

The State of Wisconsin is applying for a federal grant through the Department of Commerce called the [Good Jobs Challenge](#). We are seeking a letter of support from your organization by February 4.

The grant will have three components valuable to businesses across the state:

- Skills Accelerator - rapid workforce training program for under and unemployed residents (with a focus on historically marginalized) in the state that helps place them in a job. See the attachments for the model, metrics, and recent article on the program.
- Employer Innovation and Learning Network - a peer-to-peer affinity network for employer partner's key leaders like Chief Information Officers (CIOs) and Chief Human Resource Officers (CHROs).
- Future of Work Accelerator - creation of recruitment and worker retention tools for employers and workers for next generation work

Why?

Wisconsin needs to be a national leader for job quality and matching workers to the highest demand jobs to drive innovation and economic growth. We want to ensure Wisconsinites and our employers are ready for the explosive growth in digital skills that workplaces require for successful economic growth now and in the future. The number of skills required for a single job is increasing by 10% year over year, and over 30% of the skills needed three years ago will soon be irrelevant, according to Gartner TalentNeuron.

Digital skills are needed in virtually every role in every organization, yet there are limited programs working towards reducing the digital workplace chasm that was growing before the pandemic and has exponentially increased in the last two years. According to the "State's Digital Equity Scorecards", a publication issued by the National Digital Inclusion Association, in partnership with National Skills Coalition and Microsoft, nearly 33% of our unemployed individuals in Wisconsin lacked the foundational digital skills to compete for over 138,000 open positions (July, 2021). Closing this skills gap is an important aspect of the continued economic growth in our region and our state and this grant serves as an integral role in facilitating an equitable training platform to help more of our residents secure good jobs today and be digitally prepared for careers of tomorrow.

What is in it for my business?

You will be at the table to help craft the skilling strategy. You will have first access to skills accelerator graduates to fill your talent pipeline. The graduates will take a digital skills training program in addition to workforce readiness programming such as skills for inclusive conversations, how to manage feeling overwhelmed and critical thinking. Digital skills curriculum will be based on regional and state-wide employer needs and tailored for entry-level roles such as sales, customer service, data analyst, IT help desk and cybersecurity. While the type of roles will vary, they will all be grounded digital skills. Most roles will funnel into pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship pathways.

Leadership from your company can participate in a national corporate network with access to national thought leaders in talent recruitment, development and retention including Microsoft, LinkedIn, Markle Foundation, and America Achieves. Learn how innovation in other industries can help ensure your workers and your company thrive. Engage in with employers across sectors and divisions of companies for talent growth strategies. Learn to break down internal hiring challenges associated with technical roles for a skills-based model.

Help guide a Future of Work business accelerator. This accelerator will be dedicated to how companies create good jobs and have employees that thrive in them. This accelerator provides opportunity for discussions around how to scale effective recruiting practices for skills-based hiring, drive operational changes for the redesign of roles, responsibilities and communications to support teams working partially or fully remote and gain tools for improved benefits, continuous skilling, and the mental and physical health of your employees.

How can our organization help?

1. Successful grant applications for the Good Jobs Challenge will have several components but the most critical is the commitment of employers to hire and retain talent that is involved in this program. If your organization is currently going to be hiring in the next five years, we want you engaged with our graduates. We can provide diverse, motivated, and recently skilled applicants to your organization.
2. Employer engagement on how to improve workplaces will also be critical. Commit your company to join the discussion in the Employer Innovation and Learning Network.
3. Connect us with like-minded companies that are prioritizing advancing worker talent in Wisconsin and reducing the digital divide.

What are the next steps?

Use the attached template letter to commit to joining this effort. All organizations are welcome to tailor it.

Please send to tia@gener8tor.com no later than February 4.

If you have any questions, please schedule time during one of our virtual office hours every day from 4-5 pm CT by [signing up here](#).

What exactly is a Skills Accelerator?

Learn more [here](#).