

# STRATEGIC APPROACH TO EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT & TALENT DEVELOPMENT



At Colorado Succeeds, we are focused on aligning talent supply with demand by enhancing education and workforce development pathways that lead to high-quality, living-wage careers in Colorado. A key priority in our work is to engage employers to inform and improve training pathways that meet the needs of businesses and industries across the state.

**This update outlines the strategic ways Colorado Succeeds is engaging employers and working with intermediaries to scale access to successful talent development pathways, including initiatives like the Colorado Talent Academy, Regional Talent Summits, and Industry Association Communities of Practice.**

## INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

In the last year, Colorado Succeeds has supported a Community of Practice (CoP) for industry associations across key sectors such as construction, manufacturing, aerospace, technology, and healthcare. This group brings together industry leaders to share insights, strategies, and best practices related to talent development and workforce challenges.

### KEY STRATEGIES:

- **Collaboration & Capacity-Building:** By convening industry associations, we have fostered increased awareness of sector-specific workforce needs and built a desire for these associations to take a more active role in shaping talent pipelines.
- **Coaching & Technical Assistance:** We provide coaching and technical assistance to industry associations to design and implement new talent development strategies that can be scaled across their sectors.
- **Funding & Support:** To support the implementation of these strategies, Colorado Succeeds has offered funding opportunities through private philanthropy, allowing industry associations to expand their capacity and pilot new approaches to workforce development.

This community of practice will continue throughout 2025, further enhancing the capacity of industry associations to develop and support effective talent pipelines.

## COLORADO TALENT ACADEMY: EMPOWERING BUSINESS & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT LEADERS

Launched in June 2025, the Colorado Talent Academy will empower leaders across the state to build and lead talent pipelines that directly address workforce challenges. The Academy is a six-month, cohort-based program designed for senior leaders in business, education, and workforce development organizations. This program will offer specialized Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) training, coaching, and real-time application for sector-specific projects.

### WHO WILL BE TRAINED:

- **Business Intermediaries:** The Academy will train leaders from regional business and workforce organizations, including chambers of commerce, industry associations, economic development organizations, and employers themselves. These participants are drawn from key sectors such as construction, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, aerospace, bioscience, quantum computing, and technology, and are well-positioned to drive local workforce solutions.
- **Employer Champions:** The program will also include employer champions—senior business leaders who can galvanize participation from other employers in their industry. By equipping these champions with tools and strategies to implement talent pipeline strategies, we aim to create a network of engaged employers who are aligned on the critical skills and competencies needed in their fields.
- **Regional Talent Summit Hosts:** The Academy will include the hosts of the Regional Talent Summits created under HB24-1365. These summits convened regional stakeholders—including business, education, and government—to co-create multi-year talent plans grounded in labor market data and employer needs. Summit hosts will bring cross-sector teams from their regions, including employers, workforce centers, and training providers, so they can apply the Academy's employer-led, data-driven framework to their summit work. This ensures each region emerges from the Academy with the tools and training to implement talent strategies that reflect and advance regional economic objectives.
- **Talent Association Leaders:** Additionally, the Talent Academy will include the leaders of the trade associations in Colorado that are forecasted to grow in the regions participating in the Talent Academy. These will include associations from sectors such as construction, advanced manufacturing, aerospace, quantum computing, technology, healthcare, bioscience, hospitality, etc. By involving these talent associations, the Academy will ensure that sector-specific workforce strategies are closely aligned with industry growth trends and labor market demands.

## COLORADO TALENT ACADEMY: CONTINUED

### HOW THE TALENT ACADEMY WILL BENEFIT COLORADO:

- **Building Local Capacity for Talent Development:** By training leaders who can create and implement employer-led talent pipelines, the Talent Academy will strengthen local workforce development efforts across Colorado. Each participant will leave with actionable strategies tailored to their region and industry, directly addressing local workforce needs and ensuring that Colorado's economy has a skilled
- **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** The Academy will foster collaboration between different sectors, allowing participants to share best practices, tackle common challenges, and explore innovative workforce solutions. This cross-sector collaboration will help break down silos between industries, creating a more cohesive and responsive workforce development ecosystem in Colorado.
- **Real-Time Application:** Participants will apply the Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) framework to their own workforce development challenges, creating practical, implementable solutions. The real-time application of TPM will ensure that the strategies developed are directly relevant to each participant's work, with tangible outcomes for their regions.
- **Statewide Impact:** By training key leaders from across the state, the Talent Academy will create a network of workforce development champions who can scale successful talent development strategies statewide. As these leaders implement their new strategies and share their experiences, they will inspire and lead further improvements to Colorado's talent pipeline, benefiting the state's long-term economic vitality.

### ADDITIONAL BENEFITS:

- **Certification Opportunity:** Participants will have the opportunity to earn a TPM certification, a nationally recognized credential that enhances their ability to advocate for and implement workforce solutions at both the local and state levels.
- **Enhanced Employer Engagement:** The Talent Academy will equip employers with the knowledge and skills to be more actively involved in shaping workforce development programs that align with their hiring needs, ensuring that the talent produced in Colorado meets the demands of local industries.

# THE COLORADO SUCCEEDS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

The Colorado Succeeds Center of Excellence is designed to scale access to successful workforce pathways by supporting workforce intermediaries with the tools, resources, and technical assistance they need to thrive. The Center helps ensure that employers, industry associations, and other workforce organizations have the capacity to build, scale, and sustain talent development initiatives that are aligned with Colorado's economic and workforce needs.

## KEY STRATEGIES:

- **Empowering Intermediaries:** The Center of Excellence works to build the capacity of workforce intermediaries such as chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and industry associations. It provides intermediaries with the expertise and resources needed to enhance their role in talent development, ensuring they can effectively connect businesses with talent pipelines.
- **Sharing Best Practices:** By gathering and disseminating best practices, the Center fosters a network of learning and innovation among workforce intermediaries. This helps ensure that successful strategies are scaled across regions, creating a more unified and effective workforce ecosystem across Colorado.
- **Providing Technical Assistance:** The Center delivers hands-on support to help intermediaries implement and refine their workforce strategies. This includes guidance on developing regional talent plans, leveraging data to inform workforce solutions, and engaging employers in the talent development process.
- **Sustaining Workforce Solutions:** The Center of Excellence ensures that the workforce solutions created are sustainable by supporting ongoing collaboration, providing resources for continuous improvement, and fostering long-term partnerships between employers, educators, and workforce organizations.

This initiative is central to scaling the impact of Colorado Succeeds' workforce development efforts, enabling intermediaries to reach more employers and create lasting, high-quality talent pipelines across the state.

# TALENT PIPELINE MANAGEMENT AS A SERVICE

Colorado Succeeds is scaling a Talent Pipeline Management as a Service model to help industry associations and workforce intermediaries operationalize employer-led training pipelines across the state. Talent Pipeline Management as a Service offers high-touch, end-to-end support—from coalition design to implementation—at no cost for select industry intermediaries in 2025. This approach addresses one of Colorado’s key workforce challenges: translating employer demand into responsive education and training programs at scale. Through Talent Pipeline Management as a Service, Colorado Succeeds equips associations with both strategy and execution capacity to meet real-time hiring needs, build lasting partnerships, and leverage public-private investments.

## WHAT’S INCLUDED:

- **Certified TPM Facilitator:** Expert-led facilitation of sector-specific, member-driven employer collaboratives.
- **Demand Signal Collection:** Aggregation of employer hiring forecasts, skill needs, and job role priorities using TPM survey tools.
- **Talent Flow Mapping:** Identification of education and workforce program gaps, mismatches, and retention challenges.
- **Curriculum & Program Alignment:** Coordination with K-12, higher education, and training providers to close supply-demand gaps.
- **Workforce Strategy Roadmap:** Co-developed action plans with measurable goals, work-based learning expansion, and co-investment strategies.

## STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES:

- **Industry-Driven, Turnkey Model:** TPM as a service enables associations to offer structured workforce solutions with minimal internal lift, while maintaining employer leadership.
- **Flexible, De-Risked Entry:** No upfront cost to participate; designed to unlock additional public (e.g., WIOA, HB 24-1365) and philanthropic funds for long-term sustainment.
- **Demonstrated ROI:** Past TPM collaboratives have resulted in employer-aligned curriculum design, improved candidate pipelines, and shared investment in pre-apprenticeship and upskilling initiatives.
- **Scalable Coaching Network:** Colorado Succeeds is developing a vetted cadre of independent TPM coaches who can support intermediaries statewide, ensuring TPMaaS is accessible to regions and sectors beyond the pilot phase.

TPM as a service is a cornerstone of Colorado Succeeds’ systems-change strategy—building durable, employer-led pipelines and positioning business as a long-term co-owner of workforce development across the state.

# THE COLORADO SUCCEEDS INTERMEDIARY NETWORK

The Colorado Succeeds Intermediary Network will build the capacity of state, regional, and local education and workforce intermediaries to better support business in building stronger, more equitable, and aligned partnerships to improve education and economic outcomes. The Network will consist of industry associations, workforce and education intermediaries, and employers seeking best practices and strategies tailored to their needs and helping them build, scale, and sustain talent development initiatives.

## KEY ACTIVITIES:

- Demand planning and talent analysis to create a shared language around in-demand skills and credentials.
- Support industries and in-demand sectors with an association approach to avoid duplication.
- Partner with industry experts to deliver training and mentorship
- Cohort-based learning with clear milestones and metrics.

## KEY METRICS:

- Utilization of the Center of Excellence resources to increase intermediary talent development knowledge.
- The number of participants enrolled in Talent Academy cohorts to increase intermediary talent development capacity.
- Impact on creation of industry or regional-specific talent development plans

Colorado Succeeds is leading the charge in engaging employers to drive the development of high-quality, employer-informed training pathways. Through initiatives like the Colorado Talent Academy, Regional Talent Summits, Industry Association Communities of Practice, and the Center of Excellence, we are working directly with businesses and intermediaries to build sustainable talent pipelines. These efforts are not only designed to meet current workforce needs but also to create long-term, scalable solutions for the future of Colorado's economy. We are excited to continue these efforts and look forward to exploring new ways to engage and support employers in the coming years.

## LET'S CONNECT

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