



# A Strategic Approach to Workforce Development in NYS

Last year, as New York began to emerge from the global pandemic and recover from its impact on our economy and the labor force, State leaders identified the need to have a more intentional and strategic focus on workforce development as an instrument of economic development and expanded economic opportunity. As a result, Governor Kathy Hochul announced an **historic investment of \$350 million for workforce development** and the **creation of the Office of Strategic Workforce Development (OSWD)** within New York State's economic development agency, Empire State Development (ESD). This investment represents a decisive shift toward a State workforce development strategy that is laser-focused on connecting New Yorkers to quality, in-demand jobs in the state's fastest-growing industries.

## OSWD's Strategic Approach

As a critical link between workforce development and economic development, OSWD's work is guided by its mission to align the State's workforce efforts with the needs and priorities of employers and workers to ensure that New Yorkers have the skills needed to power our economic growth and improve their livelihoods. Core to that work is a recognition that past investment in our economy has not benefited all New Yorkers equitably. That is why OSWD-funded programs focus on good jobs and providing targeted supports that will enable more New Yorkers to access promising career opportunities.




In conjunction, OSWD **established seven statewide target industries** aligned with ESD's strategic business attraction efforts to inform its work across programs, with preference given to grant applicants supporting hiring in these industries and regional planning focused on their needs. These seven industries have played a major role in driving New York State's economic growth over the past decade. Intentional workforce investment in these industries will in turn ensure that future growth and prosperity is shared by all New Yorkers.

Statewide Target Industry	Description
Advanced Manufacturing and Materials	R&D-driven manufacturing and processing of raw materials
Biotech and Life Sciences	Research, development, and manufacturing of health care products and equipment and pharmaceuticals
Cleantech and Renewable Energy	Generation, transmission, and storage of clean energy; manufacturing of clean energy generation components; building and infrastructure upgrades
Construction	Construction of buildings, civil engineering, and specialty trades
Electronics and Optics, Photonics, and Imaging (OPI)	Computer, electronics, and chemical manufacturing industries (including semiconductor manufacturing) and related professional services
Film and TV Production and Post-Production	Motion picture, television, sound recording, and other related industries
Software and Digital Media	Software development, data processing, information services, and telecommunication

## Progress to Date and Year Ahead

Since formally launching in October, OSWD has hit the ground running and has begun to lay the foundation for the State’s new approach to workforce development. In the coming year, OSWD will continue to make strides across three core functions that are designed to drive tangible impact, share insights, and improve data and collaboration across the workforce system.

The success of the Governor’s historic investment and of this Office depends on partnership and collaboration from numerous parties – employers and industries, workers and unions, workforce development providers and advocates, academic and philanthropic institutions, regional partners, and government agencies. **OSWD is committed to partnering with all stakeholders to advance its mission and have a transformative impact on New York State’s workforce ecosystem.**

Core Functions	Progress To Date	Year Ahead
 <p><b>Drive innovative, high-impact workforce programming</b></p> <p><i>Launch and scale effective and innovative programs and leverage program data to inform future programs and partnerships.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched a \$150 million grant program and awarded \$13 million to 22 innovative training programs, which will train more than 6,600 New Yorkers for more than 200 business and industry partners, leverage more than \$10 million in matching funds, and offer robust wraparound supports.</li> <li>Established metrics for grants funded by the Governor’s \$350 million investment to track grantee training outcomes, which include training enrollment and completion, job placement rates, and earning outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fund additional innovative workforce training models and capital improvements through the \$150 million grant program.</li> <li>Establish a “resource hub” of best practices and guidelines for training providers, employers, and other workforce stakeholders.</li> <li>Coordinate with other State agencies to collect program data and begin to measure success across programs.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Establish strategic priorities for workforce investment</b></p> <p><i>Prioritize workforce investment to align the needs of workers and employers and ensure programs serve New Yorkers that are most in need.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified seven statewide high-growth target industries representing New York’s most critical growth sectors and additional regional priority sectors to guide workforce investment efforts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish insights on statewide target industries and focus populations to guide high-impact workforce program design.</li> <li>Continue to engage industry on talent needs and to support training programs.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Connect the dots across regions, industries, and agencies</b></p> <p><i>Improve coordination and facilitate collective learning and agenda-setting within the workforce development ecosystem.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Led an interagency working group to coordinate workforce programming, including metrics tracking for the Governor’s \$350 million workforce investment.</li> <li>Supported regional workforce planning, including studies led by the State’s 10 Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs).</li> <li>Began coordination with the Governor’s Office of Semiconductor Expansion, Management, and Integration (GO-SEMI) to align workforce development efforts across multiple State agencies for the semiconductor workforce.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to work across State agencies to coordinate workforce efforts for GO-SEMI and similar initiatives.</li> <li>Launch a series of regional convenings to ensure alignment with statewide workforce priorities and to discuss talent gaps, successful programs, and recommendations for statewide action.</li> <li>Support industry outreach by ESD and other agencies, bringing a workforce development lens and best practices.</li> </ul>

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