



Healthcare High Road Training Partnership Overview

January 2023

Healthcare High Road Training Partnership (H RTP): Background

The California Workforce Development Board (CWDB), in partnership with the Labor & Workforce Development Agency (LWDA), has opened a solicitation for the [High Road Training Partnership \(H RTP\) Resilient Workforce Partnerships \(RWP\) grant](#). H RTP RWP aims to build workers' skills, provide access to quality jobs, and increase economic security for underserved, marginalized, and underrepresented populations through investments in workforce development partnerships that prepare workers for good jobs in high demand industry sectors. These partnerships bring together key actors in the workforce development ecosystem—including workers, labor, workforce boards, education and training institutions, community-based organizations, and employers—to co-design programs that prepare and support workers to enter and advance in careers that provide a livable wage, safe and healthy working conditions, and pathways to upward mobility while also meeting the needs of industry for a skilled workforce.

At the foundation of the H RTP model is a commitment to **job quality**, **economic equity**, and **climate resilience**. Job quality refers to employers designing jobs that pay family supporting wages, provide health and disability benefits, create safe working conditions, establish fair and consistent scheduling practices, and ensure career advancement opportunities that are equitable and transparent. Equity refers to ensuring that gender, race, ethnicity, or other demographic characteristics do not affect access to and advancement in high quality jobs. Climate resilience refers to a vision of shared prosperity, recognizing that we can achieve both carbon reduction and economic growth by investing in career pipelines that address industry mitigation and adaptation strategies to transition to a carbon-neutral economy. The goal is to create a sustainable and resilient environment, community, and a carbon-neutral economy for all.

In response to the dire workforce shortages facing the healthcare sector, the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 State budget included \$57 million in H RTP funds allocated for healthcare partnerships. Health systems across the state are experiencing unprecedented workforce shortages stemming from a range of factors, including: worker burnout and attrition in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, retirements due to an aging workforce, and Medicaid reforms that are expanding health coverage for millions of Californians. Urgent labor shortages in all aspects of care delivery are projected to grow even more pronounced in the coming years. The Healthcare H RTP funds are intended to address the urgent demand for skilled healthcare workers with a specific focus on **allied health occupations**.

Many allied healthcare jobs are middle-skill jobs (requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year post-secondary degree) that are relatively well-paying, offer opportunities for career advancement, and can be excellent pathways to economic security and upward mobility. However, too many jobs in the healthcare sector (e.g., Home Health Aids, Certified Nursing Assistants) are low wage and have limited growth opportunities. Individuals in these roles are overwhelmingly people of color, and many are recent immigrants, who are locked in poverty and do not have the resources or supports to advance in their careers. As the state invests in building the healthcare workforce, it must also deliver on good paying jobs, as an economic driver for low-income communities as well as a force for equity for the whole state. The Healthcare HRTTP funds will create innovative and accessible opportunities to recruit, train, hire and advance an ethnically and culturally inclusive healthcare workforce, with improved diversity and higher wages.

The full Request for Applications (RFA) can be found at: [High Road Training Partnerships: Resilient Workforce Program \(RWP\)](#).

Defining Elements of Healthcare High Road Training Partnerships

Healthcare HRTTPs are an industry-driven, worker-centered strategy that encompasses four core elements:

1. **Design quality jobs:** Job quality refers to jobs with employers that: pay at or above local or regional living wages, provide health and retirement benefits, create safe working conditions, establish fair and predictable scheduling practices, include worker voice and agency, and ensure career advancement opportunities are equitable and transparent.
2. **Ensure Equity for Workers:** Equity ensures that gender, race, ethnicity, or other demographic characteristics do not affect access to and advancement in quality jobs. Equity in the context of High Road means economic equity and therefore requires close attention to job quality.
3. **Amplify worker voice:** Worker voice refers to creating opportunities for workers to participate in decisions that affect their livelihoods. This can take shape through many types of structures, including but not limited to labor unions, worker centers, labor management partnerships, or other entities with a demonstrated history of providing consistent and independent worker voice that informs employer decision-making.
4. **Invest in Environmental Sustainability:** Environmental sustainability refers to supporting efforts toward a carbon-neutral economy. Supporting these efforts requires special attention to industry sectors on the frontlines of the transition to a carbon neutral economy (e.g., energy generation and distribution, buildings and construction,

vehicle and components manufacturing, forestry services, and agriculture). *Although environmental sustainability is a core principle of the H RTP program, it may not be applicable to healthcare initiatives and proposals will not be required to demonstrate environmental sustainability strategies.*

Competitive applications will show evidence of how these core elements are incorporated into the program design.

Project Types

H RTP funds are available to support initiatives along a continuum of phases from early-stage development to scaling-up and expansion. Applicants can apply for funds in three grant categories:

- **Planning and Development (up to \$500,000 within 12 months):** Planning and Development Projects require funding to complete the work of project design with the intent of Training Implementation at a later point. Grants will support the research of industry demand and achievement of the high road elements, staff time to develop and cultivate partnerships, and program design for training and employment outcomes. Planning grants must have a clear problem statement that describes how planning and development activities will solve that problem with a training program. Applications must include a Training Plan.
- **Training Implementation (\$500,000 - \$5,000,000 within 24 months):** Training Implementation Projects will deliver training programs to achieve employment, career advancement outcomes for participants, and/or to prevent layoffs. These projects may also include Planning and Development alongside required training components. Training Implementation Projects must have a Training Plan based on previous or ongoing research and project development, an existing partnership with one or more employers (partnerships with multiple employers are encouraged for larger grants), at least one worker organization, and a training provider.
- **Expanding (\$5,000,000 - \$15,000,000 within 36 months):** Expanding projects will have demonstrated success in achieving training outcomes and will focus on scale and/or replication. These projects will grow the number of participants and expand the partnership within the industry. Projects may also expand to adjacent industry sectors and/or replicate the project in other regions. Expanding projects will deliver training programs for participants to achieve employment, career advancement outcomes, and/or to prevent layoffs. Expanding projects must have completed research and development; evidence from a pilot program to inform their expansion; an existing partnership consisting of multiple employers; at least one worker organization; and at least one training provider. An Expanding project is an existing H RTP or an existing

industry partnership that can demonstrate that it meets all the H RTP elements and is expanding the partnership and program work.

Target Populations

H RTP RWP funding is intended to serve a broad and diverse range of participants. Applications should propose to serve target populations including, but not limited to, the following:

- English Language Learners
- Homeless and Housing Insecure.
- Justice-involved Individuals
- People with Disabilities
- Veterans
- Youth
- Immigrants/Refugees
- Low-income Workers
- Other Under-Resourced Communities

Please refer to the Target Populations section of the [H RTP RWP RFA](#) for more information.

Eligible Applicants

H RTPs are required to include:

- At least one employer
- Worker representation
- At least one training provider

In addition, they are *encouraged* to include other partners, but not limited to:

- Employers
- Industry-based training providers
- Local workforce development boards
- Labor organizations and labor-management partnerships
- Worker centers
- Worker Cooperatives
- Employment Social Enterprises
- Environmental & Environmental Justice Organization
- Non-profit and Community-based organizations
- Adult Schools
- California Community College Districts
- Industry-based intermediaries including industry associations



- California State Registered Apprenticeship Programs
- Workforce intermediaries

One entity will apply on behalf of the partnership and assume the role of the fiscal agent.

For additional information and guidance, refer to [High Road Training Partnerships: Resilient Workforce Fund Program](#).

Healthcare H RTP Priority Occupations: Allied Health

The upcoming Healthcare H RTP solicitation will prioritize **allied health occupations**. A large proportion of the healthcare workforce is made up of allied health professionals—workers who are involved with the delivery of health or related services and, with minor exceptions, are largely trained through career technical education involving more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year post-secondary degree. *Registered nurses and physicians are not considered allied health professionals*. Allied health occupations comprise an estimated 60% of the healthcare workforce nationwide.¹

The following list is not exhaustive, but contains some of the most well-known allied health occupations:

- Medical Assistants
- Certified Nursing Assistants
- Emergency Medical Personnel (EMTs, Paramedics)
- Dental Hygienists and Dental Assistants
- Phlebotomists
- Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists
- Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists
- Imaging Specialists
- Respiratory Therapists
- Radiation Therapists
- Medical Laboratory Scientists
- Pharmacy Personnel (Pharmacy Technicians and Assistants)
- Nutritionists and Dieticians
- Health Information Technologists
- Health Educators
- Counselors (Genetic Counselors, Mental Health Counselors, Family Therapists)

¹ Futuro Health. *Case Study: Allied Health Training*. <https://futurahealth.org/healthcare-best-practices/>

The demand for allied health workers across the state is projected to grow over the next five years, and these jobs can lead to high road careers, particularly for H RTP priority populations.²

- In California, total job openings in the 33 highest demand allied health occupations between 2018-2018 are estimated to be 753,170.
- Of those 753,170 jobs, 515,370 (68%) are middle-skill jobs that require a post-secondary certificate (non-degree award), 81,470 (11%) require an Associate's Degree, and 156,260 (21%) require a High School Diploma or Equivalent.
- Average wages vary by region, but across the state, the average wage for allied health jobs that require a post-secondary certificate is \$26.33/hour; for jobs that require an Associate's Degree, it is \$47.72/hour; and for jobs that require a High School Diploma or Equivalent, it is \$23.80/hour.

By all projections, the supply of allied health workers will not come close to meeting the state's demand.

- For the ten highest demand allied health professions, it is estimated that there will be nearly 23,000 to 36,000 unfilled jobs per year.³

H RTP grants will prioritize allied health occupations that pay at least \$20/hour and do not require a four-year post-secondary degree. However, applicants can propose other occupations for training and make a case for local labor market demand, employer partners, and job quality.

Resources for Healthcare H RTP Applicants

H RTP General Information:

- California Workforce Development Board, High Road Training Partnerships Webpage <https://cwdb.ca.gov/initiatives/high-road-training-partnerships/>

Labor Market Information:

- Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, Health Care in California web page https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/Health_Care_in_California.html

² California Employment Development Department Labor Market Information Division data.

³ California Competes. *Meeting California's Demand for Allied Health Workers*. February 2021. https://californiacompetes.org/assets/general-files/CA-Competes-Allied-Health_Final.pdf

- Meeting the Demand for Health: Final Report of the California Future Health Workforce Commission
<https://futurehealthworkforce.org/our-work/finalreport/>
- United States Health Resources & Services Administration, Allied Health Workforce Projections
<https://bhw.hrsa.gov/data-research/projecting-health-workforce-supply-demand/allied-health>

Quality Healthcare Jobs:

- PolicyLink, *Building an Inclusive Health Workforce in California: A Statewide Policy Agenda*
https://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/Inclusive_Health_Workforce_091818b.pdf
- National Fund for Workforce Solutions, *Job Quality Outcomes Maps*
<https://nationalfund.org/our-resources/publications/job-quality-outcome-maps/>
- CareerSTAT, *Best Practices for Investing in Frontline Healthcare Workers*
<https://nationalfund.org/explore/careerstat/resources/>