



## **NOVA Workforce Board 2017-2020 Four-Year Strategic Plan**

**Vision:** We are a regional catalyst shaping and influencing the Silicon Valley workforce investment system to promote economic opportunity and shared prosperity.

**Mission:** NOVA Workforce Board provides strategic leadership to continuously improve the Workforce Investment System by:

- providing guidance to the One-Stop delivery system;
- being responsive to what our customers value;
- being accountable to our investors; and
- holding service providers accountable for results.

**Purpose:** NOVA's purpose is to support workforce mobility by easing workers' transitions from opportunity to opportunity throughout their career cycles. To advance transitions with economic sustainability, NOVA provides:

- real-time labor market information about in-demand skills;
- skill-building and enhancements to match market demand;
- navigation tools for the ever-changing and entrepreneurial new labor market (e.g. social media & networking);
- advocacy for necessary infrastructure to support workers between opportunities such as Unemployment Insurance for all and portable benefits; and
- interconnected support system for multiple career pathways for youth.

### **Ten Priority Strategies**

#### **1. Align with Sector Strategies:**

- Align workforce development and education and training programs with industry sector needs.
- Participate in and lead regional sector strategies with Workforce Development Boards (WDB) in the defined Bay-Peninsula region representing San Francisco, NOVA (San Mateo County and northern Santa Clara County), work2future (San Jose and southern Santa Clara County) and San Benito County.
- Implement sector strategies through partnerships with appropriate key partners in industry sector, education, organized labor, workforce development and community-based organizations.
- Identify priority sectors based on economic and labor market data, among other key indicators. While each local WDB in the region will offer workforce preparation for all of its relevant sectors, one (or more) WDBs will coordinate efforts to collect and disseminate information regarding employer demands, skill gaps and labor market

trends for its primary sector(s) on behalf of the entire region. Identified regional priority sectors include information technology, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, construction, and hospitality.

## **2. Form Strategic Partnerships:**

- Engage key partners including community service providers, education, organized labor, employers and business and economic development associations to understand the challenges and opportunities in a fast-moving economy and to develop workforce solutions.
- Collaborate with WDBs in the region to strategize and align workforce development activities and resources with the employer needs of the region and to promote regional economic growth.
- Ensure that partnerships are strategic and “value-add” where the partnership achieves its goals and relationships built benefit those who participated.

## **3. Support Career Pathways:**

- Support progressive and flexible skill development curriculum (with multiple levels and entry/exit points) and credentialing as appropriate that will lead to employment success in the labor market.
- Offer short-term serial training options to ensure that workers who can’t commit to long-term training programs can still build skills.
- Explore and expand online training and other learning alternatives to deliver skills training, as well as job search and career navigation content.
- Collaborate with community colleges, adult education, and other education partners to recognize and address the workforce needs and skill gaps of the region’s employers and leverage these relationships to support policy changes that address institutional barriers to rapid market responsiveness.

## **4. Utilize “Earn and Learn” Strategies:**

- Promote access to lifelong learning through flexible and industry-informed options, including “earn while you learn” training strategies where participants are attaining applicable career/occupational skills and credentials while at the same time receiving compensation. This approach also promotes access for customers with barriers to employment who cannot afford to participate in a training program without being paid. Examples of “earn and learn” approaches include apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, paid internships, risk-free tryout employment, on-the-job training, work/school options, project-based compensated learning, and short-term contract work through the gig economy.

## **5. Lead on Information and Communications Technologies and Health Care Sub-Sector/Occupations:**

- Lead efforts in the Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) sector by promoting digital literacy that includes coding as a basic skill necessary for all job seekers in the ICT sector to achieve economic self-sufficiency.
- Promote workforce development in the health care sector.

## **6. Explore and Disseminate Real-Time Labor Market Intelligence Strategies:**

- Explore and disseminate real-time labor market intelligence to uncover occupational skills gaps that will shape service-delivery strategies and programs. This is achieved through collection of (1) traditional labor market and economic data and trends analytics, validated by (2) the career advisors who work with the customers and onsite recruiters and other employers who possess real-time labor market intelligence, followed by (3) forecasting trends obtained through innovative resources that serve as portals to the future.
- Explore the development of cross-system data capacity that supports exchange of labor market information across the workforce development system. Not every WDB will possess deep information about every sector, so it will be important for one (or more) WDBs to specialize in a select few sectors and then collect and disseminate information to the other WDBs and partners in the region.
- Explore use of performance outcomes for workforce development programs as another important source of information.

## **7. Promote Business Engagement:**

- Engage businesses in identifying sector skill needs with a focus on aligning skill needs with the workforce development and training curriculum in order to fill skill gaps.
- Increase business access to talent through targeted regional job fairs, personal and electronic communications, and online technology.

## **8. Reimagine Youth Program:**

- With the advice of the NOVA Workforce Board Youth Committee, engage key partners in a strategy that best utilizes NOVA's expertise and leverages other community resources to efficiently reach more youth with combined services.

## **9. Pursue and Leverage Resource Development and Braiding:**

- Pursue additional resources to address outsized demand from customers highlighted in WARN notices (NOVA ranked #2 in state for number of impacted individuals) and to provide case management services, career advising and training for target populations that include those with special needs and barriers to employment, specifically, persons with disabilities, veterans, low-income disadvantaged, long-term unemployed, foster care youth transitioning out of the child welfare system, and the formerly incarcerated (reentry population) who may require more individualized services.
- Explore braiding/leveraging resources across the workforce development system to maximize services and minimize duplication to best meet the diverse needs of job seekers, and for capacity building of staff across partners.

## **10. Assist with Supportive Services:**

- Provide assistance to job seekers who face barriers to employment with accessing a broad array of ancillary services that will facilitate their completion of education and training programs and job search activities leading to successful employment. Service may include childcare and dependent care, health care, transportation vouchers, payment for books, uniforms and course

equipment, substance abuse treatment, assistive technology for individuals with disabilities, licensing fees, housing assistance, emergency assistance, financial services and counseling.

- Collaborate with organizations that specialize in these services to support shared customers.