

Future Workforce Now

Reimagining Workforce Policy in the Age of Disruption

The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), FHI 360, and the Fab Foundation, with support from the Siegel Family Endowment and the Gates Foundation, have launched a new 18-month project to help states begin developing policy and practice responses to prepare for the workforce needs of the future through rigorous research and dialogue with leading thinkers, researchers, and policymakers.

Future Workforce Now will explore in depth the technological disruptions and global forces that are shaping the future of work, workers and workplaces; what these changes will mean for education, training, and state policy; and the most promising policy and practice responses that position states to prepare the workforce of the future. Through a series of topical roundtables, the *Future Workforce* project will bring together national and international experts with state policy leaders to share knowledge and expertise on the disruptive forces impacting workers and the education and training systems, and to map a path forward for state and local success. The roundtables will lead up to a State Policy Forum for Action to share the accumulated knowledge and promising solutions from the roundtables with state policy teams and engage them in framing policy and programmatic responses to address the needs of the future workforce. A toolkit will be released at the culmination of the project to guide future state action.

Key Activities

Future workforce Now is an 18-month project spanning June 2018 through December 2019. Key activities will take place according to the timeline below.

February 2019	Roundtable 1: Disruptions: Work, Workers, and Workplaces
Spring 2019	Roundtable 2: Disruptions: Skills, Education and Training
Spring/Summer 2019	Roundtable 3: Disruptions: Policy and Programmatic Responses
October 2019	State Policy Forum for Action
December 2019	State Leaders Toolkit

Roundtables with Leading Experts and State Policymakers

A series of three roundtables will convene leading thinkers, researchers, organizers who are addressing questions about the future workforce, and state policymakers. Each roundtable will host approximately 40 participants who will, through facilitated discussion, delve into one of the three key areas of exploration for the project, building on previous roundtable discussions and research with each subsequent roundtable. These conversations will be structured to go beyond highlighting leading research and competing ideas to bring these concepts together to map out what is actionable for state policymakers. Each roundtable will be accompanied by a discussion paper highlighting recent research on related topics.

February 2019 – Disruptions: Work, Workers and Workplaces

This roundtable will focus on answering: What are likely major technological disruptions on the horizon for 2025 and beyond, and how will they change the nature of work, workers, and



workplaces? The conversation will focus on implications for employers and workplaces; current and future workers, particularly those with marginal connections to work; and both urban and rural labor markets.

Spring 2019 – Disruptions: Skills, Education and Training

This roundtable will focus on answering: What are the implications of the above disruptions on retraining the current workforce, K-12 and postsecondary education, corporate and workplace education and training systems, and workforce development systems in the states? In other words, this conversation will focus on identifying the skills workers will need to have to remain competitive and employable, and how education and training systems may need to adapt to more effectively confer those skills to the future workforce.

Spring/Summer 2019 – Disruptions: Policy and Programmatic Responses

This roundtable will aim to define the path forward, including what can we learn from promising practices in the U.S. and other countries, and what policy changes will be needed to position states and local areas for success in the future. The conversation will include promising practices and new ideas for responses to the skills and systems change needs identified through the first two roundtables.

Future Workforce State Policy Forum for Action

The roundtable discussions will build toward the Future Workforce State Policy Forum for Action in October 2019. The Forum will convene around 300 participants, including national and international experts and thought leaders, teams from states including governor’s policy advisors, leaders of state education and workforce systems, local elected officials, employers, educators, and NGOs.

During this action-oriented forum, state teams and experts will collaboratively develop policy guidelines for preparing the future workforce, and states will learn from promising practices. State teams will also begin to develop policy frameworks and actions steps that support the broad and meaningful changes that may be necessary to prepare and educate the workforce of the future.

Future Workforce State Leaders Toolkit

An interactive Future Workforce State Leaders Toolkit, targeted for release in December 2019, will compile lessons learned from all project activities, including roundtables and discussion papers, and will provide a common framework to guide state policymaker’s actions on addressing future workforce challenges and opportunities. The toolkit will also serve to inform the ongoing national and international dialogue on the future of work, workers, and workplaces, and what policy and practice responses are needed to prepare the future workforce.