



Board Workshop / Discussion Agenda

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-266-9200

November 21, 2023 - 1:30 p.m.

Courthouse Room 220

WORKSHOP

**Intergenerational Prosperity for Racial and Economic Inclusion Strategic
Priority Update - Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan**

[2023-505](#)

Sponsors: Economic Growth and Community Investment

Board Workshop / Discussion

Request for Board Action

Item Number: 2023-505

Meeting Date: 11/21/2023

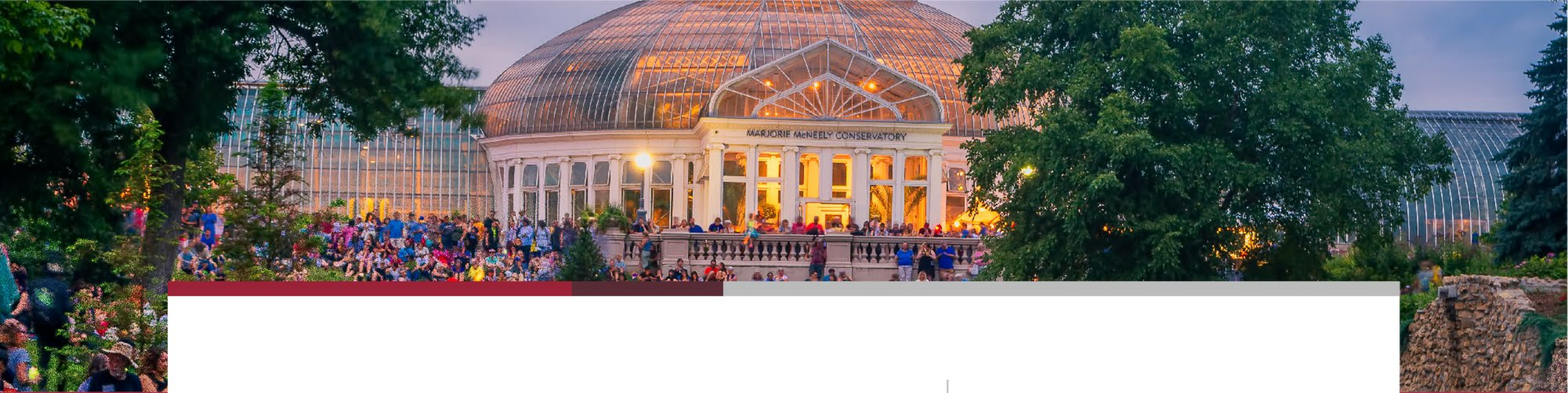
Sponsor: Economic Growth and Community Investment

Title

Intergenerational Prosperity for Racial and Economic Inclusion Strategic Priority Update - Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan

Attachment

1. Presentation



**Intergenerational Prosperity for
Racial & Economic Inclusion
Strategic Priority Update –
*Economic Competitiveness and
Inclusion Plan***



Agenda

- Opening and Introductions, Johanna Berg, Economic Growth and Community Investment Deputy County Manager
- Today's Presenters:
 - Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions Director
 - Kari Collins, Community and Economic Development Director
 - Rachael Molenaar, Kristi Cobbs, WFS Planning Specialists
 - Emma Corrie, CEO Twin Cities R!SE
- Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan Efforts
 - Workforce Solutions Updates
 - Community and Economic Development Updates
- Economic Development Authority Discussion
- Economic Competitiveness & Inclusion 2.0

Goals for Today

- Share update on progress of Intergenerational Prosperity for Racial & Economic Inclusion Strategic Priority Update.
- Demonstrate progress toward Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan.
- Share Economic Development Authority concept.
- Have discussion and feedback from the board.

What is this priority?

- Commitment to address systemic and institutional racism that have created barriers to workforce participation, family sustaining wages and affordable housing by cultivating economic prosperity and investing in neighborhoods that have historically experienced wealth extraction.
- Imperative for Ramsey County work with community to eliminate the racial and ethnic wealth gap and create new prosperity that can be passed down to future generations.
- Build on work of the [Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan](#).



Workforce Solutions Updates

- Entrepreneurship as Workforce Development Strategy.
- Earn and Learn Investments.
- Leveraging other funding streams.
- Attract and grow high-wage industry and innovation: technology, advanced manufacturing, and life sciences.

Entrepreneurship as a Workforce Development Strategy

Entrepreneurship as a Workforce Development Strategy



- Post pandemic economic recovery, reskilling, upskilling and developing the American workforce to cultivate job creation and economic growth is perhaps never more critical to the long-term sustainability of an inclusive economic recovery in our community.
- **Recognition of entrepreneurship as powerful wealth-building strategy.**
- Commitments and coordination with intermediaries leading new efforts.
- **Re-evaluation of human capital investment in a knowledge-based economy.**

Entrepreneurship in Workforce Programs

WIOA Youth Program required element

Program Element 12: Entrepreneurial skills training

This program element provides the basics of starting and operating a small business. Such training must develop the skills associated with entrepreneurship. Such skills may include, but are not limited to, the ability to:

- **take initiative;**
- **creatively seek out and identify business opportunities;**
- **develop budgets and forecast resource needs;**
- **understand various options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each option; and**
- **communicate effectively and market oneself and one's ideas.**

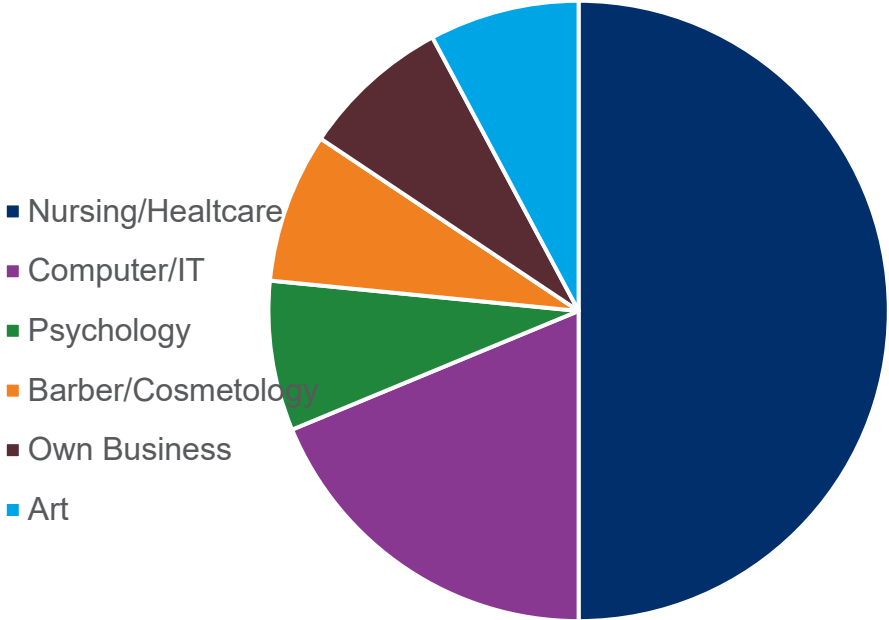
Approaches to teaching youth entrepreneurial skills may include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Entrepreneurship education that provides an introduction to the values and basics of starting and running a business. Entrepreneurship education programs often guide youth through the development of a business plan and also may include simulations of business start-up and operation.
- (2) Enterprise development which provides supports and services that incubate and help youth develop their own businesses. Enterprise development programs go beyond entrepreneurship education by helping youth access small loans or grants that are needed to begin business operation and by providing more individualized attention to the development of viable business ideas.
- (3) Experiential programs that provide youth with experience in the day-to-day operation of a business. These programs may involve the development of a youth-run business that young people participating in the program work in and manage. Or, they may facilitate placement in apprentice or internship positions with adult entrepreneurs in the community.

[Minnesota WIOA Youth Policies- Chapter 11](#)

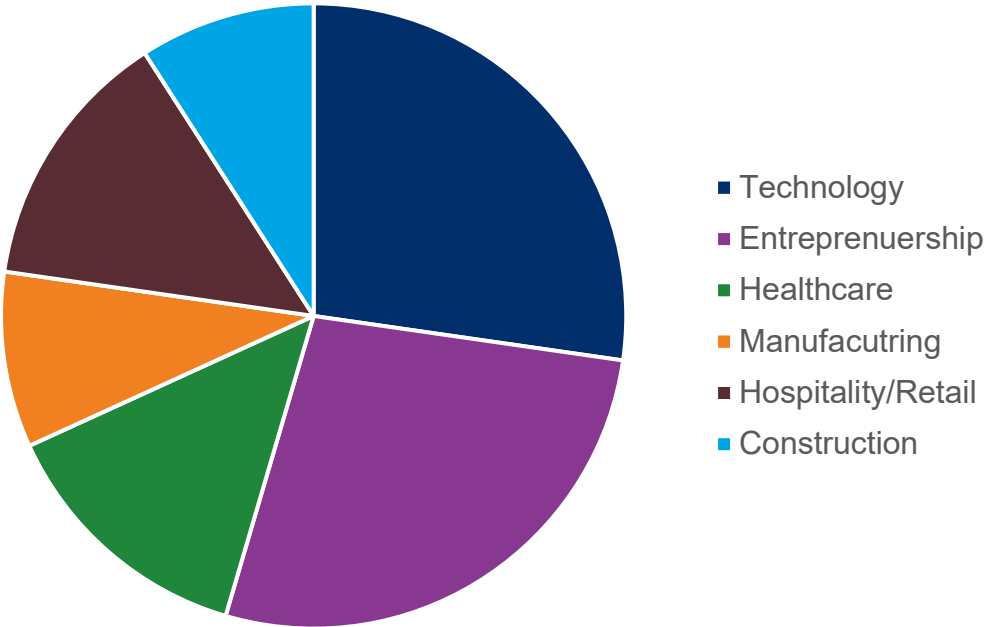
What Are We Hearing From Youth & Those Who Serve Them

What opportunities are you interested in?



*WFS Youth Survey, 2021

What sectors are young people you serve most interested in?

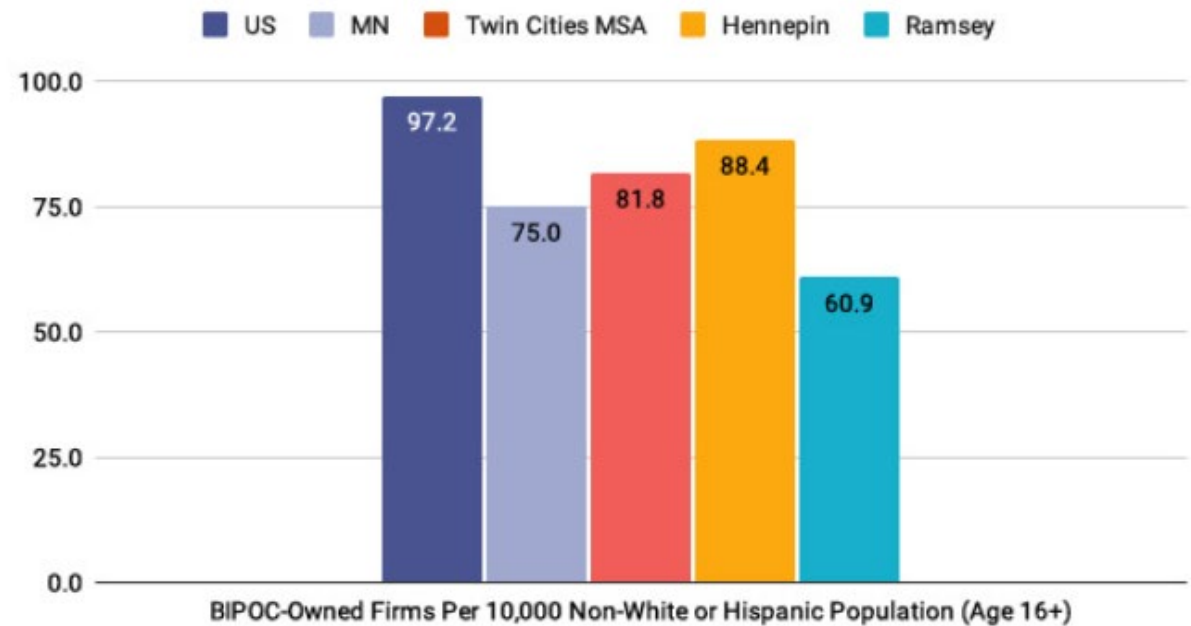


*WFS Provider Survey 2022

Closing the Wealth Gap



Black, Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous Owned Firms



Ramsey County needs 500 more minority business enterprises (MBE) to match the U.S. ownership rate. Adding 500 businesses owned Black, Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous people would create 6,690 new jobs in Ramsey County³.

Black, Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous business ownership is significantly lagging in Ramsey

Earn and Learn Investments

Earn and Learn Investments

- Lessons of the pandemic.
 - Many young people are supporting their families and rely on income.
 - Young, diverse residents with high school education or less most economically impacted.
- Investment in people.
 - Demographic shifts continue to bode opportunity for Ramsey County.
 - Diversity and youth as an asset.
 - Opportunity costs of education and training.
 - Alternatives to secondary economy.



Earn & Learn Overview

- Co-investment with city of Saint Paul.
- Eligible participants ages 18-30, priority to low-income or employment barrier.
- All provide PAID occupational or entrepreneurial training (classroom).
- All provide PAID job shadow, industry exposure or internships.
- All pathways lead to identified Gateway Occupations and entrepreneurship opportunities.

How Ramsey County Workforce Solutions Identifies **Gateway Occupations**

- ✓ **\$42,000+** Average Annual Wage
- ✓ Minimal negative impact to employment during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- ✓ Strong **current demand** (unemployment below 3% and/or higher than average job posting volumes in the past 12 months)
- ✓ Strong **forecasted demand** (higher than average forecasted growth through 2026 and/or will likely replace 50% or more of the existing workforce in the next five years)
- ✓ Focus on **middle-skill jobs** with opportunity for advancement into high-wage, high-demand Target occupations through additional experience or educational advancement
- ✓ Focus on roles typically requiring an **Associate's Degree or less** that offer opportunity for immediate employment or early Earn and Learn activities

Earn and Learn Partners

Organization	Occupation/Industry
Goodwill Easter Seals	Advanced Manufacturing
Twin Cities Rise	Disel Mechanic
Tree Trust	Arborist
Spark-Y Youth Action Labs	Entrepreneur
New Vision Foundation	Computer Programmer
Minnesota Training Partnership	Clinical Assistance
Merrick/Hired/KOM	Human Service Assistant/Case Aid
Merrick	Entrepreneur
Hack the Gap	UX Designer
Goodwill Easter Seals	Green Construction
Center for Energy & Environment	HVAC & Insulation Installer
Bridgemakers	Entrepreneur
African Economic Development Solutions	Entrepreneur
Asian Economic Development Association	Entrepreneur

Total Awards:

\$10,576,547

Total Residents:

591

Learn More!

RamseyCounty.us/learn&earn



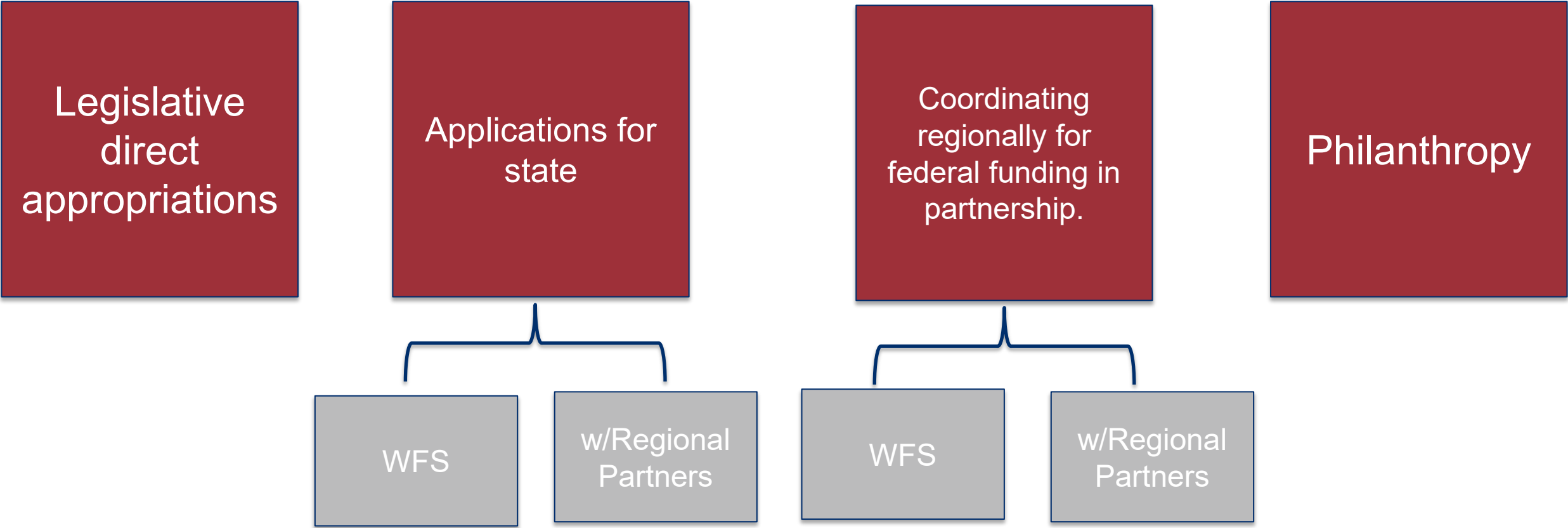
TWIN CITIES R!SE

Featured Program: Twin Cities R!SE

- 8-week hands-on training **diesel technician** program in partnership with St. Paul College.
- Paid learning and earning.
- Participants learn the fundamentals including preventative maintenance, diagnostic systems, and engine troubleshooting.
- Career coaching to help remove barriers
- New cohort starting Jan. 8, 2024.
- Intentionally service justice-impacted individuals.

Leveraging Other Funding Streams

Leveraging New Funding Streams



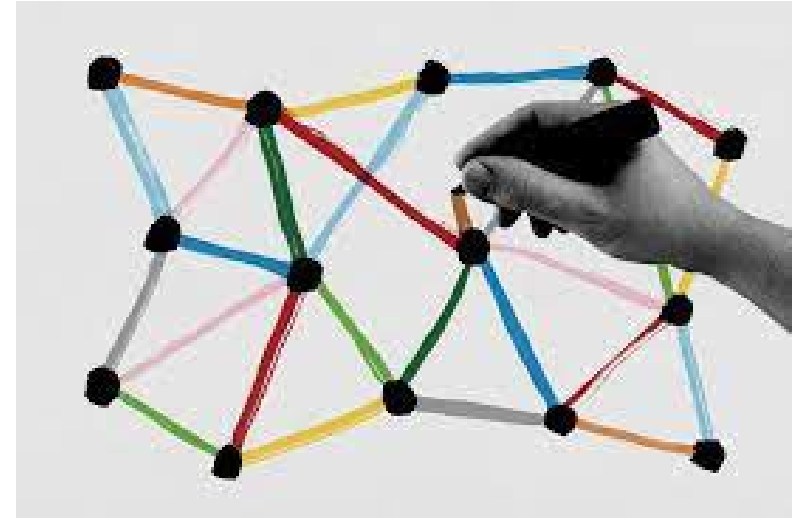
Making Grant Connections

- Inflation Reduction Act, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and CHIPS Act – unprecedented amount of federal funds.
- Difficult and complex.
- Coordination and reducing duplication will not only save time but provide more opportunities for applications and have greater support and consideration.



Making Grant Connections

- Partnership:
 - Ramsey County WIB and Minneapolis WIB.
 - Minnesota Employment Services Consortium.
 - Eastside Employment xChange.
- Meeting later this month with all providers to discuss how we can be more coordinated and work together.
- Discuss expertise, capacity and partnership.
- Key role of the WIB to be convener.
- Reduce complexity and encourage coordination.



Economic Development Administration (EDA) Recompete Grant - Background

- The Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program (Recompete Pilot Program) aims to alleviate persistent economic distress and support long-term, comprehensive economic development and job creation in places with a high prime-age (25 to 54 years) employment gap.
- The program uses prime-age employment gap (PAEG) as an indicator of economic distress because it accounts for prime-age workers who have stopped looking for jobs and left the labor force, as well as those who are currently looking for jobs and are unemployed.

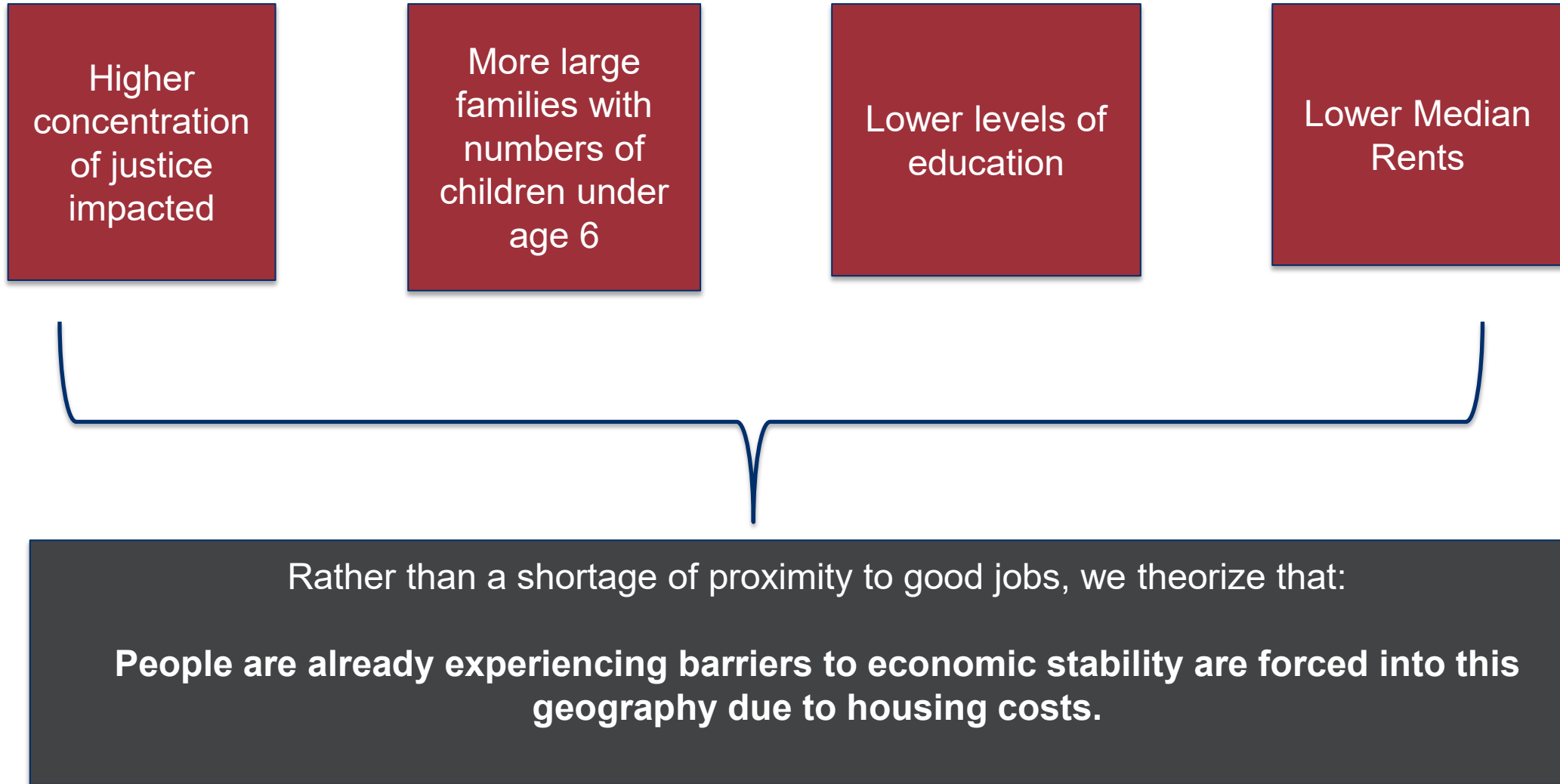
EDA Recompete

EDA Recompete Pilot Program.

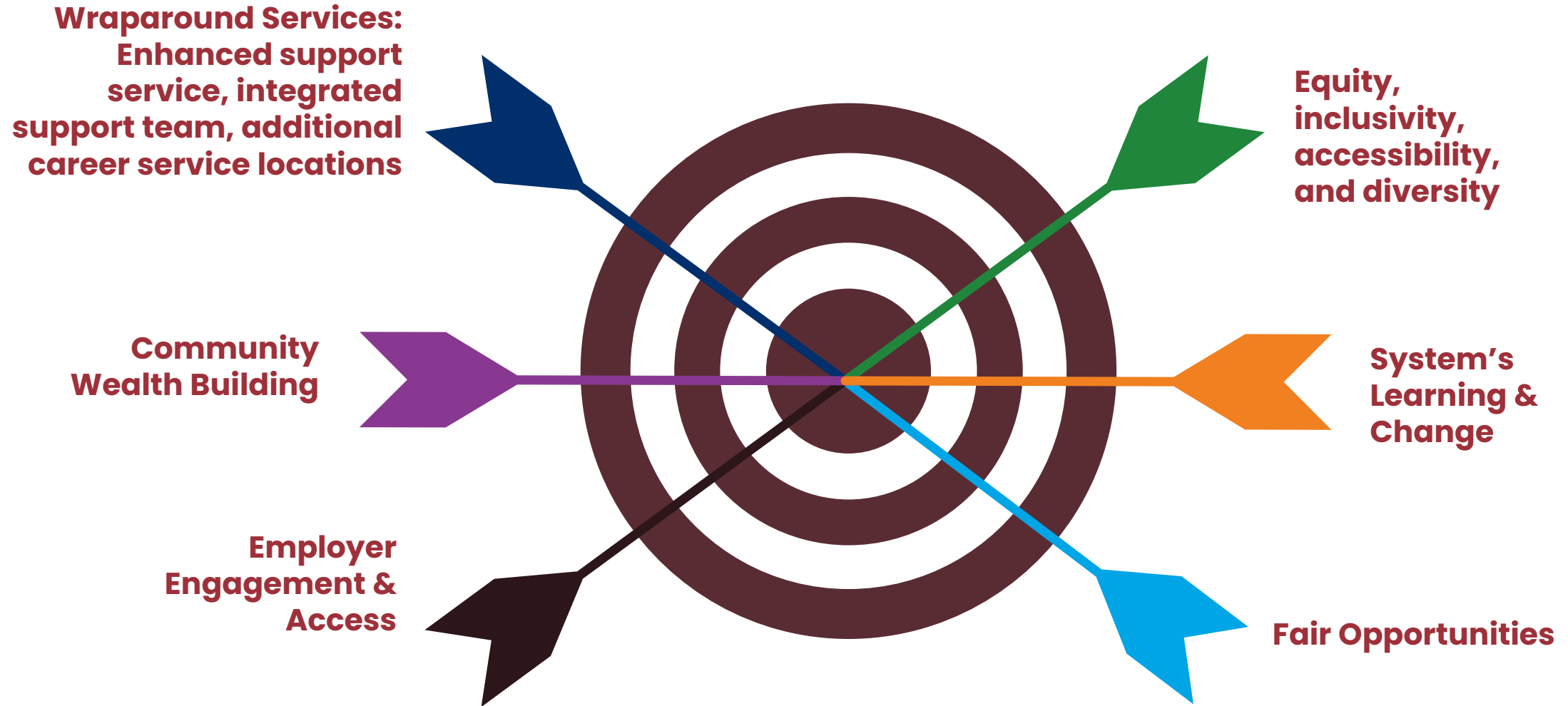
- Only two geographic areas in MN are eligible, including Saint Paul (Frogtown, Dayton's Bluff).
- Focused on developing a plan to build strategies to increase family-sustaining employment for residents ages 25-54 in the specified geography through Recompete Plan.
- Phase 1: Recompete Plan Approval (select up to 20 areas).
- Phase 2: Application for Implementation Grants up to \$20 million (fund up to 8 areas).



EDA Recompete Grant – The Area



EDA Recompete Grant – Strategy Ideas



Regional Coordination with GreaterMSP - CHIPs

- The CHIPs Act invests \$280 billion to bolster US semiconductor capacity, catalyze R&D, and create regional high-tech hubs and a bigger, more inclusive STEM workforce.
- Ramsey County supported workforce plan that employers would insert into their applications.

Minnesota CHIPS Coalition

COALITION OBJECTIVES:

expand semiconductor manufacturing and
suppliers in the MSP region and Minnesota



Semiconductor Workforce

How many workers will be needed in Minnesota's Semiconductor Industry under a conservative baseline forecast scenario by the end of 2027?

~4,566

new professionals statewide

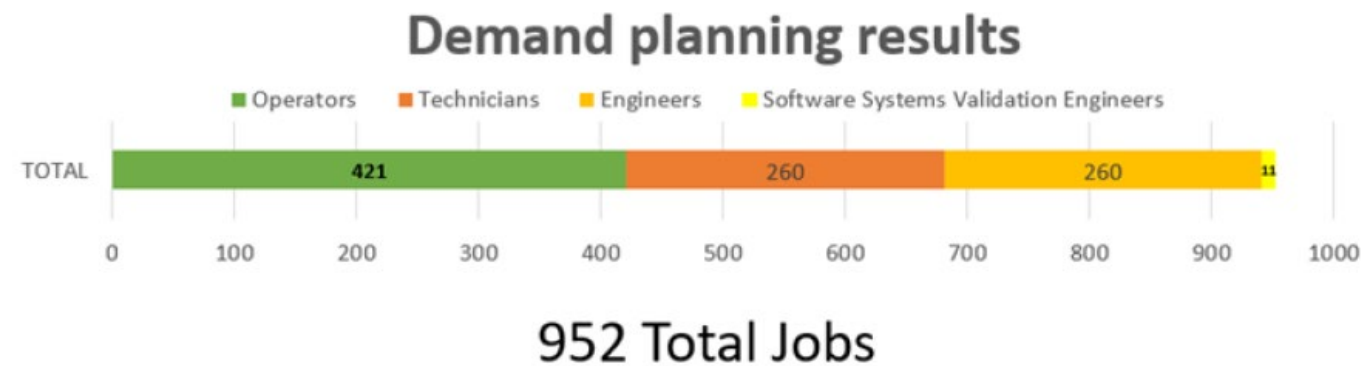
How many core pathway workers are we likely to fall short with Minnesota's current talent pipelines in place?

~228 talent shortage

How many more workers would the Semiconductor Industry and closely related supplier industries need to double the industry's output?

~7,004 additional workers

Eight employers forecast 952 total positions needed across the critical occupations, the majority of which are full-time positions. Composition of the 952 positions to be filled: 260 are Engineers, 260 are Technicians, 421 are Operators, and 11 are Systems Software Validation Engineers.



SOURCE: RealTime Talent. Chmura JobsEQ 2022Q3 Dataset modeled from Bureau of Labor Statistics and US Census Bureau sources, by place of work. HS = High Skill; HW = High Wage; HD = High Demand; OG = Occupation Gaps/Talent Shortage; AG = Award Gaps/shortage of postsecondary awards compared to national benchmarks

Tech Hubs

- The Tech Hubs Program will invest directly in regions with the assets, resources, capacity, and potential to transform into globally competitive innovation centers.
- The Tech Hubs Program was enacted as part of the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022.
- \$10 billion for the program over five years.
- As part of the FY 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act with EDA \$500 million to launch the program.



Minnesota MedTech 3.0



- Minnesota MedTech 3.0 will lead a needed transformation to the third frontier of the world's medical technology (MedTech) industry. To become the global hub of "Smart MedTech," Minnesota will apply advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and data science throughout our medical technology economy.
- Medical Alley: Home to globally leading companies and institutions that helped establish a strong MedTech ecosystem.
- Hub connects region's medical-device manufacturers with other parts of healthcare system, such as healthcare providers, insurers, information technology firms, private capital, research institutions and government.








Strategy 7

Attract and grow high-wage industry and innovation: technology, advanced manufacturing, and life sciences

Recommended Actions

- 2022**  Expand business support network to advance entrepreneurial activity and offerings for growing immigrant communities.
- 2022**  Use the Ramsey County Means Business website to encourage and attract niche manufacturing industries that are reliant on county rail and river infrastructure assets.
- 2023**  Use the Ramsey County Means Business website to focus attraction efforts on small-scale medical device companies.
- 2024**  Map the ecosystem of business technical assistance, space, and capital in the county for startups in biotech and advanced manufacturing industries.

Type Key

-  Investment
 -  Policy
 -  Program
 -  Coordination
- 48  RAMSEY COUNTY



Measures of Success

The ECI plan seeks to transform Ramsey County and the following metrics will demonstrate the impacts that the plan is having as a result of efforts to support business attraction and growth:

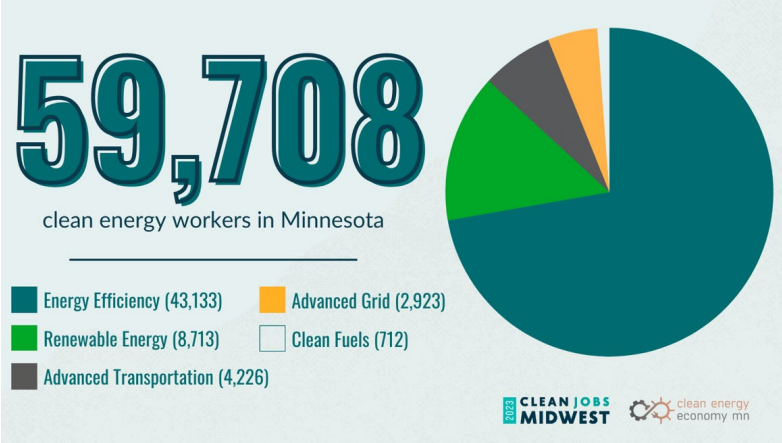
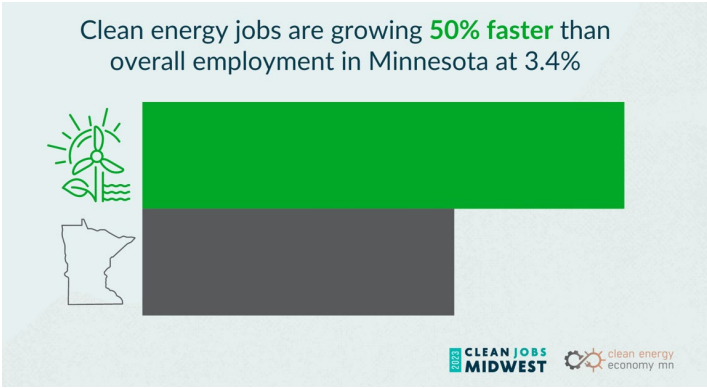
- Increase in share of entrepreneurial businesses and specifically those in targeted sectors
- Increased number of advanced manufacturing companies operating in the county
- Increased number of employment opportunities in high-wage industries

Minnesota MedTech 3.0

- Coalition will also incorporate existing programs and solutions to speed up and improve the innovation process. Proposed actions include:
 - New data exchanges that enable organizations across the healthcare system to share insight on specific disease and technology areas.
 - Startup incubators and accelerators that are scaled to support entrepreneurs working across different stages of the journey to build new products and solutions.
 - Expanded access to lab spaces, private equity, supply chains and other key infrastructure that fosters greater medical-technology innovation.
 - Next-generation talent strategies that address workforce gaps through the enhancement of training programs and career pathways, such as apprenticeships.
 - Comprehensive approaches to advancing equity to better connect underrepresented populations and rural and tribal areas to Minnesota's MedTech growth.

High Growth Industries

Clean Energy Economy



Levels of Green Skill Integration



Additive	Jobs gain new green skills while maintaining traditional overall roles and functions.
Blended	Job roles and functions start to evolve as they gain new green skills.
Job-Changing	Job roles and functions are completely changed due to their full integration of green skills.

A truly just transition to a green economy requires solutions that not only limit the root causes of our warming planet but also lead to accessible, equitable, and quality jobs for a sustainable future. A truly just transition will not happen on its own.

Finding and Sustaining Talent - IT

Ramsey County
Tech Talent
Report 2023



MnTech Talent
Dashboard



IT HIRING STATS



- ▶ The Ramsey County IT unemployment rate **stands at 1.0%** as compared to a **2.5% overall rate**, demonstrating an extremely tight tech labor market.
- ▶ Ramsey County companies will need at least **4,650 new IT professionals** to replace retirements and other exits due to job changes out of IT careers. Plus, at least 300 more due to growth.

3rd Diversity Index Quartile



Minnesota is in the bottom half of the country for representative diversity in tech roles.

EDUCATION



- ▶ **91%** of IT job postings in Ramsey County over the past year required a **bachelor's degree**. 89% in the MSP Metro.
- ▶ **Only 60%** of companies nationally **require a bachelor's degree** for software developer roles, demonstrating that Minnesota companies can make changes to compete for talent nationally.

Black or African American

4.8%

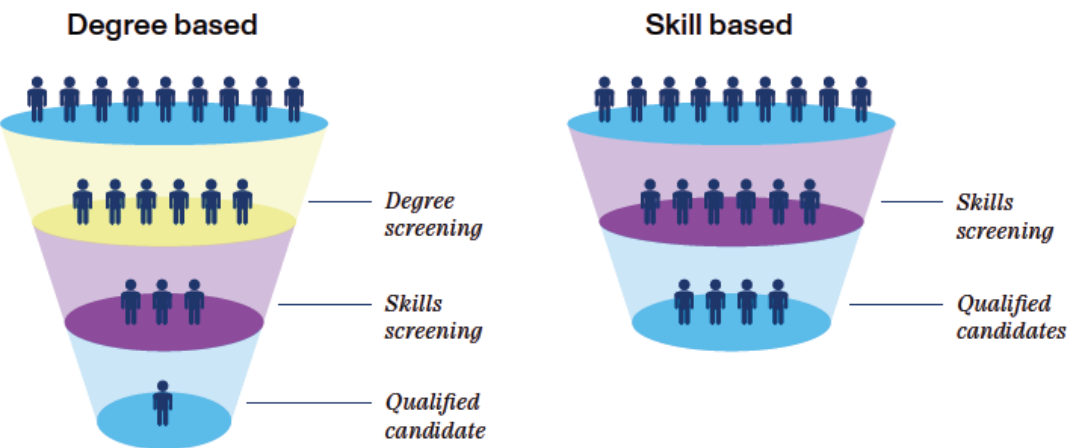
of Ramsey County IT workforce are Black or African American, compared to 10.7% across all occupations of employment and 3.8% for IT careers statewide.

Governor Walz Executive Order

- On Monday, October 30, Governor Tim Walz signed Executive Order 23-14 to build and maintain Minnesota's workforce **by removing college degree requirements for most state jobs**. Unnecessary college degree requirements and a lack of mechanisms to account for job-related lived experiences present barriers to state job opportunities for many people in Minnesota. Such **unnecessary barriers prevent the state from recruiting, advancing, and retaining the workforce needed** to deliver uninterrupted, high quality, and effective services and programs. This executive order removes these barriers, helping workers develop and build careers in state service.
- This executive order will also support state agencies in improving career advancement and professional development for state employees. This includes supporting agencies in writing individual development plans and providing development training to prepare employers for future opportunities. Additionally, this executive order will help supervisors get the skills necessary to guide effective teams while helping employees learn and grow.

Skills Based Hiring

Traditional role-based hiring screens for education, credentials, and experience. Skills-based hiring is an approach that screens for specific competencies. Skills-based hiring goes beyond majors and focuses on the candidates' skills that are applicable to the role.



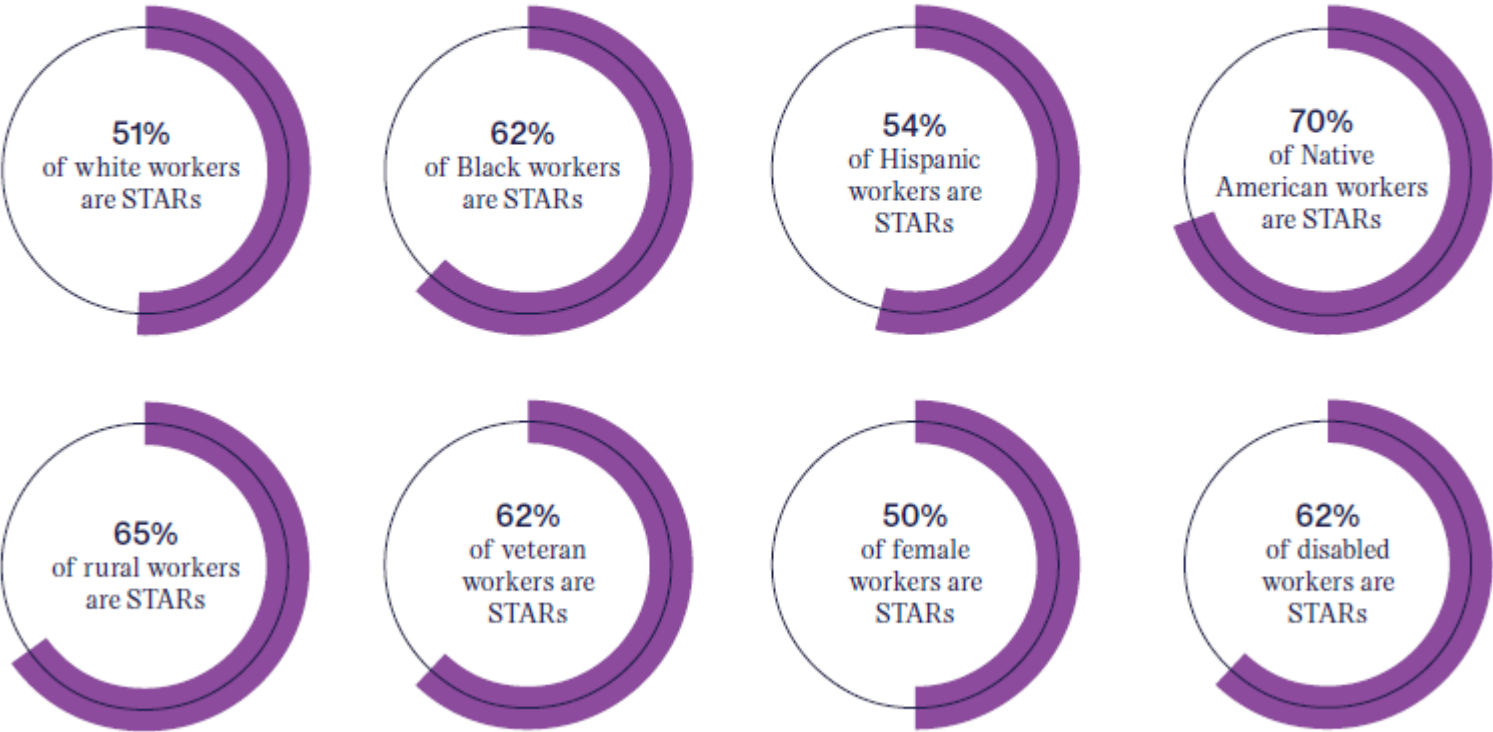
The prevalence of degree screens today:

67%	36%	30%
of job descriptions require a bachelor's degree	of the U.S. population has a bachelor's degree	of jobs truly need a bachelor's degree

Skills Based Hiring STARs

STARs are at least 25 years old, currently active in the workforce, and have a high school diploma. They make up half the workforce, work in nearly every field and occupation across the labor market, and reflect our country's diversity in a way that college graduates do not. When employers include STARs in their hiring strategy, they open their doors to:

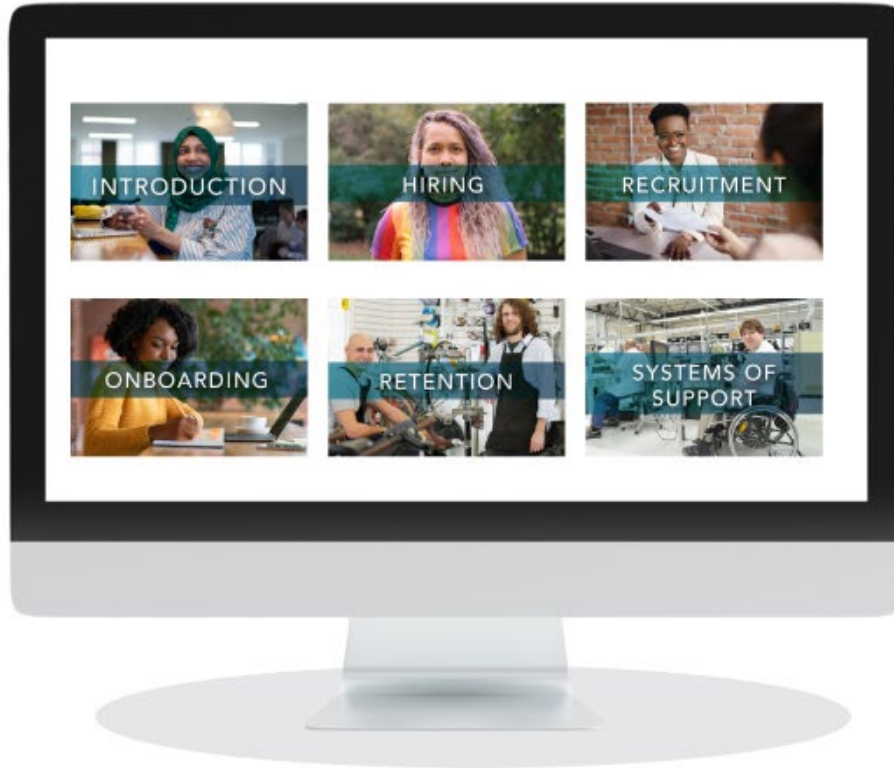
Skilled Through Alternative Routes



Companies interested in diversifying their workforce have a much more difficult task if they're not hiring STARs.

Manufacturing Sector Strategies – 2024

- Targets a specific industry or cluster of occupations, developing a deep understanding of the interrelationships between business competitiveness and the workforce needs of the targeted industry;
- Intervenes through a credible organization, or set of organizations, crafting workforce solutions tailored to that industry and its region;
- Supports workers in improving their range of employment-related skills, improving their ability to compete for work opportunities of higher quality;
- Meets the needs of employers, improving their ability to compete within the marketplace; and
- Creates lasting change in the labor market system to the benefit of both workers and employers.



Inclusive Employer Toolkit

A **free** toolkit for employers with resources to improve diversity, equity and inclusion.

ramseycountymeansbusiness.com/Toolkit

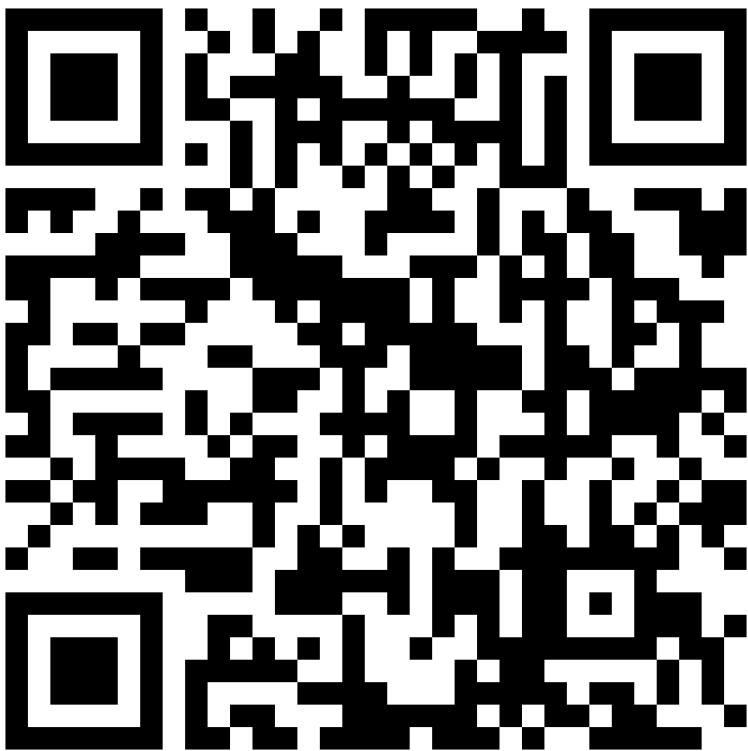
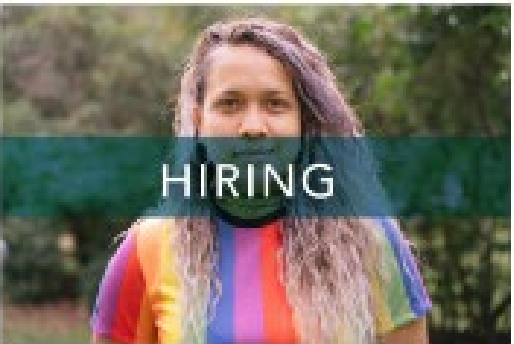
Workforce
Innovation Board
of Ramsey County

 **RAMSEY COUNTY**

Inclusive Employer Toolkit

The Equity Committee of the Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County has assembled this action guide to help employers in our community and region improve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Our purpose in creating this resource is to provide practical tools that will ultimately help move the needle on workforce disparities and provide equitable access to wealth and opportunity.

This guide offers concrete practices to build diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces in the areas of staff recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and retention. Much of the information contained in this guide was crowd-sourced from employers and experts committed to achieving equity outcomes.



Community & Economic Development Updates

Small Business Imperative

- ECI Plan/Plan Tracker Demonstrates limited investment in Small Business Programming/Wealth Building.
- RamseyCountyMeansBusiness continues to be the main resource platform for small businesses looking for assistance and opportunities.
- The County was successful in receiving a congressional earmark to support a virtual Small Business Reimagination Center.
- We will be going before the Board on December 12 to accept the funds and have been meeting with business advisory organizations to determine how best to deploy these dollars.
- Programming will include the expansion of advisory services via a coalition of support agencies that may also have flexible capital to help with local investment.

Programming Continued

- CED has been exploring an additional partnership with Hennepin County that expands opportunities along the business growth continuum.
- Current partnership includes CEONext (supported by the General Levy) which is a business retention program that helps strengthen mid-sized businesses via a cohort learning model.
- New opportunities are being explored to help target existing smaller businesses that need a strategic business plan to help manage and grow their businesses.
- CED will bring forward more information on early-stage business development programs as we learn more.

Economic Development Authority Flexibility

Strengthening our Post-Pandemic Small Business Ecosystem

- Ramsey County invested approximately **\$25 million** in grants that aimed to small businesses survive the pandemic.
- Ramsey County, according to DEED, continues to lag behind the west metro in business startups and also lacks a Small Business Development physical center presence.
- For more annual, and reliable funding, CED suggests considering expanding HRA eligibility to ensure the most flexible use of resources in a post-pandemic economic climate.
- EDA investments into small business support will help to ensure that programming that is created via the Small Business Reimagination Center will be sustained.
- Housing will to continue to be the priority of investment.

Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Powers "+"

- Currently CED as a department is funded both by the General Levy and the HRA. The General Levy supports existing business programming (e.g. Open To Business, Ramsey County Means Business, and staff to support these programs).
- Statutory Authority (469.1082) allows for a County Housing & Redevelopment Authorities to **expand** to include Economic Development Authority powers.
- Counties may also activate an additional EDA levy authority for business investments. (This is not being considered at this time.)
- Although vague, the HRA is limited to funding the removal or mitigation of blight. Redevelopment activities, like those via the Critical Corridor program, have served this use.

Next Steps & Key Considerations

- Next steps include continued engagement with community and cities.
- Consideration of stakeholder letters of support.
- Special legislation to be considered in 2024.
- Cities wouldn't be asked to consider Resolutions of Support until CED/WFS can co-create business programming with city partners.
- Cities would need to consider a Resolution of Support to benefit from business programming by the July before the next taxable year (e.g. July of 2024 for 2025 tax collection).

Economic Competitiveness & Inclusion 2.0

ECI Plan Update

- WFS & CED to partner on what will be the next iteration of the ECI Plan.
- Recommendations currently run through 2025. The next ECI Plan will take the County to 2030 which will sync up with city comprehensive plan updates as well.
- Next ECI Plan will consider existing investments and how to build a more resilient economy.

