

The Lowcountry Careers Collaborative

Section 1: Project Description and Overview

Section 1A: Executive Summary

Historical racial inequities have had a pervasive impact on the Lowcountry region of South Carolina, representing Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester (BCD) Counties. These systemic challenges have resulted in structural barriers that have excluded many of our region's underserved populations from accessing career pathways that would offer upward mobility.

The **Lowcountry Careers Collaborative (LCC)** is an initiative developed by the **Charleston Chamber Foundation through the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber)** - the System Lead Entity (SLE), in conjunction with the **Educate, Empower, and Elevate Foundation (E3)**. The project will **bridge historical gaps in representation within workforce development to ignite inclusive and equitable growth** that is equally beneficial to industry, the economy, and workers. **LCC's initial focus is healthcare - the Lowcountry Healthcare Careers Collaborative (LHCC)**, and one of the region's largest employers and providers, **Roper St. Francis Healthcare will serve as the Backbone Organization**.

This is an unlikely but intentional partnership between an advocacy organization led by Black women, the major convenor of businesses, and a key employer in our economy. We are committed to developing an equity-centric, employer-led approach that builds upon our existing regional training systems to offer pathways to higher level careers. We will accomplish this by:

- Empowering underserved populations to seek opportunities in promising sectors
- Collaborating across sectors to address skills gaps identified by employers
- Addressing workforce barriers that have prevented inclusive and equitable growth
- Improving access to training for communities of color that will enhance pathways to high-earning potential jobs in healthcare, simultaneously boosting representative health care options
- Delivering thoughtful wraparound services

Section 1B: About the Charleston Chamber Foundation, the E3 Foundation, and Roper St. Francis

The Charleston Chamber Foundation through the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce: System Lead Entity

The Chamber will serve as Lead Applicant and System Lead Entity on an application supporting the development of a sectoral partnership in healthcare and the administrative infrastructure to add more sectors in the future. The Chamber's leadership role in regional economic development and existing relationships with key players in the regional workforce ecosystem, including employers, governmental entities, state and local workforce development boards, educational institutions, and worker-serving organizations, will enable us to fulfill this challenge. The Chamber has extensive experience executing workforce development initiatives in healthcare, as well as other leading sectors in the region. In addition to strong year over year budget performance, the Chamber has leveraged nearly \$50 million in community and economic development over the last 10 years. With the support of our committed executive leadership and key industry partners, we are driven to lead **innovative and cooperative solutions for regional workforce training that meets the needs of employers and workers**. We are well-positioned to be a System Lead Entity with:

- **Convening power in the region:** The Chamber has over 1,600 members representing businesses across the BCD region. We work each day for our members, each of their employees and our entire community to ensure we have a healthy business environment.

- **Committed support from executive leadership from the region and buy-in from appropriate stakeholders:** We can tackle the tough issues because of the strength of our members and volunteer leaders. Together, our collective voices are advancing our region. It is because of each one of our members and leaders, and our tremendous staff, that we were honored to be named the 2018 Chamber of the Year by the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.
- **Relationships and credibility with key players in the workforce ecosystem:** We have direct partnerships with post-secondary institutions (technical colleges and universities) and regional employers, in addition to the region’s four school districts. We partner with community organizations and districts to support programming at the elementary and middle school level. In postsecondary education, we serve as a liaison for institutions and employers, and we address multiple areas, including training, recruitment, retention, and upskilling, as well as work-based learning, apprenticeship and internship opportunities.
- **A proven track record of coordinating across sectors and partners:** We actively partner across Fortune 500 companies, non-profits, small business and state and local governments to improve the economic vitality of our region. As an organization and team, we are involved both from a community partnership perspective and through our member and investor relationships.
- **Ability to translate various sectors’ objectives and key concerns to other sectors:** Our members represent a cross-section of the BCD region’s economy. We partner closely with these organizations to share best practices across sectors to enhance our performance as a region.
- **Strong fundraising capabilities:** Over the course of the last 10 years the Charleston Metro Chamber Foundation has executed three successful fund development campaigns targeting workforce and talent advancement strategies for the BCD region. These multiyear campaigns have resulted in over \$10 million in sustainable, mission-based support from corporate, foundation and individual investors.
- **Ability to reach underserved workers:** We believe that exposing students to jobs that are in high demand and showing them how to pursue the education needed is the way forward. Our strategic partnership on this initiative with E3 will ensure we maintain an equity-centric focus, providing opportunities to historically excluded populations.
- **Dedicated full-time employees focused on addressing regional workforce issues to support regional economic development:** Our Talent Advancement Team is led by **Barbara Stapleton, a talent pipeline management practitioner who has a diverse background in a breadth of industries, including higher education, banking, legal and transportation & logistics.** The Chamber and E3 will manage this effort through a combination of existing and new staff. The table below represents our staffing plan. **Bios for key staff and stakeholders are included in *Appendix A - Staff Biographies.***

Title	Responsibilities	Personnel
SVP, Talent Advancement	Serves as Chief Program Officer for LCC	Barbara Stapleton
Director, Talent Initiatives	Serves as Director for LCC	Celeste Granger
Director, Emerging Talent	Provides programmatic support for LCC, including student outreach and recruitment	Darryl Brown
SVP, Finance & Operations	Manages Finance & Accounting functions for LCC, including grants management	Laurie Carter
SVP, Leadership & Programs	Spearheads development and fundraising efforts	Adrian Cain
Community Engagement Subject Matter Expert	Leads community stakeholder engagement in conjunction with E3	Audrey KS Lane
Wraparound Services Subject Matter Expert	Leads wraparound services delivery in conjunction with E3	LaTisha Vaughn

Grant Compliance & Reporting Manager	Assures compliance & reporting requirements for all grant awards	To be hired
Program Manager	Manages implementation and execution of program activities	To be hired
Program Coordinator	Assists in coordination of sectoral partners and stakeholders	To be hired
Data Analyst	Analyzes of program outcomes and forecasting for future needs	To be hired
Accounting & Administrative Assistant	Provides administrative support to program and finance staff	To be hired

The Educate, Empower, and Elevate Foundation (E3): Lead Strategic Partner

Our key strategic partner, E3, is a community-based advocacy organization with a mission to ensure those most impacted by inequities are educated, empowered, and elevated to exercise their agency collectively in the South. With over 55 years of cross-sector experience, E3 works to **educate** Black and Brown families through culturally competent, relevant, and sustainable engagement, to **empower** through the coalition building of Black and Brown led-organizations, leaders, educators, children, and families, and to **elevate** Black and Brown communities to act in their power and purpose. E3’s guiding principle is that those most impacted by systemic inequities - people of color - must be at the center of all decision-making. It is not only their North Star but is fundamental to their approach. E3 leaders are competent, committed, and community-minded, and have experience across sectors including non-profit, advocacy, corporates, and public education. They provide a voice to those closest to the problem and most impacted. E3’s leadership team (**bios in Appendix A - Staff Biographies**) includes Founding Partners:

- **Audrey KS Lane, Executive Director:** an education leader and consultant with expertise in talent pipeline development, leadership development, strategy, and project management. Previously she served as the Chief of Access & Equity for the SC Public Charter School District and the Deputy for Human Capital Development for the Charleston County School District.
- **LaTisha Vaughn, Chief Programs Officer:** an accomplished educator with over 20 years of experience in both traditional public schools and charter schools. She consults with school districts and schools across the country to support antiracism and positive school culture. LaTisha spent over five years as one of the original staff members at Charles R. Drew Charter School, one of Atlanta’s most successful community revitalization projects. During her tenure with the Charleston County School District, she served as a principal and the Assistant Associate Superintendent/Director of Educational Initiatives.

The Chamber’s partnership with E3 will ensure that **equity stands at the forefront of program elements and outcomes**. The Chamber and E3 will conduct outreach to organizations that serve populations that have been historically excluded from regional economic growth and prosperity. E3 has extensive relationships within communities of color and demonstrated experience in community engagement, talent pipeline development for people of color, and enhancing accessibility to high-quality educational options. In three years, E3 has already built a reputation as a bridge between systems leaders and the community. They have done this by:

- **Expanding the awareness of historical inequities** that have occurred across systems through five community convenings called the "Charleston Anti-Racism Speaker Series" that have included over 500 participants through in person and virtual events.
- **Building statewide coalitions of Black and Brown led organizations, leaders, and educators** to address key issues that impact Black and Brown children and families including the current anti-truth legislative bills. Coalition members include community based, non-profit, business, education, and advocacy organizations including the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, ACLU of South Carolina, Jewish Federation, South Carolina

Appleseed, local chambers, elected officials, parents and student groups for a total of over 150 people meeting regularly, organized to defeat current bills.

- **Creating an annual network of 40 Black and Brown leaders** who are equipped with the tools to serve, advocate, and empower historically marginalized communities.

While the Chamber is applying for Good Jobs Challenge Funding for one sector, healthcare, we are establishing the infrastructure to add on additional sectors in the future. Sectors that we have in the pipeline to address include bio-life sciences and advanced manufacturing.

Roper St. Francis Healthcare: Healthcare Backbone Organization

To lead the healthcare sectoral partnership, the Chamber and E3 are partnering with Roper St. Francis Healthcare (Roper), a leader in healthcare for the BCD region. As the area's only private not-for-profit healthcare system, Roper has almost 6,000 employees and is the region's second-largest private employer. Roper continues to receive top national awards for patient, employee, and doctor satisfaction. Roper provides millions of dollars in charitable services and care for our community through patient financial assistance, community-based programs and the incredible dedication and volunteerism of its employees. **As the Backbone Organization for Healthcare, Roper St. Francis is well positioned to engage peer institutions in the BCD area to create a training program that will meet their hiring needs.** As the Backbone Organization for the healthcare sectoral partnership, Roper commits to:

- Use its relationships with other healthcare providers in the region to **convene a strong group of industry partners to serve as employers for program participants, identify regional skills gaps, and co-create training curriculum**
- Engage **executive leadership from Roper's peer organizations, as well as key government and union leadership**, in the co-creation of an innovative healthcare training program
- Draw on its **experiences as a major regional employer to develop solutions to regional challenges in the healthcare labor market**
- Support administration of the healthcare sectoral partnership, **using its extensive experience in managing over \$25 million in current Federal grants**
- **Engage foundations and other philanthropic organizations** to secure resources to support the sustainability of the LHCC initiative
- **Dedicate leaders and staff** to the administration of the program and coordination of the sectoral partnership. Those leaders include:
 - **Dr. Michael Moxley, MD, VP and Division Chief of Diversity, Inclusion and Health Equity:** With more than 30 years of experience in healthcare, Dr. Moxley has advocated for patients from underserved communities. Dr. Moxley partners with boards, leaders, physicians, and learners in identifying, recommending and promoting inclusive diversity strategies while also being active as an OB/GYN doctor.
 - **Melanie Stith, VP and Chief Human Resources Officer:** Melanie serves as a trusted adviser for the HR team, fellow leaders, and physicians regarding Roper's workforce and issues that impact their employees. She also co-chairs the Diversity and Inclusion Council.
 - **Anne Sass, GPC - Grants Director:** Anne serves as the Chief Grants Development and Administrative Officer for Roper St. Francis Healthcare. She has secured more than \$30 million in grants to date for Roper St. Francis projects such as The Duke Endowment's AccessHealth Tri-county Network for uninsured adults and a \$6.1 million FEMA Shelter-in-Place project.

Bios for Roper leaders that will be engaged in this effort are included in **Appendix A - Staff Biographies**.

Section 2A: Employer Leadership and Commitments

The Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) framework from the US Chamber of Commerce is core to our approach for employer engagement. A letter from the US Chamber of Commerce in support of our approach can be found in ***Appendix G - Letter from US Chamber - Documented Process to Gather Skills.***

We are committed to building a training model “by employers, for employers,” that keeps their needs at the center. Representatives from the Chamber who will support our sectoral partnership have completed the TPM Academy and know how to best implement the TPM framework to align workforce systems and drive performance-based outcomes. **Based on the demand for healthcare jobs in our region, we aim to touch 1,000 BCD residents through the LHCC initiative.** Drawing on our member network and industry relationships, we have secured commitments to support our program from the following employers:

- Roper St Francis Healthcare
- Bishop Gadsden Retirement Plan Community
- Fetter Health Care Network
- Floyd Lee Locums

Letters of support from industry partners can be found in ***Appendix C - Employer Letters of Support.***

Commitment to Hire

The **primary commitment of our industry partners is to hire graduates** from the LCC training program. During the System Development phase, we will collaborate with employer partners, to formalize commitments including number of jobs, contributions to building out the LCC initiative, and support for the training program. We will **leverage our partnership with E3 to help increase the cultural competency of our industry partners to support more equitable and inclusive recruitment, interviewing, hiring, and retention practices.**

Commitment to Expand Our Employer Partner Base

Given the Chamber’s deep relationships in the greater Charleston business community, our partners in industry will **leverage their connections to engage additional employers to be a part of our healthcare sectoral partnership.** Further, our engagement with these partners will **lay the groundwork for other sectors, namely bio-life sciences and advanced manufacturing.** We have begun initial conversations with employers and industry groups across these sectors.

Commitment to Train

We expect that employers will not only commit to hiring program graduates, but also to co-creating the regional training system, co-developing training curriculum, and collectively providing mentorship to program participants. **In the implementation of LCC, industry partners will be invited to deliver training modules.** We will engage representatives from **our employers to be involved in formal and informal mentoring** of students. To ensure that skills gained through the program are practical, we will continuously refine training modules based on in-demand employer needs as well as actively identify **opportunities for students to engage in hands-on learning and/or job shadowing** with our industry partners. Further, **the leadership of E3 has deep roots in the South Carolina education system, offering their expertise to the development and delivery of our training program.**

Commitment to Recruit

We will engage employers, alongside our strategic partners, to develop a recruitment strategy that includes best practices for building a pipeline of candidates for the program and reaching underserved communities. Employers will receive training prior to the interview process on culturally responsive recruitment strategies. Our **partnership with E3 is critical for driving the recruitment of traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations.** We

will draw on **their trusted position in the community** to connect with minority-serving organizations and to effectively engage our target population.

Commitment to Engage in Continuous Process Improvement

As participants graduate from LCC, **we will seek feedback from employers to evaluate their performance in interviews and on the job, as well as insights from program participants about their experience.** We will use this information to refine the program structure and curriculum.

Commitment to Include and Respond to Worker Perspectives

South Carolina is one of the least unionized states in the country, however we understand the need to ground our program in a diverse set of worker perspectives. We are working alongside industry partners to determine the best ways to **engage professional organizations to provide insights that prepare program participants for future professional development and respond to current worker concerns.**

Commitment to Enhancing Representation

Our employer partners are committed to collaborating with equity-focused organizations and to **identify best practices for training, recruiting, hiring and retaining historically underserved and underrepresented populations.**

Section 2B: Other Stakeholders and Partnerships

We have already engaged employers and community organizations to serve as industry and strategic partners within our healthcare sectoral partnership. The following tables outline the organizations we’ve already partnered with and their expected roles.

Education & Training Partners

Because we believe the pathway to good jobs begins before students graduate from high school, we have included our regional school systems, as well as colleges and universities to support the development and delivery of program curriculum. The graduation rate is 13% higher for South Carolina high school students who take three or more career education classes. Additionally, **E3’s deliberate engagement and outreach to Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), will ensure that our program is culturally-responsive and supports cultural representation among program instructors.** We are in conversation with two of South Carolina’s flagship HBCUs for inclusion in this initiative. Anticipated partners in this area are outlined in the table below:

Training Provider	Potential Partners	Role in LCC
Local Education Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Berkeley County Schools ● Charleston County Schools ● Dorchester County Schools Districts 2 and 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exposing students to career pathways ● Connecting students in existing career courses to LCC opportunities ● Providing guidance on training program curriculum
Historically Black Colleges & Universities <i>(To be confirmed)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Claflin University ● South Carolina State University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offering access to culturally competent and representative training and instructors ● Partnering with employers to support curriculum development ● Providing training for program participants
Region’s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partnering with employers to support

Technical College	Technical College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> curriculum development Providing training for program participants Coaching students along career pathways
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Wraparound Service Providers

The Chamber and E3 are committed to creating a program that breaks down the structural and systemic barriers that have excluded many Charleston area residents of color from the region’s best career opportunities. To address these concerns, **we are engaging leaders in the provision of services like transportation, childcare, mental health services, and job readiness that have a track record of strong outcomes and a commitment to underserved workers.** The partners are also **committed to helping us recruit and retain** program participants. Anticipated partners in this area are outlined in the table below:

Wraparound Service Provider	Service Offerings
Palmetto Goodwill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing career readiness services Serving as a community resource during training and employment
Palmetto CAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting economic independence through programs and partnerships Developing customized solutions to situational and generational poverty
Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing program participants with access to transportation services
Office of Rural Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing in educational activities and health programs Increasing access to quality health care Improving the social determinants that contribute to a community’s overall health Connecting available resources across South Carolina with local needs in rural communities
Eckerd Connects – Career Opportunity Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping participants develop soft skills to gain or maintain employment Assisting employer partners in developing and maintaining a qualified workforce

E3 will provide support to these organizations in expanding their capacity to meet the needs of our targeted populations.

Industry Organizations

We have also engaged industry organizations to help provide a national and regional context for workforce development and provide our partners with insights that will make our program responsive to developments in the industries, the region, and the broader economic landscape. Anticipated partners in this area include:

Strategic Partner	Role in LCC
US Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advising on leveraging the TPM framework to maximize the impact of employer engagement

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sharing best practices in TPM from Chambers of Commerce across the country
Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting recruitment efforts through their existing jobseeker programming ● Helping to connect employers and training providers to create pathways to employment

Government

Our partnerships with state and local governments are essential to **driving alignment between the goals of the training program, constituent needs, and strategic priorities of our public sector leaders.** We have support from the following government leaders/organizations:

- Mayor John Tecklenburg (Charleston)
- Senator Tim Scott
- Rep. James Clyburn
- Rep. Nancy Mace
- State Senator Marlon Kimpson
- State Rep. Marvin Pendarvis
- State Rep. Krystle Matthews

Letters of support from our stakeholder partners can be found in **Appendix B - Stakeholder Letters of Support.**

Section 3: Regional Description

Our proposal is focused on strengthening the economic position of the BCD Economic Development District through community-driven and equity-oriented engagement.

Economic State

Following the Great Recession, economic reporting showed that the BCD regional economy experienced slow but stable growth compared to other parts of South Carolina and the nation. The COVID-19 pandemic broke a streak of reliable growth after the hospitality and manufacturing industries saw job losses. But, following a 2020 high of 6.04%, the BCD region’s unemployment rate recovered to a nearly record low of 2.89% in September of 2021.

The revival of the region’s unemployment rate is misleading. Job losses resulting from COVID-19 mainly impacted traditionally middle-income and low-wage sectors in the BCD region, while the number of jobs paying more than \$60,000 per year increased by 4.8%.¹ These losses are representative of the disproportionate hit that low-income communities and people of color face during economic shocks. The Good Jobs Challenge presents a significant opportunity to invest in equitable economic development built on underlying data which demonstrates that **“healthy” economic projections in the BCD region mask the gross disparities that marginalized communities face and have misled past economic development approaches.**

Regional Racial Injustice

The legacy of slavery and pervasiveness of systemic racism in the BCD region has contributed to the prevalence of wide-reaching inequities. Equity challenges have led to intergenerational poverty, housing segregation, educational opportunity gaps, and gaps in access to human services, such as health care. The table below presents data from the 2019 American Community Survey, showing persisting economic gaps with **White median household income**

¹ Wren, D., & Wise, W. (2021, April 8). Covid-19's economic impact largely depends on your job title. Post and Courier.

being, on average 89% and 59% higher than those of Black and Hispanic households, respectively.

Median Household Income, 2019 American Community Survey			
County	Black	Hispanic	White Non-Hispanic
Berkeley	\$44,641	\$69,076	\$81,949
Charleston	\$38,978	\$44,641	\$89,240
Dorchester	\$49,774	N/A	\$76,680

The health disparities our region saw during COVID-19 reflect systemic inequity. Minority communities had a higher likelihood of contracting the virus by living in urban areas and disproportionately working in higher-risk environments. Barriers to accessing essential resources such as health care, food, transportation, and housing, as well as a long history of unequal treatment, discriminatory policies, and underrepresentation in the healthcare industry have also led to higher rates of chronic and severe medical conditions in communities of color.

Opportunities to Invest in Equitable Workforce Development in Healthcare and Beyond
Earnings per job in healthcare in the BCD region average \$73,993, a wage 66% higher than the median household income for Black families in 2019. Of healthcare postings in 2021, 82% did not list a requirement for a bachelor’s degree. This signals a significant opportunity for targeted engagement of individuals without a college degree. **The healthcare industry represents some of the region's largest employers, including the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), the Hospital Corporation of America, and Roper St. Francis. These employers have voiced a need to close the representation gaps for healthcare professionals.**

While the LHCC initiative is positioned around healthcare, our plans to build the structure and framework to add other sectors in the future, will ultimately address vast regional systemic racism by enabling strong job growth that reaches Black communities, a commitment to lowering the poverty rate, a renewed commitment to fighting discrimination in the labor market, addressing the systemic barriers to hiring qualified Black candidates, and increasing the recruitment pipeline for region’s largest employers looking for more diverse candidates.

2018-2023 BCD Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Alignment

We are aligning with the vision for the BCD region outlined in our 2018-2023 CEDS Report (found in **Appendix K - CEDS Alignment - 2018-2023 CEDS Plan**): to flourish regionally for the next twenty years by sustainably pursuing economic prosperity through wise, diverse investment, and devotion to maintaining a high quality of life for all residents. **We acknowledge and are motivated by the fact that this vision cannot be fulfilled without holding a commitment to breaking down systemic barriers.** A letter of support from the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments Economic Development District can be found in **Appendix D - EDD Letter of Support.**

Section 4: Impacts of the Regional Workforce Training System

Section 4A: Proposed Project Components

The Chamber is applying for all three funding phases to develop sectoral partnerships that train workers for high quality jobs. Ultimately, these partnerships will serve the in demand needs of employers, address skills gaps and access concerns of underserved workers, including wraparound services, and build economic resilience in the BCD region.

The strengths of our existing regional workforce system include:

- Strong presence of educational institutions and training organizations in the region

- Existing career pathway programs, like the Career Pathways Project, which includes Healthcare Career Pathways, connecting local school districts, technical colleges, and employers
- Strong engagement of large employers in supporting career development programs

We are also aware of some of the **structural challenges facing our region, including:**

- Historical lack of representation of underserved populations in workforce and economic development efforts
- Disparities in opportunities for residents of rural areas, resulting in a lack of representation in the high earning potential sectors of our economy
- Impact of gentrification on marginalized communities resulting from the consolidation of resources and infrastructure in the urban center

Weaving the TPM framework into our approach for all three phases of the grant, while incorporating the input from key players, will position LCC to meet the challenges and opportunities our workforce system is facing by means of collaboration and representation. In turn, the LCC initiative will:

- Empower underserved populations to seek opportunities in promising sectors
- Enable collaboration between employers and training providers to develop a curriculum that addresses skills gaps identified by employers
- Address workforce barriers that have prevented inclusive and equitable growth
- Improve access to training for communities of color that will enhance pathways to high earning potential jobs in healthcare, while simultaneously boosting representative health care options
- Overcome systemic barriers to inclusive growth by adding layers of wraparound supports to workforce systems

System Development – Tackling Structural Challenges & Capitalizing on Opportunities: System Development will focus on Strategy 1 of the TPM framework - *Organize for Employer Leadership and Collaboration*. The Chamber is committed to creating a system where our industry partners work alongside community organizations to deepen our regional strengths and address our challenges, while meeting the needs of our most underserved neighbors.

We anticipate **System Development will last 3 months.** Key outcomes of this phase include:

- Development of a robust coalition that authentically represents underserved and marginalized voices at the SLE and sectoral partnership levels
- Detailed documentation to support coordination between the SLE and Backbone Organizations
- Defined plans to further develop the sectoral partnerships, training model, fundraising plan, recruitment strategy, and delivery of wraparound services
- MOUs between sectoral partnerships and the Chamber with refined employment and programmatic support commitments from industry partners
- An established cadence for employer leadership meetings
- A renewed collective commitment to fighting discrimination in the labor market

Program Design – Engaging Partners in Designing a System to Meet Hiring Needs:

During Program Design, we will engage employers in **TPM Strategy 2 – *Projecting Critical Job Demand, to refine the employment commitments of industry partners.*** This will allow us to align the training program with the skills and occupations that are most in-demand for our partners and fill regional gaps. We will also deploy **Strategy 3 of the TPM framework – *Align and Communicate Job Requirements.*** As a regional workforce system, we intend to align multiple components of successful workforce programming into one collective, equitable, and comprehensive structure. We will support and align with existing programmatic work within Charleston’s Career Academies programs and the work-based learning opportunities with pilots

of the Career Academy clusters. **We are committed to creating pathways for program participants beyond the diploma or initial certification to “stack” credentials, offering the responsiveness to workforce demands that is missing from current structures.** Once the framework for the secondary educational programming is in place as outlined, we will **use TPM Strategy 4 – Analyze Talent Supply, to identify skills gap challenges** and build the scalable, sustainable pipelines of talent that our region needs to provide a complete alignment within healthcare, with future engagement in bio-life sciences and advanced manufacturing.

We anticipate **Program Design will last 3 months.** Key outcomes of Program Design include:

- Research and analysis to finalize targeted skills, occupations, and number of hires
- Development of inclusive and accessible training program curriculum and other instructional materials
- Detailed roadmap and other resources to implement wraparound services
- Plan to coordinate outreach and recruitment through industry and strategic partners, as well as other community organizations
- Funding identified to support program sustainability beyond the grant period
- Plans to address systemic barriers that prevent hiring of qualified candidates of color

Program Implementation – Building a System with Sustainable Success:

We will use TPM framework Strategy 5 – Build Talent Supply Chains, to coordinate with strategic partners and other community-based organizations to **conduct outreach and drive recruitment of our target participants.** As we implement the training program, we will **seek feedback** from the sectoral partners and program participants as part of **TPM Strategy 6 – Engage in Continuous Improvement and Resilience Planning.** We will actively use this information to **refine the training program content and structure, as well as wraparound services,** to make sure that it is effective in achieving the goals of the partnership.

We anticipate **Program Implementation will last 30 months.** Key outcomes of Program Implementation include:

- Evidence of program trainees and graduates’ ability to meet the needs identified by employers
- Documented results data on effectiveness of wraparound services and supports
- Processes for continued engagement of program graduates, including career pathway progression supports
- A robust recruitment pipeline of diverse talent in key sectors
- Strong job growth that reaches underserved communities

Section 4B: Alignment with EDA’s Investment Priorities

The COVID-19 pandemic has put a considerable strain on the healthcare industry across the country, and the Charleston region is no exception. Our region has experienced both increases in demand for healthcare workers to address an overburdened system and decreases in supply associated with the Great Resignation. **We will meet the Recovery and Resilience investment priority by not only providing much needed resources to an industry that was significantly strained by COVID-19, but also providing opportunities to populations that were disproportionately impacted by adverse outcomes related to the pandemic.**

In addition to the Recovery and Resilience investment priority, our program meets the following investment priorities:

- **Equity:** The Chamber is acutely aware of the racial and economic disparities that characterize our region. Our strategic partnership with E3 is designed to make sure that our approach to the regional training system is equity-centric and works to break down barriers to upward mobility and wealth creation that have existed for generations.
- **Workforce Development:** The workforce training system we have proposed sits at the intersection of meeting the demand of our key employers and providing access to strong career pathways for a segment of our community that has been historically

excluded from these opportunities. By not only providing training, but also offering wraparound services to address structural and systemic barriers, we will provide a sustainable increase to regional talent.

- **Manufacturing:** While our initial sectoral partnership is focused on healthcare, we are setting up the infrastructure to be able to add more sectors soon. Given the strong demand in advanced manufacturing in our region, we are starting to put together the framework to be able to address workforce challenges in that industry as well.

Section 4C: Job Creation

We are targeting 400 trainees annually, or 1,000 trainees over the grant period of performance via our sectoral partnership in healthcare. As part of our Healthcare Career Pathways framework, we are primarily focused on occupations where credentialing can improve career opportunities. **The average salary associated with these roles is \$41,000, more than double the annualized minimum wage for South Carolina. The employers we have sought out as partners, offer employee benefits, as well as opportunities for upward mobility from entry-level roles.** Our target certification-oriented careers in healthcare include:

Occupation	Estimated Trainees	Estimated Job Placements	Average Starting Salary	Wage Gain
EMT	200	150	\$39,162	156%
Advanced EMT	200	150	\$39,162	156%
Licensed Practical Nurse	200	150	\$48,719	219%
Certified Medical Assistant	200	150	\$36,224	137%
Medical Claims Processor	200	150	\$40,707	166%

We are committed to ensuring employment for program participants, as well as exposing them to the benefits of continued education. Our **partnership with Trident Technical College will help position program participants to explore associate degrees**, which provide additional advancement opportunities. **Average starting salaries for these roles is \$43,000, nearly three times the state minimum wage (185% wage increase).** Target opportunities include:

- Registered Nurse
- Pharmacy Technician
- Health Information Technician

A key feature of our program will be building the “scaffolding” to help support upward momentum through the career pathways for our participants. We know that this will require continued engagement beyond the first credential, job and/or apprenticeship. Our plan for robust tracking, monitoring, and case management for each participant will help ensure long-term career success.

Section 4D: Success is Achievable and Feasible

Given our commitment to workforce development and relationships with strategic partners, we are well-positioned to provide program participants with a holistic career training program. We will leverage relationships that already exist between our industry partners and strategic partners who are involved in education and training. We will build upon the success of our region’s Healthcare Career Pathways program which includes:

- The Health Science Career Academies with the Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester School Districts
- Youth Apprenticeship programs with Trident Technical College focused on healthcare and other in-demand sectors
- Certification programs with Trident Technical College, ECPI, and Southeastern Institute

Through Program Design and Implementation, **we will create a bridge to connect all of the work into a holistic, aligned, employer-driven, data-informed regional talent system that**

creates shared value, competitiveness and accountability not only for business & industry, but for all education partners and all of our region’s most underserved residents, not just to, but through their careers. Additionally, our team has done significant groundwork in understanding the TPM framework and how we can use that to build a strong employer-focused sectoral partnership.

Section 4E: Target Participant Demographics

As an organization and partner in regional workforce and talent opportunities, the Chamber has identified the need to further **develop and grow our collaborative skills training programs to better reach historically underserved populations, including:**

- **Communities of Color:** target program **participation of 75%** for people of color, including Black, Hispanic and Latino Charleston area residents. Our engagement with E3 and other minority-serving organizations will support effective outreach/recruitment, as well as culturally responsive training and support services. We are committed to ensuring representation of people of color across training providers, mentors, and wraparound service providers.
- **Women:** target program **participation of 50%** for women. We will collaborate with our industry partners to provide opportunities for women’s mentorship.
- **Rural residents:** target program **participation of 5%** for residents from the Census-designated places or unincorporated communities within Berkeley, Dorchester and Charleston Counties and the following communities:
 - Town of Bonneau
 - Town of Jamestown
 - Town of St. Stephen
 - Town of McClellanville
 - Town of Meggett
 - Town of Lincolnvile
 - Town of Harleyville
 - Town of Reevesville
 - Town of Ridgeville
 - Town of St. George

We expect our program impact to be significant:

- **1,000 program participants** and their families
- **Over 10 community organizations and education institutions** to support our program participants
- **Over 5 employers**, representing some of our region’s largest employers
- **10 rural communities** well as other cities, towns, and unincorporated areas

Section 5: Funding Request and Program Design and Implementation

Section 5A: Estimated Funding Request

A detailed **funding request of \$8.4 million** can be found in **Appendix F - Budget Narrative**. The chart below provides an overview of our funding request for each phase of the grant:

System Development Anticipated Total Spending	Program Design Anticipated Total Spending	Program Implementation Anticipated Total Spending
\$231,826	\$281,826	\$7,909,900

System Development Funding

Funding for the System Development phase will be used to establish a healthcare sectoral partnership via the following expenditures:

- Salaries for Chamber and Roper staff to support the initiative
- Costs associated with TPM framework professional development
- Acquisition/development of grants management platform/framework

Program Design Funding

Resources for the Program Design phase will be used to cover the costs to identify skills and wraparound service needs, and design a training program that address regional issues:

- Contracts to engage wraparound service providers to design delivery mechanisms
- Contracts to engage training providers in curriculum design
- Acquisition of training materials and equipment
- Development of tracking and feedback mechanisms

Program Implementation Funding

Funding for Program Implementation will be used to support training and job placement support for program participants:

- Delivery of training and wraparound services, including job placement support
- Tracking of outcomes for continuous process improvement

Based on these expenses, the projected training cost per worker is approximately \$8,400, inclusive of provision of comprehensive wrap-around services.

Section 5B: Grant Projects

Project	Outcome
System Development	
Develop administrative capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hire required staff for The Chamber and E3 ● Provide professional development training on TPM framework
Organize for Employer Leadership and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish governance structure for industry partner interaction ● Partner with industry partners to identify other employers ● Determine appropriate meeting structure and cadence for sectoral partnership
Project Critical Job Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refine research around hiring needs for industry partners ● Execute MOUs with job commitments from industry partners
Engage Strategic Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refine identification of required wraparound services ● Determine appropriate cadence for engagement between the strategic partners and industry partners ● Execute MOUs with strategic partners
Program Design	
Align and Communicate Job Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finalize target occupations ● Communicate occupations and job requirements to the sectoral partners
Analyze Talent Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish roles and responsibilities of recruitment team ● Develop recruitment strategy/plan
Establish Training Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine skills required by each target occupations ● Engage industry partners to determine the training mechanism that will be prepare program participants ● Coordinate with training partners to design curriculum
Structure Delivery of Wraparound Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop mechanisms to deploy wraparound services ● Coordinate with strategic partners to develop a framework to evaluate effectiveness of wraparound services
Program Implementation	
Build Talent Supply Chains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish performance metrics, incentives, and risk management strategies to better manage the talent pipeline ● Prioritize identifying, engaging, and implementing talent pipelines with preferred education, training, credentialing, and other wraparound support providers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deploy recruitment strategy
Execute Training Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Procure training supplies, equipment and materials Launch training program curriculum
Deploy Wraparound Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine wraparound service needs of participants ● Connect participants with providers of required services ● Seek feedback from organizations and participants on the effectiveness of services provided ● Refine wraparound services, as required
Engage in Continuous Process Improvement and Resiliency Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop strategy to promote continuous improvement and improve resilience to external disruptions ● Seek feedback from industry partner and program participants on the effectiveness of the training ● Refine training curriculum and delivery models, as needed

Section 5C: Breaking down Barriers and Sustaining Success

Core to our program’s approach is **providing program participants with access to effective wraparound services to breakdown the systemic and structural barriers that often impeded the success of past workforce training programs.** The table below provided an outline of the barriers we identified and the services that we are targeting to address them. We will continue to **refine our relationships with strategic partners to secure the appropriate mix of service providers** to meet the needs of our program participants.

Barrier	Wraparound Support
Demographic Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professional mentorship from diverse practitioners ● Access health care from diverse providers
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access to shared van routes ● Ride share credits
Childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Childcare vouchers
Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Healthcare services with industry partners and local providers
Recidivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Post-conviction stability supports
Substance Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Drug treatment programs ● Access to mental health supports
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Counseling and therapy services
Career Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support with completing job applications ● Interview preparation and training ● Career navigation and job placement support
Financial Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal finance education ● Support building financially sustainable lifestyle ● Wealth building education/awareness

Sustaining Success

The Chamber is committed to ensuring sustainable success for the training program, as well as supporting continued progression for program participants. We will continue our work with strategic partners and other supporters of our work to **ensure that the funding and resources are available, to continue our work** with the healthcare sector after the grant period, as well as add on other sectors. We will draw on our success leading capital campaigns to raise the funds required to sustain this program, collaborating with our partners in business, government, and the community.

We will design tracking and monitoring systems so that we can **measure the outcomes of program participants and support them with retooling and access to additional training.** The Chamber is also committed to **helping program participants to pursue subsequent education and job placements to drive continued career advancement.**