



**Empire State
Development**



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Target Industries

A Resource for OSWD Stakeholders

INTRODUCTION

In a rapidly changing labor market, workforce development funds have the greatest impact when directed towards programs that prepare workers equitably for quality jobs in high-demand industries. This document provides stakeholders, including current and prospective Office of Strategic Workforce Development (OSWD) grantees, with a high-level overview of the statewide target industries prioritized for workforce investment. Additionally, this document offers recommendations specifically to potential OSWD grantees, outlining how to leverage the information on target industries when developing programs, establishing partnerships, and preparing funding applications. By working collaboratively to prioritize training for high-growth, high-wage industries, New York State's workforce ecosystem can collectively enhance outcomes for learners, workers, businesses, and the overall state economy.

TARGET INDUSTRIES OVERVIEW

To guide the state's workforce investment, OSWD established seven high-growth statewide target industries aligned with ESD's strategic business attraction efforts. These industries inform OSWD's work across programs, with preference given to grant applicants supporting hiring in these industries and regional planning focused on the needs of these industries. In brief, these sectors:

- Play an important role in driving New York State's economic growth; and
- Are projected to continue creating high-quality, accessible jobs across many occupations.

Not all trends related to these industries have been positive, as several sectors have meaningful gender and racial representation gaps. Addressing these gaps through workforce programs that reduce barriers to entry for historically marginalized populations will continue to be a priority for OSWD.

The seven statewide target sectors are:

- Advanced manufacturing and materials
- Biotech and life sciences
- Cleantech and renewable energy
- Construction
- Electronics and optics, photonics, and imaging (OPI)
- Film and TV production and post-production
- Software and digital media

RECOMMENDATIONS

Programming

- Because statewide target industries provide many quality jobs that do not require a post-secondary degree, OSWD highly encourages training providers to shape curricula around in-demand skills and credentials for these sectors.
- Programs should assess learners' existing skills and knowledge and help them choose an industry that aligns with their goals, providing wraparound services to support training completion.
- Training providers should prioritize addressing gender and racial representation gaps within the target industries in their programming decisions. This includes implementing intentional recruitment strategies and tailored supports to participants who have historically been marginalized by the education and workforce systems.

Career Pathway Development

- OSWD advises training providers to develop clear career pathways within the identified priority industries. These pathways should outline the progression of skills and credentials required for advancement within the industry.
- By mapping out these pathways, training providers can help learners understand the various opportunities available and make informed decisions about their career goals, fostering upward mobility for program graduates.
- It is crucial for training providers to ensure that these career pathways are accessible to individuals from all backgrounds, including those who have been historically underrepresented in the State's target industries.

Industry-Aligned Partnerships

- OSWD also encourages training providers to use this industry list to guide employer and stakeholder outreach. By partnering with employers and industry associations within the State's target industries, training providers can seek regular feedback on key skills and credentials to inform their program development, as well as build employment pipelines for program graduates.
- These partnerships should ideally actively address gender and racial representation gaps through efforts to reduce barriers, promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, and create equal opportunities for workers from all backgrounds.

Funding Applications

- While employer partnerships are required for OSWD-funded programs, OSWD looks favorably on applications from organizations that have partnerships with employers in the State's target industries.
- Specifically, OSWD prioritizes applications that bring strong employer and industry partners that can facilitate effective trainings and direct job placements (e.g., signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) indicating employers' commitment to hire program graduates).
- Furthermore, funding applications that demonstrate a commitment and ability to impact gender and racial representation gaps within the target industries will be highly valued.