

## Workforce Partnerships Guidelines

The key functions of sectoral workforce partnerships are:

- *Organize resources from multiple institutions* and funding streams to support and sustain workforce advancement;
- *Pursue a dual customer approach*, serving businesses looking for qualified workers and job seekers and incumbent workers looking to advance their careers;
- *Provide or broker services*—education, training, asset development, and support services—that help workers gain access to the initial rungs of the ladder to economic opportunity and advancement;
- *Serve a variety of workers*, but recognizing and addressing the special needs of lower-skilled, lower-wage workers and job seekers;
- *Reduce turnover* and increasing economic mobility of workers;
- *Test and adapt innovative approaches* to workforce problems;
- *Catalyze improvements* in public systems and business employment practices.

Workforce partnerships engage businesses in the structure of the partnership as a formal part of decision-making and ongoing governance. They also specify benefits and outcomes for individuals, employers, and the systems that affect employers and low-skilled adults.

The following table identifies some key differences between traditional workforce programs and workforce partnerships.

Traditional Approach	Workforce Partnerships
Focuses on increasing worker skills and job placement	Focuses on solving problems faced by workers and businesses
Transactional services	Relational and engaging
Works within existing funding systems and business practices	Works to change funding systems and business practices to enable a full array of solutions
Sharp boundaries around fixed organizational roles and practices	Catalyzes flexible partnerships to solve problems and enhance value
Short-term focus on service delivery to customer	Long-term orientation on impact and outcomes for partners, individuals, and systems.