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# POSTSECONDARY/WORKFORCE INITIATIVES IN TEXAS

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A Brief Landscape Scan of Initiatives in Texas

September 2021

## Summary and Acknowledgements:

This document intends to provide a snapshot of work in Texas regions aligning postsecondary education and workforce partners to create career pathways with family-sustaining wages. This descriptive document was developed to inform our Regional Upskilling and Reskilling Initiative at Trellis Foundation so that we can more easily connect our partners to other work happening in the regions. We also wanted to converse and collaborate with colleagues, as possible and relevant, on outcomes metrics and technical assistance for grantees. Thus, the information collected and the format it is presented in were designed with our internal needs in mind. We are sharing the information widely, but please note that this is not exhaustive information on each initiative, and we likely have not reflected all relevant initiatives. We are happy to update this information as needed and we are also happy for you to use it to inform your own programming and analyses. We hope you will share your landscape scans with us as well! Thank you to colleagues from the regions and initiatives mentioned; we appreciate your time and expertise!

## Matrix of Initiatives by Region:

Note: Not an exhaustive list of initiatives or regions. Our main focus was the nine regions Trellis Foundation is working with on this topic. Other regions were included as they were mentioned by other initiatives, but some regions of the state are not represented in this particular, internal scan. Brief descriptions of the initiatives can be found on the following pages.

	Trellis Fdn Upskill/ Reskill	We CAN	Aim Hire	Advance Together	Civic Lab	THECB Resilling Grants	Graduate! Network BTTG	Tri-Agency TRPN	TRUE
<b>Coastal Bend</b>	X				X	X	X	X	<b>TBD</b>
<b>RGV</b>		X		X	X	X		X	
<b>Dallas</b>		X	X			X		X	
<b>Houston</b>	X	X	X			X		X	
<b>Capital Area</b>	X	X	X	X*	X	X	X	X	
<b>Irving</b>						X	X		
<b>Ft Worth</b>		X	X			X	X	X	
<b>Longview</b>			X			X	X		
<b>SA</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<b>Amarillo</b>	X	X	X	X					
<b>Brazos Valley</b>	X					X		X	
<b>West Central Tx</b>	X	X		X*		X		X	
<b>Waco</b>	X		X			X			
<b>East TX</b>		X	X	X*		X		X	
<b>Permian Basin</b>			X	X*		X		X	
<b>Denton</b>				X	X	X			
<b>El Paso</b>						X		X	
<b>Temple</b>	X			X		X			

\*Advance Together communities funded in the second phase as well. The others were funded in the design phase.

## Summary of Initiatives:

Initiative	Primary contact	Objective	Funding source
<b>Regional Upskilling &amp; Reskilling</b>	Jenny Achilles <a href="mailto:jenny.achilles@trellisfoundation.org">jenny.achilles@trellisfoundation.org</a>	Both short- and long-term efforts to align regional workforce and education systems – specific to employers and working learners looking to upskill or reskill due to COVID-19 and/or in view of potential improvement in long-term economic vitality.	Trellis Foundation
<b>We CAN</b>	Dr. Kenyatta Lovett <a href="mailto:klovett@cftexas.org">klovett@cftexas.org</a>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhance Regional Capacity and Align to Employer Needs</li> <li>2. Innovate for Equity</li> <li>3. Scale and Sustain</li> </ol>	Communities Foundation of Texas
<b>Aim Hire</b>	Hans Voss, <a href="mailto:hans.voss@texas2036.org">hans.voss@texas2036.org</a> , <a href="https://www.aimhiretexas.org/">https://www.aimhiretexas.org/</a>	Provide a statewide hub of data that accesses new sources of private data and analysis, leveraging Texas 2036’s existing resources and analytics to maintain a near-real-time analysis of the state’s workforce. It also will also work with public- and private-sector officials to share emerging and proven strategies for workforce development, serving as a clearinghouse for information and leadership.	Significant early support from JP Morgan Chase. Founding partners include: Dallas Regional Chamber, Greater Houston Partnership, TACC, Texas Rural Funders and United Ways of TX
<b>Advance Together</b>	Kseniya Benderskaya, <a href="mailto:kseniya.benderskaya@dal.frb.org">kseniya.benderskaya@dal.frb.org</a> Molly Hubbert-Doyle, <a href="mailto:Molly.Hubbert-Doyle@dal.frb.org">Molly.Hubbert-Doyle@dal.frb.org</a>	In a shared learning environment, Advance Together provides selected partnerships with training, technical assistance and external funding to help them strengthen their collaboration and achieve their goals. By building up a network of collaborative leaders in communities across the state, we’re moving toward a future where all Texas residents can achieve economic mobility and resilience.	Advance Together™ is led by the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas with partners Educate Texas and United Ways of Texas and fiscal sponsor The Dallas Foundation. Additional funding partnership include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doris Duke Charitable Foundation</li> <li>• The Kresge Foundation</li> <li>• Texas Mutual</li> <li>• The Meadows Foundation</li> </ul>
<b>Civic Lab/Talent Hubs</b>	Dakota Pawlicki, Director, <a href="https://educationcoalition.com/civic-lab/">https://educationcoalition.com/civic-lab/</a> <a href="mailto:dpawlicki@civiclab.org">dpawlicki@civiclab.org</a>	Teaches collaborative community teams how to better approach complex social problems by redesigning the way they work together. This work can include: learning/action work; distributed technical assistance; capacity-building; and design, structure, planning and systems consulting.	Originally Lumina Foundation; now expanded
<b>THECB Reskilling Funds</b>	<a href="mailto:Reskilling@highered.texas.gov">Reskilling@highered.texas.gov</a> , <a href="https://www.highered.texas.gov/institutional-resources-programs/institutional-grant-opportunities/texas-reskilling-support-fund-grant-program/">https://www.highered.texas.gov/institutional-resources-programs/institutional-grant-opportunities/texas-reskilling-support-fund-grant-program/</a>	Reskilling Grants allow institutions to provide financial assistance to Texas students through coverage of student tuition and fees. The grants support students pursuing the completion of high value credentials. Reskilling Grants are intended to be deployed as quickly as reasonably possible during the grant period.	Governor’s Emergency Educational Relief (GEER) Fund. GEER dollars, in turn, originate from the U.S. Department of Education’s administration of the Education Stabilization Fund in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES).

Initiative	Primary contact	Objective	Funding source
<b>The Graduate! Network BTTG</b>	Bridgett Strickler, <a href="https://bridgingthetalentgap.org/">https://bridgingthetalentgap.org/</a> <a href="mailto:Bridgett.Strickler@Graduate-Network.org">Bridgett.Strickler@Graduate-Network.org</a>	Bridging The Talent Gap helps communities move the needle on adult education attainment and ensure a skilled workforce in three phases: 1) Assess the business community's education and talent gap needs; 2) Engage interested employers with customized strategies to help them understand their return on investment; 3) Drive results for community stakeholders through data-driven partnership development.	Lumina Foundation, Walmart Foundation, Trellis Foundation
<b>Texas Regional Pathways Network</b>	Sarah Jenness Senior Program Manager, Jobs for the Future <a href="mailto:sjenness@jff.org">sjenness@jff.org</a>	To build regional talent pipelines that spur economic growth across the state and ensure that all Texans have the skills and credentials needed for economic advancement.	Tri-Agency/Jobs for the Future
<b>TRUE Initiative</b>	Jacob Fraire, CEO, <a href="https://tacc.org/tacc/texas-reskilling-upskilling-through-education-true">https://tacc.org/tacc/texas-reskilling-upskilling-through-education-true</a> <a href="mailto:jfraire@tacc.org">jfraire@tacc.org</a>	Prepare students for in-demand careers accelerating their transition to work while also building an enduring education infrastructure to support a thriving Texas economy throughout the diverse regions of the state. The colleges will work with business partners and others in their communities to bolster this talent pipeline strategy.	Public/private partnership including foundations: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Trellis Foundation, Great Texas Foundation, Meadows Foundation, Lumina Foundation

## Brief Descriptions of Initiatives:

Note: The majority of the content on these pages was copied directly from websites, external-facing documents or communication with project contacts. In few instances Trellis Foundation staff provided paraphrased summaries. We are not claiming authorship; we merely compiled the information.

Order of descriptions:

- Regional Ecosystem Innovation for Upskilling/Reskilling (Trellis Foundation)
- We CAN
- Aim Hire
- Advance Together
- Civic Lab
- THECB Reskilling Grants
- The Graduate! Network
- Texas Regional Pathways Network (Tri-Agency/Jobs for the Future)
- TRUE

# Regional Ecosystem Innovation for Reskilling & Upskilling (Trellis Foundation)

## Initiative Contact

Jenny Achilles, Sr. Director & Chief Program Officer

[jenny.achilles@trellisfoundation.org](mailto:jenny.achilles@trellisfoundation.org)

## Initiative Objective

The focus of this work is to encourage, expand, and learn about regional collaborative efforts that lead to greater opportunities and outcomes for reskilling and upskilling dislocated workers and students through postsecondary credentials/degrees with labor market value.

Collaborations will aim for both short- and long-term impact with the potential to inform state-wide and national efforts to improve economic strength and social mobility for communities and individuals. Short-term goals will focus on immediate upskilling and reskilling needs of workers in response to changes caused by the pandemic. Long-term goals will include mapping career pathways for adults with stackable credentials, allowing for on and off ramps leading to family-sustaining wages.

## Funding Source

Trellis Foundation

## Industries

Specific to and determined by each region

## Outcomes

Grant metrics are community specific. The Foundation is collecting information from related initiatives and experts to determine a set of metrics to track that are common to the field of post-secondary education/workforce alignment.

## Communities & Partners

Houston:

- Greater Houston Partnership
- United Way of Greater Houston, THRIVE network of more than 20 community organizations
- Boston Consulting Group
- Houston Community College
- San Jacinto College
- Lone Star College
- Gulf Coast Workforce Solutions

Brazos Valley:

- Project Unity
- Brazos Valley Council of Governments

- Blinn College District
- Workforce Solutions
- Texas A&M University
- Bryan ISD

San Antonio:

- San Antonio Education Partnership
- Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce
- UTSA-The Office of Extended Education
- Alamo Colleges District (ACD)
- Project Quest
- SA Works
- Workforce Solutions Alamo
- City of San Antonio-Economic Development Department
- The Graduate! Network
- TX Fame (partnership of regional manufacturers)
- H-E-B

Austin:

- Foundation Communities
- Workforce Solutions Capitol Area
- PelotonU
- Austin Community College
- United Way for Greater Austin
- E3 Alliance
- Austin Chamber of Commerce
- The University of Texas' Ray Marshall Center

Waco:

- Prosper Waco
- Heart of Texas Workforce Development Board
- TSTC-Waco
- McLennan Community College
- Heart of Texas Goodwill
- Caterpillar

West Central Texas:

- West Central Texas Workforce Development Board
- Big Country Manufacturing Alliance
- Goodwill West Texas
- Sweetwater Enterprise for Economic Development
- Adult Education with Abilene ISD
- Abilene Industrial Foundation
- Abilene Christian University
- Cisco College
- TSTC



Coastal Bend, Rural Counties:

- E2E Partnership
- Aransas County Workforce Training Center
- Better Business Bureau (BBB) serving the Heart of Texas
- Coastal Bend Council of Governments
- Coastal Compass Education and Career Resource Center
- Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corporation
- Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)
- Craft Training Center of the Coastal Bend
- Del Mar College
- Education Service Center Region 2
- Nueces County Inclusive Development Network
- Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
- Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend

Amarillo:

- Amarillo College
- Amarillo College CEO Council (50 local industry leaders)
  - Ex: Jorge Ramirez, Architect/Firm Principal, Höhe Design Group, currently employing an AC apprentice
- Panhandle Workforce Development Board
- Panhandle Regional Planning Commission

Temple:

- Temple College
- Workforce Solutions
- Temple and Belton Economic Development Cooperation
- Texas A&M University Central Texas
- Temple Community Clinic
- Temple Industrial Foundation
- Central Texas Food Bank
- HEB
- BBVA Bank in Temple
- City of Temple
- Chamber of Commerce

# WE CAN TX

## Initiative Contact

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Educate Texas

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<https://www.edtx.org/our-impact-areas/higher-education/wecantx>

## Initiative Objectives

WE CAN TX is a statewide peer-learning network convened and supported by Educate Texas that empowers regional partnerships to build education-to-workforce pathways. Led by community colleges and workforce organizations, partners will develop and scale innovative, modern work-based learning experiences and academic structures (e.g., internships, youth apprenticeships, teacher and faculty externships) that address employer needs in high-wage and high-demand careers.

WE CAN TX aims to increase the number of students who earn postsecondary credentials and are working in high-demand industries that pay a livable wage, with a vision of ensuring equitable outcomes for first-generation, low-income students of color across Texas and meeting the talent and workforce demands of businesses.

## **WE CAN TX Goals**

1. Enhance Regional Capacity and Align to Employer Needs
2. Innovate for Equity
3. Scale and Sustain

## **How WE CAN TX Works**

WE CAN TX launched in March 2021 with a cohort of 11 regional partnerships that will receive technical assistance and engage in peer learning. Educate Texas will meet regions where they are and provide technical assistance and resources designed to realign and scale up work-based learning programs, including but not limited to:

- A. Regional Assessments and Opportunity Gap Analysis
- B. Data Landscape Analysis
- C. Adult and Youth Apprenticeships
- D. Work-based Courses (WBCs)
- E. Tools to Support Virtual Learning & Work

## Strategies

**Partners** - Involve the right parties and convene for action

**Programs** - Innovate and prove them in practice

**Policies** - Instill evidence-based practices and policies for enduring impact and scale

## Industries WE CAN TX Serves

The primary industries at the start will be in advanced manufacturing, petrochemical operations, and other traditional trades for apprenticeships. The goal is to quickly expand into IT and other high-tech/high-demand emerging fields.

## List of Metrics that WE CAN TX asks their Partner Communities to Track

WE CAN TX does not have pre-set metrics that they ask their partner communities to track. Instead, they are working collaboratively to scope metrics together. The network has begun to develop a common narrative for the theory of action for the three primary goals, which will include a logic model for each theory of action. Based on the logic models, a common data dashboard will be developed to (1) inform program design, (2) measure performance, and (3) evaluate program outcomes. The dashboard prototype is expected to be completed in December 2021.

## Funders

ECMC Foundation, PAYA/New America, Lumina Foundation, the Prentiss F. and Alline F. Brown Foundation, Texas Mutual, and the Meadows Foundation.

## Communities

### *Central Texas*

- Workforce Solutions Capital Area & Austin Community College

### *North Texas*

- Dallas College
- North Central Texas College
- Tarrant County College

### *East Texas*

- Tyler Junior College

### *Gulf Coast*

- Lee College
- San Jacinto College

### *Panhandle*

- Amarillo College

### *West Texas*

- Workforce Solutions West Central Texas

### *South Texas*

- Alamo Colleges District & SA Works
- South Texas College & RGV FOCUS

## Aim Hire (Texas 2036)

### Initiative Contact

Hans Voss

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<https://www.aimhiretexas.org/>

### Initiative Objective

A new statewide workforce initiative, Aim Hire Texas, will help close gaps preventing many Texans from finding good, high-paying jobs that Texas employers seek to fill, thereby expanding economic opportunities both today and for future generations.

The effort is a collaboration between Texas 2036 — a data-driven nonprofit working to ensure that Texas remains the best place to live and work through its bicentennial in 2036 and beyond — and the Commit Partnership, who will co-chair the effort and help facilitate the implementation of effective education and workforce data-driven practices. They are joined by a diverse group of founding partners also includes the Dallas Regional Chamber, Greater Houston Partnership, Texas Association of Community Colleges, Texas Rural Funders and United Ways of Texas.

### Industries

No specific industries served. Serve all industries across Texas.

### Strategies

Aim Hire Texas will provide a statewide hub of data that accesses new sources of private data and analysis, leveraging Texas 2036's existing resources and analytics to maintain a near-real-time analysis of the state's workforce. It also will also work with public- and private-sector officials to share emerging and proven strategies for workforce development, serving as a clearinghouse for information and leadership.

### Funding Source

Significant early support from JP Morgan Chase. Originally founded with seven partners and now representing 46 members across the state.

### Consortium Participants

- Amarillo Economic Development Corporation
- Austin Chamber of Commerce
- Bank of America
- Bell Flight
- Combined Arms
- The Commit Partnership\*

- Dallas College
- Dallas Regional Chamber\*
- Educate Texas
- Education Opens Doors
- Fort Worth Chamber
- Greater Austin STEM Ecosystem
- Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Houston Partnership\*
- HCA Houston Healthcare
- IBM
- INEOS Olefins & Polymers USA
- JPMorgan Chase
- Longview Chamber of Commerce
- Lubbock Chamber of Commerce
- Ludlum Measurements, Inc.
- North Texas Commission
- Paul Quinn College
- Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce
- Project QUEST
- Prosper Waco
- RAM, Inc.
- Richardson Chamber of Commerce
- San Antonio Chamber of Commerce
- San Antonio Economic Development Foundation
- ScholarShot
- The Snyder News
- Texas 2036\*
- Texas Association of Business
- Texas Association of Community Colleges\*
- Texas Association of Goodwills
- Texas Business Leadership Council
- Texas Mutual
- Texas Partnership for Out of School Time
- Texas Rural Funders\*
- Texas State Technical College
- TEXPOSITION
- Toyota North America
- Thomson Reuters
- Tyler Area Business Education Council
- United Ways of Texas\*

\* *Founding Organizations*

# Advance Together

## **Advance Together** (Dallas Fed)

### Initiative Contact

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Molly Hubbert-Doyle, [Molly.Hubbert-Doyle@dal.frb.org](mailto:Molly.Hubbert-Doyle@dal.frb.org)

<https://www.dallasfed.org/cd/at>

### Initiative Objective

Advance Together™ accelerates the progress of community partnerships in Texas that are addressing education and workforce challenges. Their work is instrumental in reducing barriers to economic opportunity. We seek to expand its impact.

In a shared learning environment, Advance Together provides selected partnerships with training, technical assistance and external funding to help them strengthen their collaboration and achieve their goals. By building up a network of collaborative leaders in communities across the state, we're moving toward a future where all Texas residents can achieve economic mobility and resilience.

Advance together is a collaborative of community partners that address the most pressing problems around educational attainment and workforce development. Advance Together's theory of change focuses on the following core principles: (1) Collaborative leadership which entails the ability to work together across the nonprofit, business, and public sectors to achieve a shared, long-term vision and goals; (2) community engagement and racial equity, which focus on authentic involvement of residents in the development and implementation of the initiative, with an emphasis on recognizing and addressing racial disparities in outcomes; (3) Systems thinking and systems change which entails the ability to see how organizational systems, sub-systems, and their parts interact with and influence each other; and how these systems create and contribute to specific problems and (4) Learning orientation which is the willingness to tackle hard questions about the partnership's community and the problem they are addressing, to use evidence to inform their decisions about strategies and priorities and change course when needed.

### Industries

Education, business, nonprofits, government, and the community.

### Strategies

Advance Together's strategy is to help participants grow in key areas that drive program success and advance economic inclusion:

- Community
  - Engaging people who have often been left out

- Promoting racial equity
- Learning
  - Continuous improvement toward shared outcomes
  - Data sharing and evaluation
- Collaboration
  - Bringing sectors together to lead change
  - Capacity building
- Opportunity
  - Changing systems to reduce barriers that limit economic mobility

### Outcomes

Advance Together has developed a framework that captures their initiative strategies, activities, and interim outcomes.

### Funding Source

Advance Together™ is led by the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas with partners [Educate Texas](#) and [United Ways of Texas](#) and fiscal sponsor [The Dallas Foundation](#).

Additional funding partnership include:

- [Doris Duke Charitable Foundation](#)
- [The Kresge Foundation](#)
- [Texas Mutual](#)
- [The Meadows Foundation](#)
- [Communities Foundation of Texas](#)

### Communities

[Nine community partnerships](#) in Texas were selected for the initial phase of Advance Together. As grantees in the Design phase, each community partnership received \$15,000 in funding to use to assess their efforts and develop a plan to accelerate their progress. To assist them, Advance Together provided training and resources in a shared learning environment. This phase prepared each group to apply for a larger, second-phase implementation grant to put their plan into action.

[Four community partnerships](#) were selected to move ahead to the second phase of Advance Together. They represent a diversity of communities—urban, suburban and rural—from across the state. Each partnership connects leaders from education, business, nonprofits, government and the community. All are committed to working together to build a brighter future for everyone in Texas.

Over three years, each partnership will receive \$300,000 in external funding to implement their plans to address education and workforce challenges in their community, as well as training and coaching to increase the impact of their programs.

The following four partners were selected for the full second phase. The five communities receiving funding in the design phase are listed at the bottom.

[Educate Midland & Education Partnership of the Permian Basin](#) seeks to improve educational outcomes for all students in the Permian Basin, starting with at-risk youth.

- Partners: Educate Midland, Education Partnership of the Permian Basin, United Way of Midland, ACCESS for SUCCESS, Star Tech Group, Midland ISD, Ector County ISD, Midland College, University of Texas Permian Basin, Region 18 ESC, Odessa College

[Big Country Manufacturing Alliance](#) is focused on increasing employment in middle-skill, high-wage manufacturing careers in West Central Texas, especially in rural areas.

- Partners: Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas, Region 14 Education Service Center (ESC), Ludlum Measurements, Inc., R. E. Dye Manufacturing, BWJ Metalworks L.L.C., Rentech Boiler Systems, USG Corp., Sweetwater Enterprise for Economic Development Municipal Development District, RAM Inc., Abilene Industrial Foundation

[Family Pathways 2-Gen Coalition](#) is helping Austin-area parents improve educational skills and become economically stable while addressing their children's developmental needs.

- Partners: United Way for Greater Austin, Austin Community College, Workforce Solutions Capital Area, Child Inc., Housing Authority of the City of Austin, University of Texas – Ray Marshall Center, City of Austin Office of Economic Development, Travis County Health & Human Services

[Deep East Texas College and Career Alliance](#) seeks to improve career pathways for low socioeconomic students of color in Deep East Texas through college or industry-based certifications.

- Partners: Jasper ISD, Jasper Higher Education Foundation, Jasper County EDC, Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas, Lamar Institute of Technology

*Communities that had received funding during the Design Phase:*

[No Limits, No Excuses](#) aims to build the Texas Panhandle workforce and attract new business to the area by increasing the percentage of residents with a quality job credential.

- Partners: Amarillo Area Foundation, Amarillo College, Amarillo Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Amarillo Independent School District (ISD), BSA Health System, Canyon ISD, CNS Pantex, Kids Inc., Mary E. Bivins Foundation, United Way of Amarillo and Canyon, Workforce Solutions Panhandle

[Denton County Workforce Success Leadership Team](#) is working to reduce the percentage of families in Denton County who earn less than family-sustaining wages.

- Partners: United Way of Denton County, Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas, North Central Texas College, Denton ISD, Texas Woman's University, Denton Housing



Authority, Wells Fargo Bank, Texas Health Resources Denton, University of North Texas, Denton County Economic Development, Denton County Transportation Authority

**Reaching Income Stability with Education** aims to increase the percentage of Bell County households earning family-sustaining wages by increasing access to higher-wage jobs through education and support services.

- Partners: United Way of Central Texas, Workforce Solutions of Central Texas, Temple College Adult Education and Literacy, Hill Country Transit District, Central Texas Housing Consortium, East Temple Neighborhood Initiative

**Dual Generation – San Antonio** is focused on helping families on San Antonio’s Eastside gain stability and access to opportunities that lead to improved quality of life and self-sufficiency.

- Partners: United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County, San Antonio Housing Authority, Goodwill Industries of San Antonio, Workforce Solutions Alamo, Healy Murphy Center, Family Service Association, DePelchin Children’s Center, Alamo Colleges, City of San Antonio Department of Human Services (DHS), City of San Antonio DHS Early Head Start–Child Care Partnership, San Antonio ISD

**RGV FOCUS** is working to provide opportunities for students in the Rio Grande Valley to obtain an industry-recognized certification.

- Partners: Educate Texas, South Texas College

# Civic Lab

## Initiative Contact

Dakota Pawlicki, Director

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<https://educationcoalition.com/civic-lab/>

## Initiative Objective

Civic Lab is a nonprofit institute dedicated to advancing the practice of civic collaboration. The work initially began as part of the Talent Hubs designation launched by the Lumina Foundation.

## Communities

More than 300 communities throughout the country. Regional work in Texas has included the Rio Grande Valley, Austin, Corpus, San Antonio and Denton.

## Industries

Work focuses on system redesign and capacity-building and is thus applicable to any relevant industry.

## Strategies

CivicLab's approach is to learn what makes community collaboration work at its best, document these discoveries, and teach and share the practices broadly. They teach collaborative community teams how to better approach complex social problems by redesigning the way they work together. This work can include: learning/action work; distributed technical assistance; capacity-building; and design, structure, planning and systems consulting.

## Outcomes

Region-specific

## Funding Source

Talent Hubs/Civic Lab were originally launched at Lumina Foundation; since the formation of Civic Lab, funding sources have varied.

# THECB Texas Reskilling Support Fund Grant Program

## Initiative Contact

[Reskilling@highered.texas.gov](mailto:Reskilling@highered.texas.gov)

<https://www.highered.texas.gov/institutional-resources-programs/institutional-grant-opportunities/texas-reskilling-support-fund-grant-program/>

## Initiative Objective

The Texas Reskilling Support Fund Grant Program is a \$46.5 million fund established to provide essential emergency educational support to students that have been most significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and aid in the continuation of their education and economic recovery.

## Communities

Texas-wide regional and local communities

## Industries

Regional and local Texas labor market

## Strategies

Reskilling Grants will allow institutions to provide financial assistance to Texas students through coverage of student tuition and fees. The grants will support students pursuing high-value credentials who are near completion of their postsecondary credential and re-enrolling to complete a postsecondary credential.

## Funding Source

Governor's Emergency Educational Relief (GEER) Fund. GEER dollars, in turn, originate from the U.S. Department of Education's administration of the Education Stabilization Fund in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES).

# Graduate! Network Bridging the Talent Gap

## Initiative Contact

Bridgett Strickler: [Bridgett.Strickler@Graduate-Network.org](mailto:Bridgett.Strickler@Graduate-Network.org)  
<https://bridgingthetalentgap.org/>

## Initiative Objective

The Graduate! Network catalyzes communities and systems around the interests of individual aspirations and goals in the collective movement toward full education and economic equity. Bridging The Talent Gap (BTTG) is a proven approach to activate employers – and the nearly \$1 trillion they invest in education and training each year – in support of this essential agenda. Local BTTG survey campaigns can be flexed and adapted based on a community’s specific priorities, goals, and requirements as they relate to a rightly skilled and educated workforce.

## Funding Source

Lumina Foundation, Walmart Foundation, Trellis Foundation

## Communities

Corpus, Austin, Irving, San Antonio, Ft. Worth, Longview

## Strategies

Bridging The Talent Gap helps communities move the needle on adult education attainment and ensure a skilled workforce in three phases: 1) **Assess** the business community’s education and talent gap needs; 2) **Engage** interested employers with customized strategies to help them understand their return on investment; 3) **Drive results** for community stakeholders through data-driven partnership development.

The protocol starts with two short (@10 minute) surveys - one focused on [employers](#) and the other deployed with [employees](#) of a subset of those employers. The former collects information on hiring practices and preference, as well as support for education and training. The latter focuses on educational aspirations and perceptions. Data is correlated and presented through a [portal](#) that allows for comparisons to overall national norms, by sector, by employer size, and a host of other factors.

Most significantly, it provides a [roadmap](#) by which a community can increase post-secondary investments and outcomes. Specifically, survey data provides a clear line of sight into practices and policies that facilitate greater employer investment in low wage workers. Further, as a practical matter, it identifies front line workers who have educational ambitions, allowing for targeted services to help them achieve their goals.

## Texas Regional Pathways Network (Tri-Agency)

### Initiative Contact

Lindsey Phillips

Effective Advising Program Manager

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[Texas Regional Pathways Network | Texas Education Agency](#)

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Jobs for the Future national Pathways to Prosperity: <https://ptopnetwork.jff.org/resource-category/texas>

### Initiative Objective

The Texas Regional Pathways Network (TRPN) was launched in 2019 to support Governor Abbott's Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative, through which the Texas Education Agency, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Texas Workforce Commission are working collaboratively to increase economic prosperity in Texas by linking education and industry.

With a vision that all Texans are prepared to contribute to an inclusive and competitive Texas economy, the TRPN aims to build regional talent pipelines that spur economic growth across the state and ensure that all Texans have the skills and credentials needed for economic advancement.

The TRPN is a growing community of regions across the state (see table below) working to develop, refine, and scale high-quality career and education pathways. Through the network, grantees can share knowledge and best practices, make strategic connections, and build intentional partnerships across regions in service of their goals.

### Strategies

The TRPN has seven key components:

1. Cross-sector partnerships;
2. Alignment with high wage, in-demand labor market information (greater than \$35,339 annual salary and greater than 17% annual growth for the state);
3. Links between secondary and postsecondary education with multiple entry and exit points;
4. Credentials and degrees with value in the labor market;

5. Integration of rigorous academics and career-focused learning;
6. Strong college and career advising and counseling supports; and
7. Continuum of work-based learning experiences

Communities

The current Texas Regional Pathways Network regional teams (Cohort 1 and Cohort 2) include:

Workforce Development Area	Intermediary	Independent School District(s)	Higher Education Partner(s)	Pathway(s) of Focus
Alamo	<a href="#">ESC Region 20</a>	Devine ISD, Harlandale ISD, Northside ISD, San Antonio ISD, Southwest ISD	Alamo Colleges, UT San Antonio	Cybersecurity
Borderplex	<a href="#">ESC Region 19</a>	Canutillo ISD, Clint ISD, El Paso ISD, Fabens ISD, San Elizario ISD, Socorro ISD, Tornillo ISD, Ysleta ISD	El Paso Community College, New Mexico State University, Texas Tech University, The University of Texas El Paso, Paul L. Foster School of Medicine-Texas University Health Sciences Center	Health Science, IT
Brazos Valley	<a href="#">ESC Region 6</a>	Bryan ISD, College Station ISD, Snook ISD, Mumford ISD	Blinn College	Carpenters, Machinists, Welders
Cameron County	<a href="#">RGV LEAD</a>	La Feria ISD, Santa Rosa ISD, Rio Hondo ISD	Texas State Technical College, Texas	Construction, Renewable Energy, Health Science

Workforce Development Area	Intermediary	Independent School District(s)	Higher Education Partner(s)	Pathway(s) of Focus
			Southmost College	
Cameron County	<a href="#">RGV LEAD</a>	Lasara ISD, San Isidro ISD, San Perlita ISD	Southern Industrial Careers Center	Welding
Capital Area	<a href="#">ESC Region 13</a>	Hutto ISD, Granger ISD, Taylor ISD, Jarrell ISD	Texas State Technical College, Temple College	STEM & IT
Coastal Bend	<a href="#">The Rural Schools Innovation Zone</a>	Freer ISD, Premont ISD, Brooks County ISD	Coastal Bend College, Del Mar College, Texas A&M	Education, Health Science, Welding, Construction, Engineering, STEM
Coastal Bend	<a href="#">Workforce Solutions of Coastal Bend</a>	Jim Hogg County ISD, Benavides ISD, and San Diego ISD	Coastal Bend College	Emergency Services, Nursing Science
Dallas	<a href="#">ESC Region 10</a>	Carrollton Farmers Branch ISD, Plano ISD, and Richardson ISD	Collin College, Dallas College	Cybersecurity, Electrical Engineering, and Manufacturing Technology
Dallas	<a href="#">ESC Region 10</a>	A+ Academy Secondary, Inspired Vision Secondary School, Sunnyvale High School	Eastfield Community College	Education, Pharmacy Tech
East Texas	<a href="#">Mineola Economic Development Corporation</a>	Alba-Golden ISD, Grand Saline ISD, Lindale ISD, Mineola ISD, Yantis ISD)	Tyler Junior College	Industrial Maintenance (HVAC, electrical, plumbing)

Workforce Development Area	Intermediary	Independent School District(s)	Higher Education Partner(s)	Pathway(s) of Focus
East Texas	<a href="#">Tyler Area Business Education Council</a>	Chapel Hill ISD, Hawkins ISD, Tyler ISD, Whitehouse ISD, Winona ISD	Tyler Junior College, The University of Texas at Tyler	Manufacturing, Health Science
Gulf Coast	<a href="#">Region 4 ESC and East Harris County Empowerment Council</a>	Sheldon ISD, Dayton ISD, Channelview ISD	San Jacinto College, Lee College	Plumbing and Pipefitting, Welding, Electrical, Security, Health Science
Lower Rio Grande	<a href="#">ESC Region 1</a>	PSJA ISD, Lasara ISD, Roma ISD, La Joya ISD, Vanguard Academy Charter School, Harlingen CISD, Valley View ISD, Hidalgo ISD, South Texas ISD, Lyford CISD	UT- Rio Grande Valley, South Texas College	Health Sciences
North Central Texas	<a href="#">InterLink</a>	Azle ISD, Birdville ISD, Cleburne ISD, Crowley ISD, Era ISD, Fort Worth ISD, Grapevine-Colleyville ISD, Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD, Keller ISD, Mineral Wells ISD, Strawn ISD	Tarrant County College District	Aerial Robotics
Permian Basin	<a href="#">Educate Midland</a>	Midland ISD, Greenwood ISD, Stanton ISD	Midland College	Public Services, Energy
Tarrant County	<a href="#">InterLink</a>	Cedar Hill ISD, Dallas ISD, DeSoto ISD, Duncanville ISD, Forney ISD, Lancaster ISD	Dallas College, Texas A&M – Commerce, UT – Arlington	Electrical (under Architecture and Construction Program of Study)



Workforce Development Area	Intermediary	Independent School District(s)	Higher Education Partner(s)	Pathway(s) of Focus
West Central Texas	<a href="#">ESC Region 14, Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas</a>	Colorado ISD, Loraine ISD, Westbrook ISD	Texas State Technical College, Western Texas College	Health Care, Education, Manufacturing

## TRUE Initiative (Tri-Agency, led by TACC and THECB primarily)

### Initiative Contact

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<https://tacc.org/tacc/texas-reskilling-upskilling-through-education-true>

### Initiative Objective

The Texas Reskilling & Upskilling through Education (TRUE) initiative aims to prepare students for in-demand careers accelerating their transition to work while also building an enduring education infrastructure to support a thriving Texas economy throughout the diverse regions of the state. The colleges will work with business partners and others in their communities to bolster this talent pipeline strategy.

### Industries

Regional and local Texas labor market. Industries served include but not limited to include manufacturing, energy, agriculture, healthcare, and finance.

### Strategies

Community colleges with business and industry partners will expand short-term education and training opportunities.

### Funding Source

Public/private partnership including foundations: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Trellis Foundation, Great Texas Foundation, Meadows Foundation, Lumina Foundation.

### Communities

All community college districts in Texas eligible to apply for the current round of TRUE grants. Multiple regions will be included in the first round, with potential statewide applicability as the learnings are shared. Grantee selection anticipated October 2021.