginia's Tidewater Area evolved in 2005 to address Ford Motor Company's decision to close a local assembly plant.

- Organizations located in the Minnesota Triangle area collaborated in 2005 to recruit a wind power company from India to their region.

There are many other examples of pre-existing cross-sector planning groups, reflecting the unique history and connections within each region.

Implementation Plans and Planning Partners

Collaboration among regional organizations in developing the implementation plans involved as many as 100 organizations in one region, 70 members of a leadership group in a second, 47 partners in a third, and 21 regional leaders in a fourth. Most of the other regions indicated that their planning activities had involved one or more partners representing industry councils or trade associations, education leaders, economic development directors, community college and university representatives, local government officials, and officials from local WIBs. There was no pattern of participation among stakeholders and partners that appears to be related to the grant requirements, targeted industries, or section of the nation in which these regions are located.

There do, however, appear to be some relationships—albeit not very strong relationships—between an emphasis on regional partner/stakeholder participation in formulating implementation plans and (1) the approach towards the use of asset maps and other data resources in driving goals and strategies, and (2) the relationships that regional goals and strategies have with previously-developed regional or statewide economic development strategies.

In the first case, regions in which asset mapping and other data collection activities were specifically undertaken in order to identify potential goals and strategies were also regions where these data were presented to groups of diverse partners and stakeholders (or potential stakeholders) in order to build initial support and solicit input for the region. For example, one region delayed its commitment to specific strategies until the completion of asset mapping and other data collection activities because of a desire to build consensus and support among a broad base of constituent organizations before moving to the activities phase. As one WIB director in that region noted regarding the pressure from partner organizations to move forward with an implementation plan, strategies, and funded activities, his goal was to implement the "right way" by collecting data, presenting it to regional partners and stakeholders, and then letting the data point toward the solutions. This observation, however, should not be taken to imply that other

regions ignored the input of their partners and stakeholders or that they ignored data resources available to them. Rather, leadership in most of the other regions tended to place less emphasis on asset mapping and, in several cases, had already staked out their target industries and activities from existing statewide and regional strategies and through discussion with their partners and stakeholders.

In at least half of the regions there was a direct relationship between the goals and strategies that were being incorporated within the regions' implementation plans and with either statewide or regional strategies that were already in existence. In many of these cases, partners and stakeholders were already familiar with the broad goals being pursued by their regions, and they did not necessarily need to be involved in the development of the implementation plan. In several of these cases, the data-gathering part of the planning process was conducted mainly to confirm already held positions, and partners were mostly involved in a later stage of the planning process where they were asked to provide details about the specific activities in which they would be engaged as they strove to meet the region's goals.

Planning Tools

Almost all of the regions had conducted some sort of asset mapping or regional data collection activity, or were currently engaged in data collection to profile the principal workforce, industry, and demographic characteristics of the region. Other activities conducted as part of the planning process in some of the regions include:

- Human capital analysis among young adults who were former or current residents of the Louisville, Kentucky, area (Central Kentucky region) to determine why they left, why they stayed, and what would bring them back to the region. Comparisons between the two measures provide insight into how well the community provides what younger residents value most.

- Employer surveys to determine current and anticipated labor force needs in three regions: South Central Kansas, Greater Albuquerque, and Southeastern Mississippi.

- A gap analysis to determine how well current and future workforce needs were being met by workforce development activities within the Delaware Valley region.

- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis for the Southeastern Connecticut region.

- Analysis of STEM-related education and occupational training programs in a few regions.

- Presentations to industry councils, educators, WIBs, and other partners/stakeholders to solicit input in almost all of the regions.

Asset Mapping and Planning

Most of the regions indicated that their asset mapping activities were conducted by organizations hired to do this research and to prepare reports based upon them. In a few cases the identity of the vendors was not shared with the site visitors, but in most cases they were well known

workforce organizations or consultants, including organizations on ETA's Technical Assistance Team for WIRED or staff from nearby universities. Some contributions to asset mapping activities were also provided by state labor market information agencies. In only a few cases asset mapping was conducted by WIRED region staff themselves or by their strategic partners. For the most part, asset mapping has not been problematic.

Discussions with local leaders and stakeholders about the use of asset mapping pointed to four reasons for it:

- *To identify regional assets, strengths, and potential.* For example, in one region the asset map was viewed as a pivotal piece of information for identifying regional needs and gaps. This region put such a strong emphasis on the asset map that none of the funds available through the initiative were allowed to be used until the mapping process had been completed and the results were reviewed and discussed.

- *To confirm applicability of strategies to address regional growth that have been adopted during the early stages of the region's collaborative effort.* For example, in some regions the targeted sector(s) and program strategy were based on discussions among a limited number of stakeholders that were involved in the process of preparing the proposal for the Initiative. Consequently, these decisions did not necessarily reflect regional conditions, gaps, and needs. The systematic review of regional assets provided a more objective perspective on regional needs.

- *To identify potential stakeholders and partners.* For instance, as part of the asset mapping process, one region sought to learn more about the needs of a targeted sector by conducting an employer survey as part of the asset mapping and planning process. Another region assigned teams of local stakeholders to conduct face-to-face surveys of individual employers in their area. In addition to collecting useful information about employer needs, these activities were used to engage employers in the initiative and to identify employers that might be interested in becoming actively involved.

- *To meet ETA's requirement.* Each of the regions was required to conduct an asset mapping process to inform strategic planning. ETA provided information and support for this process by distributing a booklet on the topic that was prepared by the Council on Competitiveness.[59] Additional technical assistance was available for regions that sought help.

There was not a consensus among the regions in terms of the usefulness of asset mapping. In most cases, the reasons offered for doing it cut across these categories.

Among the regions, the emphasis placed on asset mapping varied considerably, with some regions assigning a special line item in their budget for this activity while others hardly mentioned the mapping component. While hiring a special consultant to prepare the asset map seemed to increase the likelihood that the resulting document would contain a considerable

[59] Council on Competitiveness, Asset Mapping Roadmap**:** *A Guide to Assessing Regional Development Resources*, Prepared for US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, October 2006.

amount of detailed data, it did not necessarily guarantee that the resource maps would be comprehensive in terms of including: stakeholder perspectives on the value of regional assets to the regional initiative, the linkages between regional assets, the underlying business culture in the region, and/or regional attitudes about risk and entrepreneurship.[60] Since the majority of the asset maps were not completed at the time of the first site visit it is not clear how many of the regions took this comprehensive approach.

Ongoing Planning Activities

The collaborative nature of the Initiative and the importance of data-driven decisions have contributed towards a moderately expanded interest in and capacity for planning among the 26 regions and their partners. Examples of specific ongoing planning activities include:

- Creating an extranet for the planning phase that will be continued and transitioned to a website to serve both partners and external audiences.
- Collaborating with the state labor market information system to purchase a subscription to an online economic modeling service to inform their planning.
- Engaging K-12 leaders in planning and implementation, and conducting outreach to businesses as pilot projects are implemented**.**
- Using training funds as a pilot for future planning and resource allocation at a regional level.
- Continuing the Regional Workforce Council that was established during the planning phase as a regional planning body.

Some of the regions have maintained planning groups that were established during the planning phase or have established new planning groups to help implement the activities that were developed earlier. Some regions established WIB consortia (also known as workgroups or issue groups in some regions) that are continuing to meet in order to share ideas and plan future activities together. The Northern North Jersey region, for example, includes representatives of all five local WIBs in the region, One-Stop operators from four counties and the City of Newark, plus representation from the Newark Alliance and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority. This consortium serves as one of the region's eight strategy teams. Other regions have established and are maintaining Industry Councils that focus on specific sectors. These are important organizations, especially for those regions in which multiple industry clusters are targeted in their implementation plans, as they bring employers, educators, and workforce developers together to narrow their focus and apply their resources collaboratively to a single industry or sub-sector in a single location.

Additional Themes and Illustrations

Several additional cross-cutting themes emerged during the analysis and are discussed in greater detail below.

Generation II Versus Generation III

Designation of Generation II WIRED regions as "virtual" regions and the provision of $100,000 for planning purposes appears to have made little difference between these regions and their

[60] Ibid., p. 5.

Generation III counterparts in terms of their planning activities and, in particular, their compilation and use of asset maps or other data-gathering activities to help drive their planning activities. Delays in planning and asset mapping are evident among regions that received funding during both rounds of grant investment.

Planning and Existing Regional Strategies

At least half of the regions have planned goals, strategies, and activities that are extensions of or variations on existing statewide or regional initiatives that were initiated prior to this initiative. In New Jersey, for example, several industries targeted for economic development had previously been identified by the Governor and an additional $500,000 Regional Economic Development Initiative grant was provided to each New Jersey region to support their efforts. In Wisconsin, state government had already identified strategies for growing the state's economy, which framed the focus for both of Wisconsin's regions.

A major challenge for several of the regions that operate within an existing economic development framework is finding the industry sector that can be used as the basis for transforming their regional economies. Southeastern Wisconsin, for example, identified an emerging industry around the application of technology for water purification and fresh water resources as one of their targets. In Central New Jersey, a statewide focus on the biotechnology industry prompted that region to focus on small, emerging biotechnology firms as the structure of the pharmaceutical industry has changed in recent years from highly-structured vertical integration to greater dependence on startup firms that are focusing on biologicals rather than pharmaceuticals. The Southwestern Connecticut region, which is strongly engaged with the financial services industry, is exploring service industries, such as health care, as part of their planning to provide employment for other segments of their labor force. It remains to be seen if these new targets, developing industries, or alternatives will develop as foci for regional economic transformation over the next few years.

In contrast, other regions, especially those that are already the homes of potentially transformational industries—regardless of whether or not an existing regional or statewide development strategy was in place—have had the opportunity to take a different tack in planning. The Greater Albuquerque region is mainly focused on technology-driven industries that are already established in their area, and the major challenge for this region is to work with educators and industry to train enough technicians to meet the current and anticipated workforce needs of these industries. The South Central Kansas region contains a cluster of aircraft manufacturers and related employers; the regional partners have focused much of their attention on training current and future workers to work with new, more sophisticated material (e.g., composites) that will become the standard in this industry in the future. Regions like these are not as focused on what industries will potentially transform their economies as they are on how they will prepare the regional workforce to participate in this transformation.

Planning for Proposals and Planning for Implementation

Although not all of the regions' implementation plans were available at the time of the evaluation visits, those that were examined and discussed with partners and stakeholders within the region revealed that the focus of activity among approximately half of the WIRED regions was reasonably consistent over time. For those where there were changes from proposal to

implementation, factors driving these modifications included reassessment of original plans and priorities through their strategic planning activities and concerns about limitations on the use of H-1B funds. There were also a few instances in which specific goals were eliminated or modified over time to reflect changing regional conditions, changes in the geographic area to be served by the region, and/or changes in the participation by key partners or stakeholders. For example, in the Central Kentucky region, after the original proposal was approved the region's geography grew to include Fort Knox, where a major base realignment was underway.

In some cases, the focus was modified as a result of expanded data about specific targeted industries. One example is the narrowing focus on biotechnology within the Central New Jersey region. The region's leadership became more aware of changes occurring within that industry—specifically a shift from vertically-integrated companies which traditionally relied on their own internal resources to create new pharmaceutical products to a growing industry-wide reliance on small, independent bio-science companies to do new, creative work.

Planning and Defining Regions

One important planning activity for several of the regions was the identification of the geographic area to be served. Based on metropolitan areas established by the Census Bureau, state planning areas, economic development districts, or workforce development districts, most regions had to think through their boundaries as one of their first planning activities. In several cases, the regions that were defined for proposals submitted in response to the original SGA, were redesigned as part of proposals submitted during the second grant competition, often expanding across state boundaries and/or incorporating additional areas within the original states. North Oregon and Southwestern Connecticut are two examples of regions that expanded to adjacent states when they were selected.

Some of the changes in regional boundaries have resulted in more innovative plans being proposed. Once the Southwestern Connecticut region was established across a state boundary, a policy was established requiring that all planned activities involve partners from both states. This resulted in some creative new relationships between local WIBs, educational institutions, and employers that would not have occurred otherwise. Similarly, Central Kentucky and North Oregon both expanded across a state line to include several adjacent counties that were part of their normal labor shed, thus preventing the plans developed for those regions from artificially restricting participation by employers, organizations, and individuals.

Summary Observations

- For most of the regions, planning started before the grants were awarded and has been ongoing throughout the process. At least half of the regions have adopted at least some of the goals of pre-existing development plans established within their regions and/or states.

- The planning process was still the dominant activity at the time of the initial site visits. Most of the regions had not moved much beyond planning at the time.

- Regions from both generations appear to be at all stages of the planning process—some have moved further along than others regardless of their generation.

- Asset mapping was conducted by most of the regions, but these exercises were not necessarily conducted in order to identify the most appropriate goals for their region. Asset mapping was conducted for a variety of reasons, predominantly to confirm target industries and goals that had already been chosen and, in some cases, to drive goals and strategies for adoption by the regions.

- Most of the regions contracted with consultants and/or university research institutes to conduct asset mapping activities on their behalf.

- Most of asset mapping activities were fairly straight-forward analyses of workforce, industry, and demographic assets within the regions. Only a few of the regions conducted surveys, performed gap analysis, or engaged in other data-gathering activities.

- For most of the regions, planning is an ongoing process revolving around regularly-scheduled partner/stakeholder meetings and the creation of planning subgroups of local WIB directors, educators, or industry councils.

E. Communication

Introduction

As a dimension in the evaluation's Theory of Change, effective communication is a necessary, although not in itself sufficient, condition for an effective collaboration. Internal communications among the participants in a collaboration are necessary for administrative reasons such as notifications of meeting arrangements or distribution of minutes. But perhaps more importantly, internal communications are also necessary in order to promote a common vision or commitment to the goals and strategy of the collaboration. External communication is necessary for the collaborative effort if its intent is to increase public awareness and support and/or to effectuate institutional changes that may impinge on individuals or entities outside of the collaboration. Communication must be considered in regard to fluidity. Current research conceptualizes communication as a fluid continuum between formal (scheduled, directed, designed) and informal (unscheduled, interactive, spontaneous) interactions.[61] This evaluation will examine the extent to which communications are clear, timely, and appropriately disseminated, and the manner (formal and informal) in which that communication tends to take place within regions.

Communication Purposes

Regional partners communicate in order to disseminate administrative information. The regions report to the public their plans and accomplishments, and they attempt to inform the public about WIRED and the region's plan to transform the workforce development and economic development systems. Finally, the regions reach out to the business community to gain awareness of WIRED.

Communicate Ongoing Administrative Items

The communication of ongoing administrative items to internal stakeholders is vital to ensure that partners are kept informed of the initiative's progress and to encourage their full participation. Of the implementation plans available for review, eight discussed processes to keep partners and other stakeholders up to date on the details of the operations of the initiative. They also sought to communicate ongoing administrative issues to stakeholders, particularly internal stakeholders who are part of the process of implementation of regional activities. Processes in place included emails sent from project management with details of previous and upcoming meetings (minutes, agendas, discussion items etc.); Web sites which included sections that were updated periodically with information on the progress of the initiative; and one-to-one discussions, whether by phone or in person.

As discussed previously, communication about decision-making is as important as the decision-making process itself. Communicating the regional vision is partly achieved by the establishment of "interlocking leadership" structures that ensure a flow of information to and

[61] Robert E. Kraut, Robert S. Fish, Robert W. Root, and Barbara L. Chalfonte, "Informal Communication in Organizations: Form, Function, and Technology." I. S. Oskamp & S. Spacapan (Eds.). *Human Reactions to Technology: The Claremont Symposium on Applies Social Psychology.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications. 1990.

from stakeholder groups. Having this structure in place was seen to improve and enhance the communication process and furthered the articulation of the regional vision.

On the whole, those interviewed during the site visits felt that the staff and management of the regions were effectively informing stakeholders of the progress of their efforts. Many respondents acknowledged that project staff was working hard at maintaining solid communications, and they appreciated the effort. Comments at numerous sites made it obvious that stakeholders felt they were "kept in the loop." One individual from a college indicated that communication within the regional partnership was better than within the college itself.

Reporting Plans and Accomplishments to Program Administrators, the Public, and Other Stakeholders

Ten of the 26 implementation plans discussed the need to have a process in place to disseminate accomplishments and success stories to both internal and external audiences. The processes discussed included the use of newsletters, Web pages with specific stories highlighting successes, video vignettes embedded in e-mails that provided personal stories, and flyers distributed to generate Web site traffic. The audiences for these communications included stakeholders in the business community, partners in the economic development community, students and potential training participants, the media, and many others.

Local stakeholders interviewed during the site visits affirmed that disseminating success stories is a vital component of a successful communication strategy. However, external communication was still in its infancy in many regions. Formal communication plans were still being completed at the time of the site visits, and a number of other sites had yet to fully implement the communication strategies they had devised. Consequently, it is not possible to measure the effectiveness of the strategies that the regions have used to disseminate plans and accomplishments to external audiences. The second round of site visits should paint a much clearer picture regarding the potential success of the regions' communication strategies.

Use of Communication to Broaden Understanding of Regional Transformation

Effective communication may be an essential component of the effort to foster regional collaboration and broaden its understanding across a wide audience. Eight of the implementation plans included specific plans to reach out to external audiences and educate them regarding the partnerships' work in their regions. Regular meetings were seen as one way to educate regional leaders and to pass on critical information regarding the collaboration. For example, in South-Central Kansas, the project director holds monthly meetings with the region's leadership and implementation teams to ensure that all parties are aware of the status of implementation and can address any issues as they arise. The project director also provides electronic communiqués at midmonth to keep partners updated. Southwest Connecticut has formed a Regional Communicators Council consisting of communications professionals affiliated with partners of the initiative. The council works together to coordinate outreach to its respective constituencies and the media, thus ensuring a consistent message. Other specific strategies that regions have undertaken or plan to undertake include hosting conferences where regional staff would present information on its activities; including external stakeholders (such as the business community) in the process of drafting communication; and holding forums in which specific target groups—such as entrepreneurs—would be the focus of discussion.

As previously noted, geographic barriers exist among some of the regions, particularly those which encompass large rural areas and/or multiple, competing political jurisdictions. Holding meetings at different locations within the region was an additional strategy employed by at least seven regions to address this challenge. The rotation of meetings helped ensure that ownership for the region's implementation was felt more keenly by stakeholders who were located in outlying areas of the region as they became part of the process. This is true of Northern California, which rotates meetings across the region; shares reports from previous meetings; and makes heavy use of telecommunications such as webcasts and teleconferencing to keep stakeholders informed and cultivate ownership. In another region that did not rotate its meetings, several interviewees demonstrated a lack of knowledge regarding that region's efforts, and two stated explicitly that they would participate more often—and would feel more connected to the initiative—if meetings were held at different times and/or alternating locations.

In two regions in particular, the rotation of meetings has also allowed for the mitigation of historical differences between core cities and outlying rural areas through increased partnerships and points of contact among constituencies. For example, the project director in South-Central Kansas, mindful of the rural-urban disconnect, has made specific efforts to bring representatives of outlying rural counties to the table, solicit their input, and keep them engaged—an effort that was not lost on those representatives, as indicated during the site visit.

Creating Awareness in the Business Community

Many regions have recognized the importance of aligning their efforts closely with the needs of the business community. Eight of the available implementation plans specifically mention reaching out to the business community through education, awareness-building, and inclusion. One of the implementation plans discussed providing the business community with a voice on the communications team so that they were integral to the communications messages that were being distributed. During the site visits, however, interviewees in several regions pointed out that it was too soon to reach out to the business community before they had some successes to communicate. For example, in one region that had delayed its asset mapping activity and had not yet rolled out the bulk of its grant programs, stakeholders believed it was premature to engage businesses and preferred to wait until concrete outcomes could be unveiled.

Communication Methods

Staff members are the main facilitators of communication strategies, with consultants being used in different capacities at several of the sites. For instance, Central New Jersey has a full-time paid staff member dedicated exclusively to communication; Southwest Indiana has a communication staff person who is employed for both the region and for the convening WIB organization; and Central Kentucky uses a consulting firm to help with communication issues. The use of personnel dedicated to communication issues appeared to be beneficial to the regions, as they provided additional resources and expertise. In addition, two of the implementation plans discussed the need for, and their request for, additional technical assistance dollars to facilitate the implementation of communications strategies.

At least five of the regions were making use of innovative Web-based communication tools. In some cases, these tools were employed in response to geographic limitations. For example,

Appalachian Ohio has limited broadband connectivity, which is likely a function of its large rural area, hilly terrain, and lack of major population centers. In response, this region has experimented with new communication approaches, such as purchasing a virtual "island" on the Second Life Web site which is used for instructional purposes related to the region's focus on the digital animation sector. Similarly, Southwest Indiana is working to deploy community-wide broadband access in order to overcome the communication barriers presented by the isolation of its rural areas. Southern Arizona, another largely rural region, plans to use the Web to help foster a regional identity by linking WIRED partners from participating organizations across the region. In other regions, Web-based communication tools provide a means for reaching across densely-populated areas encompassing multiple political boundaries. For instance, South Central and Southwest Wisconsin is implementing a new Web-based communication tool called "Basecamp" to facilitate online collaboration and communication among partners. The Delaware Valley Innovation Network has created a Web site intended to bridge the gap between industry, academia, economic development, and workforce development, providing reports and customized data searches with a regional scope. The Web site also boasts an interactive mapping tool, "DVIN Tri-State Region at a Click," which shows where life science companies and training institutions are located in the region.

Interviewees in some of the regions noted that well-organized, formal channels of communication (e.g., scheduled meetings, regular email updates, etc.) had facilitated the development of informal channels of communication—fortuitous contacts that sometimes led to unforeseen positive outcomes. In Central-Eastern Puerto Rico, for example, faculty from the University of Puerto Rico had a history of working independently and without dialogue with companies in the manufacturing sector and did not view themselves as playing a role in the economic development of the region. Through this initiative, faculty members participated in a series of work team meetings with manufacturing employers to discuss skill needs and gaps. During these meetings, the faculty members learned that their students needed more training in Applied Physics in order to address industry needs for quality control experts. To circumvent the cumbersome process of curriculum revision, they developed capstone courses that could be provided for those finishing an Associates' Degree in Electronics and also those pursuing a Bachelor's program in Applied Electronics. Because these courses would not be required for a degree, they could be created quickly and did not have to go through regular approval channels at the University.

Some interviewees mentioned that they had taken advantage of opportunities for learning and communication among regions at the Academies, peer-to-peer national training conferences sponsored by ETA. The consensus was that the Academies were an excellent place to meet with other grantee representatives and their regional partners, learn from them, and hear their stories. In addition, communications between the regions and the relevant state fiscal agent representatives appeared mostly smooth, albeit restricted to grant-administration issues. During site visits, several of the regions' administrative staff members spoke of the valuable and helpful relationships they had built with the ETA staff assigned to their regions.

Measurement

Although the implementation plans included specific tools and strategies for implementing communication strategies, there was very little discussion of measurements for communication

either in the implementation plans or during the site visits. In one of the implementation plans, the region discussed the use of Google Analytics to review the number of hits that its Web site received and to see whether there were any spikes in activity at the time of specific regional events. Since some of the regions were still in the process of developing their communication plans and strategies, more details may emerge in the coming months regarding whether and how the WIRED regions will assess the effectiveness of their communication efforts.

Effectiveness

Given the size and diversity of many of the WIRED regions, it was clear from the outset that communication among a wide array of partners and sectors could be very challenging. At the time of the site visits, many regions were taking positive steps towards inclusion of all relevant stakeholders, but distance often proved problematic to ensuring regular, in-person meetings. As previously noted, seven regions had demonstrated extensive collaboration prior to these regional efforts. These early interactions established a level of trust, commitment, and common identity that made face-to-face communication less of an issue. In regions with limited prior collaboration experience, well-articulated communication strategies employing multiple communication channels, ranging from in-person to more technologically-advanced tools, helped to break down historic barriers to collaboration. Even in the most connected of regions, interviewees indicated that WIRED had opened new paths of communication across boundaries that had seemed insurmountable only a few years before.

Summary Observations

Stakeholders across the regions indicated that they valued and expected clear, concise, and timely communication. In most cases, the regions delivered, using a wide variety of tools—whether formal or informal, traditional or highly innovative—to convey administrative information, foster common understanding, raise awareness, and build support among regional stakeholders and the public. Where such communications were lacking, interviewees tended to demonstrate a lack of knowledge, a lack of buy-in, or both.

- Surprisingly, in regions with effective and well-established formal communication channels, informal communication seemed more prevalent as well.

- Regions with a history of collaboration may have an advantage over those with limited collaboration experience, but the deployment of strategic communication plans—especially those which include paid staff members or consultants—may be just as effective for improving the quality, timeliness, and productivity of communication efforts.

F. Use of Data

Introduction

Collaborative efforts attempting to achieve transformation should rely on data in their decision-making processes. To analyze how data informs decisions, it is useful to think of collaborations in terms of a life cycle: the collaborations are formed; they traverse a learning curve as they begin to function; they mature into effective organizations; and they, ultimately, cease to function. The formation of a collaborative occurs because organizations and individuals have a perspective about the status quo context of their environment. These organizations and individuals are often working together to introduce a change or improvement to that environment. The initial participants in the collaboration may share perceptions about the context of their environment, but as the effort begins formally, data are needed to drive decisions about specific goals, activities, and the utilization of resources. To obtain funding, for example, individuals or institutions that invest in a collaboration usually want data about how the resources will be used.

As a collaborative effort begins to provide services or other value-added activities, its need for data becomes one of monitoring performance. Information is needed to monitor and track the activities to measure characteristics such as participation, growth, and change. To be useful, the performance monitoring data needs to be presented to decision makers in a timely and understandable manner, and decision makers need to know how to use the data. As organizations mature, data become useful for evaluation. That is, the decision makers need to gain a sense of the value of their activities so that they can make rational decisions about continuing on their course of action or making changes.

As the regions attempt to transform their economic development and workforce systems, they will make a number of strategic and tactical decisions. The question is the extent to which the partners rely on data in making those decisions. There are several key points during the life cycle of a region when the leadership could rely on (or could have relied on) data: (1) during the formation stages; when organizations and individuals were identifying sectoral targets and approaches that would transform their region and thus be reasonable projects for funding under the initiative; (2) when developing the implementation plan that established the region's specific goals and strategies; (3) when establishing metrics for activities; (4) in mapping regional assets; (5) for monitoring project activities; and (6) when undertaking strategies aimed at sustainability.

Analyses

The analysis of the use of data was done at three points in the regions' collaboration life cycle. First, it examined the extent to which data was used in the proposal and implementation plans to inform decisions about sectors and activities. Second, the analysis focused on the asset mapping that was done in several of the regions. Finally, it looked at the ongoing use of data in monitoring activities and in establishing strategies for sustainability.

Use of Data to Identify Target Sectors

The methodology used by regional stakeholders in selecting their target industries is an important issue because most regions' plans call for the formation of educational partnerships

and the redirection of regional resources to transform the region's workforce. The proper selection of these targets will enhance the potential success of the regions' efforts.

The feasibility for future success of a region's targeted industries depends on the region's economic suitability to those industries. Data to measure that suitability is as follows:

- A comparison of industries' labor force requirements to the region's workforce skills and abilities.
- Where gaps exist, the capacity of educational/training institutions to provide training for the appropriate occupations.
- Existence of a solid supplier base for the industries or a good market location for the industries.
- Presence of the industries in the region in order to "cluster" and share common resources.

Other factors that may be used to identify the promise of a sector include:

- Accessibility of the region's current workforce to the required skills.
- The rate of growth of national and international markets.
- Rates of pay that are average or better-than-average for the region.

To understand the importance of accessibility to skills, consider the following example. The jobs offered by a new manufacturer of wind turbines will likely be accessible to many regional workers if it locates in a region that already has numerous auto parts manufacturers. On the other hand, many jobs in bioscience laboratories may require more advanced education than is available in the workforce in an area that has relatively poor educational attainment unless there is a substantial investment in education, which would also require a long training period. Potential international competition is important also because sectors with relatively standardized skill requirements will likely face bleak futures as a result.[62]

Most regions have selected target industries that were already successful in the region. Seventeen of the 26 regions identified "advanced manufacturing" and six regions selected health care because of the strong presence these sectors already held in the region. The Arkansas Delta, Northern New Jersey, and Southwest Indiana regions sought to take advantage of their geographic locations and transportation infrastructures by focusing on the transportation, distribution, and logistics (TDL) sector. The Central New Jersey region responded to a restructuring in its pharmaceutical sector, changing from large companies to small and medium-sized firms. In addition, several regions selected targeted industries that could take advantage of the region's unique resources, e.g., major federal and commercial research centers or shipping ports.

From an economic development perspective, this strategy has several advantages and a disadvantage. The strategy allows the regions' partners to work with existing companies in their industries to tailor the workforce system. The presence of the targeted industries in the region

[62] David H. Autor, Frank Levy, and Richard J. Murnane. *The Skill Content of Recent Technological Change: An Empirical Exploration. Quarterly Journal of Economics*. Vol. 118 No. 4. (November 2003): Pages 1279-1333.

suggests that the region already holds a comparative advantage over other regions. Moreover, it is generally easier to assist existing industries to grow than trying to attract new industries into the region. The one possible disadvantage of this strategy is that the region's current major industries may be facing severe national or international conditions that limit their growth potential regardless of regional efforts.

Only three regions have selected target industries that currently have little or no presence in their region. Their plans call for either the development of training programs or entrepreneurial development programs specifically focused on these industries. The advantage of this approach is that it allows the region to select industries, such as computer technologies, nanotechnologies, and/or biotechnology, all of which are facing promising futures. However, without any unique resources, these regions face a difficult challenge in attracting industry activity into the region.

How was data used to make these choices? Most regions picked their target industries based on the region's economic stakeholders' knowledge of the region's past and current economic structure. However, 11 of the 26 regions indicated that they consulted previous economic development assessment studies for their region in the selection of their targeted industries. Three adopted target industries identified by their state's economic development organization or governor's office. For example, the Wasatch Valley region effort involves a staff person from its governor's economic development agency who is responsible for promoting workforce development initiatives that will strengthen and support the many biological-science-related industries in the region.

A few regions conducted their own economic analyses to identify their targeted industries. Three performed some type of cluster analysis to identify industries that had a strong supplier base in the region or more than one competing company in the region, and/or examined whether those companies shared a common workforce. Two used location quotients to identify which industries were the most concentrated in the region.[63] One region used employment multipliers to estimate the industry's impact on the region. Unfortunately, neither location quotients nor employment multipliers provide any information regarding the potential growth of the industry. In fact, outside of health care, only one region cited national growth projections as a consideration in their target industry selection.

In short, only a few regions used data extensively by carrying out detailed economic analyses in selecting their targeted industries. Instead, they counted on the regional knowledge of their economic development stakeholders and the potential economic impact of their unique research and education assets. It may be that regions understood the uncertainty associated with targeting industries; it is very difficult for anyone to pick "winners." This uncertainty led many regions to identify broad targets such as "advanced manufacturing" and "entrepreneurship," rather than venturing to name specific sectors, such as fabricated metals or plastics.

[63] An industry's location quotient is derived by dividing its percent share of the region's workforce by its percentage of the nation's employment. A location quotient of greater than 1.5 suggests that the region is highly concentrated in that industry.

Asset Mapping

One major use of data by regions, required as part of participation in this initiative, is asset mapping. During the first round of site visits to all 26 regions, local leaders and stakeholders were queried about the status, use, and general perceptions of the asset mapping process. Many regions were relying on the asset maps for what might be considered their primary purpose: identifying partners or regional resources that might be tapped for initiative-supported activities. In addition to that purpose, however, respondents indicated that the data derived from the asset mapping were used for other purposes, such as when conceptualizing the project for the original proposal, selecting target industries and occupations to focus on in the implementation plan, directing activities, and promoting the concept of regional collaboration.

Despite the fact that the site visits occurred relatively early in the initiative's timeline, a significant number—ten regions in all—reported that their asset maps had already been completed and were currently being used. In some cases, the asset mapping had even been done prior to receiving the grant funding, which these regions reported as being highly beneficial for the development of the original proposal and implementation plan. For example, the Delaware Valley region utilized a pre-existing asset map that had identified five target industries as the basis for their focus on life science activities. The amount of data provided by this asset map was substantial, which provided information for the region's application, as well as direction for its decision regarding focus sectors.

Interviewees from half of the 26 regions visited reported that asset map data had helped them to identify a program, service provider, or firm with a specific occupational need that could be involved in the initiative. Other popular uses of asset map data were the identification and selection of target industries and occupations (four regions) or to guide who was selected as a primary partner for the project (two regions). However, it is also worth noting that interviewees in the remaining regions were unsure of how the asset map data would be used, even if they also expressed positive hopes regarding its potential for guiding future decisions. In at least one region, there was a plan to hire consultants to conduct a workshop for those who were interested in learning more about the asset mapping process and use of resulting data. For example, in one region, interviewees indicated that data from the asset mapping process has been driving multiple aspects of their initiative. Area partners were engaged in asset mapping prior to forming a region, which has allowed the project to be data-driven from the very beginning—even influencing the initial application. According to one local partner:

> *Every time we make a strategic decision or recommendation, we look at our asset mapping. [We] have used it a lot…where we may think there is a need for certain skills [or] knowledge that we may want to include [in the initiative]…companies we want to reach out to…[to find] students for graduate [training], we use [asset mapping data].*

Of the regions that did not have completed asset maps at the time of the site visits, five reported that asset mapping was currently in progress, while the remaining eleven regions were still in various stages of planning and were not yet engaged in asset mapping. Regions that were in the process of completing the asset map typically reported that they were already making use of initial data to bring partners together or to identify firms or training organizations to invite into

the collaborative. For instance, in Northern New Jersey in-house asset mapping was underway at the time of the team's site visit. The region found that the energy industry kept popping up in their early analysis. Although energy was not included as one of the region's original target clusters, the group made a decision to add curriculum for the energy industry to its planned activities, based on these data.

In only two regions did interviewees express a strong negative view of asset mapping; interviewees from these areas felt that they already knew their region's assets and that the data would not be used. In sharp contrast, most regions held an expectation that the asset map data would be used, and four regions demonstrated that pre-existing asset map data had been used extensively in the development of their goals and strategies from the beginning.

Of course, being data-driven can mean extending the use of knowledge beyond the obvious or intended purposes to strengthen other areas of a region. For example, a regional leader expressed some amazement in regards to how the asset mapping data helped her to find new collaborators for the initiative. Additionally, having data on the region's resources was found to be "useful in outreach" such as promoting collaboration, as well as "very instrumental in breaking down silos" and getting partners to think in broader terms.

Performance Monitoring and Sustainability

According to documents and discussions with administrators, ETA placed considerable emphasis on the development of usable, measurable metrics for activities in each region's implementation plan. Indeed, for the most part, those metrics are clearly specified in the plans. Of those that were examined, 20 listed outcomes/metrics.[64] There was considerable variation across regions, and even across activities within a region, in the specificity and measurability of these outcomes/metrics, however. In many cases, the plans note very general outcomes such as "a plan will be developed," "a formative evaluation will occur," or "data will be compiled." In other cases, very specific numeric targets are given. The following table is an example from one of the implementation plans that has quite specific metrics.

[64] Counted among the 20 was a region that had prepared a document titled, "Accountability Plan," totally separate from the implementation plan.

Table 10: One Region's Metrics and Expected Outcomes

Measures	Expected Outcomes
Business Impact/Entrepreneurship	
Number of Business Startups	150
Number of Business Expansions	75
Number of Businesses Utilizing Incubators	15
Amount of Business ("Risk") Loans**	$5,000,000
Training/Education-Related Activities	
Number Began Education/Training Activities	1,500
Number Completed Education/Training Activities	1,200
Number Attained Degree or Certification	750
Number Placed in Target Industry Employment	1,000
Number Placed in Post-Secondary Education or Certificate Program	50
Average Wage at Placement	$12/Hour
Capacity-Building	
Number of New/Expanded Industry Courses Available	50
Job Creation	
Number of New Jobs Created in Target Industries	450

*This table was drawn from one region's implementation plan.
**The term "Risk" Loans was used in the implementation plan to refer to loans to entrepreneurs having difficulty accessing conventional financing.

Whereas regions were diligent in terms of identifying outcomes and metrics, they were less far along in actually monitoring activities against the desired outcomes or metrics at the time of the site visits. Here are some related comments from individuals during site visits:

> *We discuss metrics at the leadership team meeting but at a higher level. When we give money out, we write an accountability piece with the measure embedded.*
> [Note: In this region, the leadership team had met only once.]

> *We know what we want to measure – in the implementation plan. However, our metrics committee is still in development, and we are not sure where to get the data.*

On the other hand, a couple of regions have achieved quite a level of sophistication in monitoring their activities. One region indicated that projects are discussed at board meetings. An individual from that region noted, "I have been impressed by the board's desire to gather data and make informed decisions. Data are important. Some of it has been really interesting and has even changed the perspective of some of the board members." Another region was in the process of finalizing a document explaining the details of the metrics process that they had established. Staff members indicated that they were going to "roll out the baseline metrics" at the next leadership meeting, and then they planned to calculate and publicize them on a quarterly basis.

Interestingly, none of the implementation plans mention summary evaluations of the extent to which workforce or economic development systems have been transformed in the region, or to

track regional (macro) economic indicators such as employment or incomes. The approach of the regions to date is uniformly to fund or promote activities that regional stakeholders believe to be transformative or innovative and to measure the takeup of those activities. No region purports to measure overall regional economic activity nor the extent to which transformation has been achieved.

Tracking and Reporting Progress

The tools and methods a region devises to track and report progress also support its decision-making. As one region has done, this might include having task teams monitor and report on outcome measures on a quarterly basis. In this region, this information is reported to the leadership team as well, which is responsible for assessing program effectiveness. Another region has created a thorough financial management process. In this region, a financial manager reports quarterly to the leadership team, providing updates on the status of each of the region's project efforts

To date, the above examples are not common. Most regions are monitoring expenditures and general project implementation status, but this information is not widely shared within their structures. Specific outcome measures are not being compiled and tracked in nearly all cases.

Summary Observations

- An examination of the background documents, proposals, and implementation plans suggested that most of the regions selected targets based on the partners' common knowledge of the existing industrial structure in the region. They confirmed these choices with data. It appears as though only a small number of regions systematically analyzed available data on employment or business formation in order to choose targets.

- For the most part, regions seemed to have taken seriously regional asset mapping. Ten of the 26 regions (split about equally between generations) had completed the mapping and were using the results. The asset mapping in most of the rest of the regions was in process or planning. In only two regions did there seem to be resistance to the activity. As the evaluation unfolds, monitoring of the extent to which regions use their asset maps will continue. The study team will try to determine whether there is any relationship between the seriousness with which regions conducted the asset mapping and their progress toward regional transformation of the workforce and economic development systems in the region.

- With considerable prodding from ETA, the regions explicitly listed expected outcomes and metrics for the activities in their implementation plans. A review of these revealed considerable variation in the usefulness and measurability of these metrics. As the evaluation progresses over the next couple of years, it will be interesting to observe and try to tease out any correlation between the specificity and measurability of the metrics and the region's progress toward transformation.

- In terms of monitoring performance of activities, most regions indicated that they were just initiating their activities and had invested little effort to date in monitoring outcomes. Nevertheless, the regions suggested that they intend to do that monitoring over time. This

will be evaluated to determine the extent to which they do so, and the approaches they take to using the data to support future decision-making.

G. Resources and Sustainability

Introduction

In the evaluation's Theory of Change, the dimension related to resources and sustainability is relevant to the ability of regions to meet the goals of the initiative, and to move toward realization of regional innovative economic transformation. The adequacy of resources is an important factor in the effectiveness of initiative activity.

The leveraging of other funds was one required component for the regions. For regions to meet their transformation goals, it is anticipated that grant funds will need to be enhanced with in-kind and cash resources from other sources. Achieving regional economic transformation may also result from leveraging grant funds and activities to help sustain or expand existing efforts to provide training for new technologies, and to support entrepreneurship and other similar programs.

Allocation of Initiative Funds

The budgets that are integral parts of the region's implementation plans are extremely important indicators of how the regions perceive their roles within the initiative as well as what goals they believe are most valuable to their overall mission to transform (or at least begin the transformation of) the economy in their respective regions. Two broad categories of expenditures are evident from the plans, budgets, and discussion with region leaders. One category includes the administrative and organizational funding that was needed to startup, hire, or contract out new organizational structures for the staff to manage the initiative activity. Funds designed to implement or sustain collaborative efforts among disparate partners and stakeholders—such as WIB directors' consortia, industry councils, education-industry partnerships, and other similar efforts—are also part of this broad category. The second broad category of expenditures is for programmatic activities. These are the funds that regions use to specify how they plan to transform their regions and, as discussed below, these funds may also be further placed within several broad sub-categories which illustrate the mechanisms through which the regions intend to transform their economies. These include funds allocated to training workers, creating new curricula, promoting STEM activities, informing workers about workforce opportunities, matching workers to these new opportunities, promoting entrepreneurship, and promoting further economic and workforce innovation in the region. Several regions have carved out a portion of their expenditures to promote innovation through competitive subgranting of grant investment funds.

Most regions organized their implementation plan budgets according to strategy or by goal area, since ETA required that budgets be mapped to prioritized goals for the first year. This formatting created a difficulty in neatly categorizing line items. Another difficulty in categorizing this type of allocation is that six regions either did not have budgets or did not have sufficiently detailed budgets to determine the allocation categories of interest. Therefore the following discussion about the allocations is a rough approximation of planned expenditures.

Administrative, Organizational, and Operational Expenses to Support a Collaborative Process

The regions are allocating between one-fourth and one-third of their grant investment funds towards startup and administration expenses, including funds for program executives, administrative staff, accounting, and, in some cases, administrative fees to state government. Additional funds in this category are for purchased services and equipment, computer hardware and software, rent, publications, data resources, and consultants (most often conducting asset mapping). As previously noted, most of the regions have contracted with commercial vendors or university institutes to compile regional profiles or other related data gathering activities. The Heldrich Center at Rutgers University, for example, has provided regional asset data for both the Northern New Jersey and the Central New Jersey regions. Central Kentucky has contracted with two vendors: one to provide a comprehensive profile of the economy and population of the region; and another to determine what draws young adults away from the region, what keeps others in the region, and what may entice those who have left to return. Other operational expenses include communication expenses, hosted meetings and conferences, and travel.

Programmatic Expenses

Almost all of the remaining funds in each region's budget are devoted to programmatic activities that are intended to begin the economic and workforce transformation of these regions. Among the 26 regions are dozens of programs and activities designed to meet the regional goals, such as through education and training programs, workforce system redesign, industry council development, minority recruitment for technical careers, entrepreneurship, and the like. Almost all of the regions are devoting some portion of their budgets to education and training activities. For example, the Greater Albuquerque region has budgeted funding for developing a community college "green" building" curriculum, including environmentally sensitive techniques for landscaping, construction, heating and cooling, water conservation, and solar power. All three of New Jersey's regions (i.e., DVIN, Bio-1, and New Jersey Partners) are funding laboratory technician training that targets minority youth. The North Oregon region devoted funds to recruit rural youth to a High Tech University program designed to expose them to science and engineering careers.

Eight regions (evenly divided between Generations II and III) heavily targeted an emerging industry with their goals and activities. No regions expected to attract industries entirely new to their economies. Of those that focused on emerging industries, the targets included life sciences, information technology/interactive digital technology, logistics/transportation/distribution, composites, nanotechnology, and green technology/renewable energy. In examining the budgets presented with the implementation plans for these regions, it appears that the grant funds were intended to support activities to bolster collaboration and communication in the region, expand the numbers of workers in the industry pipeline, and encourage entrepreneurship. The grant funds were used largely as seed money to build added capacity and spur new programs. In most cases, the regions also had leveraged funds to compliment the grant funds, and were working off existing ideas or models. For instance, the Tennessee Valley region budgeted funds for new curriculum modules created by the Hudson Alpha Institute for Biotechnology (HAIB) and to expand the Alabama APPLE AP lab support program, among other activities, stating "We do not

view the $5 million from DOL-ETA as an end point but rather a jump-start to a larger value proposition for the long-term benefit."[65]

Several of the regions have allocated grant investment funds to redesign or reconfigure aspects of the workforce system in their areas. One example is the Southwest Connecticut region, who's goal to "create an integrated, regionally-based talent development system linking education, workforce, and economic development . . ."[66] Another is the planned establishment of a "Bio-1 Stop" (Central New Jersey) that will combine workforce development, training, entrepreneurship, and economic development activities into a "seamless . . . portal into the direct activities of workforce development . . . [and] . . . also as a connection into New Jersey's economic development."[67] This activity ties in specifically with the region's goal of reversing losses it was seeing in its share of the pharmaceutical market.

Another common activity included in the regions' budgets is industry councils that link employers, educational organizations, and workforce agencies together. For example, the Northern New Jersey region has brought representatives of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (employer) together with community college educators, data resources from the Heldrich Center at Rutgers University, and workforce agencies to help bring a mix of training, education, workforce resources, and information to support the growing transportation, warehousing, and distribution (TWD) industry along the Hudson River.

Funds designated for entrepreneurship and funds for competitive proposals to develop and implement innovative workforce and training programs were singled out for additional focus as important examples of innovative activity, and are discussed in more depth below. These are highlighted because of their crucial role in promoting creativity and input from multiple sectors, and the significant window of opportunity they create in stimulating new ways of approaching transformation and thinking outside the box.

Allocations to Stimulate Innovation

Descriptions of allocations are at best rough approximations of the happenings at the regional level, since most regions ordered their budgets by goal area, and there is some subjectivity in how to categorize activity. Nevertheless, a number of regions specifically allocated funds to stimulate innovation through subgrants either through allocations specifically for entrepreneurship activities or a variety of other activities.

Entrepreneurship. Budgets for ten of the 26 regions contained some funding for the support of entrepreneurial activity as specific aspects of those region's plans. The amount of funding varied from a low of $22,500 (about 0.5 percent of its total grant budget) for technology transfer in one region to a high of $1.2 million (23.5 percent) in another region, for expansion of entrepreneurial training, coordination between workforce development and entrepreneurial training, business

[65] Valley Innovation Alliance, "Implementation Plan," January 2008, page 5.
[66] The Workplace, Inc. "Talent for Growth WIRED Implementation Plan." Revised November 2007. Bridgeport, CT: 2007, page 13.
[67] Bio-1. "Central New Jersey WIRED Implementation Plan." Revised March 19, 2007. New Brunswick, NJ: 2007, pages pages 34-35.

incubators, angel investor forums for startup businesses, and small business development activities.

The budget plans that were submitted by each region along with their implementation plan do not necessarily line up with the emphasis placed on entrepreneurship activities. One of the primary reasons for this is that some regions were more focused than others on leveraging resources from federal agencies (Economic Development Agency, Agriculture, and Small Business Administration), universities, and private investors (angel investors, corporate foundations) to supplement WIRED funds. As a result, the total level of investment in entrepreneurship programs is actually higher than what is shown in Figure 5.

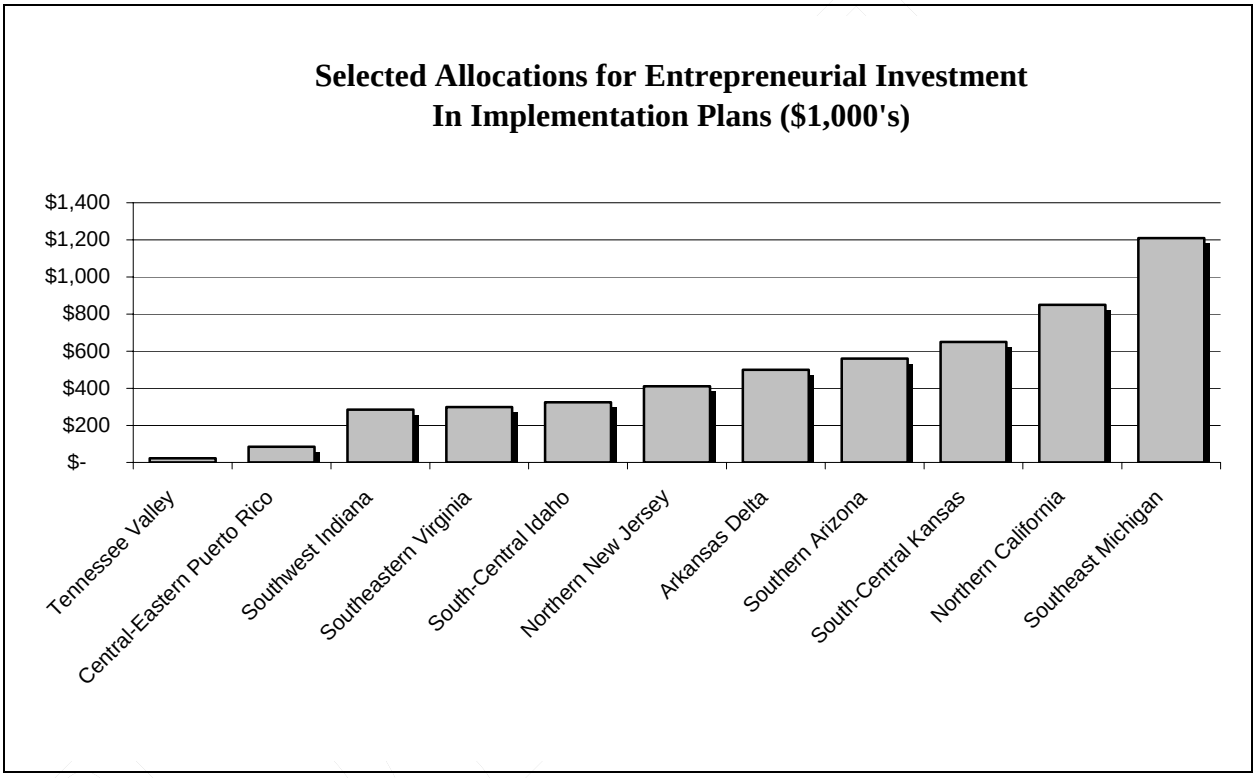

Figure 5

Competitive Grants

Although all of the regions are focused on developing innovative solutions to the workforce system challenges they face, about one-third (nine of 26) are looking for these solutions through a competitive reinvestment process and have explicitly allocated funds for this purpose. It is possible that other regions may also be employing this approach, but that is not discernable from the budget detail of the implementation plans. Figure 6 describes the distribution of regions according to allocations for a competitive subgranting process.

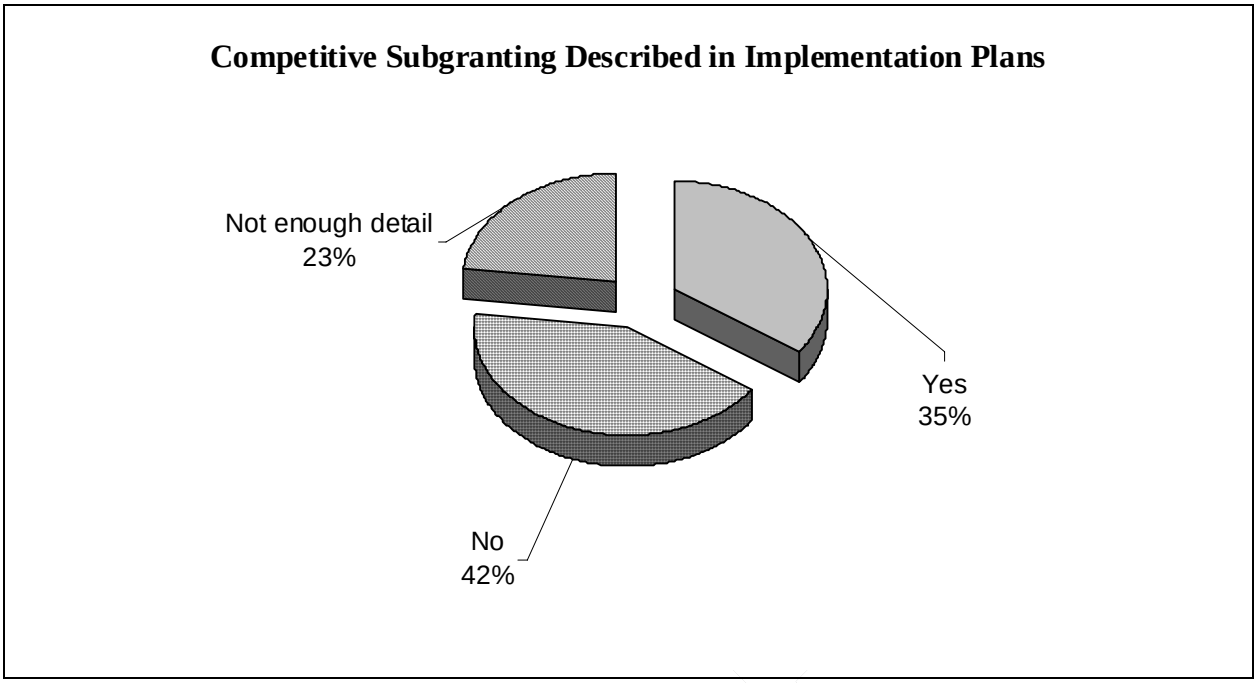

Figure 6

Budget items that were intended for subgranting activity were identified in the budgets as "innovative stimulus fund," "grant opportunities," or "opportunity trust fund," or simply "innovation funds" and were all assumed to represent attempts to stimulate an entrepreneurial and a competitive approach in proposing and implementing worker training, curriculum development, entrepreneurship, collaboration, and the like. The amount of funding varied from a low of $40,000 (less than one percent of its total budget) for "Business and Workforce Performance Improvement to coordinate planning with Contract Education and Flexibility grants" to a high of $3.1 million (63 percent) in another region, for development of curriculum and support of regional workforce programs to meet industry needs, for youth and adult STEM programs, and for E-SHIP and SME programs. As implied in Figure 7, there was great variation in the range of amounts set aside for competitive subgrants.

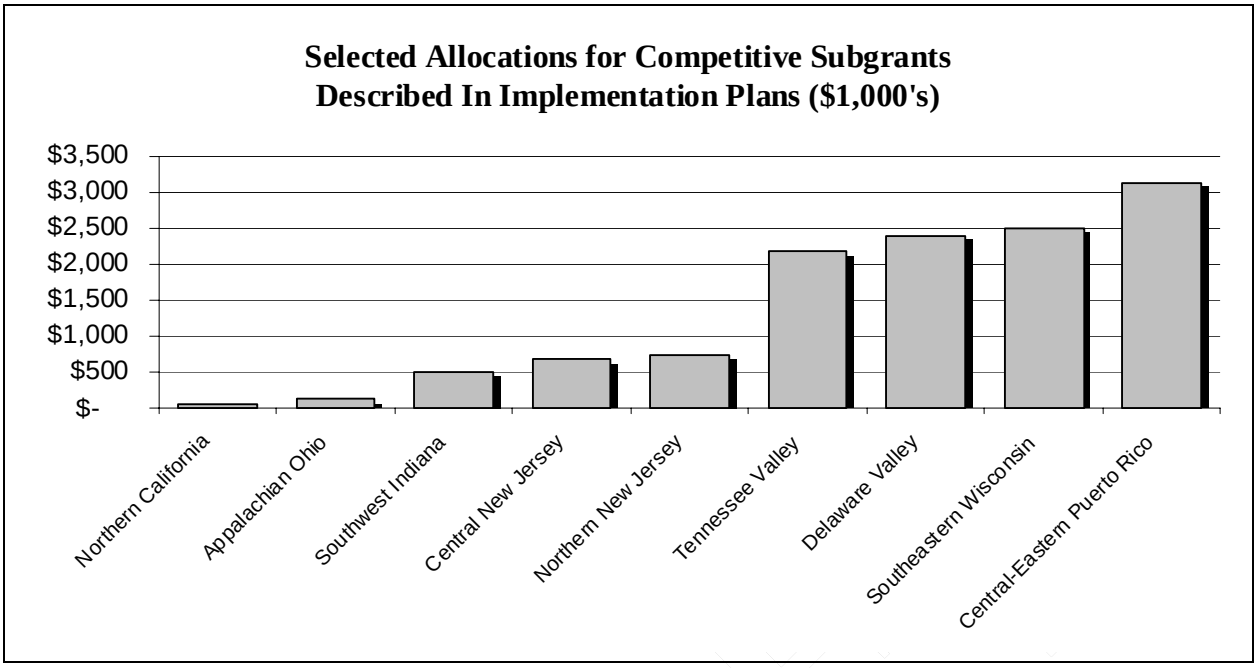

Figure 7

One important task in following the progress of these budget allocations during the life of the initiative will be to determine whether different levels of subgranting will influence the impact of the initiative overall.

Expenditure Status

The spend-down status of each of the regions was assessed using data from ETA as of January 9, 2009. The range of expenditures at that time is shown in Table 11. To put these expenditures in context, Generation II regions were selected in February of 2007, and Generation III regions in June 2007. Most Generation II regions had their implementation plans approved by ETA in 2007. Most Generation III regions had their implementation plans approved by ETA in 2008.

Regions in Generation II had spent from about nine percent to 39 percent of their grant funds, and in the aggregate had spent about 25 percent of the funds invested in them. More specifically, in Generation II, four regions had spent less than 20 percent of their funds by January 2009; three had spend about one-quarter of their funds; and six had spent at least 30 percent of their funds.

Regions in Generation III had a wider range of funds expended, from about one percent to about 52 percent, and in the aggregate had spent about 19 percent of their grant funds. Three Generation III regions had spent less than 10 percent of their funds by January 2009; five had spend less than 20 percent; two had spent about one-quarter of their funds; and three had spent at least 30 percent of their funds.

Table 11: Grant Expenditure Status as of January 2009

Site	Grant Amount	Maximum Amount Expended or Drawn*	Proportion Spent As Of January 2009
Generation II			
Wasatch Range Utah	$4,160,000	$361,563	8.7
Delaware Valley	$4,160,000	$392,648	9.4
Northern New Jersey	$4,160,000	$564,340	13.6
Appalachian Ohio	$4,060,000	$715,228	17.6
Southeast Michigan	$4,144,000	$959,854	23.2
Tennessee Valley	$4,160,000	$991,947	23.8
Southeastern Wisconsin	$4,160,000	$1,055,220	25.4
Southwest Indiana	$4,160,000	$1,235,000	29.7
Arkansas Delta	$4,160,000	$1,275,945	30.7
Rio South Texas	$4,060,000	$1,261,213	31.1
Southwestern Connecticut	$4,160,000	$1,342,787	32.3
Northern California	$4,160,000	$1,410,359	33.9
Central-Eastern Puerto Rico	$4,100,000	$1,591,607	38.8
Totals	**$53,804,000**	**$13,157,711**	**24.5**
Generation III			
Central New Jersey	$2,559,999	$33,416	1.3
So Cen and So West Wisconsin	$2,499,999	$124,150	5.0
Greater Albuquerque	$2,559,999	$203,972	8.0
Southcentral and Western MN	$2,559,999	$264,500	10.3
South Central Kansas	$2,559,999	$281,428	11.0
Southeastern Mississippi	$2,559,999	$300,695	11.7
Southern Arizona	$2,499,999	$323,383	12.9
Southeast Missouri	$2,559,999	$418,098	16.3
Central Kentucky	$2,559,999	$599,332	23.4
North Oregon	$2,559,999	$685,662	26.8
South Central Idaho	$2,559,999	$745,321	29.1
Southeastern Virginia	$2,559,999	$845,961	33.0
Pacific Mountain Washington	$2,559,999	$1,332,734	52.1
Totals	**$33,159,987**	**$6,158,652**	**18.6**

Data for this table came from expenditure reports submitted by the regions and a summary report prepared by ETA.
**Note:* Based on costs reported or cash draws to date (1/08/09), whichever is greater.

During the course of the site visits, staff in some of the regions explained why their spending had not been more extensive. There is, however, no single explanation as to why these expenditures were so limited, as shown in Table 12. A few of the regions reported that their delay in using

their funds to establish or support programs was related to confusion around Federal regulations as to what they were legitimately allowed to support. In addition, at least two sites had deliberately held off spending until certain activities were completed (i.e., asset map completed, business plans submitted) in an effort to make more data-driven decisions about expenditures. Three Generation III regions reported that spending had been delayed due to their lack of having their implementation plans approved. A few of the regions also had reorganized due to changes in the geographic composition of the region and/or its leadership, and these factors also slowed down the planning, implementation, and funding process.

Due to the slow pace of expenditures so far, a few of the regions expressed concern about being able to expend all of their grant investment funds before the end of the period of performance of their Federal grant. Table 12 below outlines some of the circumstances that accounted for delays in spending down the grant funds, as described during the site visits in 2008. Staff in one region characterized their situation as being "in a race to spend the entire grant amount."

Table 12: Reasons for Delays in Expenditure of Grant Funds
Site Visit Feedback 2008

Confusion Around Federal Regulations
Allowable cost guidelines were perceived to change over time, leading to temporary paralysis within some of the regions. Several regions indicated initial lack of familiarity with ETA guidelines, for example, the prohibition against using grant funds for training those below age 16.
There was a lack of direction from ETA on funds expenditures.
Confusion about Federal requirements, such as whether the region had to wait for ETA approval of the implementation plan before the planning funds could be expended, contributed to the delays.
The grant budget process was burdensome and complex, and caused delays in disbursing the funds for projects.
Due to the lack of clarity about expenditures, at least one region first spent other leveraged funds that had fewer restrictions than grant funds.
Implementation Plans Had Not Been Approved or Funds Were Just Recently Available
The region's implementation plan had not yet been approved at the time of the site visit, and was at the beginning point of activities.
The region did not have an approved implementation plan at the time of the site visit. It took a methodical approach that would not tolerate spending until an approved plan was in hand.
Funding had just become available from ETA in the spring of 2008, and expenditures as of late summer were few.
Early Research Took Up Valuable Time
Extensive research conducted at the startup of the initiative left little time to implement the plan of action.
Awaiting completion of asset mapping; leadership insisted on minimizing project spending until asset mapping was completed and an implementation plan based on research findings was approved.
Changes in Regional Organization, and State-Level Bureaucracy Also Interfered With Timely Expenditure of Funds
Regional reorganization appeared to be a factor in the slow pace of spending grant funds.
Delays were in part the result of expansion of the region to include areas within an adjacent state (and the official recognition of the new regional organization by the second state) as well as expansion of the areas included within the original state.
Changeover to a new project manager contributed to the delay.
State government officials applied state expenditure vetting rules to the grant funds instead of implementing expenditure decisions made by the initiative's project manager. Some partners were willing and able to take on some of the costs with the expectation of being reimbursed later, but others were not able to do so; all the partners were concerned about receiving reimbursement in a suitable timeframe.

Leveraged Funds

ETA required grantees to submit quarterly updates of leveraged funds, and provided a specific format for this reporting. Leveraged funds are not defined in regulation or administrative requirements, but apparently have a common usage definition in most Federal agencies. Within

ETA programs, leveraged funds are considered as "all resources used by the grantee to support the grant activity and outcomes, whether or not those resources meet the standards required for match."[68] These leveraged funds must be expended on costs that are allowable under OMB circulars, and can include both Federal and non-Federal dollars.

There was a good deal of variability between regions in how much attention the topic of leveraged funds has received. Although ETA had not provided an explicit definition of leveraged funds, it appears that in-kind resources have not been considered leveraged funds. For example, New Economy Initiative funds for Southeast Michigan (a large scale [$100 million] foundation-funded initiative to transform Detroit) were not included as leveraged funds by ETA. In site visits it appeared that regions were more flexible than ETA in what they perceived to be leveraged funds, and, even if they could not be quantified, sometimes referenced in-kind resources as leveraged. During site visits, regions also sometimes cited funds that pre-existed WIRED as leveraged funds. Given the above scenarios, analyses of leveraged funds must be viewed with the possibility that they are inflated or underreported.

A review of the regions' proposals and implementation plans revealed that all but three identified separate sources of leveraged funds, ranging from one to 41, with three regions not listing any. In the proposals, seven of the 26 regions indicated that they had specific plans for additional leveraging of resources. Of the implementation plans available, eight did not list specific separate sources of non-grant leveraged funds. At the other extreme, one region was able to specify as many as 41 sources of leveraged funds.

Moving forward to 2008, the scope of leveraged funds among regions is captured by ETA's data report from April 3, 2008. The data were gathered by ETA and represent to-date funds. Leveraged fund reports should be considered preliminary or approximations of leveraging, due to the apparent inconsistent definitions applied, and because some data are missing. About 12 regions had not provided a report for April 2008. Table 13 summarizes the available data, showing each type of leveraged fund source, and, for each type of source, the number of sources, the amount of funds, and the percent of total leveraged funds.

[68] Regional Workforce Alliance, Southeastern Wisconsin, "A Discussion of Match and Leveraged Resources, " (2008). <www.milwaukee7-rwa.org/files/a-discussion-of-match-and-leveraged-resources-document.pdf> , 1.

Table 13: Leveraged Fund Sources
As Reported by ETA, As of April 3, 2008

Type of Source	Number of Sources	Amount of Leveraged Funds	Percent of Leveraged Funds
Generation II			
Education	1	$1,500	<1
Industry	2	$26,000	<1
Local	2	$181,704	<1
Foundation	9	$5,101,000	1.7
Federal	28	$50,373,264	17.0
State	28	$98,400,095	33.2
Multiple	4	$142,465,000	48.0
Total	**74**	**$296,548,563**	**100.0**
Generation III			
Federal	4	$6,097	<1
Multiple	4	$16,891	<1
Foundation	1	$60,000	1.0
Industry	12	$163,330	2.8
Education	18	$182,829	3.2
Local	4	$450,630	7.8
State	12	$4,871,784	84.7
Total	**55**	**$5,751,561**	**100.0**

As Table 13 shows, the amount of funds leveraged by Generation II regions collectively was an impressive $296 million. Generation III, at the same point in time, had amassed about $5.7 million. For Generation II regions, the greatest number of sources was found in the Federal and state category (28 for each). Generation III regions, on the other hand, had netted the greatest number of sources from industry, education, and state sources (12, 18, and 12, respectively). In contrast, in Generation II, the industry category yielded just two sources that, together, accounted for less than one percent of the total leveraged funds for that Generation. In all, Generation II regions had leveraged funds from 74 separate sources, and Generation II regions, leveraged from 55 sources.

The Federal and state sources also comprised about half of the total dollars leveraged in Generation II, and "multiple sources" made up about half as well. At this same point in time, however, the vast majority of leveraged funds for Generation III was from state sources (85 percent).

Because Generation II and III initiatives began at different times, it might be expected that Generation II regions would be further ahead in leveraging funds. Thus, it is somewhat surprising that Generation III had engendered more than twice the amount of local funding as Generation II, and many more separate sources of funds from industry and education. Given the variations in how leveraged funds have been defined and reported, it is premature to draw any firm conclusions about this disparity.

Several Generation II regions reported during site visits that they were able to find some positive outcomes from the disappointment of not being approved as Generation I regions; they were able to use their time and energy to leverage other resources to begin addressing their goals.

Leveraged funds have been used for several different purposes, including:

- Covering program-related costs that do not meet the allowable cost requirements for the Initiative's H1-B funds (e.g., angel investors)
- Extending the reach of the program strategy to include students less than 15 years old
- Expanding a program strategy to cover a broader geographic (e.g., statewide) region
- Supporting implementation programs that were researched, designed, and developed through the Initiative
- Covering the cost of a key program that had been included in the region's original (Gen I) proposal
- Supporting greater participation in training programs by dislocated workers

Sustainability

None of the 26 regions included a developed plan for sustainability within their proposals. However, ten of the regions either anticipated in some fashion the mechanisms by which programs or the initiative could be sustained, structures or conditions that would be needed, and types of funding required, or recognized explicitly the need to create a plan and/or timeline for sustainability.

Fifteen implementation plans explained how the regions would ensure sustainability, four regions made no mention of this issue, two did not provide any specific strategy, and another indicated it was under discussion. As observed during the site visits, the degree to which regions were addressing sustainability varied; from no attention to integration of sustainability efforts within their plans or activities. Site visit observations revealed that 11 regions were taking steps to address sustainability; seven were making plans to address it; and at least five regions had not begun to plan or strategize in any organized fashion the issue of initiative sustainability. At least three regions indicated that sustainability was one of their top goals for the initiative. Most of the other regions folded sustainability as a sub-activity within one or more of their goals.

Focus on Building Revenue Streams

Regions are addressing sustainability through both financial and structural approaches, including the following:

- *Leveraging funds and using multiple funding streams*: Projects are including in-kind contributions and program-specific funding sources, such as Northern California's creation of an angel network venture capital fund. The possibility of gap funding to fill the gap between the end of grant funds and the establishment of stable continuation funding is also under consideration.

- *Requiring subgrantees to obtain matching funds, and submit sustainability plans*: At least two regions mentioned that they would require subgrantees from within the region to submit

sustainability plans as part of their proposals, and some planned to require one-to-one matching funds. For example, in Delaware Valley, applicants for Innovation Investment funds, the name given to the initiative's subgranting program, must demonstrate funding sources in addition to the Delaware Valley grant funding for activities extending beyond the Innovation Investment funding period. A one-to-one match for all funds provided through these innovation investment grants was also being planned.

- *Establishing self-sustaining activities/projects:* At least five regions planned to establish activities or projects that could generate their own revenues, such as fee-for-service endeavors, or membership dues. For example, North Oregon required employer contributions to the cost of training, both for new and incumbent workers, as both a model for making the training financially sustainable and as a test of value of the training to employers. They implemented a cost-sharing system in which employers pay 30 to 50 percent of the total cost of training.

- *Establishing non-profit status:* At least two regions indicated an expectation that transforming their collaborative into a nonprofit entity would provide insurance for sustainability by allowing them to pursue grant funds from government, private, and foundation sources.

- *Supporting or expanding existing activities:* Doing so set the stage for transition of financial responsibility back to the original program funders. For example, Northern New Jersey envisioned a scenario where the work of the site coordinators, who organize the activities of the One-Stops, employers, and educators within clusters, would continue working beyond the end of grant funding. These positions would be absorbed within and funded by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Overall, grant investment funds were seen as a valuable source from which to build workforce and training infrastructure.

Demonstrating and Communicating Value

Other sustainability efforts were focused on structural, organizational, or operational measures as means to this end. These strategies included the following:

- *Designated Responsibility*. Designating a committee or similar body to specifically attend to and enact measures of success that would then be used to promote the sustainability of the regional collaborative. At least seven regions mentioned this tactic, with most of those designating a panel rather than an individual.

- *Documenting Success.* At least 11 regions indicated that positive outcomes from their efforts would be the foundation of sustainability; if they provided value and if they documented and shared their successes, then the efforts would become sustained by those industries or employers who found value in the results. Others believed that if the site coordinators are recognized as providing real value to the employers within their respective clusters, employers could be asked to fund these positions, possibly using funds that would otherwise be paid to commercial employment agencies to recruit workers.

- *Capacity-Building.* As noted above, while many focused on outputs—the valued results of efforts—at least one region viewed the inputs as extremely valuable in propelling regional efforts into the future. Part of their sustainability approach was to build upon existing resources and initiatives. For example, in one region, it was anticipated that "building capacity at the leadership level" would enable the initiative to continue to press forward.

Building on the Momentum of Increasing Regionalism

Another expectation mentioned by at least seven regions was that the collaborative process and partnerships that they had built under the Initiative would ensure sustainability. It was suggested that if the region created a valued network of partners around their regional vision, then the leaders would work to continue the partnerships. The initiative was viewed as the "nurturing source" that would permit the region to become more cohesive and successful. The collaborative work was seen as a foundation and a model for continued work in the future. The importance of shared vision was highlighted because a lack of buy-in could threaten the sustainability of the change being implemented. Some stakeholders expressed the view that if the level of partnership is supported, it would lead to new and innovative ideas which would keep the momentum of the initiative.

Venture Capital

Venture capital is an important tool for supporting entrepreneurs who need to commercialize a product, service, or process. Development of angel investment or venture capital sources, however, has not yet been a prominent activity for the regions.

At least three regions that plan significant efforts in entrepreneurship programs have integrated angel investing as part of their programming:

- Northern California established an angel investment fund, had raised $19,000, and, at the time of the site visit, reported that it planned to raise as much as $3 million in private funds to be available for investment in innovative startup companies. In this case, the recipients will be entrepreneurs who are developing products or services that are unique and have the potential to achieve substantial growth.

- Southeast Michigan launched an innovative program where potential investors who may be considering the idea of becoming an angel investor have been invited to attend selected class sessions to learn more about available investment opportunities.

- Another region has several representatives of the region's banking industry who have expressed a desire to be involved in the initiative, which could translate into a possible source of investment capital.

Summary Observations

- An examination of the budget allocation of grant resources showed that overall there was a great amount of variability between regions in the proportion allocated to innovation, subgranting, and entrepreneurial programming, ranging from two percent to 76 percent of

region funds. Compared to Generation III, Generation II regions demonstrated slightly more emphasis on innovation, subgranting, and entrepreneurial programming as avenues to reach regional goals, based on planned allocation. Caution should be used in interpreting this observation, however, because some regions' budgets were not available, not detailed sufficiently, or not formatted in a fashion that would permit a clear view of these planned expenditures.

- Leveraged funds, which varied from just a few thousand dollars to more than one million dollars, were used for a variety of purposes, including covering program-related costs that do not meet the allowable cost requirements for the Initiative's H1-B funds, extending the reach of the program strategy to include students less than 15 years old, expanding a program strategy to cover a broader geographic area, supporting implementation programs that were researched and developed through the Initiative, covering gaps in funding that arose for Generation II regions, and supporting greater participation in training programs by dislocated workers.

- Using ETA data from April 2008, the regions had leveraged more than $300 million dollars. The vast majority of these leveraged funds were for Generation II regions. At that time, Generation II regions could claim 74 separate leveraged fund sources, and Generation III, 55.

- Grant fund expenditures have proceeded slowly, and the reasons reflect barriers to startup activity, such as gathering research data, reorganization, state-level bureaucracy impediments, confusion around Federal regulations, and recent availability of Federal funds or approval of implementation plans.

- Regions reacted differently to obstacles to spending, and, wisely or unwisely, either often took risks, or refused to take risks. Some regions, such as Southeastern Virginia, permitted partners to expend their own funds with the understanding that it would be reimbursed once the Federal funds were available. Other regions were firmly against spending until guidelines were clarified, and others would not complete planning, and hence spending, without asset mapping or similar data.

- Attention has increased dramatically on the importance of sustaining new partnerships, activities and approaches for continued collaboration across the regions. Many regions are at the point where much of the initial surge of visioning, planning, and developing relationships has been accomplished, and programming, on-going communications, and collaboration are underway. The inevitable pressure to develop plans for sustaining operations is just making itself apparent across most regions.

- While three regions have not identified any particular means to sustain momentum, seven regions have identified three or four strategies. Strategies identified by regions have focused on both financial and structural or operational means to achieve this end. The degree to which each of these financial and structural mechanisms serves regions well will be better understood over time.

- A limited amount of attention has been directed toward the development of venture capital, but when addressed, this was part of a larger or integrated effort to promote or develop entrepreneurial opportunity within a region. One possible scenario to look for in the future is whether the recent severe downturn in the economy seems to have an impact on the availability of venture capital to the extent that it reduces or severely limits plans for promoting entrepreneurial activity through the initiative.

H. Activities

In addition to planning for how collaborative relationships among partners could be fostered, each region proposed to carry out a specific set of activities to advance the region toward its goals. In this section, these activities are examined in the context of the evaluation's Theory of Change and relative to what the regions had planned to do.

Activities as a Dimension of the Theory of Change

The Theory of Change for this evaluation notes that:

> *Regions will develop implementation plans that explicitly state their objectives. The bulk of the work that regions conduct will then be through activities intended to achieve their objectives, whether directly funded by WIRED or by leveraged funds. Thus, the success of the region will hinge considerably on the success of the activities: recruitment into the activities, effective administration of the activities, and outcomes of the activities.*

The evaluation team reviewed proposals, implementation plans, and quarterly reports submitted to ETA, and gathered data during the site visits. Together, these sources yielded a fairly complete picture of the activities being carried out in each region. For this analysis, the evaluation team looked at how activities were selected and which ones were being carried out in the regions.

How Activities were Selected

Some activities were required by ETA as a condition of the grant investment. While generally broad, they include important core processes that define the regional transformation model. The six steps of the conceptual framework for regional transformation are:[69]

- Identify the regional economy
- Form a core leadership group
- Conduct a SWOT analysis
- Create a shared identity and economic vision
- Devise strategies
- Leverage resources and implement

The evaluation team expected that each region would have acted on these prescribed steps, although not necessarily in a linear manner. This section focuses on devising strategies and activities, while the other steps are addressed elsewhere in this report. [70] In examining this step, the team tried to answer the following questions:

[69] *Six Steps of Economic and Workforce Transformation through WIRED*, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Washington, DC, http://www.doleta.gov/wired/tools/6steps.cfm, June 1, 2007, updated January 13, 2009.

[70] Across the regions, the terms "strategies" and "activities" were generally used interchangeably. Here, those terms are intended to mean the actions taken by the regions to advance toward their goals.

- How broad was the collaboration for developing transformational strategies and activities?
- Was the process genuinely collaborative or did stakeholders simply ratify proposals prepared by a small group?
- Do the activities appear to be transformational in scale and scope? Are the activites aligned with the regions' goals?

Activities Being Carried Out by the Regions

In examining the activities underway or planned in the regions, the evaluation team looked at the types and levels of activities.

Types of Activities. Within the broad framework, regions were given great flexibility in shaping their approaches. The regions documented their plans for these activities in their proposals, implementation plans, and quarterly reports. Such activities were funded by the grant investment, other sources, or a combination thereof. These activities typically included:

- Development of sectoral or industry-based groups to identify workforce challenges
- Curriculum development or identification of training programs to address the challenges
- Delivery of training, which might include incumbent workers, job seekers, and the emerging workforce
- Strengthening the worker pipeline for targeted industries by working with the K-12 and higher education systems
- Stimulation and support of entrepreneurship and economic innovation
- Creation of an administrative infrastructure to provide staff support to the leadership team and workgroups, subgrants processing, office management, grant administration and reporting, and related functions

These activities might be new or built on precursors. It is important to observe that, in addition to those listed above, other activities might be carried out that fit ETA's six-step process.[71]

1. *Level of Activity*. An important consideration of each activity is the level at which it is, or will be, carried out. The evaluation team considered the relationship of each activity to the region's approved implementation plan, its intensity, and its breadth. These characteristics are defined below.

2. *Relationship to approved plans.* The implementation plan for each region was reviewed and approved by ETA. These plans were generally quite specific about the resources to be invested in each activity and the timeline for implementation. The evaluation team examined the site visit data to determine the degree to which the level of activity in reality corresponded to that proposed.

3. *Intensity.* The evaluation team examined indicators of intensity, including personnel assigned, dollars invested, and continuity. Intensity is an important factor in whether activities will make a meaningful difference for regional workforce and economic transformation. This included an examination of the allocation of resources between

[71] A detailed matrix that shows all focal sectors for each region is presented in the Introduction section beginning on page 1.

administrative and programmatic activity, which is addressed in the Resources and Sustainability section, beginning on page 73.

4. *Breadth*. An important element of the model is that it is regional in breadth. As a result, the evaluation team looked at the geographic reach of the activities to determine whether they were typically regional or subregional in nature. Similarly, the team looked for indications of what fraction of the target population was reached or expected to be reached. This review was conducted with an eye toward the goals for economic transformation and collaboration.

Analyses

Analyses of the data from the regions touches each of the elements of the type and level of activity described above. While the data are preliminary, they do provide at least an indication of the progress in each region.

How Activities were Determined

Across most regions, the process of selecting activities started with some preparation by initiative staff. That preparation often included consulting with stakeholders to develop ideas, examining regional data, or reviewing activities of others. Materials were then put in front of a group or groups of stakeholders for input or decision-making, with a final draft completed by staff. That draft would usually be vetted by regional leadership or other stakeholders. How well that process worked depends on a variety of factors, but the goal was to identify a set of activities that have a reasonable prospect of contributing to transformation within the region.

For each question, below, the evaluation site visit teams determined a rating for each region, on a scale of one to four, with four representing the highest degree of alignment with the Initiative's goals of broad collaboration and transformational action.

Table 14: Activities Development by the Regions

WIRED Regions		How broad was the collaboration? *Very Broad=4 Somewhat Broad=3 Somewhat Narrow=2 Very Narrow=1*	Was the process of selecting activities collaborative? *Very collaborative=4 Somewhat collaborative=3 Not very collaborative=2 Not at all collaborative=1*	How likely are the activities to be transformational? *Very likely=4 Somewhat=3 Not very=2 Not at all=1*
Generation II				
Range of Ratings		2-4	2-4	2-4
Distribution of Ratings	4	6	4	2
	3	4	5**	5**
	2	3	4*	6*
	1	0	0	0
Mean Rating		3.2	3.1	2.8
Generation III				
Range of Ratings		1-4	2-4	1-4
Distribution of Ratings	4	6	6	1
	3	3	4	7**
	2	3	3	4
	1	1	0	1
Mean Rating		3.1	3.2	2.7

* Includes ratings of 2.0 and 2.5.
** Includes ratings of 3.0 and 3.5.
***This table is based on information gathered from interviews conducted during site visits.

- There was surprisingly little difference between the generations in the overall patterns of results for the three questions. The range of assessments regarding transformation was wider for Generation III than for Generation II, but otherwise distributions were very similar. The collaborative processes were—at this early stage—seen to be more positive thus far than the results in terms of the likelihood of the activities leading to transformative results.

- Three Generation II and four Generation III regions scored at "4" for both measures of collaboration. Six of the seven (86 percent) also scored at "3" or above for likelihood of their activities being transformational. For those regions that did not receive "4" for both collaboration measures, only 9 of 19 (47 percent) were scored at that same level on transformation potential. This provides some evidence that effective collaborations may increase the potential for transformational results.

- For Generation III, the scores for the genuineness of collaboration were much more strongly related to high scores for likelihood of activities being transformational than were scores for the breadth of collaboration. For Generation II, no such relationships were evident.

  This can also be illustrated by specific site observation notes from the teams. Many regions enjoyed positive experiences as they shaped their activities. For those receiving the highest

scores for the likelihood of activities being transformational, site visitors made the following observations:

- *Central New Jersey:* "WIB director was the fiduciary. Dean at Rutgers was a lead. Executive director was the third in the triumverate. Lots of enthusiastic collaboration. Included venture capital."
- *Central-Eastern Puerto Rico:* "Workgroups created ideas. Leaders set the agendas for the subgroups in a general sense."
- *Minnesota Triangle:* "Brought employers together to set the agenda."
- *Southeast Michigan:* "The region has used data to inform decision-making. Also, the inclusive approach taken by Board leaders has been instrumental in creating a sense of trust among the members and has promoted a culture of openness."

In some regions, the collaborative process for selecting activities encountered barriers. For those receiving the lowest scores on the likelihood of activities being transformational, site visitors made the following observations:

- "Not clear that members of the WIRED committee had bought in to the WIRED vision or strategy, much less the activities."
- "The process was not very harmonious."
- "Mainly, a small core group shapes direction. In some cases, an individual was pushing a particular activity with little connection to others."
- "Some collaboration, but the WIBs did not feel that their interests were being represented. One person was purporting to represent higher education, but higher education was not unanimous."
- "The activities selected were creative but not likely to be transformational."

Types of Activities

The regions' planned activities were grouped into 11 broad activity areas as shown on the Table 15, below. The table details the number of regions having one or more program activities in each of these groupings.

Table 15: Broad Activity Areas*

Planned Activities	Number of Regions		
	Generation II	*Generation III*	*Total*
1. Regional workforce assessment planning	7	8	15
2. Infrastructure improvements and site development	3	-	3
3. Business councils for targeted industries	10	3	13
4. Training programs for K-12 students	8	10	18
5. K-12 teacher/counselor training	7	5	12
6. Training for incumbent workers in target industries	9	7	16
7. Internships	5	5	10
8. Training for new jobs in targeted industries	11	11	22
9. Entrepreneurial training	9	7	16
10. Business centers for research and development	3	-	3
11. Business incubators	3	-	3

*Data for this table came from available implementation plans submitted by the regions
***Note:* All activities complied with H-1B fund regulations and grantees did not propose to use grant funds for activities with students under 16 years of age.

- Eleven of the 13 regions plan to establish training programs for new jobs in their target industries. These selected industries range from logistics to green manufacturing technologies. For example, the Southeastern Virginia region is aiming to fill the short-term critical training needs of it's transportation, warehousing and distribution (TWD) sectors as well as its Modeling and Simulation (M&S) industry. The Greater Albuquerque region is developing training programs in green manufacturing technology, green building technologies, and renewable energy.

- The majority of regions are also focusing their attention on providing training for incumbent workers in their targeted industries. Southwest Connecticut is developing a program that will enable incumbent, low-wage, and low-skilled health care workers to advance to more skilled positions. In the Rio South Texas region, the South Texas College and Texas State Technical College opened their Advanced Manufacturing Institutes and had enrolled 243 new and incumbent workers in skills training as of September 2008.

- Eighteen of the regions are focusing their efforts on easing the transition from high school to careers either through direct employment in their targeted industries or, more often, through post-secondary education pathways. For example, the Minnesota Triangle and the South Central Idaho regions are aiming to make the connection between the high schools and the immediate needs of area employers. Another approach taken by most of the regions is to establish post-secondary programs at the regions' community colleges or technical institutes.

For example, the Central New Jersey region is introducing students to a possible career pathway in biology and the life sciences through its New Jersey Biotechnology Educators Consortium. In Wasatch Range, local colleges are creating academic programs designed to prepare graduates to enter fields in the biosciences.

- Twelve of the regions plan to provide training to high school teachers and counselors to enable them to better understand the skills needs and career opportunities available in the region's target industries. The Southeast Missouri region is planning to host an annual symposium for area high school guidance counselors and career advisors in an effort to promote career development knowledge and opportunities for the region's students.

- Sixteen regions plan to offer entrepreneurial development programs. One of the most innovative efforts is Northern California's Venture Island program. On the surface, this initiative appears to be no more than a competition between would-be entrepreneurs for startup monies; however, in fact, it is an innovative way to have entrepreneurs develop peer groups and be able to articulate their business plans. It has also proven to be a good vehicle to introduce entrepreneurs to the venture and angel capital community. At the University of Southern Indiana (a Southwest Indiana partner), the business school and engineering department are collaborating to create deep, structural connections between their disciplines, including the construction of a $32 million joint educational building to link the two groups together to generate new businesses. While the connections between this effort and this initiative had not yet emerged, there is obvious potential for synergy between this development and the angel funding network also being created by the region.

- Half of the regions plan to pull together business councils for their targeted industries. For example, the Northern New Jersey region plans to form Advisory Councils for their three target sectors: transportation, logistics and distribution; health care and life sciences; and entertainment arts, retail and services. In the Arkansas Delta region, educators and business representatives are being pulled together to explore alternative fuel industry and renewable energy technology. In the North Oregon region, "skills panels" for the bioscience and metals manufacturing industries are being organized, with the bioscience panel led by the Oregon Bioscience Association.

As shown in Table 15, above, there are differences in the planned activities between the Generation II and III regions. These differences may reflect the longer planning process given to the Generation II regions and may also reflect the broader focus of the unsuccessful proposals these regions submitted for the initial round of funding. In particular, three of the Generation II regions plan to establish business incubators, research or manufacturing centers and/or infrastructure improvements, including site development, while none of the Generation III regions have such aspirations. For example, the Rio South Texas region announced the opening of the Center for Rapid Response Manufacturing, which provides a center for the region's manufacturers to develop new products. With product cycles becoming shorter, and the region being located less than ten miles from the low-wage manufacturing operations in Mexico, it is assisting manufacturers to grow by introducing new high-value products. In the Wasatch Range region, plans call for the development of laboratories that support life science research and biomanufacturing. Finally, in the Appalachian Ohio region, "Cyber Centers" are planned that

will promote the training of students interested in interactive digital technology.

In addition to the delivery of specific services, some regions' activities have involved innovation among WIBs and One-Stops, according to interview respondents. For example, for the Southwestern Connecticut region mentioned earlier, innovation has meant bringing together three WIBs that are organized differently and operate differently to pursue a common purpose. Local stakeholders feel this collaboration carries with it the potential to transform workforce development strategy in the region. In Puerto Rico, innovation means reducing the number of WIBs on the island from 18 to five or six and engaging the two local WIBs that are located entirely within the region in strategic discussions that have the potential to transform the WIBs from highly-localized service providers to strategic partners with an important role to play in regional economic development.

Innovation goals are far more modest in regions that were previously unaccustomed to using a sector-based approach to identifying and addressing workforce development needs. Business respondents in several regions with a strong WIB presence reported that their participation in these new partnership efforts has led them to become customers of the One-Stops for the first time.

Levels of Activity

Table 16, below, provides a status report of the level of implementation of stated plans at the time of the evaluation site visits (May 15 to October 24, 2008). The table provides a general sense of the status of implementation; however it is important to note the many factors that affected the ability of the regions to proceed, such as:

- *Differences in project strategy*. Sites differed in the types of activities that were included in their regional strategy.
- *Changes in project strategy*. In some cases, significant changes in overall project strategy were necessary due to confusion over the age-limitations when using H1-B funds for project activities involving students in the K-12 system.
- *Leadership challenges.* In some cases, conflicts among regional stakeholders posed a challenge to building a regional partnership. This required intervention by external consultants to stimulate constructive dialogue.
- *Differences in management approach*. Some site leaders placed a high premium on the development of complete and detailed action plans prior to expending any funds for program activities.
- *Changes in governance structure*. After settling on an approach to governing the initiative, some regions soon discovered that the approach was not feasible and had to reorganize before moving forward with key elements of the initiative.
- *Staffing changes*. In some cases, there was turnover among key staff (e.g., project managers) that set the implementation process back.
- *Contracting Difficulties*. In some cases, regions had to expend significant time developing and conducting a competitive bidding process to select key partners after it was determined by ETA that the partners named in the original proposal did not meet the criteria necessary to be treated as partners in the proposal.

- *Delays in Approval Process.* Several regions experienced significant Delays in receiving final approval of implementation plans.
- *Limited understanding of purchasing requirements.* In several instances, regional activities were delayed because of the lengthy review and approval process for acquiring and installing equipment necessary for project activities. There were also delays at some sites due to confusion about what constituted an allowable cost if using H1-B funds for non-training activities.

Still, the implementation status information provides an important baseline for future evaluation. As the initiatives progress, successful regions are likely to implement their planned activities and/or to modify their project strategy and activities as necessary.

Table 16: Progress on Implementation Plan Activities at the Time of the Site Visits (May 15–October 24, 2008)

WIRED Regions	Regional Workforce Assessment Planning		Infrastructure Improvements & Site Development		Business Councils for Targeted Industries		Training Program for High School Students		K-12 Teacher/ Counselor Training		Training for Incumbent Workers in Targeted Industries		Internships		Training for New Jobs in Targeted Industries		Entrepreneurial Training		Business Centers for Research & Development		Business Incubators	
	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated
Generation Two																						
Southwest Connecticut	x	x	x		x						x	x			x		x					
Arkansas Delta					x		x		x		x				x	x	x		x			
Rio South Texas			x						x	x	x	x			x	x			x	x		
Northern New Jersey	x	x			x		x				x				x		x	x				
Northern California					x												x	x			x	x
Delaware Valley	x	x			x	x	x		x		x				x							
Puerto Rico	x						x				x		x	x	x		x					
Tennessee Valley					x	x	x	x	x				x		x	x					x	
Southeast Michigan									x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x				
Southwest Indiana	x		x		x		x		x	x	x				x	x	x	x				
Appalachian Ohio					x	x							x				x				x	
Southeast Wisconsin	x				x	x	x				x				x							
Wasatch Range Utah	x				x		x		x				x		x		x		x			
Total	7	3	3	0	10	4	8	1	7	2	9	2	5	2	11	5	9	4	3	1	3	1

Table 16: Progress on Implementation Plan Activities at the Time of the Site Visits (May 15–October 24, 2008)

WIRED Regions	Regional Workforce Assessment Planning		Infrastructure Improvements & Site Development		Business Councils for Targeted Industries		Training Program for High School Students		K-12 Teacher/ Counselor Training		Training for Incumbent Workers in Targeted Industries		Internships		Training for New Jobs in Targeted Industries		Entrepreneurial Training		Business Centers for Research & Development		Business Incubators	
	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated	Planned	Initiated
Generation Three																						
Central Kentucky	x										x				x		x					
Southeast Mississippi							x				x				x							
Greater Albuquerque							x	x	x	x			x		x		x	x				
Southeast Virginia	x						x	x			x		x		x	x	x	x				
Central New Jersey	x	x					x				x		x		x	x						
Pacific Mountain Washington	x	x			x		x		x		x				x							
Southern Arizona									x								x					
South Central Idaho	x						x	x							x							
SC & SW Wisconsin							x				x		x		x		x					
Southeast Missouri	x								X						x		x					
North Oregon	x				x	x	x				x				x							
South Central Kansas	x	x					x		X		x				x	x	x					
Minnesota Triangle	x				x	x	x						x		x		x					
Total	9	3	0	0	3	2	10	3	5	1	8	0	5	0	12	3	8	2	0	0	0	0

*Data for this table came from available implementation plans submitted by the regions and site visit interviews.

Given the longer planning time, it is not surprising to observe that the Generation II regions have initiated a greater number of their planned activities. The activities where the most progress has been reported are in establishing business councils and training programs for targeted industries. In addition, entrepreneurial training programs have been initiated in four of the Generation II regions. It is interesting to note that the regions seem to be making better progress in creating entry-level or specialized training programs for their targeted industries than providing training programs for incumbent workers.

Although all regions had developed strategies or activities and had articulated them in implementation plans, the process of gaining approval of those plans was reported by many regional leaders and by some ETA leads as slower and much more difficult than anticipated. As a result, many of the regions reported slower-than-expected implementation of their activities.

There was some confusion about allowable costs—most common among Generation II regions—and this was also cited as a reason for implementation slowdowns. Despite the fact that the definitions for allowable costs were available, decisions about what constituted an allowable expense were not always clear cut and required consultation with the ETA leads that were assigned to each regional initiative. For example, some of the regions had intended to establish a pipeline of workers for current and emerging industry sectors. Doing so included encouraging a greater focus on science and mathematics among elementary and middle school students. Eventually, it was announced by ETA that H1-B funds could not be used for activities involving students under 16 years of age. As a result, regions had the choice of either abandoning their original plan of action or seeking other sources of funds to cover those costs. Either way, it required further discussion, outreach, revisions, and delays before formal approval of the implementation plan was granted. If one of the partners decided to proceed with implementation before approval was granted, there was a risk that the cost of the activities would not be reimbursed.

There was also confusion about the conditions under which competitive bidding was required. In at least one region there was confusion and disagreement about whether an organization that was named in the original proposal to ETA was a partner or not. After considerable discussion it was determined that the organization was not actually a partner because it did not meet a certain standard for the level of participation in the development of the proposal. The region's project manager was then required to create a written request for proposals and post the notice for several weeks before selecting a winning bidder.

By the time the Generation III regions were ready for implementation, most of the issues around allowable costs had been identified and further instructions and clarifications had been issued by ETA. As a result, the Generation III sites were able to get prompt and accurate responses to their cost-related questions.

Summary Observations

- *Effective collaborations may increase the potential for transformational results.* The team observed a pattern of those receiving high scores for both measures of collaboration also scoring high for likelihood of their activities being transformational. While the data are very

preliminary, this pattern supports a central assertion of the regional transformation model. For Generation III, there is a very strong relationship between the scores for the genuineness of collaboration and the apparent likelihood of activities being transformational. While this relationship was not evident for Generation II, it does suggest that the quality of collaborative processes may be more important than their breadth in terms of the numbers and kinds of stakeholders involved.

- *Providing training for target industries, high school-to-career assistance, and entrepreneurial training* are the predominate activities being planned by all regions.

- *In general, the implementation plans are similar in terms of the planned strategies*. The major exception is that only in Generation II regions are there plans for the physical construction of business incubators, business/development centers and industrial site development.

- *The Initiative is supporting new activity.* While the evidence is preliminary, it appears that in many regions, activities are underway that would not have occurred without the grant investment. In most regions, key stakeholders reported that new relationships had been formed that crossed the traditional boundaries of workforce, education, economic development, and business. As a result, skill needs for targeted occupations in growth industries have been identified and used to guide curriculum development, new curriculum has been shared across the jurisdictional boundaries of community colleges, new articulation agreements have been established that allow students a more seamless transition from high school to associate's and bachelor's degree programs, and schools in rural areas are now tapping into STEM-related knowledge and instructional resources that previously had only been available in urban and suburban districts.

- *Training programs that are designed for the needs of targeted industries and entrepreneurial training appear to be easier to initiate than other planned activities.* This could be because most regions have post-secondary institutes or community colleges that offer technical training for business and small business assistance centers.

- *Training is preparing workers for jobs in targeted industries*. Dislocated workers in some regions are learning how to adapt their knowledge and skills for new jobs in the bio-manufacturing and alternative energy sectors. Employees in other regions are learning how to apply the concepts of lean manufacturing to improve the efficiency of health care service administration.

- *Few surprises.* Virtually all activities discussed with the evaluation teams during the site visits are included in the implementation plans; very little was seen that had not been approved. Where divergences occurred, requests for grant and implementation plan modifications were generally under consideration.

- *Slower than intended pace.* In most regions, the launch period took longer than anticipated. Often, completing the ETA process of approval of the implementation plans was cited as a contributing factor. Many regional personnel and some ETA leads expressed considerable

frustration regarding what they saw as a process fraught with bureaucracy and delay. Apart from the ETA approval process, many regions took longer than expected to fully form their leadership groups and to staff the initiative. These delays had a cascading effect on the rollout of other activities. Lack of clarity on allowable costs was also seen as a factor in the pace of implementation. This was more common among the Generation II regions, but also was mentioned in several of the Generation III regions.

I. Social Networking

Introduction

An underlying assumption of the Initiative is that by bringing the right parties to the regional economic development planning table, new relationships will develop. These connections—these social networks—may help regions discover new opportunities for transformation; build support for action among key stakeholders; and find, leverage, and align the regions' resources to take advantage of these new opportunities.

While networks themselves may play an important role in the success of a region's initiative, social networks also can provide another way to measure the progress regions have made in other areas. Social networking is closely related to other dimensions of the Theory of Change, including engagement (see page 43), governance (see page 32), and communication (see page 60), and may offer insight into the success of regions in all these areas.

Social Networking Data

Unlike other kinds of survey results, social network information does not attempt to reveal the preferences of an individual, or even the multiple views of many individuals. Instead, social network data examine the connections between people and groups that allow for information sharing, collaboration, and engagement. The way groups are structured, from the density of their connections to the position of key links within the network, may have an impact on the effectiveness of the network for communicating and building the capacity for transformation.[72]

Social networking data for this evaluation was collected by asking region participants who were interviewed by the site visit team to name the five individuals outside of their own organization with whom they had had the most significant contact in the context of the initiative. Respondents provided the individuals' names, organizations, and job titles, along with an estimate of how frequently they were in contact. During the interviews, respondents also were asked to identify the type of organization that they and their contacts were part of, and their roles in those organizations.[73]

These data give us some sense of the connections among key figures in each region's WIRED initiative, but the information we collected is best thought of only as a baseline or preliminary look at the regional networks. There are several reasons for this:

- The data include only the list of contacts provided by participants in the region's site visit that opted to provide the information. A more complete picture of the regional network

[72] See, for example, Mark Granovetter. "The Impact of Social Structure on Economic Outcomes." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (Winter 2004). Volume 19, Number 1. Pg. 33-50. Reprinted at <http://www.leader-values.com/Content/detail.asp?ContentDetailID=990>

[73] Respondents could choose among 17 different types of organizations—including businesses, state workforce agencies, local workforce investment boards, and educational institutions—when identifying organizational affiliations for themselves and their contacts. During our data analysis process, we created an 18th category for individuals clearly identified as working for the region's Initiative, and we adjusted other responses for consistency within and across regions.

would require asking everyone on that list of contacts for a corresponding list of *their* contacts. This additional data collection activity will be incorporated into the survey phase of the evaluation.

- The number of individual names generated by the social network survey varied significantly across the regions. Respondents in one region did not mention enough individual names for even a preliminary analysis of the region's network. The number of individual names generated by the remaining regions ranged from 17 to 88, with an average of 48 individuals referenced per region. The analysis of these data take into account the fact that different regions provided networks of different sizes, but the variation in network size between regions means that we can only make preliminary comparisons between those regions.

- This analysis may suggest less interconnection among the members of the regional networks than actually exists. This is a result of obtaining the information only from participants in the region's site visit, as well as the fact that responses were limited to five contacts per respondent. That is, these baseline results probably show gaps among individuals and groups that, with a second round of data collection, would be filled in with additional ties.

As previously discussed (see page 15), key individuals in the regions often had strong professional networks even before the initiative began. Although the site visit interviews can be of some help, the social network data do not distinguish between networks that previously existed and networks that were created under the initiative. Still, social network information provides an important baseline for future evaluation. As the initiative progresses, successful regions are likely to expand and strengthen their networks. The social network data that have been collected already, combined with future data collection, will provide an opportunity for noting and drawing insight from these changes.

Results of the Social Networking Analysis

Social networking analysis can help to identify groups that are successfully working across organizational boundaries and connecting with stakeholders at all levels of those organizations. The ties among individuals also can illuminate the different roles played by particular types of organizations within the network, and the relationship between the structure of the network and communication within the WIRED regions. Healthy networks bring together organizations of different types to tackle complex challenges. A diverse set of social network connections may help regions build broader support for regional economic transformation.

Working Across Organizations

Regional networks generally have been successful in crossing organizational boundaries.[74] Across all the regions, about 82 percent of the connections listed by respondents were between organizations of different types, for example, education, industry, finance, etc.[75] This is about what would be expected from networks of this size, with this number of partner organizations.

[74] Social network analysis was conducted using Ucinet software from Analytic Technologies. Borgatti, S.P., Everett, M.G. and Freeman, L.C. 2002. Ucinet for Windows: Software for Social Network Analysis. Harvard, MA: Analytic Technologies.

[75] The percentage of cross-organizational connections is the number of ties between organizations of different types in the network divided by the total number of connections in the network.

In all but one of the regions, more than 70 percent of contacts crossed organizational boundaries, and three regions had cross-organizational connection rates of over 90 percent. At the other extreme, in one region, just 54 percent of ties were between different types of organizations. Table 17 shows the number of regions that exceeded, met, or fell short of the percentage of cross-organizational connections we would expect to see for that particular region, given its size and its number of organizations.[76]

Table 17: Connections Between Different Types of Organizations

Networks Spanning Organization Types	Difference From Expected Result	Generation II Regions	Generation III Regions	Total
Strong	6 to 9 percentage points greater than expected	2	2	4
Moderate	5 percentage points greater than expected to 5 percentage points less than expected	7	9	16
Weak	6 to 19 percentage points less than expected	3	2	5

*This table is based on the responses offered by regional stakeholders during on-site interviews.

A region's strength or weakness in crossing organizational boundaries may be related to the extent of the region's outreach as a result of the initiative. For example, during the site visit for the region with the lowest rate of cross-organizational ties, participants stressed their long history of partnership and collaboration, especially among the higher education and economic development communities, and explained that this core network gave the region a solid foundation for collaboration. The pre-existing social network in this region, perceived as one of the region's strengths, may have reduced the urgency of efforts to bring new organizations into the fold, resulting in a network with fewer links that spanned different types of organizations.

In contrast, the cross-organizational network in South Central Kansas was very strong, with about 90 percent of its connections linking different types of organizations. While key players in the region had known each other previously, through various boards or community development activities, participants in the site visit pointed to the region's success in pulling together all of these individuals as one of the principal accomplishments of the initiative so far. As a result of the initiative, the region worked to connect workforce development, economic development, business, and education agencies. This broader outreach effort—and the strong cross-organizational ties that resulted from it—may have been driven in part by the perceived lack of a solid preexisting network.

[76] The percentage of cross-organizational ties may be affected by the size and make-up of the network (i.e., if a network were made up of only educational institutions, it could not possibly have links to the private sector). To calculate the percentage of cross-organizational connections that we would expect to see in a network with a particular size and number of organizations, we simulated the creation of 5,000 networks of the same size and organizational make-up as the subject region. For each simulated network, we randomly assigned ties between individuals in the network. We then compared the resulting sampling distribution to the observed values for each region.

To some extent, regional differences in the strength of cross-organizational networks may reflect regions' differing progress in putting their implementation plans into action. In most cases, we would expect regions to build stronger links among organizations of different types as work on activities proceeds.

Working Across Levels in an Organization

A network heavy with ties among different types of organizations probably is better able to build the wide stakeholder support that is necessary for regional transformation. It is less clear, however, whether connections among individuals at different levels of the organization are important to the success of the initiative. Social networking data can provide a snapshot of the organizational level of individuals involved within the region that may help in determining what mix of active participants leads to successful outcomes.

Site visit respondents placed themselves and their contacts in one of three categories: strategists and visionaries, described as leaders or decision-makers; implementers and managers, described as individuals with the authority to make things happen; and general staff and doers, described as those who conduct the day-to-day business of their organizations.[77] While the majority of participants in our interviews were strategists, most regions had networks that successfully crossed organizational levels. Among all the regions, about half of the connections listed by respondents were between individuals at different organizational levels.

In six regions, more than 60 percent of network ties were between different organizational levels.[78] At the other end of the spectrum, three regions had a rate of cross-level ties of less than 40 percent, with a low of 26 percent. Participants in three regions did not list any general staff among their most significant network contacts. In future stages of the evaluation, we will attempt to identify whether there is a correlation between a particular mix of stakeholders and regional transformation outcomes.

Roles Played by Different Organizations

One measure of an individual's importance to a social network is the number of other individuals to which he or she is directly connected.[79] Individuals who directly communicate with a relatively large proportion of the network—those who are more central—may play several important roles, from serving as key sources of information to coordinating group action or tying in parts of the network that might otherwise be disconnected. By looking across regions at the organizations to which these key individuals belong, we can develop a better sense of the role

[77] During our data analysis process, we adjusted responses for consistency within and across regions to ensure, for example, that the same individual or job title was placed in the same category in every case.

[78] Like the percentage of cross-organizational ties discussed earlier, the percentage of cross-level ties is the number of connections among individuals at different organizational levels divided by the total number of ties in the network.

[79] The number of individuals with whom a person is in direct contact is one of several means of measuring the centrality of individuals and groups within a network. Other measures of centrality include how directly the individual or group is connected to others in the network, how quickly the individual or group can communicate with the rest of the network, and whether the individual or group is part of the network's key lines of communication.

different types of organizations play in facilitating communication, engagement, and collaboration.

Local WIBs, for example, played varied roles in the regions. Across all regions, individuals associated with local WIBs—including both WIB staff and board members—were slightly more central to their regions' networks than were others. The average individual was directly connected to about eight percent of their respective region, but the average person associated with a WIB linked to more than 10 percent of his or her colleagues.[80] Some WIBs were very central to their region's networks; in Central Kentucky, for example, WIBs were connected to almost 40 percent of the network's members. In other regions, local WIBs only directly reached about two percent of the network. Respondents from four regions did not identify any contacts from a local WIB.

Table 18: Role of Local Workforce Investment Boards

Role of Local Workforce Investment Boards	Individuals Directly Connected to a WIB	Generation II Regions	Generation III Regions	Total Regions
Very Central	13 percent to 39 percent	3	3	6
Central	8 percent to 10 percent	1	5	6
Peripheral	6 percent	2	2	4
Very Peripheral	2 percent to 4 percent	5	0	5
Not Present	0 percent	1	3	4

*This table is based on the responses offered by regional stakeholders during on-site interviews.

These findings are echoed in our site visit interviews. In a region where local WIBs were tied to only about two percent of the network, interviews revealed little WIB involvement and participants told us that the individual who directs the WIB was considered difficult to work with. In contrast, the WIBs in North Oregon were connected to a much higher proportion of the network—reaching about 15 percent of individuals—probably due to the leadership role that has been taken by the local WIB. Several staff members of the local WIB were heavily involved in the region's initiative, including the director, a senior project manager (who leads the initiative), and another key employee.

Generation III regions were required to have a WIB take a lead role in the initiative. The social network data show a corresponding, but small, difference in the centrality of WIBs between Generation II and Generation III. Individuals associated with local WIBs were linked to about eight percent of the network in Generation II regions, and about 12 percent of the network in Generation III regions. This difference in the role of WIBs between generations is smaller than we might have anticipated, and there are several possible reasons that the difference between generations is not more pronounced.

- Some Generation II regions may have sought the close involvement of WIBs, despite not being required to do so. There is some support for this view; of the five regions in which

[80] The centrality of an individual or group, as used here, is the number of people in the network who are directly connected to the individual or group, divided by the number of other people in the network.

local WIBs were tied to at least 15 percent of their networks, three were Generation II regions.

- Some Generation III regions appear not to have successfully woven local WIBs into the social networks of key WIRED partners because participants in site visits for three of the regions in Generation III did not list any significant contacts affiliated with local WIBs. In order to interpret the significance of this finding it is important to consider the original goals, plans, and implementation status of each region. For example, in one case the partnership included two local WIBs and the State's workforce development agency. The plan showed the State as a member of the executive advisory board, but was completely silent on the role of the local WIBs. In another case, the State had discontinued the local WIB structure due to budget constraints. In the third, the region proposed to involve the local WIBs across the region but had just recently launched their geographically dispersed, predominantly rural, regional initiative and had not yet established those contacts.

- Finally, the data collection approach may be understating the role of local WIBs. Respondents were asked to pick just one type of organization for each contact, but in some regions, those affiliated with WIBs—especially board members—may also be identified as part of workforce agencies, economic development agencies, training organizations, non-profits, businesses, or the initiative itself. Respondents may have chosen other appropriate labels for contacts who should have been counted as part of a WIB. Future data collection efforts will seek to address this issue.

Local WIBs tended to be more central to their regions than most other types of organizations. Not surprisingly, contacts affiliated with regional initiatives—in those regions where they were explicitly identified by respondents—played the most central role, reaching an average of 16 percent of their regions. Individuals associated with businesses and educational institutions (including K-12 and colleges) directly connect to, on average, about seven percent of network members.[81] Both businesses and educational institutions were slightly less central to networks in Generation II regions than they were to networks in Generation III.

Network Structure

The overall structure of a network has implications for how efficiently a region can communicate, how quickly it can mobilize for action, and how successfully it can respond to the loss of key individuals or groups.

Tightly woven, dense networks—those that make use of a higher proportion of their possible connections—facilitate rapid and efficient communication because each individual in the network has more ties with which to reach out to others in the network. Most networks have a tightly connected central core, with a more sparsely linked periphery (see Figure 8, at the end of this section, for an example). The densest portions of the network are likely to grow as the network develops, adding new, sparsely connected links to the edge of the network. Table 19 summarizes the density of regional social networks.

[81] Respondents were not asked to distinguish between contacts affiliated with K-12 and those associated with community colleges. Future data collection will make this distinction.

Table 19: Density of the Regions' Networks

Network Density	Percentage of Possible Connections[82]	Generation II Regions	Generation III Regions	Total
Very Dense	15 percent to 17 percent	1	2	3
Dense	10 percent	2	3	5
Sparse	5 percent to 9 percent	7	5	12
Very Sparse	3 percent to 4 percent	2	3	5

**This table is based on the responses offered by regional stakeholders during on-site interviews.

While most networks have a tightly linked central core, the degree of interconnectedness varies across regions. Some networks rely on a few key participants for most of the network's information sharing, while others spread links more evenly across the network. A network's reliance on a few key individuals may indicate a very active leadership, possibly a good sign for the success of the region's WIRED initiative, but it also means that the network may be challenged to collaborate successfully without those individuals' involvement.

The site visit interviews echo this trade-off between strong leadership and a balanced network. Southeastern Virginia (Generation III), for example, had the most even distribution of ties among individuals in the network. Interviews revealed that the region's communications were thought to be thorough and effective. One person commented that there was almost "too much opportunity to participate," and participants saw themselves as being in the loop even if they did not see themselves as key leaders of the initiative. This was not the case in a region with one of the highest disparities between the most-connected and least-connected individuals in the network. During this region's site visit, participants gave relatively high marks for communication, but raised the concern that the region's leadership might be overly-dependent upon one or two key, energetic individuals.

Network density is a tradeoff between the efficiency of communication within the network and the sustainability of the network over time. As the regions proceed with their initiatives, the networks may grow, becoming more balanced and distributing connections among a larger group of individuals. While this may result in networks that are less dense overall and less able to facilitate rapid communications, these networks would be less dependent on a small group and more sustainable over the long-term.

Example of WIRED Network Structure

Figure 8 illustrates a network structure of one WIRED network.[83] Individuals are identified by their type of organization and level within the organization (Circles are strategists, squares are implementers, and triangles represent general staff). Lines show which individuals are directly connected with thicker lines indicating more frequent contact.

[82] Density is the number of connections among individuals in the network, divided by the number of ties that the network would have if all of the individuals in the network were directly connected.

[83] Figure 8 was created using NetDraw software from Analytic Technologies. Borgatti, S.P,. 2002. NetDraw: Graph Visualization Software. Harvard: Analytic Technologies.

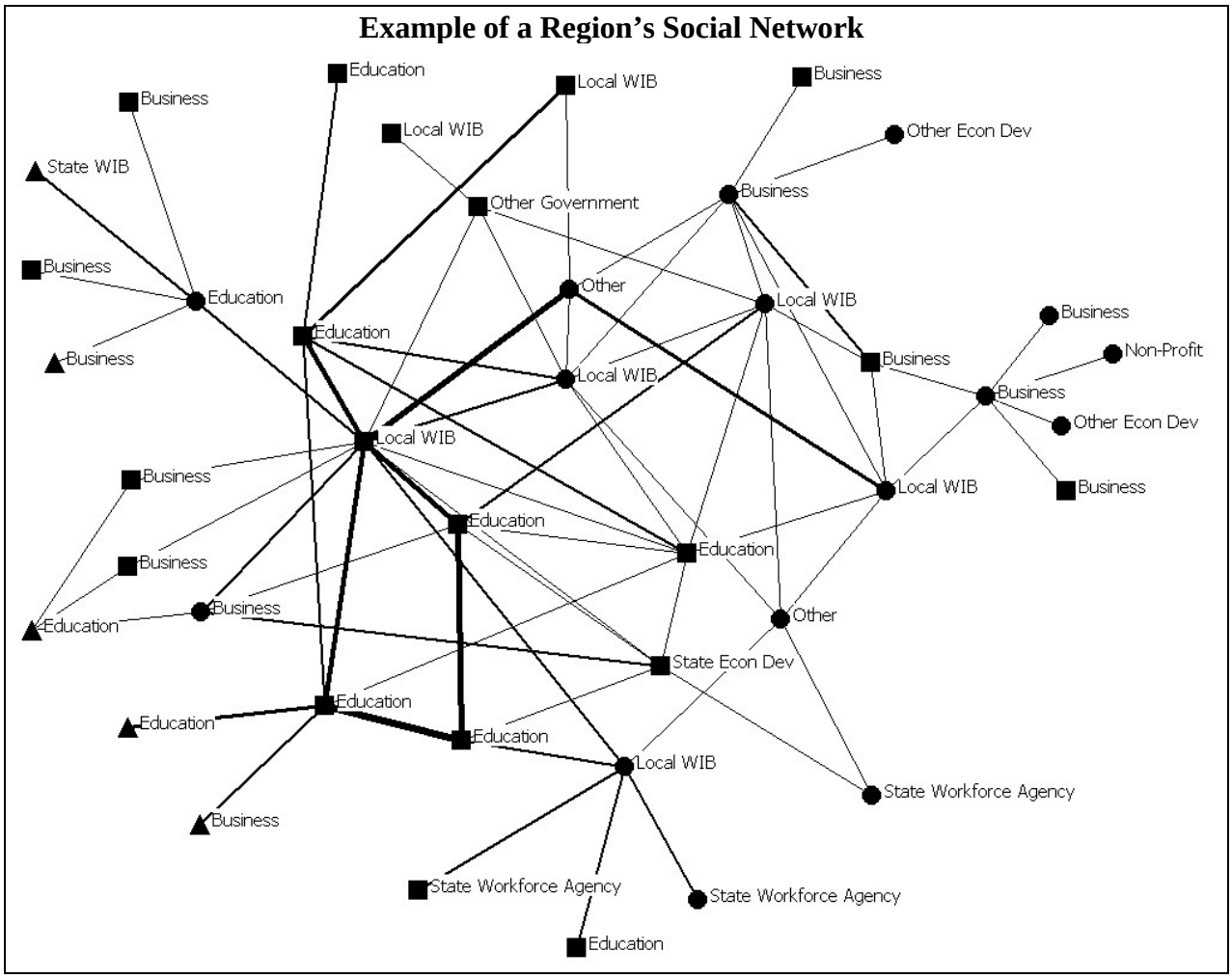

Figure 8 *This table is based on the responses offered by regional stakeholders during on-site interviews.

Table 20 presents the statistics that were discussed earlier in this section, as applied to the WIRED region above.

Table 20: Statistics for Example Region

	Percentage	Density
Spanning different organization types	4 percentage points less than expected	Moderate
Spanning different organizational levels	14 percentage points less than expected	Weak
Role of local Workforce Investment Boards	15 percent of individuals directly connected to a WIB	Very Central
Network density	9 percent of possible connections present	Sparse

*This table is based on the responses offered by regional stakeholders during on-site interviews.

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This region, like most of the regions, has a more tightly connected network core with a more sparsely connected periphery. While the links among individuals in the region are relatively well-balanced, there are still several key players who are quite central to the operation of the network, depicted here close to the center of the chart. These well-connected individuals primarily are affiliated with local WIBs and educational institutions, and the local WIBs in this network also seem to serve as gateways for the participation of businesses in the region's initiative. Several members of this network are dependent on a single individual for their initiative-related communication. If those key individuals become less involved in efforts to transform the regions, it could have an impact on the region's ability to facilitate collaboration and engagement. As the region's initiative progresses, we would expect this network to grow, expanding the dense network core and adding new links to the periphery.

Summary Observations

- Social networking can help to create the capacity for successful economic transformation in WIRED regions, and network data can provide insight into progress on engagement, collaboration, and communication. The first phase of data collection allows for only a preliminary analysis of social networking information, but these data provide a useful baseline for future evaluation.

- Many regions have successfully built new networks—or made use of pre-existing networks—that cross organizational boundaries and that involve individuals at multiple levels in the organization. A region's success in creating links among different types of organizations quickly may be related to the perceived strength of its previously-existing social network.

- Different types of organization play varied roles in the regions. Local WIBs tend to be more central to a region's network than other types of organizations and are slightly more important to Generation III regions, where WIB involvement was mandated.

- The structure of a regional network may be a key factor in how efficiently a region communicates and how well it responds to the loss of key individuals. As regions build more ties within their communities, the regional networks may become somewhat less dense and somewhat more balanced. While less dense networks may not communicate as efficiently, they are likely to be less dependent on a small number of individuals and thus more sustainable over time.

IV. Summary and Next Steps

A. Key Initial Findings

Over the course of site visits to each of the 26 regions, and through examination of additional data such as the regions' implementation plans and asset maps, the research team has developed preliminary findings about the process of launching the region's initiatives and their early efforts to use grant funds and leveraged resources to transform regional workforces and economies. The Theory of Change has provided the framework for organizing the information collected and for thinking systematically about what has occurred to date. The data collected is baseline information, and the initial findings presented in this report will be revisited and are likely to be expanded and refined as analysis of the regions' future work and accomplishments take place over the next two years of the evaluation.

For now, there are several broad themes that have come to light through this first year of data collection and analysis.

- *Building broad-based collaboration.* A wide array of organizations is represented in every region, and these organizations are becoming important partners in these efforts. While several regions boasted extensive collaborative relationships before the Initiative began, the Federal investment appears to be making a difference; the regions generally are experiencing greater collaboration among their stakeholder groups than had been the case previously. Several regions recognized the importance of broad collaboration by planning for communications that are designed to involve key stakeholders in funding decisions and activities. Successful collaboration also seemed to be reflected in the success of activities in the region; regions with high marks for collaboration also had high scores on the likelihood of their activities being transformational. A preliminary social network analysis of the regions showed that more than three quarters of links between network partners crossed organizational boundaries, an indication of the diverse coalitions being established to support economic transformation.

- *Seeking a regional identity.* The regional level of engagement for economic and workforce development seems to make sense for these regions. Although the identities of some are loosely-defined, the awareness of the interplay between the development of a workforce with in-demand skills and attention to emerging and established industry are being recognized as having broader contexts than that contained within city, county, or even state boundaries. Despite the fact that many regions span several political boundaries and must bridge urban/rural and other cultural divides, the Initiative appears to have overcome most competitive habits and successfully inculcated the idea of regionalism.

- *Research and planning, but with mixed effect.* Building on work done before the Initiative began, the regions have engaged in extensive planning and research—from developing implementation plans and asset maps, to communication plans and sustainability strategies. This work has not always been successful. Most regions were still engaged in planning

activity at the time of the site visits in summer and fall of 2008, and the asset mapping was conducted in most cases merely to confirm the target industries and goals that had already been chosen. The outcomes and performance metrics selected by regions were sometimes lacking in usefulness and measurability. Still, it is too soon to judge the effectiveness of research and planning.

- *Absentee stakeholders present barriers to progress.* Despite general success in building broad coalitions, the lack of involvement of a few key individual stakeholders in the regions may be holding back progress. State governments appear to be missing an opportunity to provide strategic leadership to the regions in 12 of the 26 regions, and private sector stakeholders seem less connected to regional decision-making and activities than their education and economic development organization counterparts. Regions may also need to pay more attention to the extent of an organization's involvement—the mere presence of a participant does not necessarily indicate an organization is fully committed to the effort.

- *Halting progress toward innovation.* At this stage in the Initiative, few regions have taken bold steps toward realizing their innovation goals. Some regional innovations involved changing the structure of WIBs, and several regions have attempted to spur innovative projects through competitive subgranting of Federal funds. The focus by some regions on entrepreneurship development is another potential area for innovation, but it is too soon to tell how influential this will be, particularly given current economic conditions. The limited movement toward innovation may yet accelerate as regions begin implementing their strategies for economic transformation.

- *Sustainability practices underway*. The regions' focus on sustainability of their efforts was still evolving at the time of the site visits. However, the regions have generally identified a substantial amount of leveraged funds and in-kind support to further their goals. Beyond the funding considerations, there has been some focus on sustainability in terms of maintaining momentum and activities long-term. As the regions implement their plans, it is anticipated that further discussion and formalized planning will occur.

- *Maintaining flexibility amidst changing circumstances.* The global economic outlook has darkened substantially since the Initiative was launched, and regions are working to adapt their transformation efforts to the new economic reality. About half the regions have made changes to their initial implementation plans, for reasons that go beyond shifting economic circumstances. These modifications were caused by limitations on the use of funds, changing priorities exposed by new strategic planning initiatives, and even an expansion of the geographical areas covered by particular regions. In some cases, the focus of implementation plans was modified to reflect new data about targeted industries. Overall, the regions have not hesitated to rewrite their economic development script as they encounter new circumstances and challenges—a promising sign for the Initiative's future progress.

- *Initial progress toward transformation.* Several regions have taken first steps in implementing activities that are of sufficient intensity to make a meaningful difference in achieving the economic and workforce transformation goals of the region. The likelihood of a region's activities being transformational seemed to be linked to the extent of effective

collaboration. While it is too early to judge the effect of these activities, as the evaluation proceeds the research team will highlight the efforts.

- *Minor differences between Generation II and Generation III.* The few differences between WIRED generations may have been the result of additional planning time and new requirements. Generation II regions made use of their extra time to leverage more funding using the initial Federal grant and to initiate a greater number of their planned activities. With additional requirements from the Department of Labor, Generation III regions made local WIBs more central to decision-making and operations. Overall, however, regions in Generation II and III faced similar hurdles and had made similar progress at the time of the first site visits.

B. Issues for Further Research

This first year of data collection has provided baseline information about the actions of the regions. Transforming a regional economy is a challenging and potentially long-term endeavor. As the regions progress and the evaluation continues, further exploration of these issues and those that emerge from new and ongoing analysis of key data sources will occur. Additional data collection is planned in the form of a survey of regional stakeholders, examination of extant data on economic indicators for each region, and an additional round of site visits to the regions in 2010. Central among the research questions yet to be explored are:

- Did the regional collaboration have an influence on systems and institutions?
- What improvements were made to support an environment for lifelong learning opportunities?
- To what extent has the workforce system been transformed?
- Were the collaborative partnerships able to develop talent such that the workforce will serve as a leading driver of regional economic growth?
- Were local, regional, or state regulations altered to promote and enhance innovation systems?
- Do business startups resulting from this grant investment succeed?
- How did businesses' ability to access the necessary talent to grow change as a result of this Initiative?
- What affect has the Initiative had on targeted industries?
- To what extent have research and development and commercialization processes been improved?
- Has venture capital investment improved as a result of these activities? If so, how?
- What changes in economic indicators in the region occurred during the grant performance period?
- How many and what types of jobs were created as a result of these efforts to transform the role of the workforce system in economic development planning?
- What were the changes in K-12 educational indicators targeted by the regions? For higher education?
- What elements of regional social networks are most closely associated with successful regional outcomes?

This interim report has presented preliminary insights on how the Initiative has unfolded in the Generation II and Generation III regions. The research team will continue to seek out the lessons of this Initiative for policy-making and regional economic transformation.

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Appendix A. Overview of Generation II and III Regions

Table A-1: Overview of Generation II WIRED Regions

Region	Administrative and Fiscal Agent(s)	Targeted Industries	Goals and Strategies
Arkansas Delta	■ Mid-South Community College ■ Arkansas Department of Workforce Services	■ Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics ■ Biofuels ■ Advanced Manufacturing	■ Create an ADWIRED Academy ■ Expand through partnerships with industry, government, philanthropic organizations, and education, with focus on: alternative fuel training and education capacity; center for excellence for transportation, distribution, and logistics; and expansion of the advance manufacturing support structure ■ Expand education infrastructure to support new technologies and to foster economic development. ■ Establish an entrepreneurship development system. ■ Expand the workforce system.
Northern California	■ The Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NRTEC) ■ State of California and NRTEC	■ Entrepreneurship ■ Agritech/ Agribusiness ■ Advanced Manufacturing ■ Information Technology	■ Create sustainable employment opportunities by encouraging a strong entrepreneurial environment. ■ Link potential entrepreneurs to regional resources and assist in the development of successful business and marketing plans. ■ Foster business development in its identified targeted industrial cluster and offer its services to all entrepreneurs and would-be entrepreneurs. ■ Encouraged innovation and entrepreneurial activities in existing firms as well as new business startups. ■ Provide job training resources for business expansion and retention activities.
Southwest Connecticut	■ The WorkPlace, Inc.	■ Health Care Services ■ Retail ■ Hospitality ■ Advanced Manufacturing ■ Financial Services ■ Information Technology ■ Biomedical	■ Create an integrated, regionally based talent development system linking education, workforce, and economic development partners. ■ Prepare a pipeline of skilled workers to support both core and innovation-intensive industry sectors in the region. ■ Establish a world-class regional communications backbone for the region. ■ Develop a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship among the partners and throughout the region.

Table A-1: Overview of Generation II WIRED Regions

Region	Administrative and Fiscal Agent(s)	Targeted Industries	Goals and Strategies
Delaware Valley	■ Innovation Philadelphia	■ Life Sciences	■ Conduct a GAP analysis (i.e., asset map) of strengths and weaknesses in the DVIN region's life sciences industry. The Council on Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and NES Consultants were retained to conduct the GAP analysis. ■ Develop and support an education and outreach infrastructure to address the needs of the life sciences industry at present and into the future. This goal seeks to develop a pipeline of life science workers and provide resources to educators. ■ Support human capital development by providing training to individuals in the region. This will be accomplished through Innovation Investment Grants (regional competitive grants awarded to regional life sciences initiatives that meet needs specified in the GAP analysis) and through outreach to inform the life sciences community about these funds. ■ Foster regional collaboration and knowledge through regular meetings to educate regional leaders on the importance of collaboration for the growth of the region's life science sector.
Southwest Indiana	■ Grow Southwest Indiana Workforce Board, Inc.	■ Advanced Manufacturing ■ Biomed/Biotech (health care) ■ Chemical and Plastics ■ Energy ■ Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics	■ Increase workforce capacity; build career awareness in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM); enhance workplace preparation; and foster incumbent workforce development. ■ Better inform and align economic development efforts. ■ To encourage the growth of entrepreneurial activity in the region. ■ To support the research and collaboration needed to develop an intermodal transportation, distribution, and logistics (TDL) hub in its counties. ■ Due to its largely rural landscape, the region plans to address community-wide broadband access. This goal includes activities such as assessing the benefits of adding capacity, mapping current access, assisting local areas with implementation, and research possibilities for connecting.

Table A-1: Overview of Generation II WIRED Regions

Region	Administrative and Fiscal Agent(s)	Targeted Industries	Goals and Strategies
Southeast Michigan	■ Detroit Regional Chamber	■ Advanced Manufacturing ■ Life Sciences ■ Homeland Security ■ Alternative Energy	■ Create a pipeline to meet workforce demands of existing and emerging industries. ■ Realign assets and programs to promote entrepreneurship. ■ Foster a diversified economy through innovation.
Northern New Jersey	■ Newark Alliance ■ New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development ■	■ Transportation, Logistics, and Distribution ■ Life Sciences and Health Care ■ Entertainment, Arts, and Retail ■ Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development ■ Information Technology (in education and training delivery)	■ Create and foster an environment where stakeholders within the region collaborate to proactively leverage physical, intellectual, and human capital assets that help sustain and grow the regional economy. ■ Build a regional coalition of economic development, education, workforce systems and industry to align programs to link unemployed and underemployed residents in the region to fill jobs in industry sectors with existing shortages and anticipated growth to bridge the regional economic divide. ■ Accelerate regional economic revitalization by sparking innovation, small business development and entrepreneurship and create partnerships among industry, academic, and capital sectors.
Appalachian Ohio	■ Information Technology Alliance of Appalachian Ohio, Inc. (ITAAO) ■ Community Action Organization of Scioto County (WDA#1 – WIB)	■ Interactive Design Technology (IDT) ■ Information Technology	■ Capitalize on the unique IDT educational programs to develop a high-tech workforce that can attract new business to the area and encourage new business development by entrepreneurs within the region. ■ Raise awareness at the secondary educational level of higher educational benefits and the opportunities associated with career paths in IDT and with technology in general. ■ At the college-level, utilize WIRED resources to improve outreach, hands-on experience, and entrepreneurial skills that will attract more local students into IDT programs and retain graduates within the Appalachian Ohio region after graduation.

Table A-1: Overview of Generation II WIRED Regions

Region	Administrative and Fiscal Agent(s)	Targeted Industries	Goals and Strategies
Puerto Rico	■ Iniciativa Tecnológica Centro-Oriental (INTECO) ■ Human Resources and Occupational Development Council (HRODC)	■ Life Sciences (pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical devices) ■ Manufacturing ■ Healthcare ■ Emerging Technology ■ Entrepreneurship	■ Retain and up-skill incumbent workers in strategic sectors. ■ Strengthen the talent pipeline by educating future workers in STEM-related fields that impact the strategic sectors. ■ Create an entrepreneurial ecosystem by strengthening the development of small and medium enterprises.
Tennessee Valley	■ Calhoun Community College ■ Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)	■ Biotechnology ■ Nanotechnology ■ Information Technology ■ Advanced Manufacturing	■ Establish a regional identity. ■ Support STEM activities in both the K-12 and postsecondary education systems. ■ Facilitate entrepreneurial activities in the target sectors.
Rio South Texas	■ The North America Advanced Manufacturing Research and Education Initiative (NAAMREI) ■ South Texas College	■ Aerospace ■ Automotive ■ Communications ■ Consumer electronics ■ Defense ■ Industrial ■ Logistics ■ Medical	■ Strengthen the region's advanced manufacturing sector by establishing a center for Rapid Response Manufacturing (RRM) by growing the size of the region's engineering workforce and enabling the region's manufacturers to turn ideas into products as efficiently and effectively as possible. ■ Establish a skills-credentialing customized training system that meets the business needs for a world-class workforce. To achieve this goal, four regional Advanced Manufacturing Training Institutes have been created and are operating on the campuses of Laredo Community College, South Texas College, Texas State Technical College and the University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southernmost College. ■ Develop a strong network among high school, postsecondary education, and economic development activities including providing educational support by creating and conducting curricula in science, technology, math, and engineering; providing training for teachers, counselors, and administrators; and creating business partnerships with K-12 school districts.

Table A-1: Overview of Generation II WIRED Regions

Region	Administrative and Fiscal Agent(s)	Targeted Industries	Goals and Strategies
Wasatch Range Utah	■ Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED)	■ Biotechnology	■ Create outreach programs to help recruit and fully engage available workers in the life sciences sector. ■ Expand successful training programs including lab-based training for students and educators. ■ Partner with research entities including universities, industries, and development laboratories to meet the needs of the state's innovative companies. ■ Create a "bio-incubator" to provide access for students to be able to undertake small, entrepreneurial life-science-based projects.
Southeast Wisconsin	■ Regional Workforce Alliance (RWA) ■ State of Wisconsin; Waukesha-Ozaukee-Washington Workforce Development Inc.	■ Manufacturing ■ Financial Services ■ Water Resources	■ Grow workforce talent in a manner that supports Milwaukee 7's economic strategic framework including a $2.5 million Training and Education Innovation Fund, establishing career pathways in the region, strengthening links between secondary and postsecondary education, and providing opportunities for lifelong learning. ■ Deliver demand-driven talent development services to support Milwaukee 7 efforts to grow, expand, and attract export-driver industries and emerging business clusters. ■ Catalyze systems integration to support talent development in Southeastern Wisconsin.

Table A-2: Overview of Generation III WIRED Regions

Region	Administrative and Fiscal Agents	Targeted Industries	Goals and Strategies
Southern Arizona	■ Pima County Workforce Investment Board ■ Pima County	■ Information Technology ■ Logistics/Transportation/ ■ Coordination ■ Border Patrol	■ Become a national Center of Excellence for homeland security and advanced technology. ■ Create a home-grown talent pipeline for emerging and existing high-technology industries. ■ Cultivate entrepreneurial culture, infrastructure, and pipelines to foster innovation and diversify the regional economy and career opportunities. ■ Support regional knowledge exchange, maximizing learning, assets, and transformation capacity across all four counties.
South Central Idaho	■ Region IV Development Association ■ Idaho Department of Labor	■ Manufacturing ■ Construction ■ Entrepreneurship	■ Immediate talent development requirements will focus on positions in manufacturing, construction, and maintenance, occupational areas that have experienced the most pressing worker shortages. ■ Focus mid-term talent development needs on the workforce needs of several industry sectors, including bio-fuels, animal sciences, food processing, and cluster-based manufacturing. ■ Transform the region's talent development system long-term goal.
South Central Kansas	■ Housed at: Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas (Local Area IV) ■ Kansas WorkforceONE (Local Area I) ■ Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC)	■ Composites and Advanced Materials (aerospace and other sectors)	■ Leverage the education, training, and workforce development resources in the region as a way to develop a highly skilled workforce that will support the sustainable, high wage jobs required in a global economy (education and training). ■ Catalyze the research and development, investment, and application of composite and advance materials sciences in ways that will strengthen the economy of the region (employment opportunity expansion). ■ Cultivate an emerging global cluster to strengthen the regional economy (regional economic development).

Table A-2: Overview of Generation III WIRED Regions

Region	Administrative and Fiscal Agents	Targeted Industries	Goals and Strategies
Central Kentucky	■ Lincoln Trail Workforce Investment Board	■ Transportation and Logistics ■ Life Sciences ■ Health Care Services ■ Human Resources (Ft. Knox BRAC) ■ Energy Technology ■ Advanced Manufacturing	■ Build an effective structure to govern and sustain this initiative. ■ Develop a regional culture that values and supports education, economic development, entrepreneurship, innovation, and visionary leadership. ■ Enhance growth and competitiveness in high-growth industries. ■ Stimulate creative enterprise. ■ Align education and workforce training to support transformation throughout the region.
Minnesota Triangle	■ Renewable Energy Marketplace, an Alliance for Talent Development ■ Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development ■ Southwest Minnesota Workforce Council	■ Renewable Energy (wind turbines, biomass) ■ Agriculture ■ Manufacturing ■ Biosciences	■ Build a skilled workforce. ■ Build stronger communities. ■ Build a stronger regional economy through talent development. ■ Stop the outflow of talent and younger workers who are leaving these communities to find work in more metropolitan areas. ■ Address the needs of existing companies within the region linked with the renewable energy sector. ■ Show people that there are real opportunities for good jobs in the region, in both renewable energy and advanced manufacturing.
Southeast Mississippi	■ Mississippi Department of Employment Security	■ Advanced Manufacturing ■ Metal Industries ■ Construction	■ Develop a business model for transforming the region's, and ultimately, the State's workforce development strategy. ■ Link all stages of workforce development: basic education, post-secondary education and skills training, and lifelong learning. ■ Create a replicable model workforce system for targeted industry sectors. ■ Provide accessible skills training to workers and job seekers, emphasizing adult workers who seek skills upgrades or transitions to better jobs.

Table A-2: Overview of Generation III WIRED Regions

Region	Administrative and Fiscal Agents	Targeted Industries	Goals and Strategies
Southeast Missouri	■ Workforce Investment Board of Southeast Missouri	■ Renewable energy ■ Tourism ■ Logistics ■ Health care ■ Advanced manufacturing ■ Entrepreneurship	■ Develop a strong entrepreneurial support system ■ Build the targeted sectors ■ Create a more responsive workforce system by bringing together the WIB, educators, and industry to share concerns and plan for improvement.
Central Eastern New Jersey	■ Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board ■ Rutgers University	■ Biotechnology ■ Life sciences	■ Excite young people about the biosciences with a focus on underrepresented groups. ■ Lay smooth education and career pathways and have a new biotechnology educators' consortium develop articulation agreements. ■ Transform graduate education to create a new set of professional master's degrees tailored to the needs of bioscience companies. ■ Develop professional science master's degree programs for integrating science and business. ■ Increase bioscience workforce system. ■ Enhance linkages between education and industry, with the aim of establishing a "one-stop" bioscience career site. ■ Facilitate global competitiveness to attract and enhance global partnerships and to attract international bioscience companies to the region.
New Mexico	■ New Mexico Technet ■ New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions	■ Optics ■ Green-Building Construction ■ Aerospace and Aviation ■ Renewable Energy ■ Microelectronics ■ Advanced Manufacturing ■ Entrepreneurship	■ Train central New Mexico's future advanced/green technology workforce at all levels from high school through graduate school ■ Stimulate entrepreneurship and promote technology transfer from federal laboratories to private sector startups ■ Assess the region's workforce needs and resources and promote information on "Jobs for the Future."

Table A-2: Overview of Generation III WIRED Regions

Region	Administrative and Fiscal Agents	Targeted Industries	Goals and Strategies
North Oregon	■ Worksystems, Inc.	■ Advanced Manufacturing (bioscience, metals)	■ Support leadership for regional economic growth through mapping of the region's resources, improving the efficiencies of its workforce system, researching its workforce, and conducting a global context assessment. ■ Grow the talent pipeline through four projects (High Tech U, regional workforce readiness soft skills assessment and certification, improving WorkSources' interaction with the advanced manufacturing sector, and developing the career-related learning experiences [CRLEs] system). ■ Align curriculum to reduce skills gaps by profiling advanced manufacturing jobs and modifying or creating curriculum to improve training. ■ Increase opportunities for training by establishing a training fund for advanced manufacturing at the local WIB level.
Southeast Virginia	■ Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board (Opportunity Inc.)	■ Transportation, Warehousing, and Distribution ■ Modeling and Simulation	■ Foster economic development by supporting the workforce needs of the TWD and M&S industries. ■ Mitigate the impact of base realignment and closure (BRAC) and industry downsizing by strengthening the pipeline for talent development to fast growing occupations in TWD and M&S. ■ Enhance relationships between existing partners and expanding the collaborative as needed.
Pacific Mountain Washington	■ Pacific Mountain Alliance for Innovation ■ Thurston County Board of Commissioners	■ Traditional and Renewable Energy ■ Manufacturing ■ Construction	■ Develop a globally competitive, dynamic, and technologically savvy talent pool. ■ Grow and support innovation and entrepreneurships as the basis of the regional economy. ■ Leverage the resources of partners to establish and support the regional identity.
South Central and Southwest Wisconsin	■ Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin	■ Advanced Manufacturing ■ Agriculture ■ Biotechnology ■ Health Care ■ Skilled Trades ■ Utilities	■ Develop a career pathway infrastructure that spans the six major industry groups. ■ Expand training capacity, mostly through expansion and improvement of training programs at area technical colleges.

Appendix B. Social Network Graphs by Regions

Appalachian Ohio Social Network

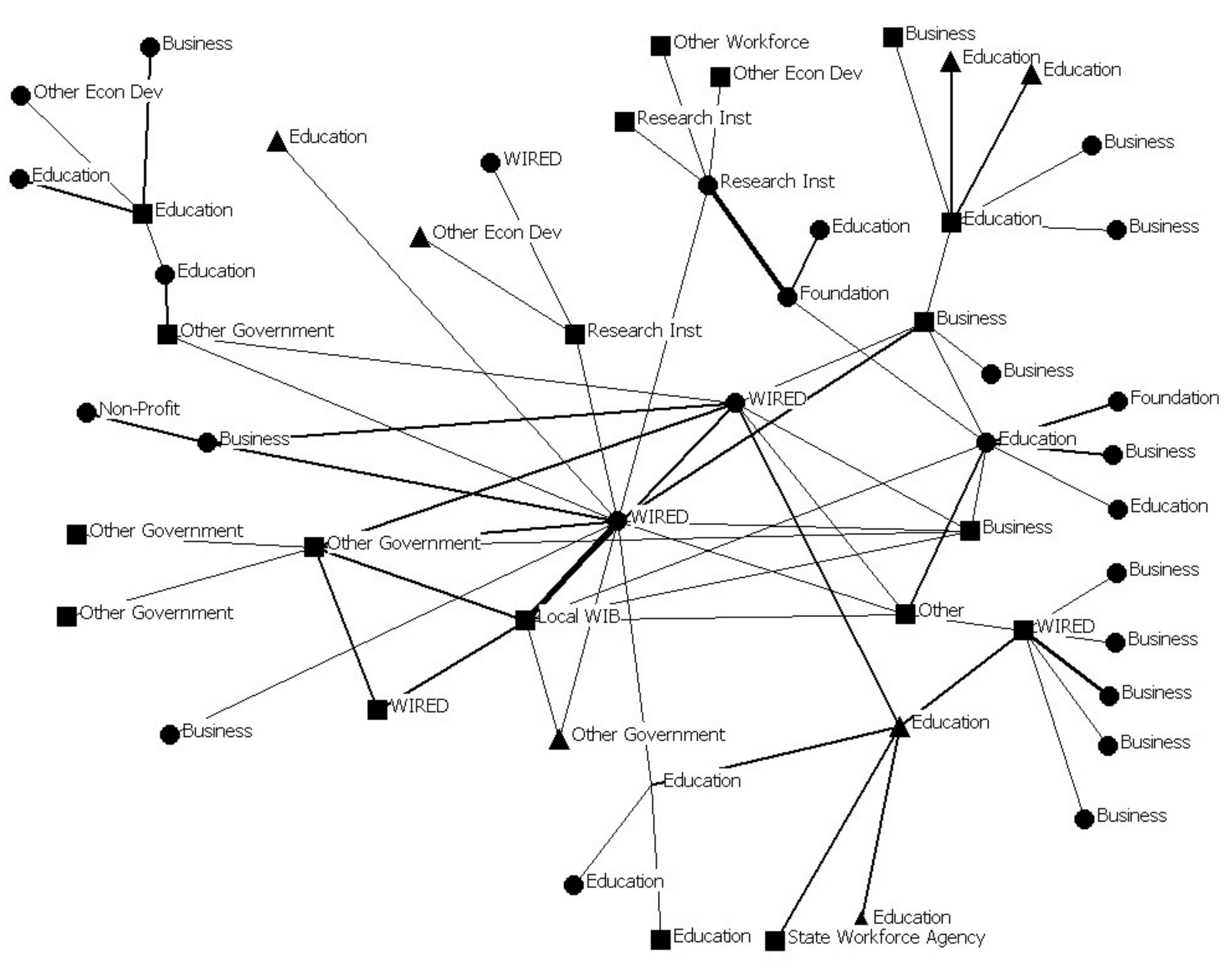

Figure B-1

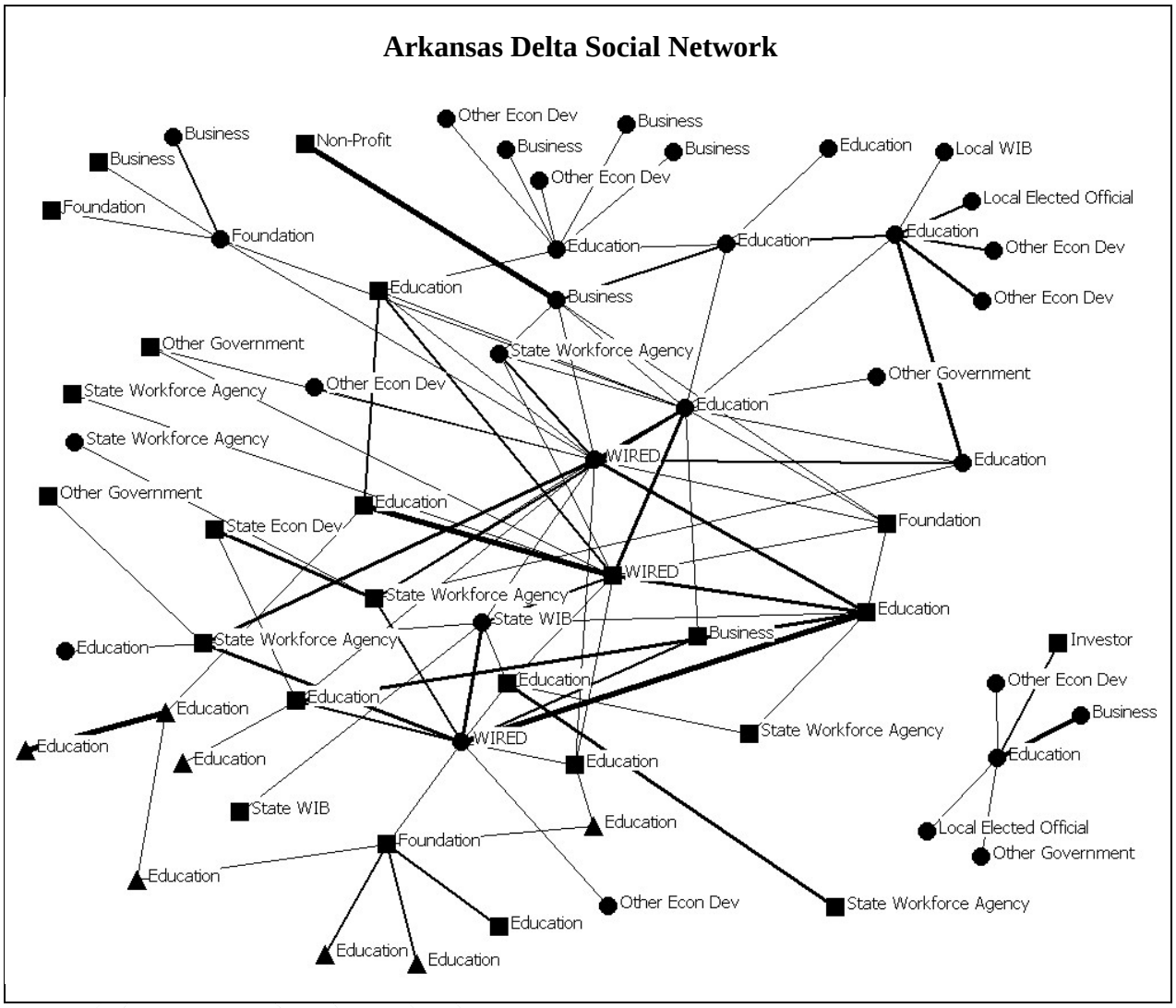
Arkansas Delta Social Network
Other Econ Dev
Business
Business
Business
Business
Non-Profit
Business
Other Econ Dev
Education
Local WIB
Local Elected Official
Foundation
Foundation
Education
Education
Education
Other Econ Dev
Other Econ Dev
Education
Business
Other Government
State Workforce Agency
Other Government
State Workforce Agency
Other Econ Dev
Education
State Workforce Agency
WIRED
Education
Other Government
Education
State Econ Dev
Foundation
WIRED
State Workforce Agency
Education
State WIB
Education
State Workforce Agency
Business
Investor
Education
Education
Education
Other Econ Dev
Business
Education
WIRED
State Workforce Agency
Education
Education
Education
State WIB
Education
Foundation
Local Elected Official
Other Government
Education
Other Econ Dev
State Workforce Agency
Education
Education
Education

Figure B-2

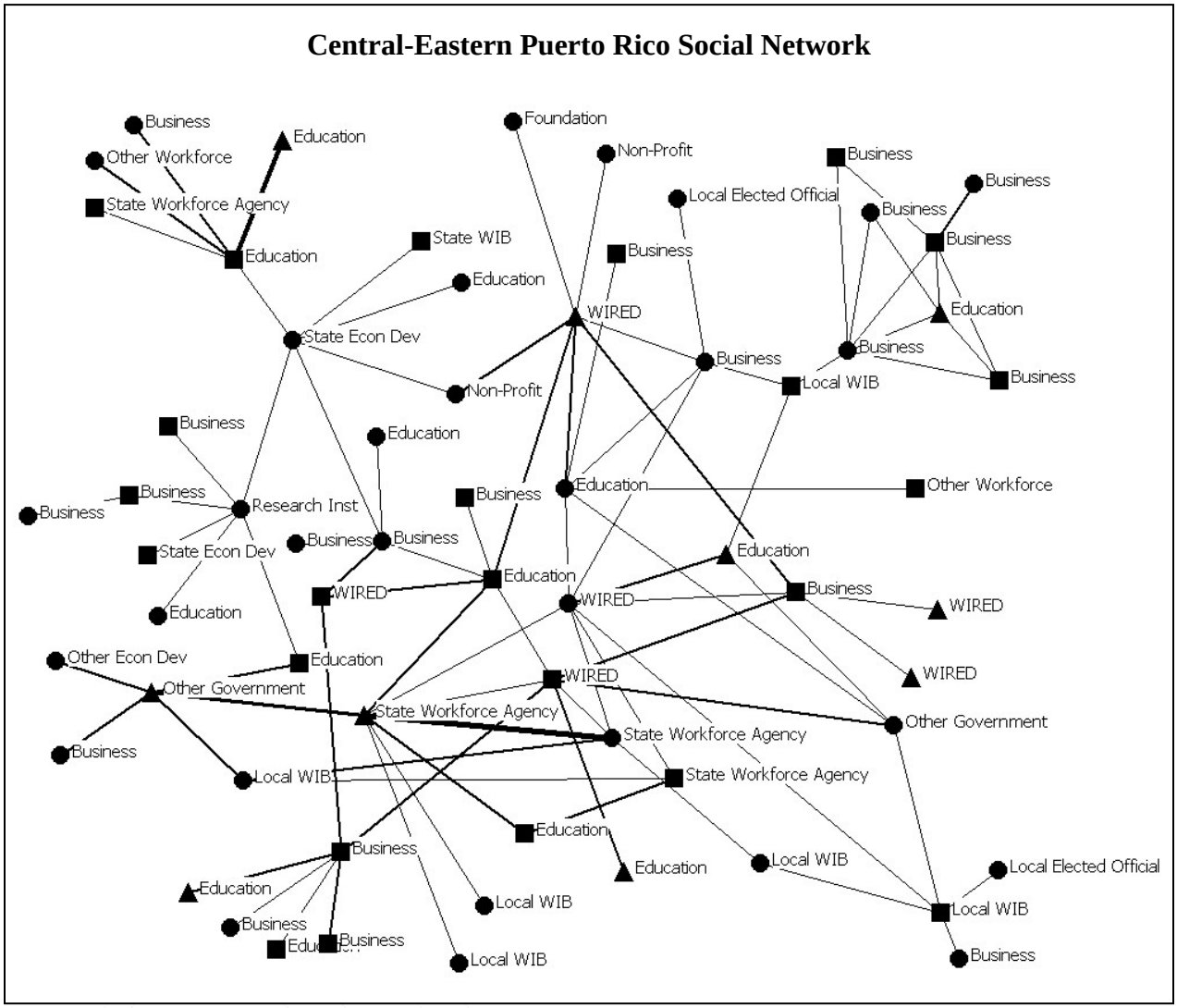
Central-Eastern Puerto Rico Social Network
Business
Education
Other Workforce
State Workforce Agency
Education
State WIB
Education
State Econ Dev
Non-Profit
Foundation
Non-Profit
Local Elected Official
Business
Business
Business
Business
Business
Education
WIRED
Business
Business
Local WIB
Business
Business
Education
Business
Business
Research Inst
Business
Business
Business
Education
Other Workforce
Business
Business
State Econ Dev
Education
WIRED
Education
WIRED
Business
WIRED
Education
Other Econ Dev
Education
Other Government
WIRED
WIRED
State Workforce Agency
Other Government
Business
State Workforce Agency
Local WIB
Education
Business
Education
Local WIB
Local Elected Official
Education
Local WIB
Business
Local WIB
Business
Local WIB

Figure B-3

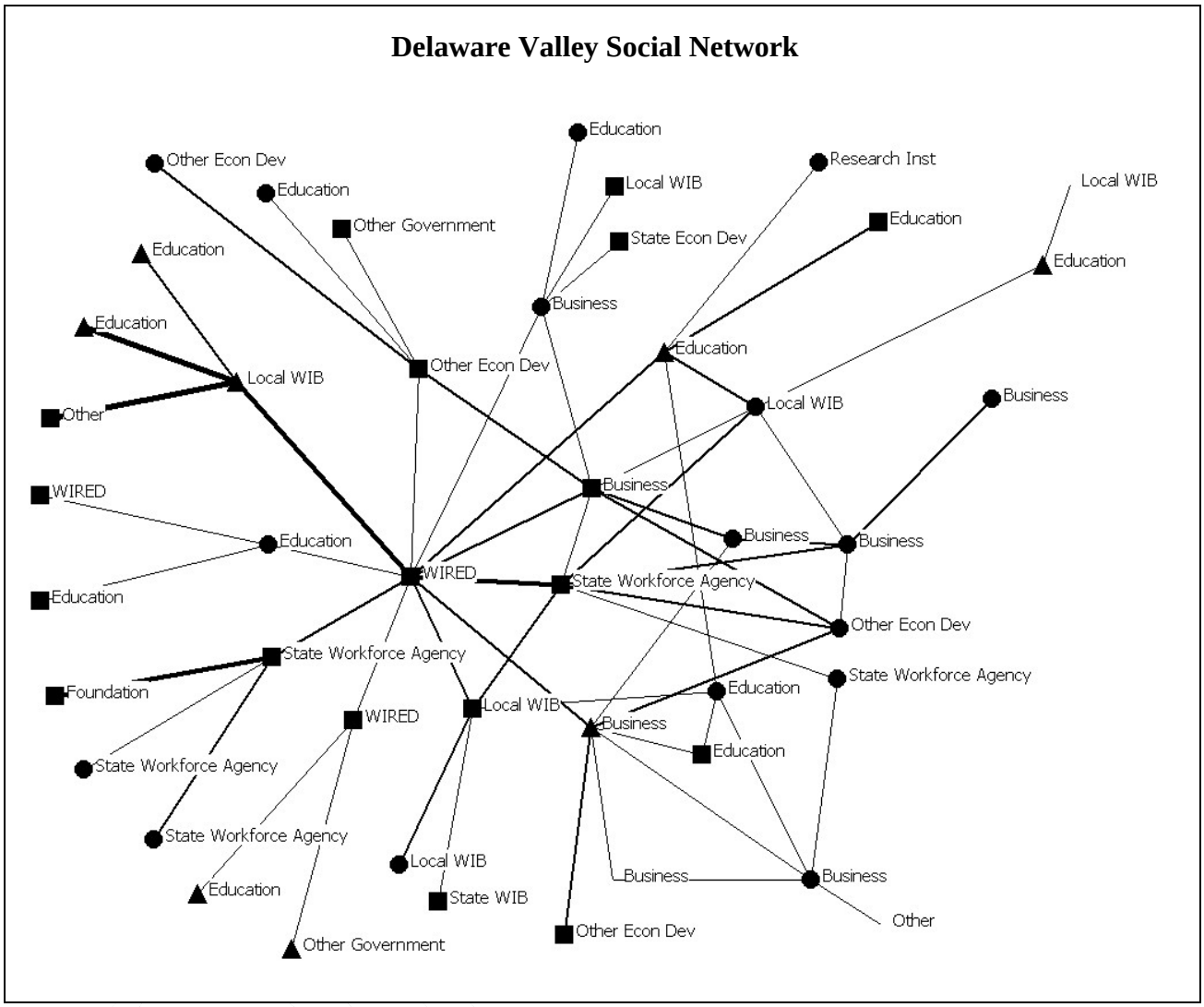
Delaware Valley Social Network
Education
Other Econ Dev
Research Inst
Local WIB
Education
Local WIB
Education
Other Government
State Econ Dev
Education
Education
Education
Business
Education
Other Econ Dev
Local WIB
Other
Local WIB
Business
Business
WIRED
Education
Business
Business
Business
Education
WIRED
State Workforce Agency
Other Econ Dev
State Workforce Agency
Foundation
Education
State Workforce Agency
WIRED
Local WIB
Business
Education
State Workforce Agency
State Workforce Agency
Local WIB
Business
Business
Education
State WIB
Other
Other Econ Dev
Other Government

Figure B-4

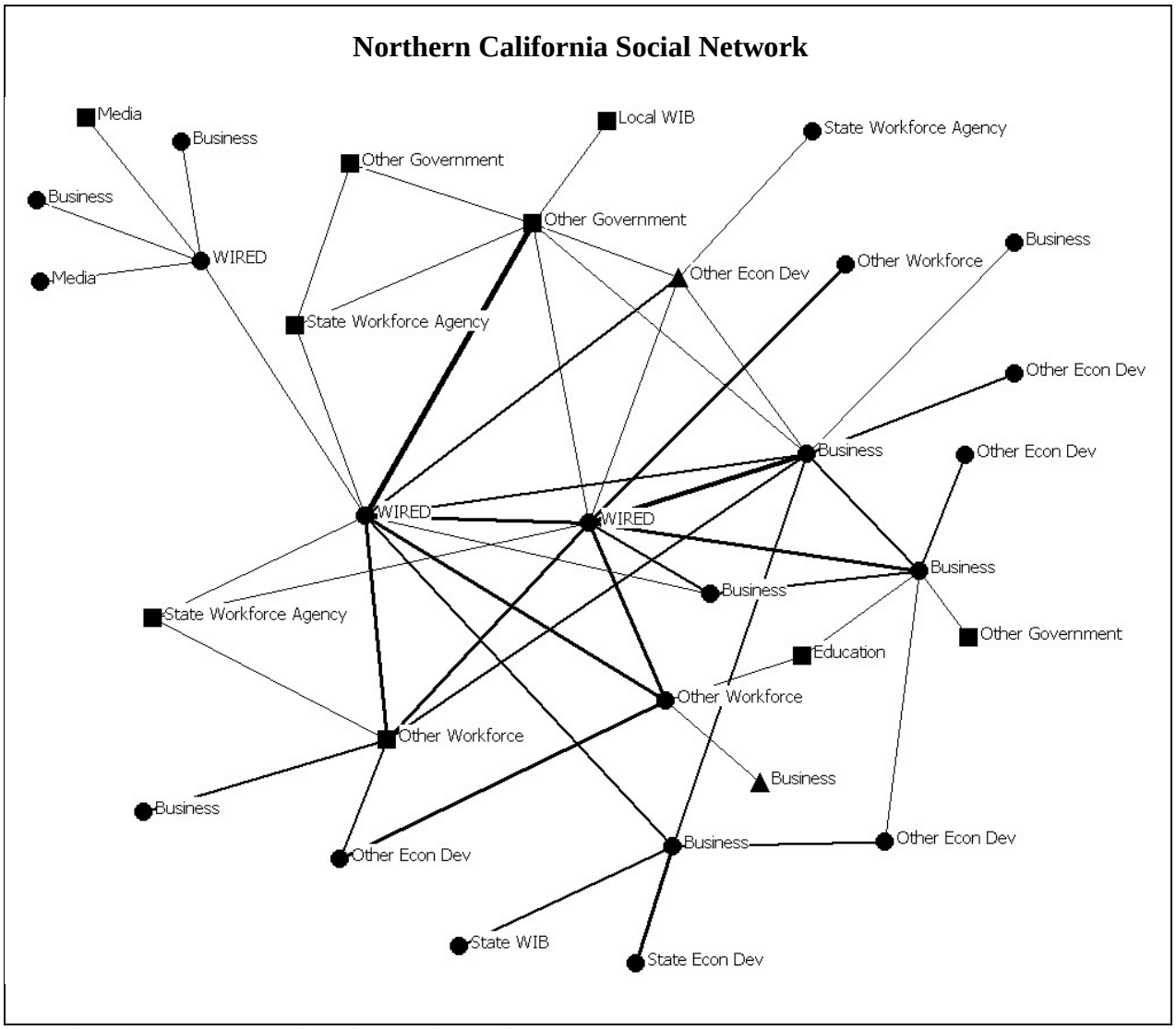
Northern California Social Network
Media
Business
Other Government
Local WIB
State Workforce Agency
Business
Other Government
Business
WIRED
Media
Other Econ Dev
Other Workforce
State Workforce Agency
Other Econ Dev
Business
Other Econ Dev
WIRED
WIRED
Business
Business
State Workforce Agency
Other Government
Education
Other Workforce
Other Workforce
Business
Business
Other Econ Dev
Business
Other Econ Dev
State WIB
State Econ Dev

Figure B-5

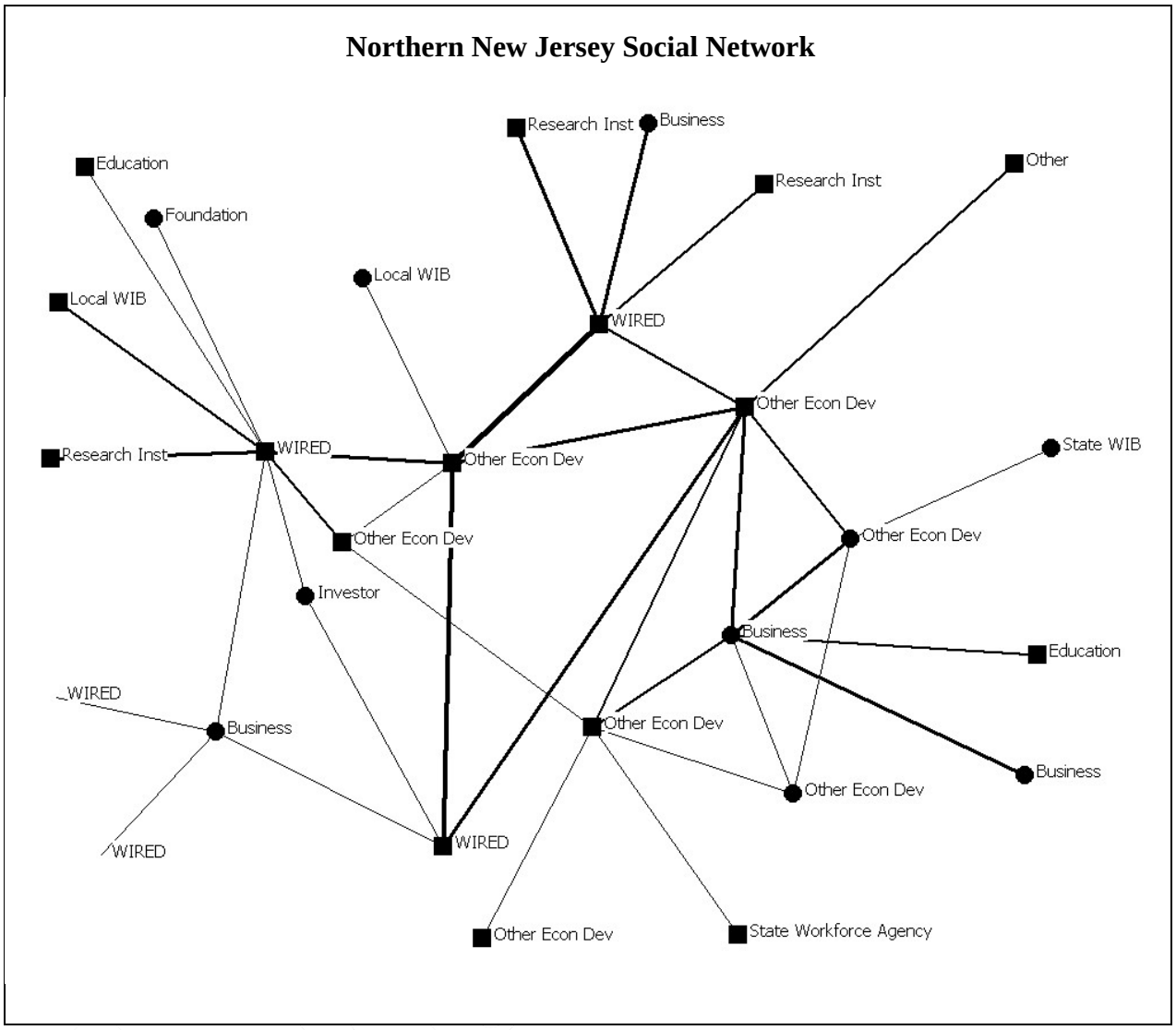
Northern New Jersey Social Network
Research Inst
Business
Education
Other
Research Inst
Foundation
Local WIB
Local WIB
WIRED
Other Econ Dev
Research Inst
WIRED
Other Econ Dev
State WIB
Other Econ Dev
Other Econ Dev
Investor
Business
Education
WIRED
Business
Other Econ Dev
Business
Other Econ Dev
WIRED
WIRED
Other Econ Dev
State Workforce Agency

Figure B-6

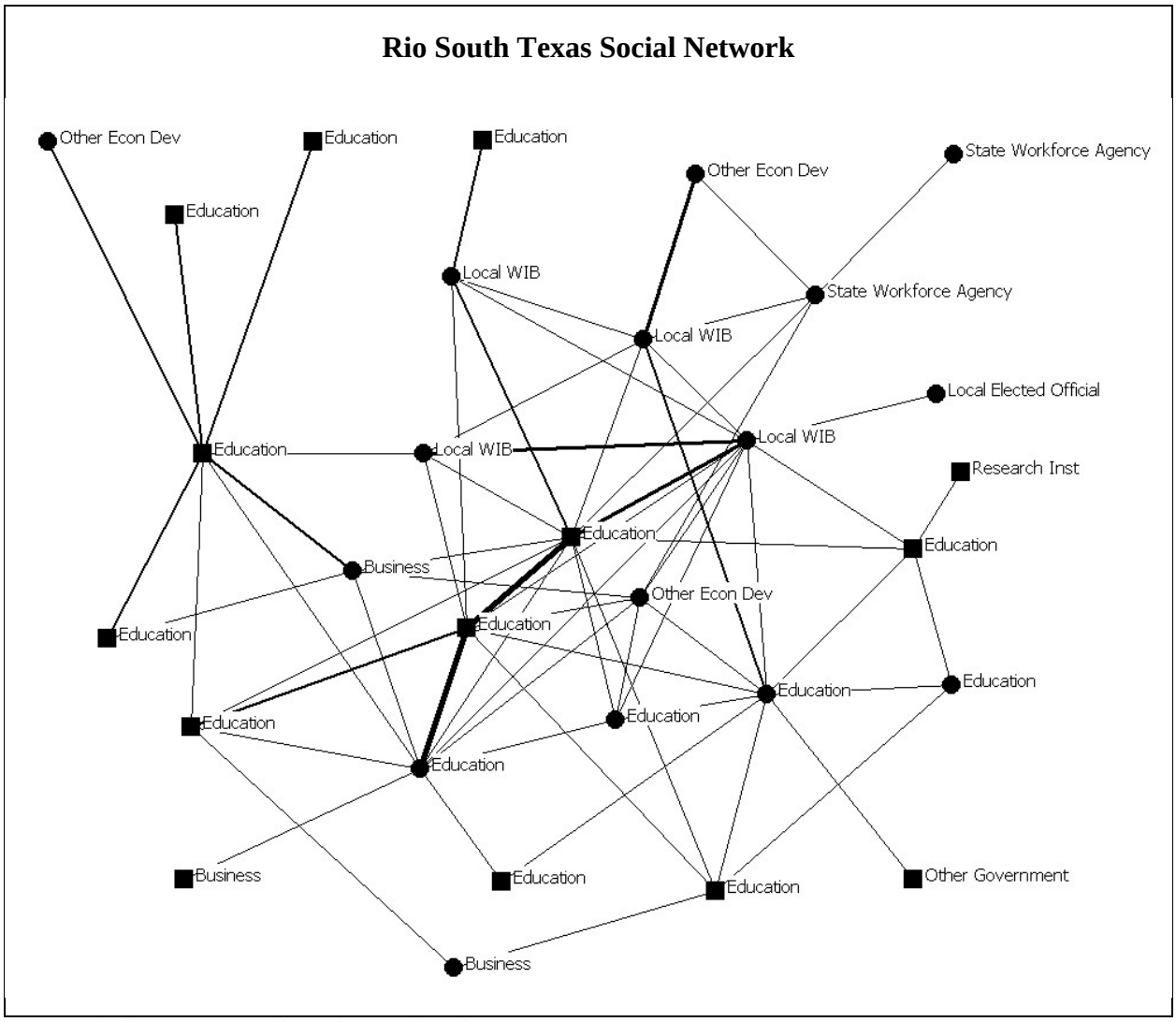
Rio South Texas Social Network
Other Econ Dev
Education
Education
Other Econ Dev
State Workforce Agency
Education
Local WIB
State Workforce Agency
Local WIB
Local Elected Official
Education
Local WIB
Local WIB
Research Inst
Education
Education
Business
Other Econ Dev
Education
Education
Education
Education
Education
Education
Education
Business
Education
Education
Other Government
Business

Figure B-7

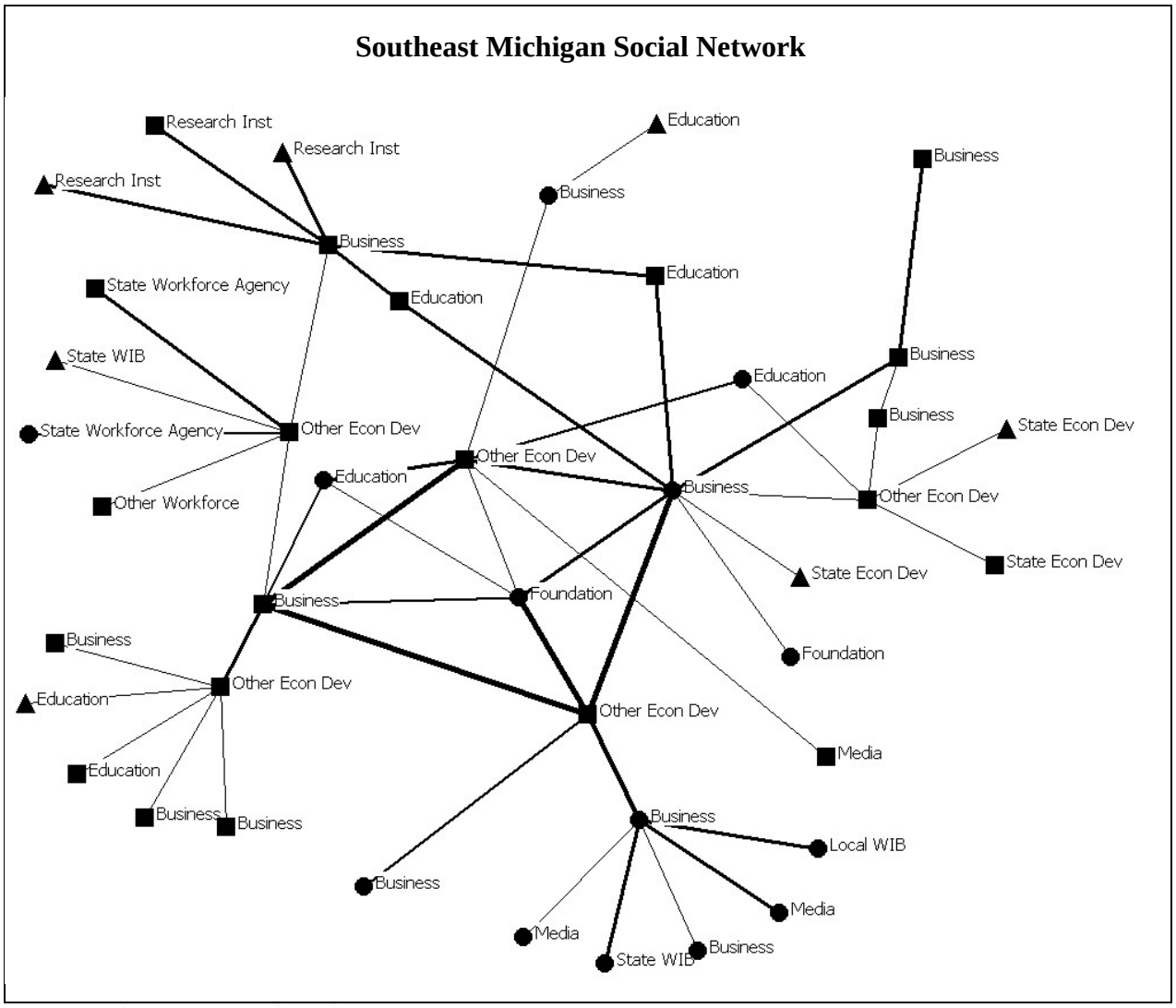
Southeast Michigan Social Network
Research Inst
Research Inst
Research Inst
Education
Business
Business
Business
Education
Education
State Workforce Agency
State WIB
Business
Education
State Workforce Agency
Other Econ Dev
Business
State Econ Dev
Other Econ Dev
Education
Other Workforce
Business
Other Econ Dev
State Econ Dev
State Econ Dev
Business
Foundation
Foundation
Business
Other Econ Dev
Education
Other Econ Dev
Media
Education
Business
Business
Business
Local WIB
Business
Media
Media
Business
State WIB

Figure B-8

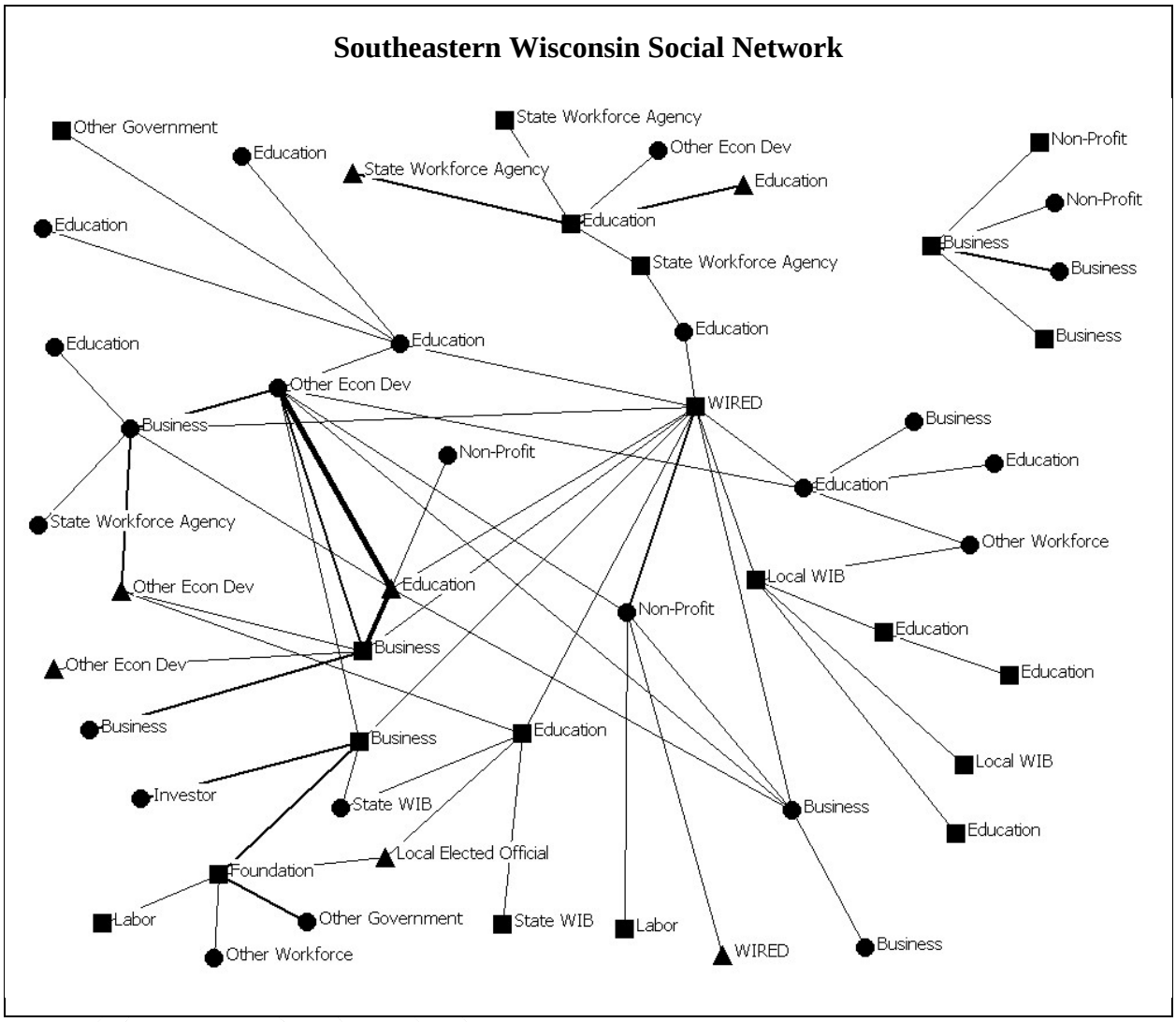
Southeastern Wisconsin Social Network
Other Government
Education
State Workforce Agency
State Workforce Agency
Other Econ Dev
Education
Education
Education
Non-Profit
Non-Profit
Business
Business
Business
State Workforce Agency
Education
Education
Education
Other Econ Dev
WIRED
Business
Business
Non-Profit
Education
Education
State Workforce Agency
Other Workforce
Other Econ Dev
Education
Local WIB
Non-Profit
Education
Business
Other Econ Dev
Education
Business
Education
Local WIB
Investor
State WIB
Business
Education
Local Elected Official
Foundation
Labor
Other Government
State WIB
Labor
WIRED
Business
Other Workforce

Figure B-9

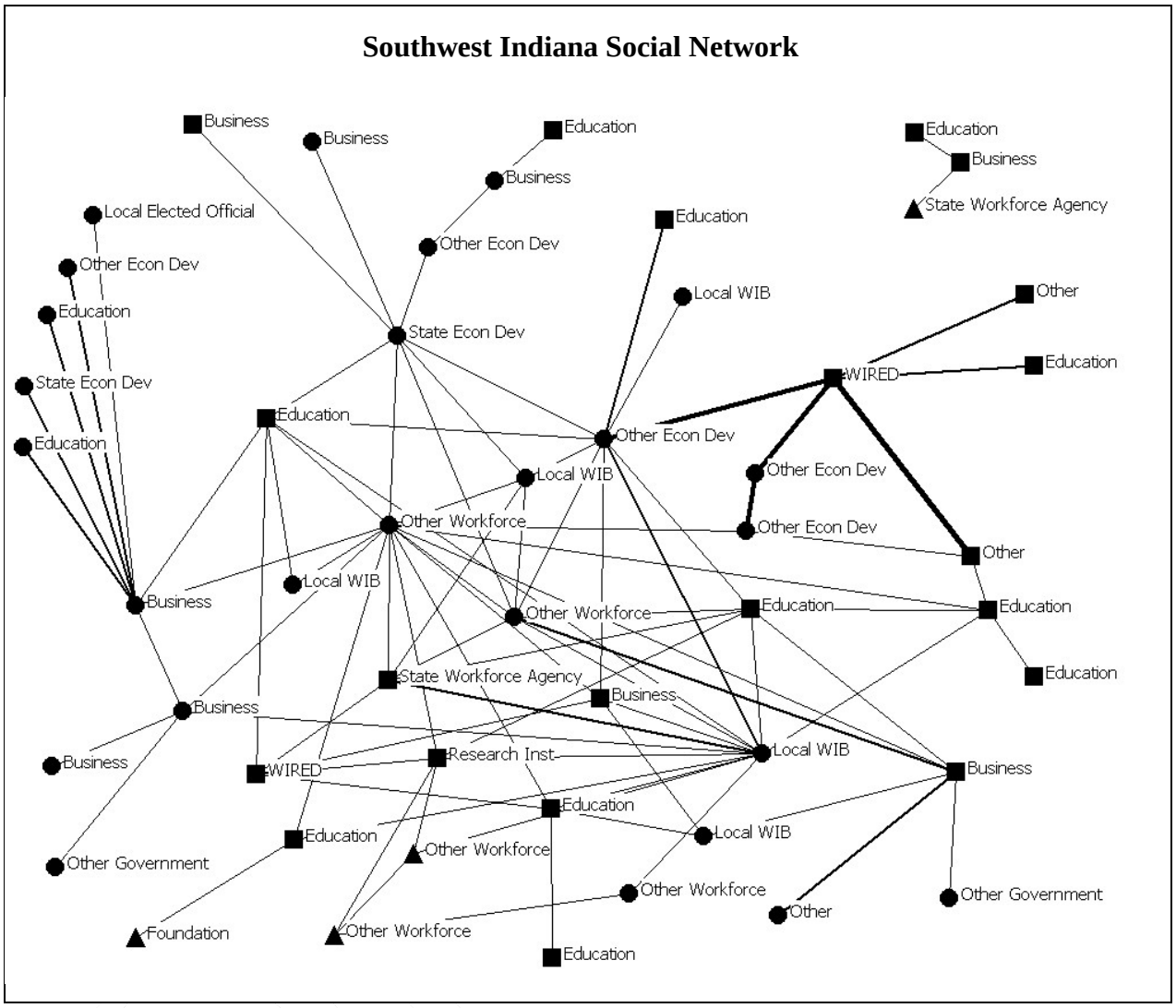
Southwest Indiana Social Network
Business
Business
Education
Business
Local Elected Official
Other Econ Dev
Education
State Econ Dev
Education
Business
Education
Business
State Workforce Agency
Other Econ Dev
Local WIB
State Econ Dev
Education
Other Econ Dev
Local WIB
Other Workforce
Other Econ Dev
Other
Local WIB
Business
Other Workforce
Education
Education
Education
State Workforce Agency
Business
Business
Research Inst
Local WIB
Business
WIRED
Education
Education
Local WIB
Other Government
Other Workforce
Other Workforce
Other
Other Government
Foundation
Other Workforce
Education

Figure B-10

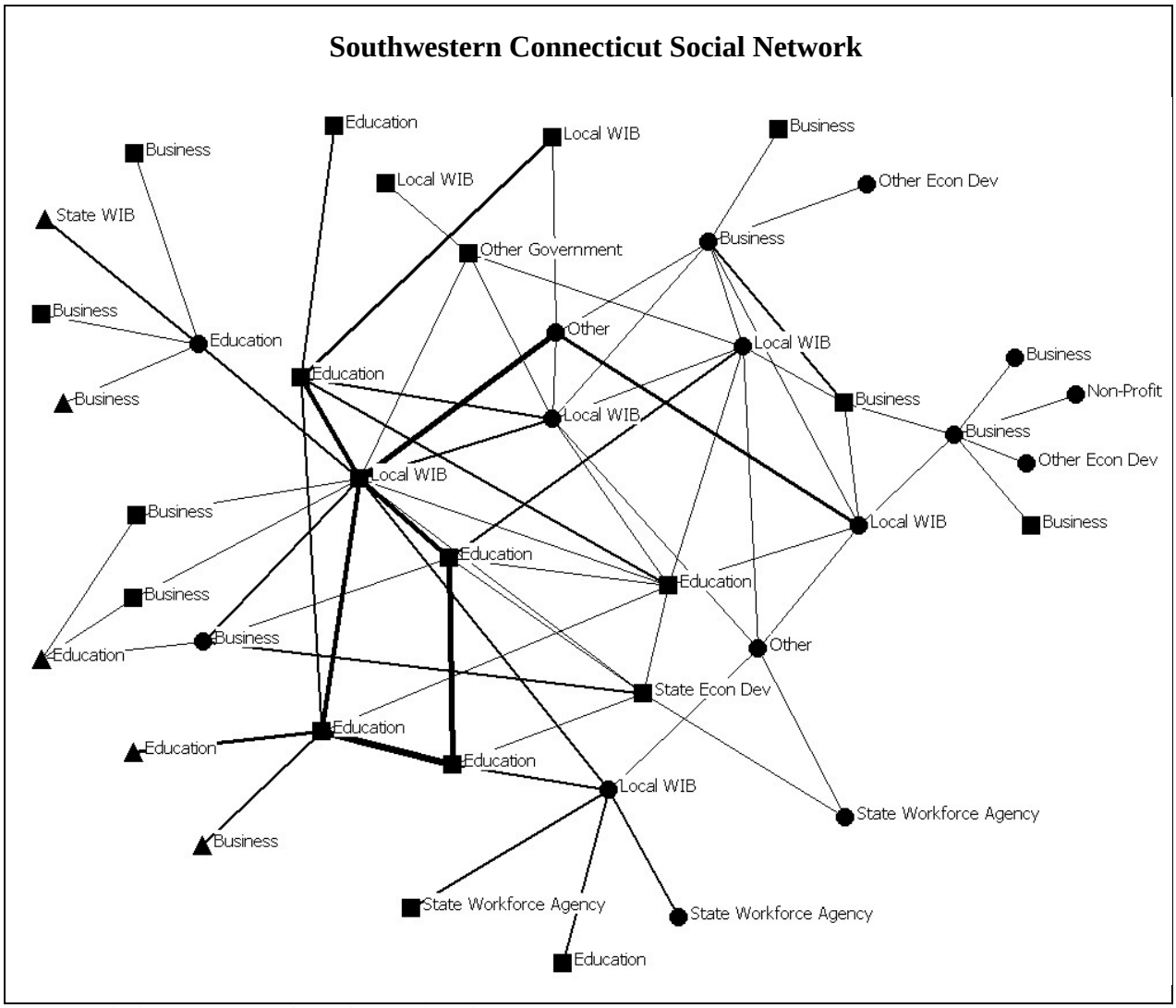
Southwestern Connecticut Social Network
Education
Local WIB
Business
Business
Local WIB
Other Econ Dev
State WIB
Other Government
Business
Business
Other
Local WIB
Education
Business
Education
Business
Local WIB
Business
Non-Profit
Business
Other Econ Dev
Local WIB
Business
Local WIB
Business
Education
Education
Business
Business
Education
Other
State Econ Dev
Education
Education
Education
Local WIB
State Workforce Agency
Business
State Workforce Agency
State Workforce Agency
Education

Figure B-11

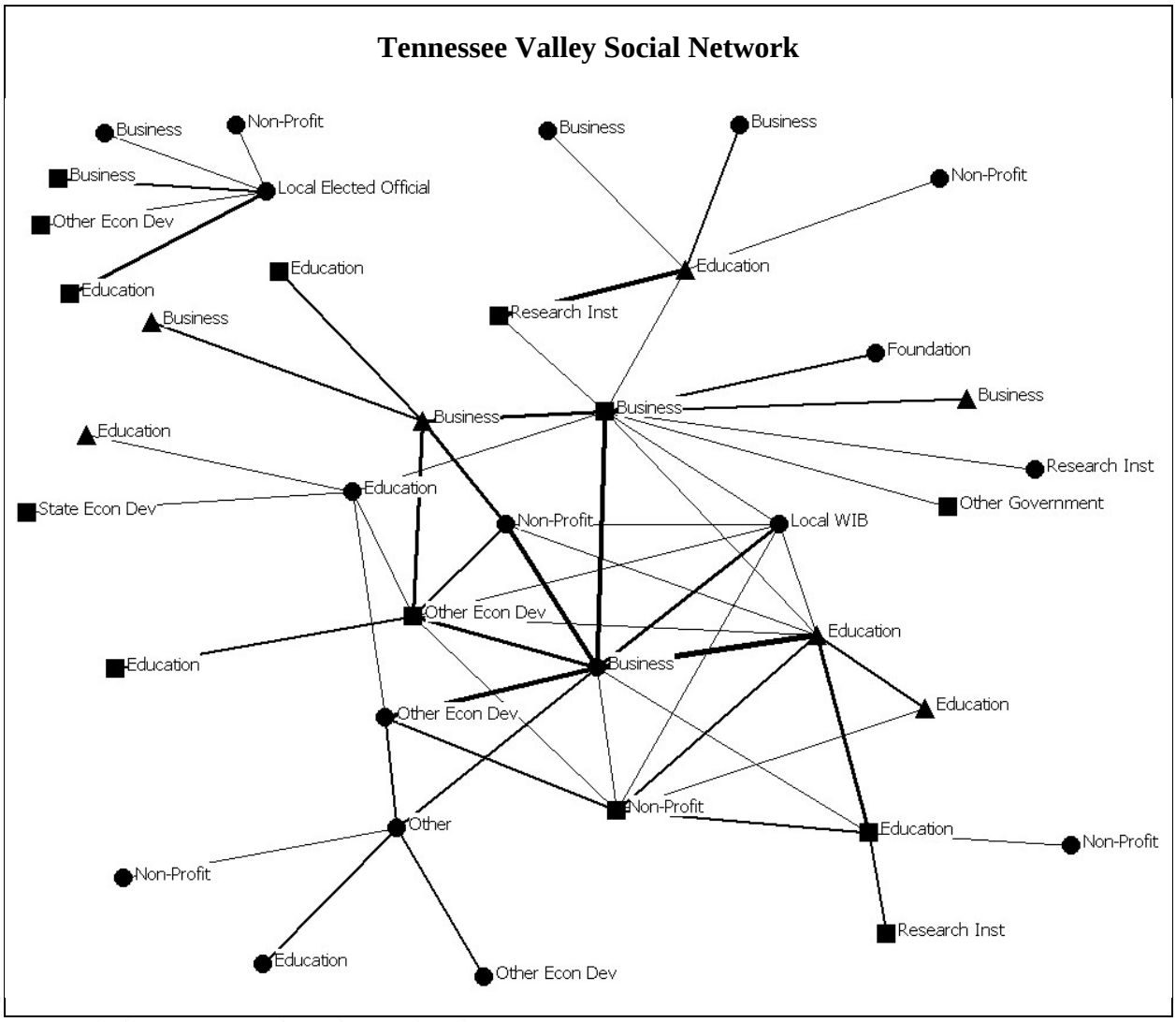
Tennessee Valley Social Network
Business
Non-Profit
Business
Local Elected Official
Other Econ Dev
Education
Education
Business
Business
Business
Non-Profit
Education
Research Inst
Foundation
Business
Business
Education
Research Inst
Education
State Econ Dev
Other Government
Non-Profit
Local WIB
Other Econ Dev
Education
Education
Business
Education
Other Econ Dev
Non-Profit
Other
Education
Non-Profit
Non-Profit
Research Inst
Education
Other Econ Dev

Figure B-12

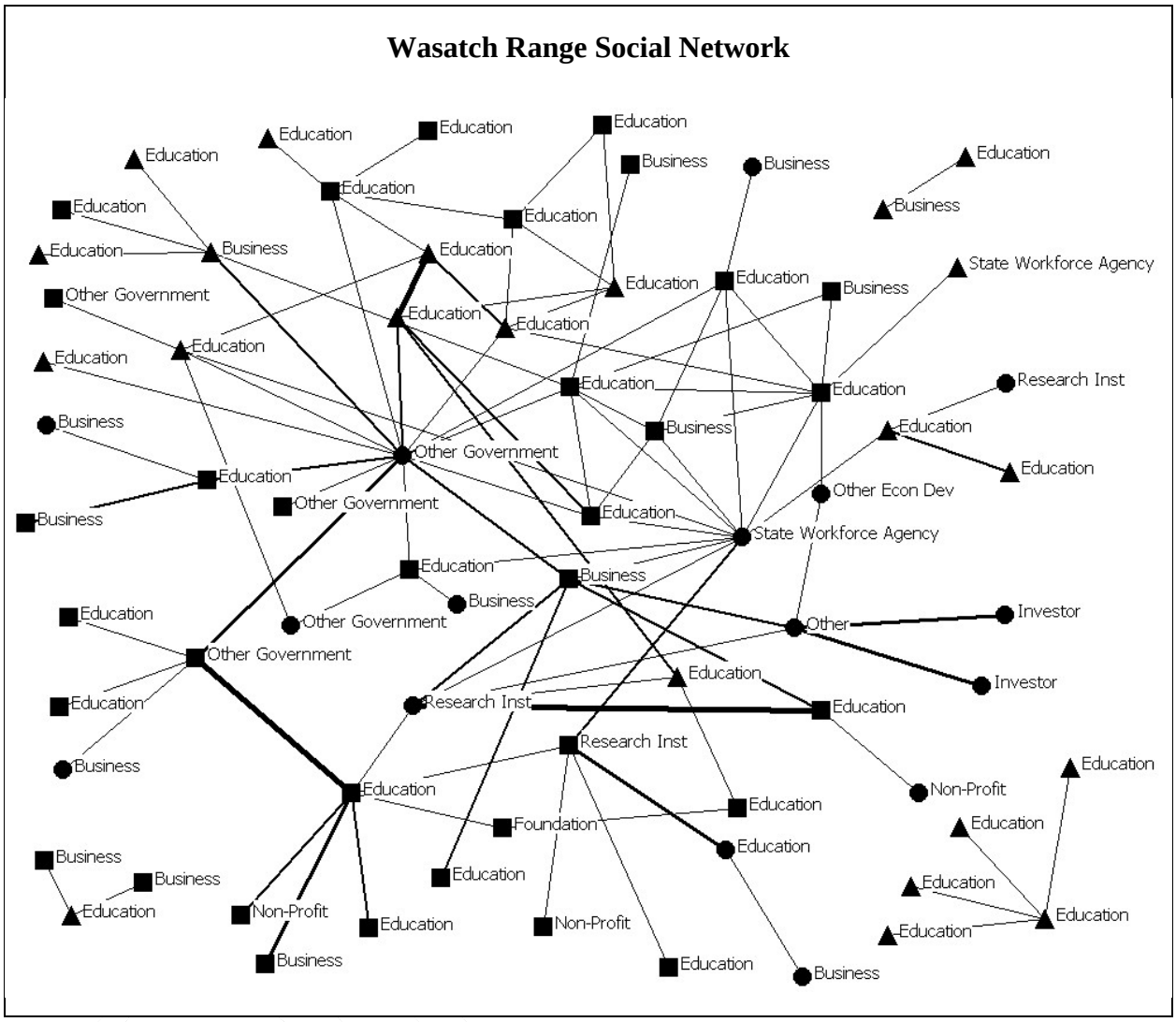
Wasatch Range Social Network
Education
Business
Other Government
State Workforce Agency
Research Inst
Other Econ Dev
Other
Investor
Non-Profit
Foundation

Figure B-13

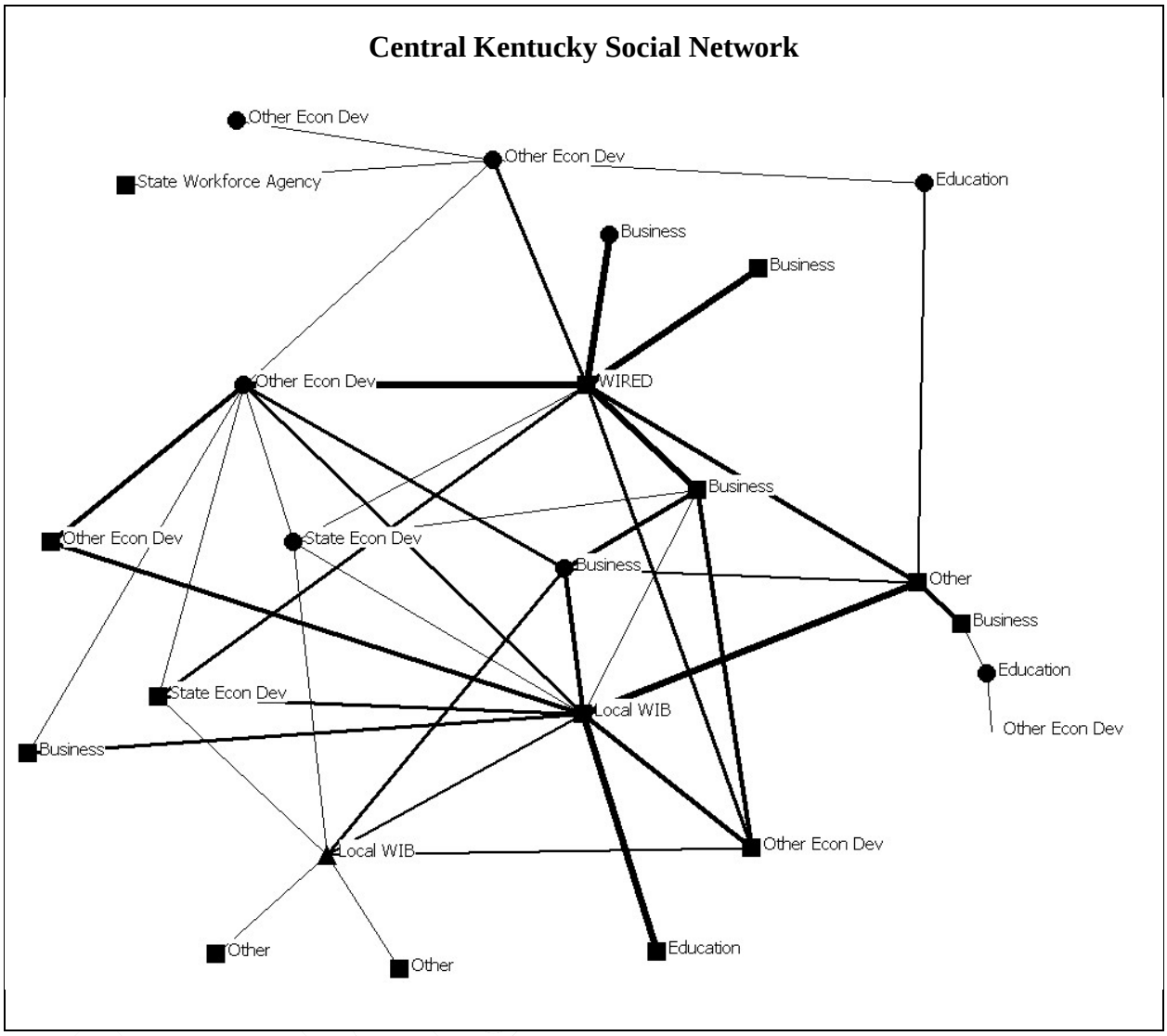
Central Kentucky Social Network
Other Econ Dev
Other Econ Dev
State Workforce Agency
Education
Business
Business
Other Econ Dev
WIRED
Business
Other Econ Dev
State Econ Dev
Business
Other
Business
Education
State Econ Dev
Local WIB
Other Econ Dev
Business
Local WIB
Other Econ Dev
Other
Other
Education

Figure B-14

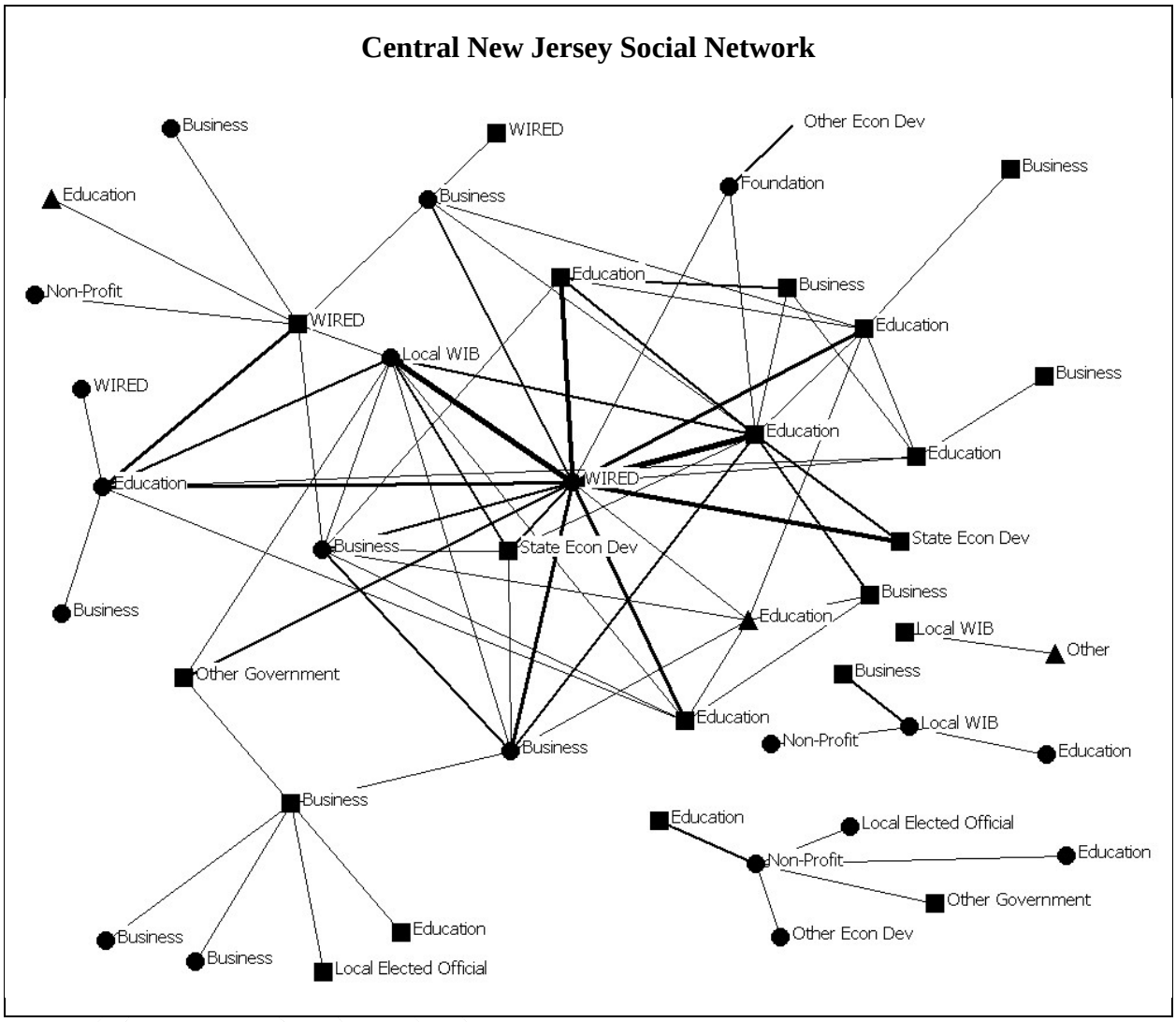
Central New Jersey Social Network
Business
WIRED
Other Econ Dev
Business
Education
Business
Foundation
Education
Business
Non-Profit
Education
WIRED
Local WIB
Business
WIRED
Education
Education
Education
WIRED
State Econ Dev
Business
State Econ Dev
Business
Education
Local WIB
Other
Other Government
Business
Education
Local WIB
Non-Profit
Business
Education
Business
Education
Local Elected Official
Non-Profit
Education
Other Government
Other Econ Dev
Business
Business
Education
Local Elected Official

Figure B-15

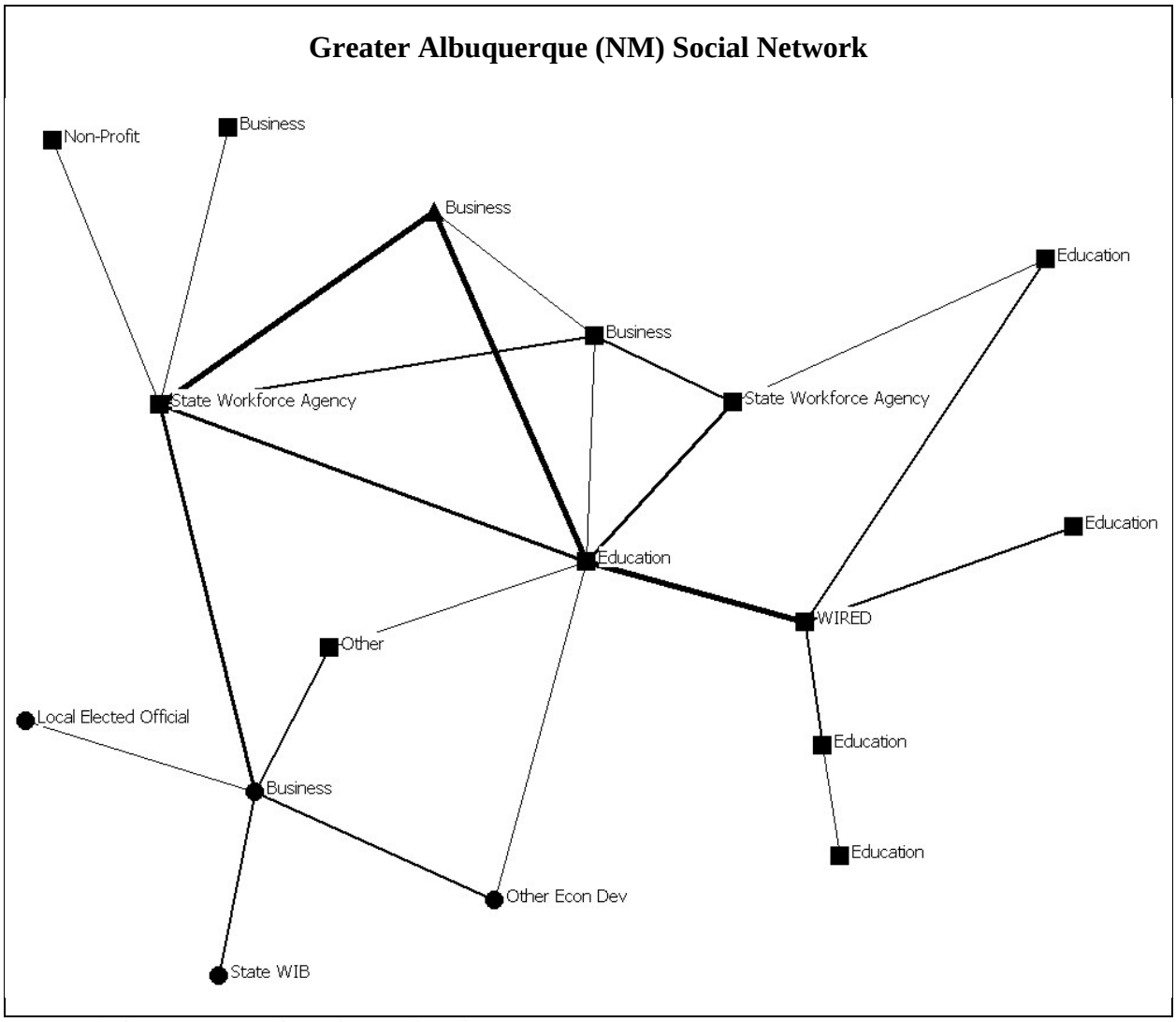
Greater Albuquerque (NM) Social Network
Non-Profit
Business
Business
Education
Business
State Workforce Agency
State Workforce Agency
Education
Education
WIRED
Other
Local Elected Official
Education
Business
Education
Other Econ Dev
State WIB

Figure B-16

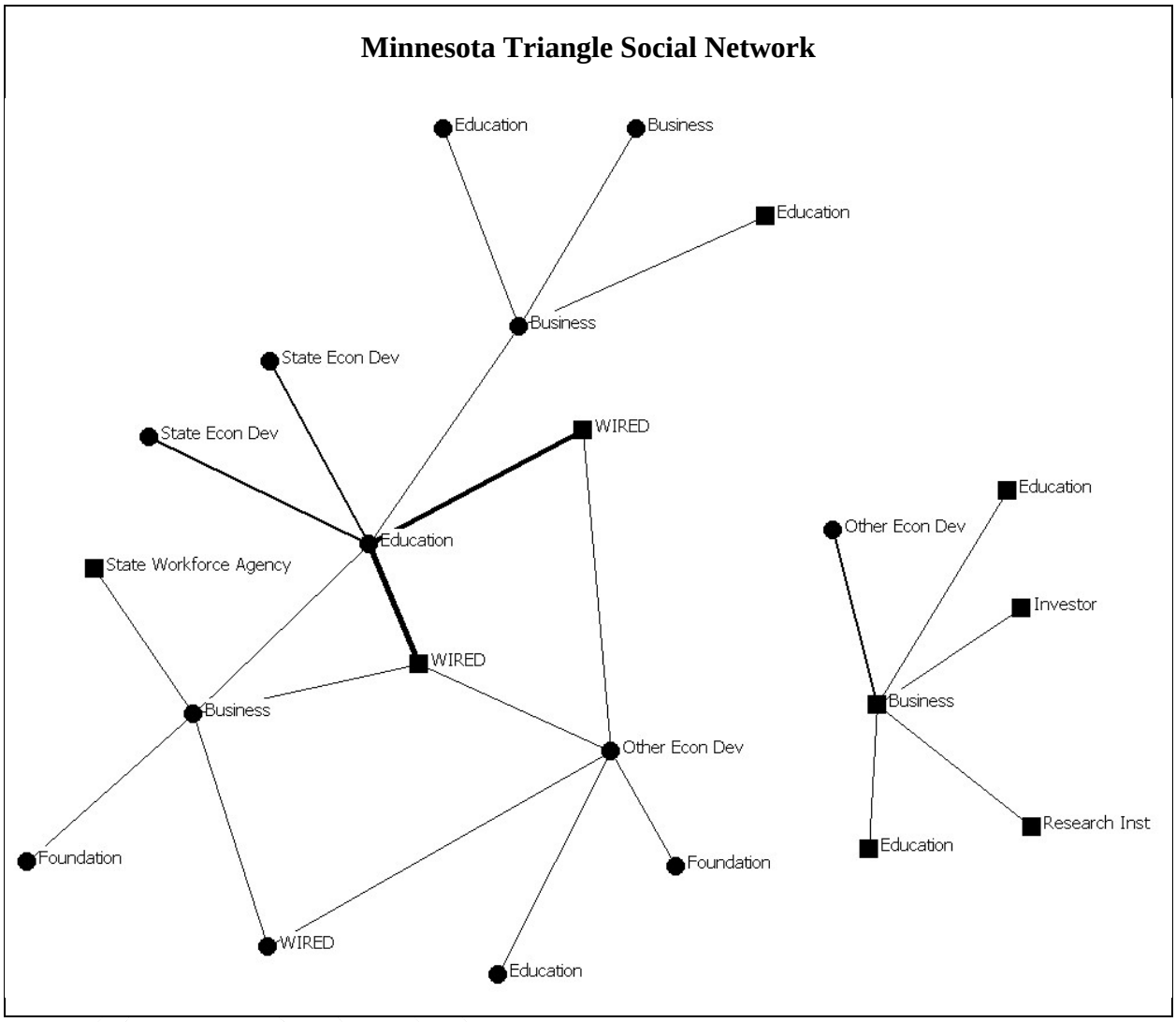
Minnesota Triangle Social Network
Education
Business
Education
Business
State Econ Dev
State Econ Dev
WIRED
Education
State Workforce Agency
WIRED
Business
Other Econ Dev
Foundation
Foundation
WIRED
Education
Education
Other Econ Dev
Investor
Business
Research Inst
Education

Figure B-17

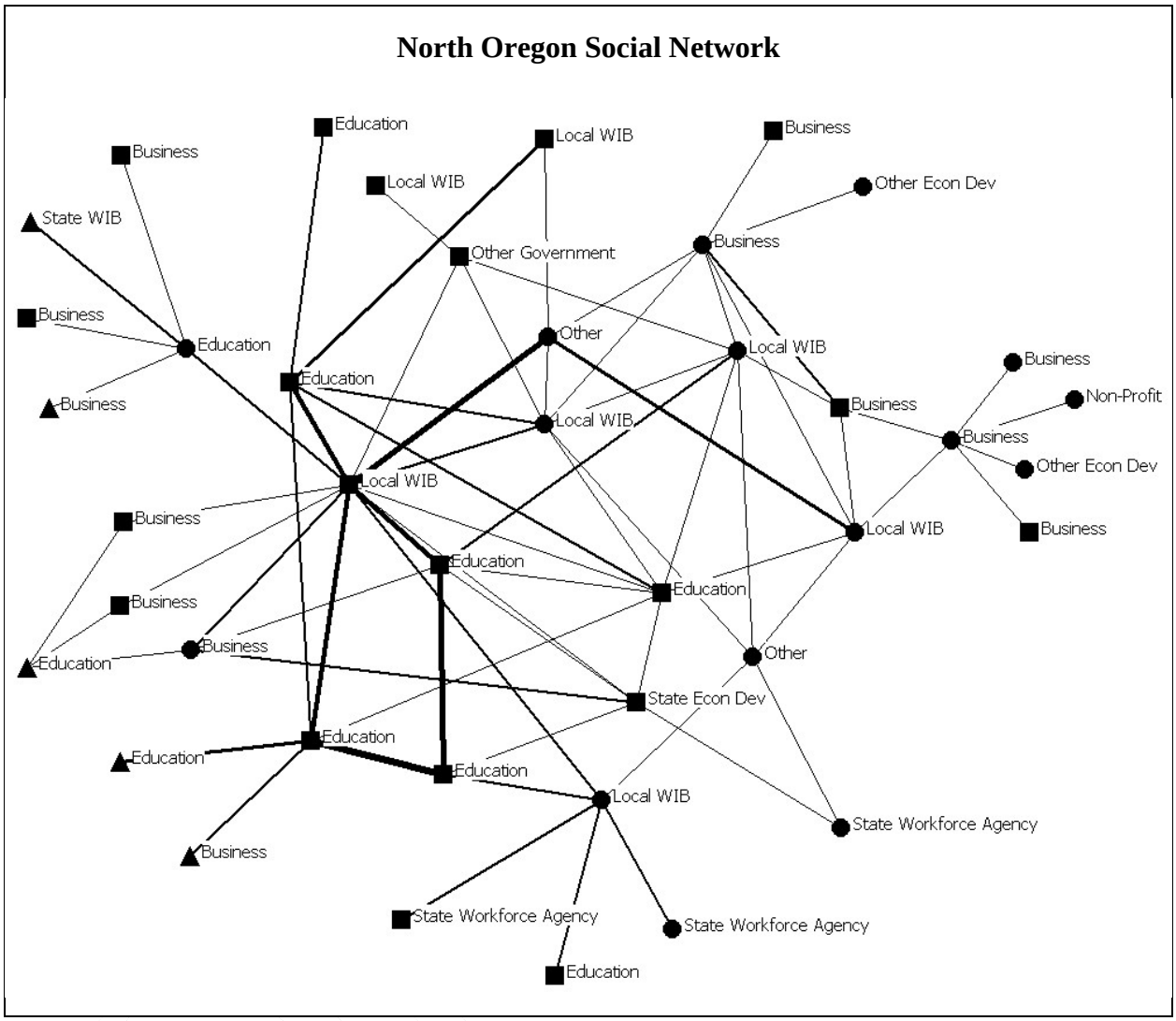
North Oregon Social Network
Education
Local WIB
Business
Business
Local WIB
Other Econ Dev
State WIB
Other Government
Business
Business
Other
Local WIB
Education
Business
Education
Business
Non-Profit
Local WIB
Business
Business
Other Econ Dev
Local WIB
Business
Business
Education
Education
Business
Business
Other
Education
State Econ Dev
Education
Education
Education
Local WIB
State Workforce Agency
Business
State Workforce Agency
State Workforce Agency
Education

Figure B-18

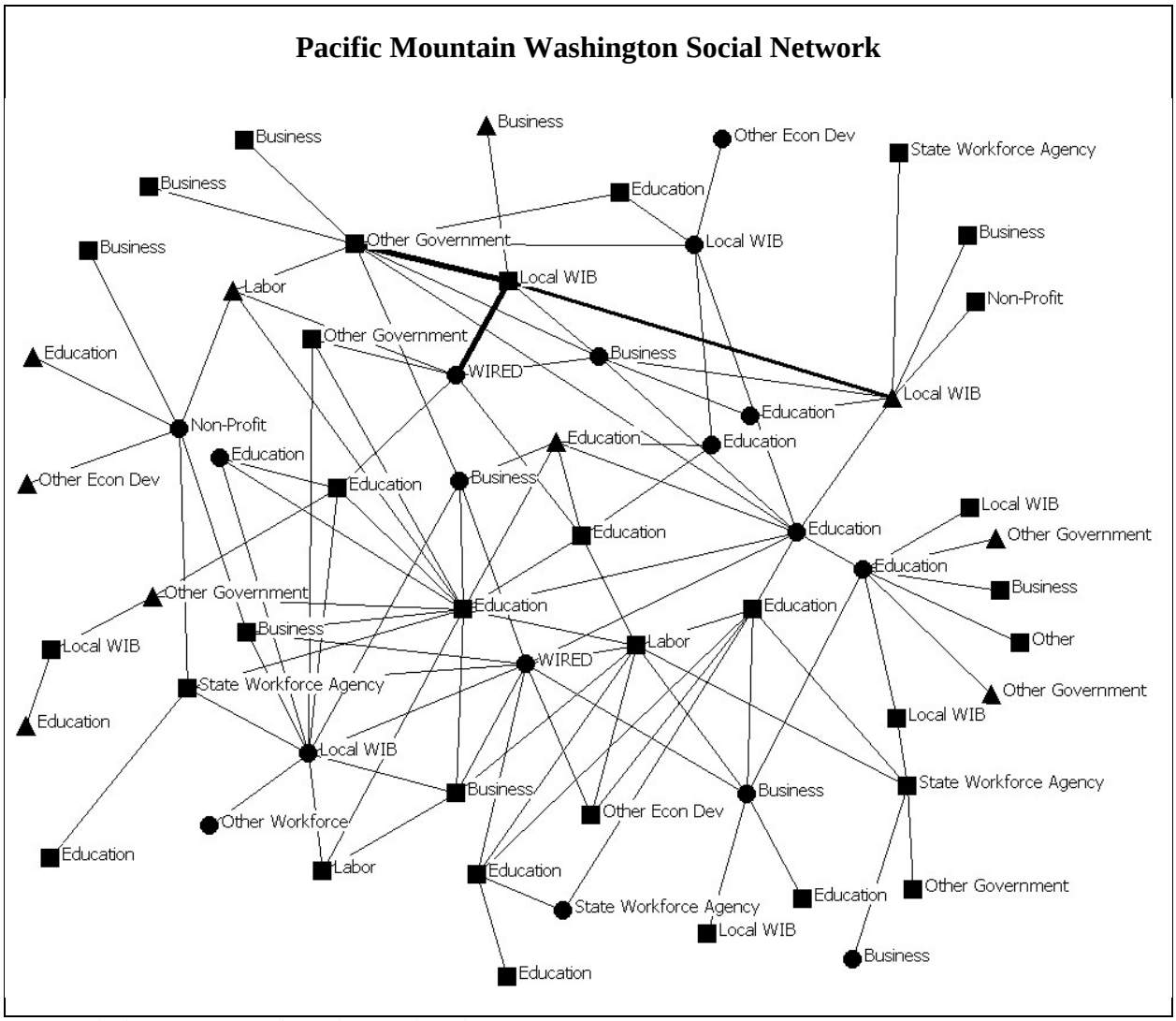
Pacific Mountain Washington Social Network
Business
Business
Business
Business
Business
Other Econ Dev
State Workforce Agency
Education
Other Government
Local WIB
Business
Local WIB
Labor
Non-Profit
Other Government
Education
Business
WIRED
Local WIB
Education
Non-Profit
Education
Education
Education
Other Econ Dev
Education
Business
Local WIB
Education
Education
Other Government
Education
Other Government
Business
Education
Education
Business
Local WIB
Labor
Other
WIRED
State Workforce Agency
Other Government
Education
Local WIB
Local WIB
Business
Business
State Workforce Agency
Other Workforce
Other Econ Dev
Education
Labor
Education
Other Government
Education
State Workforce Agency
Local WIB
Business
Education

Figure B-19

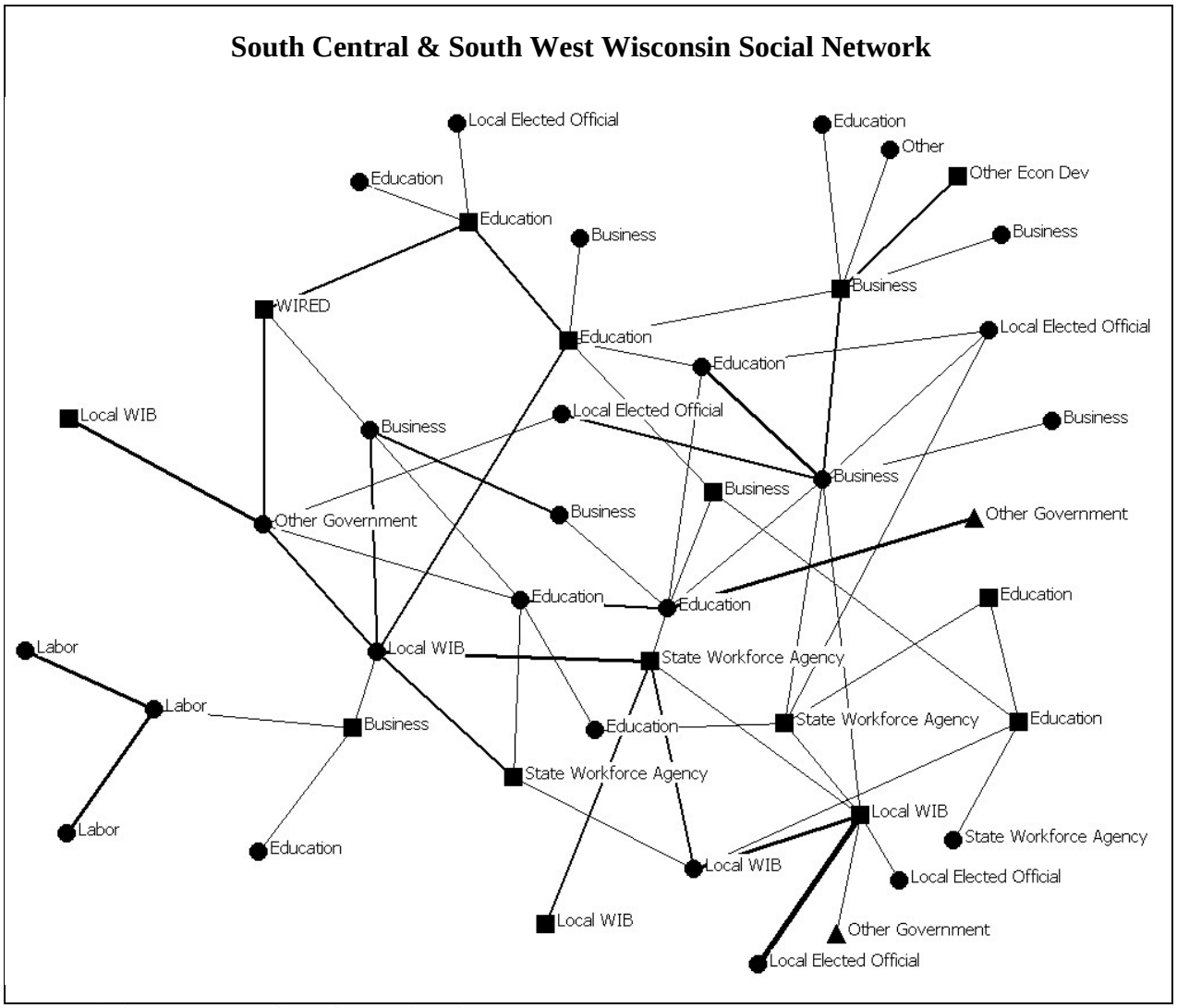
South Central & South West Wisconsin Social Network
Local Elected Official
Education
Other
Other Econ Dev
Education
Education
Business
Business
Business
WIRED
Education
Local Elected Official
Education
Local WIB
Business
Local Elected Official
Business
Business
Business
Other Government
Business
Other Government
Education
Education
Education
Labor
Local WIB
State Workforce Agency
Labor
Business
Education
State Workforce Agency
Education
State Workforce Agency
Local WIB
Labor
Education
Local WIB
State Workforce Agency
Local Elected Official
Local WIB
Other Government
Local Elected Official

Figure B-20

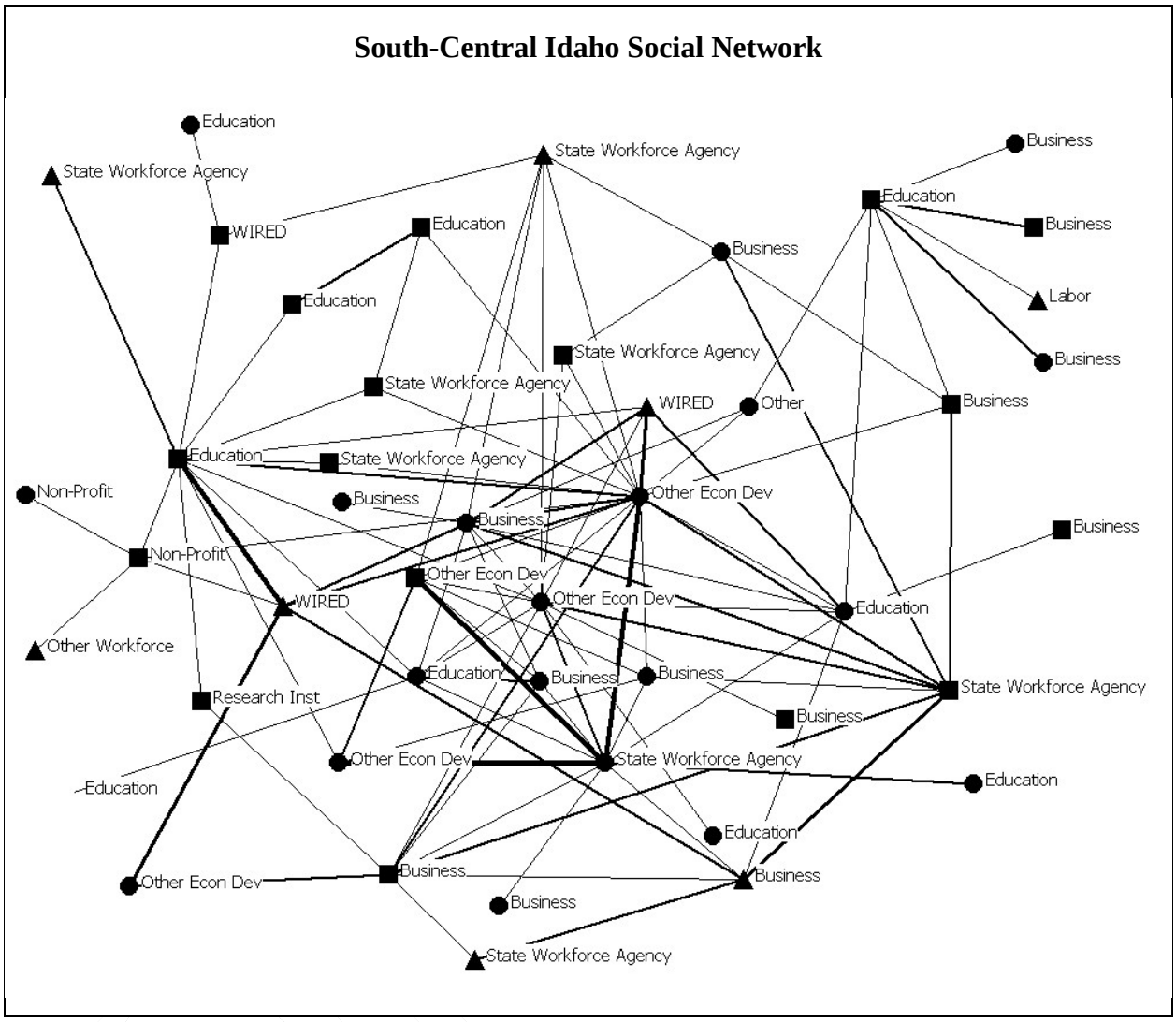
South-Central Idaho Social Network
Education
State Workforce Agency
State Workforce Agency
Business
Education
WIRED
Education
Business
Education
Business
Labor
State Workforce Agency
Business
State Workforce Agency
WIRED
Other
Business
Education
State Workforce Agency
Non-Profit
Business
Other Econ Dev
Business
Business
Non-Profit
Other Econ Dev
WIRED
Other Econ Dev
Education
Other Workforce
Education
Business
Business
State Workforce Agency
Research Inst
Business
Other Econ Dev
State Workforce Agency
Education
Education
Education
Business
Other Econ Dev
Business
Business
Business
State Workforce Agency

Figure B-21

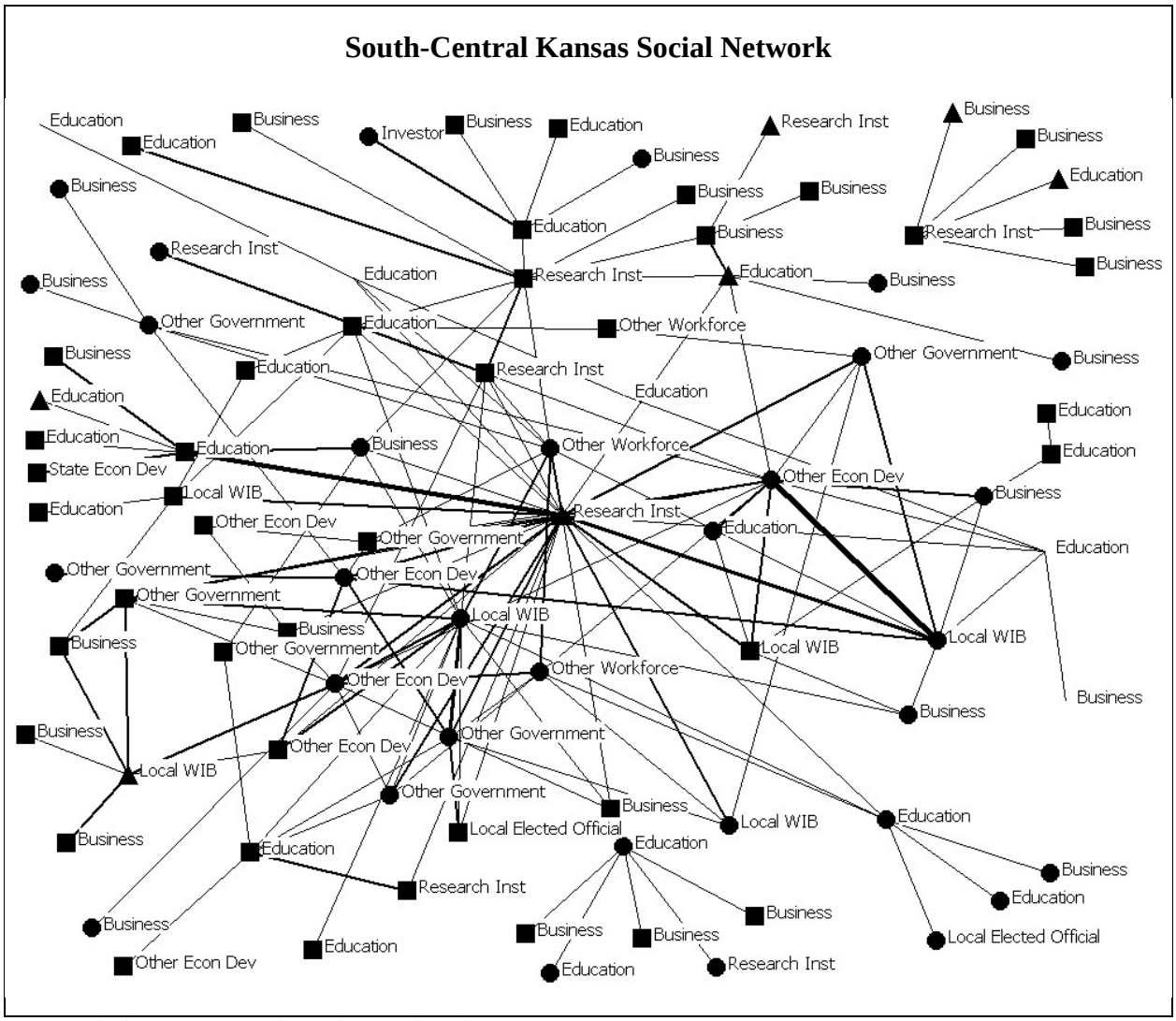
South-Central Kansas Social Network
Education
Education
Business
Investor
Business
Education
Research Inst
Business
Business
Business
Business
Business
Education
Business
Research Inst
Business
Business
Education
Research Inst
Business
Research Inst
Education
Research Inst
Education
Business
Business
Other Government
Education
Other Workforce
Business
Education
Research Inst
Other Government
Business
Education
Education
Education
Education
Education
Business
Other Workforce
Education
State Econ Dev
Other Econ Dev
Local WIB
Education
Other Econ Dev
Research Inst
Education
Business
Other Government
Education
Other Government
Other Econ Dev
Other Government
Local WIB
Business
Business
Other Government
Local WIB
Local WIB
Other Workforce
Other Econ Dev
Business
Business
Business
Other Econ Dev
Other Government
Local WIB
Other Government
Business
Local WIB
Education
Business
Local Elected Official
Education
Business
Education
Research Inst
Business
Business
Business
Education
Other Econ Dev
Education
Local Elected Official
Research Inst

Figure B-22

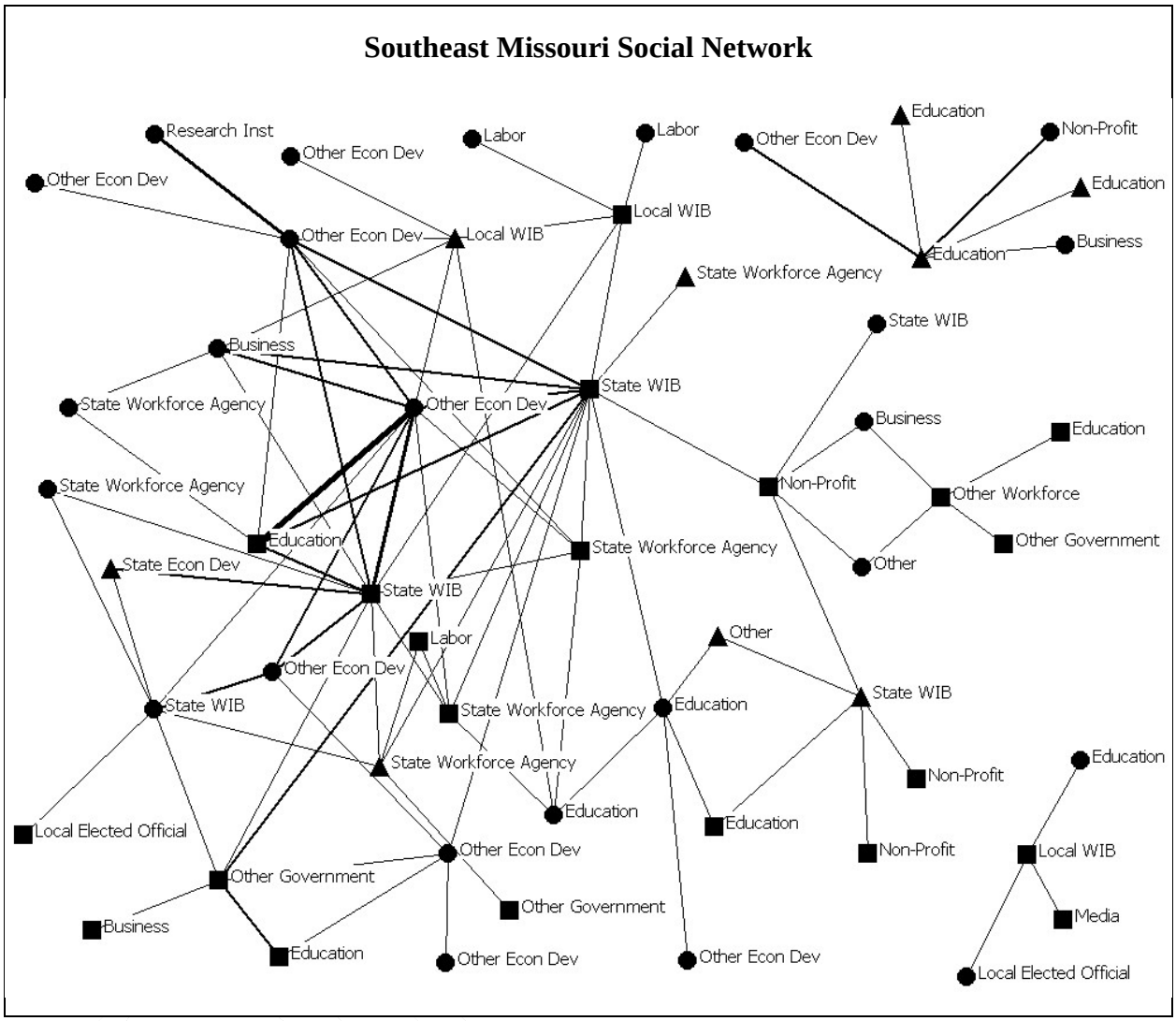
Southeast Missouri Social Network
Research Inst
Other Econ Dev
Other Econ Dev
Labor
Labor
Local WIB
Other Econ Dev
Local WIB
Other Econ Dev
Education
Non-Profit
Education
Business
Education
State Workforce Agency
State WIB
Business
State WIB
Other Econ Dev
State Workforce Agency
Business
Education
Non-Profit
Other Workforce
State Workforce Agency
Education
State Workforce Agency
Other Government
Other
State Econ Dev
State WIB
Labor
Other
Other Econ Dev
State WIB
State WIB
State Workforce Agency
Education
State WIB
State Workforce Agency
Non-Profit
Education
Education
Local Elected Official
Non-Profit
Local WIB
Other Econ Dev
Other Government
Other Government
Media
Business
Education
Other Econ Dev
Other Econ Dev
Local Elected Official

Figure B-23

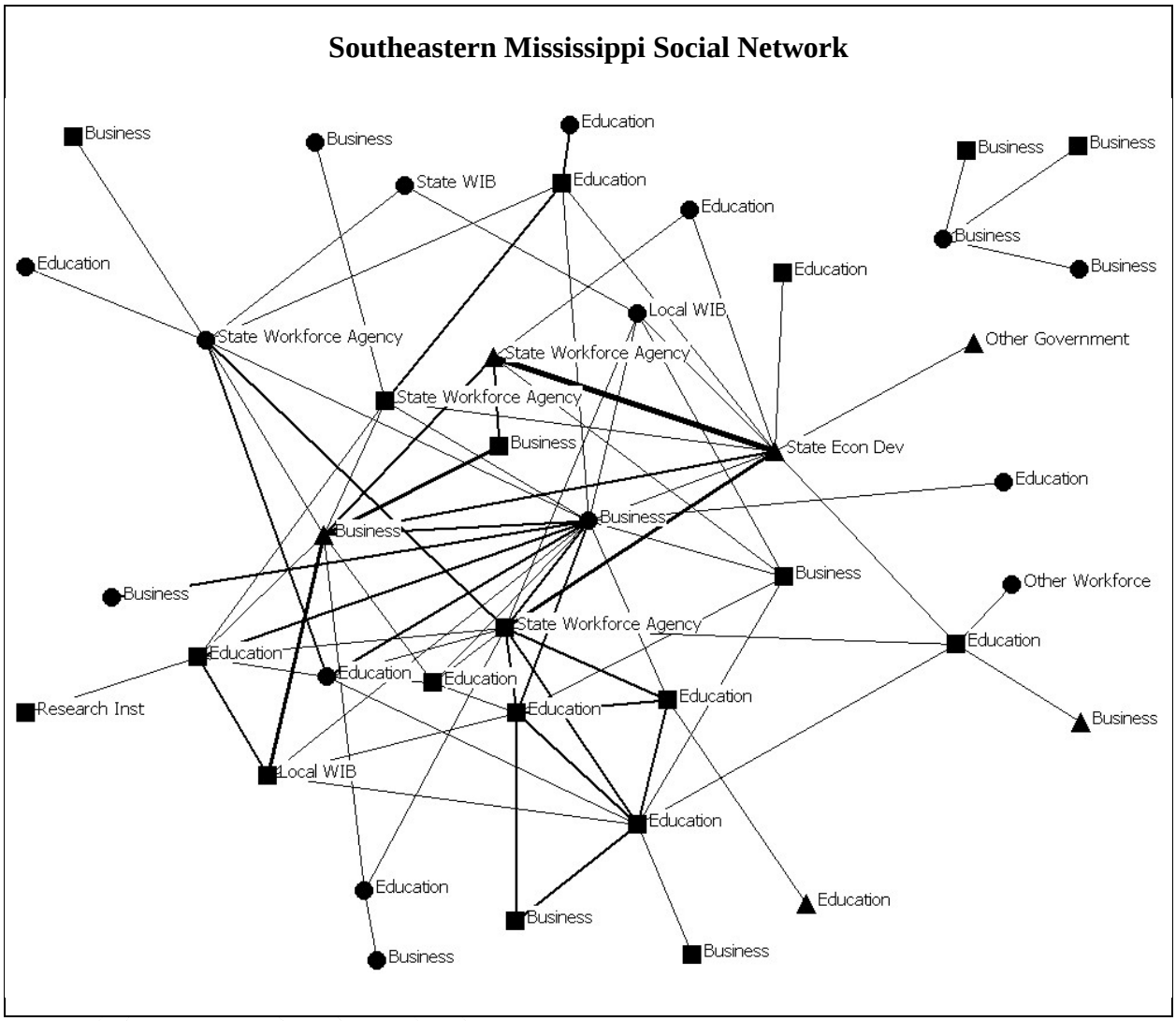
Southeastern Mississippi Social Network
Business
Business
Education
Business
Business
State WIB
Education
Education
Business
Education
Education
Business
Local WIB
State Workforce Agency
Other Government
State Workforce Agency
State Workforce Agency
Business
State Econ Dev
Education
Business
Business
Business
Other Workforce
State Workforce Agency
Education
Education
Education
Education
Research Inst
Education
Business
Local WIB
Education
Education
Education
Business
Business

Figure B-24

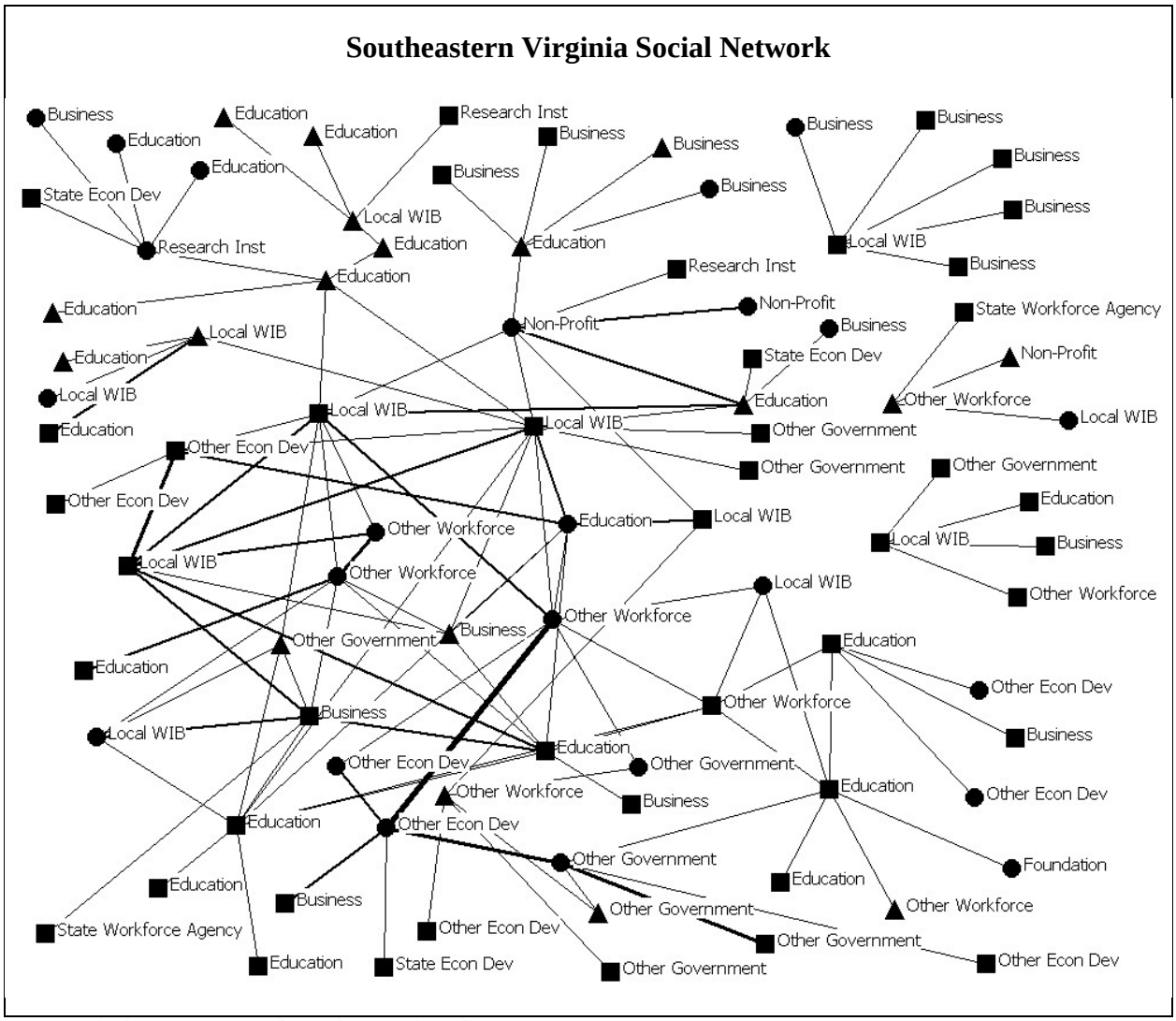
Southeastern Virginia Social Network
Business
Education
Education
Education
Research Inst
Business
Business
Business
Business
Business
Business
Business
Business
Business
State Econ Dev
Local WIB
Research Inst
Education
Education
Education
Local WIB
Education
Research Inst
Non-Profit
Business
State Workforce Agency
Non-Profit
State Econ Dev
Education
Other Workforce
Local WIB
Other Government
Local WIB
Education
Local WIB
Education
Local WIB
Local WIB
Other Econ Dev
Other Government
Other Government
Other Econ Dev
Education
Local WIB
Other Workforce
Education
Local WIB
Business
Other Workforce
Local WIB
Other Workforce
Local WIB
Other Workforce
Other Government
Business
Education
Education
Other Econ Dev
Business
Local WIB
Other Workforce
Education
Other Econ Dev
Business
Other Government
Other Workforce
Education
Other Econ Dev
Business
Education
Other Econ Dev
Other Government
Foundation
Education
Business
Education
Other Workforce
State Workforce Agency
Other Econ Dev
Other Government
Other Government
Education
State Econ Dev
Other Government
Other Econ Dev

Figure B-25

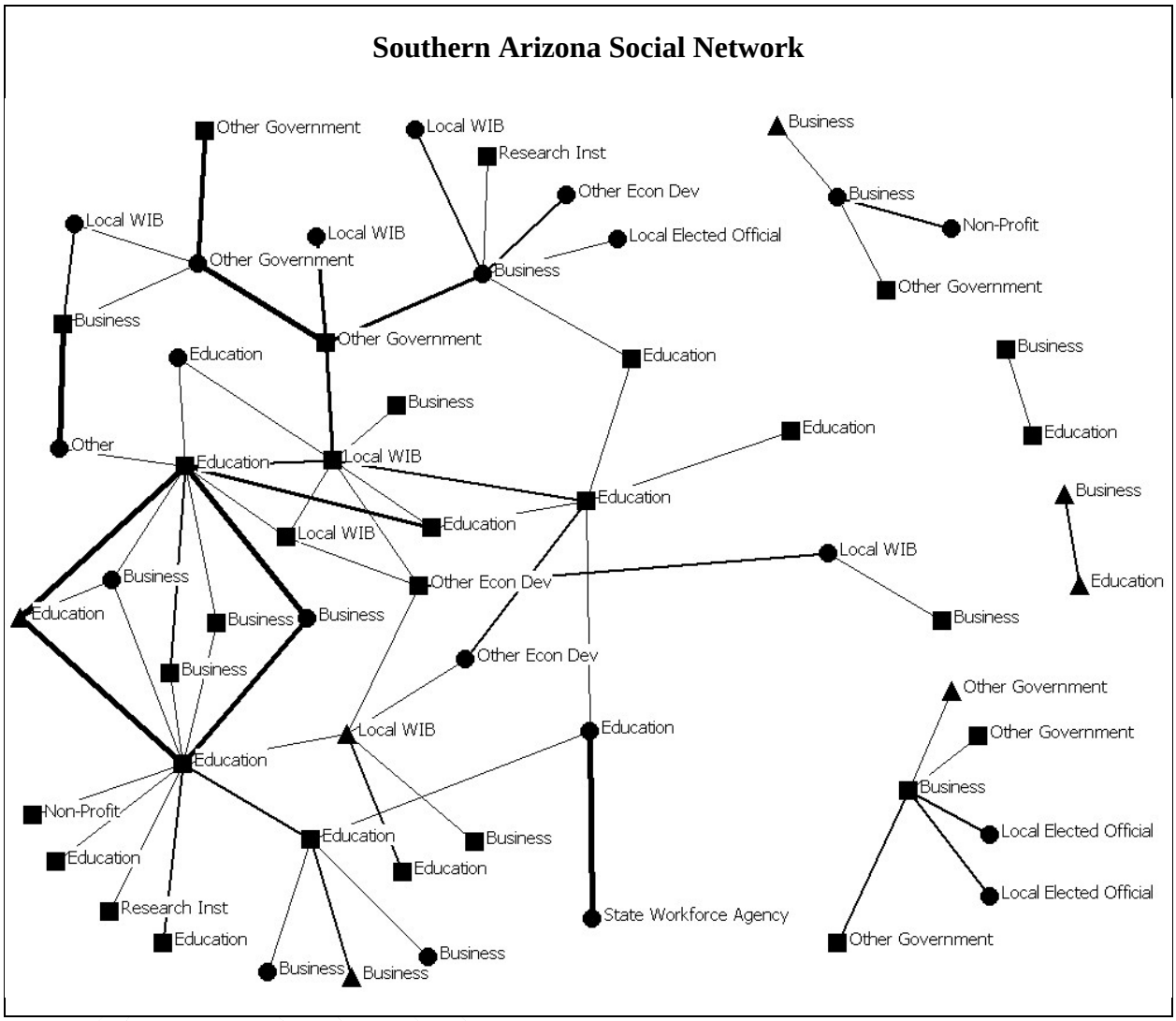
Southern Arizona Social Network
Other Government
Local WIB
Research Inst
Other Econ Dev
Local Elected Official
Business
Non-Profit
Other Government
Local WIB
Local WIB
Other Government
Business
Business
Other Government
Education
Education
Business
Education
Business
Education
Other
Education
Local WIB
Education
Education
Local WIB
Education
Business
Local WIB
Business
Education
Other Econ Dev
Business
Business
Business
Other Econ Dev
Other Government
Other Government
Local WIB
Education
Education
Business
Non-Profit
Education
Education
Local Elected Official
Local Elected Official
Research Inst
Education
State Workforce Agency
Other Government
Business
Business
Business

Figure B-26