



Virginia Growth and Opportunity Fund (GO Virginia)

Talent Pathways Initiative (TPI) Planning Guidance

Section I: GO Virginia Program Intent and TPI

GO Virginia’s goal is to facilitate regional collaboration to grow and diversify the economy through supporting projects leading to the creation of more higher paying jobs through revenue derived from out-of-state sources. Programs and projects recommended by the regional councils and approved by the board shall be consistent with the strategies and targeted industry clusters outlined in each regional growth and diversification plan.

Since 2017, GO Virginia has supported many workforce development and training programs, and while several afford opportunities for duplication or scale up across regional boundaries, these projects have often been focused on specific job creation opportunities instead of leading to broader talent pathways efforts over the long term to grow and enhance the available workforce for sustainable economic growth in a region.

[House Bill 29](#), approved by the 2022 General Assembly, provided \$2.5 million to the GO Virginia State Board for planning grants to support analysis of the workforce needs of regional businesses and the identification of the skills and training that can help prepare Virginians to fill available jobs in regional markets. It is anticipated that regional councils will focus this analysis on prioritized industry clusters identified in their approved 2021 Growth and Diversification plan.

The Board envisions a planning phase and will allot each region up to \$250,000.

Using this analysis, it is anticipated that the Board, with subsequent funding, will be able to support implementation projects for talent pathways initiatives. Such efforts will seek to align training curricula with the needs of business through collaboration incentives as well as facilitate increased work-based learning experiences (internships, apprenticeships, on-the-job upskilling, and re-skilling programs) and to develop entrepreneurial talent.

Section II: Talent Pathways Initiative – Planning Phase

Establishes and funds planning for a new “talent pathways” planning initiative **to foster collaboration by business and education to meet workforce needs by developing, retaining, and attracting talent to the Commonwealth** to meet the needs of Virginia businesses.

Each region will have access to up to \$250,000 to conduct a situational analysis and to support the development of a regional talent pathway strategy to support the workforce needs of priority targeted industry clusters as identified in their approved 2021 Growth and Diversification plan.



The selection of priority cluster for this initiative should be informed by an analysis of which industry clusters support the highest growth opportunities within a region.

Such grant requests shall demonstrate existing and future collaboration among stakeholders that may include primary and secondary education, higher education, businesses, local workforce boards, non-profits, and local governments as part of this analysis and for future implementation strategies.

The Board invites interested regional councils to identify an industry cluster talent coordinating entity which may apply for up to \$250,000.

With oversight by the regional councils, the coordinating entity in each region that is interested in applying will be tasked with developing a comprehensive talent pathway analysis and prioritize strategic investments with input from regional stakeholders.

To facilitate the analysis of talent pathways that support sustained economic growth and talent development and retention in the Commonwealth, planning activities must include:

- 1) Development of industry coalitions directed by industry leaders and engaging workforce system partners to guide and advise on the following:
- 2) Completion of a quantitative and qualitative situational analysis of the workforce needs for one or more high-impact industry clusters prioritized by each region,
- 3) Completion of a gap analysis related to the jobs needed to help such clusters grow,
- 4) Identification of the skills and training needed for people to fill such jobs, including those provided through high school career and technical education, credentials, certifications, apprenticeships, internships, and other degree and non-degree programs, including a gap analysis of where such programs fall short in meeting identified needs,
- 5) Development of an asset map that evaluates the region's capacity (institutions, programs) to support the identified unmet workforce needs,
- 6) Identify strategies and supporting highest-impact pathway projects for future implementation.

The Growth and Opportunity Board will waive the local match requirement and the \$1:1 matching requirement for Talent Pathways Initiative analysis and planning proposals that undertake the effort given the exceptional economic opportunity of the initiative, but will still require the minimum Code of Virginia match of half the grant (e.g. A \$250,000 request will require \$125,000 match of non-state matching sources). Any future talent pathways implementation projects will be subject to the normal matching requirements absent subsequent action by the Board or the General Assembly.

Section III: Application Process

The application process will open upon adoption of this policy with the first grants available in December 2022, however, it is understood that not every region will be interested in or ready to apply for this funding at this time. This planning grant program shall last no longer than a year from its start date, and represent a one-time regional allocation of funds for this purpose.

The Board will accept applications for Talent Pathways Planning Initiative through Dec 2024. Any unobligated funds will be pooled for future related workforce development efforts identified by the State Board.



Each regional council that seeks to implement this subprogram will apply to DHCD through the Centralized Application Management System (CAMS) which is utilized for all GO Virginia funding applications. Applications shall be submitted in CAMS by the regular established application deadlines. DHCD shall develop the application and make it available on the DHCD website.

Applications submitted to DHCD for consideration will be reviewed by DHCD's GO Virginia staff in collaboration with VEDP's Office of Education Economics staff and reported to the Board for consideration at the next board meeting.