**CHIPS Act Grant Applications - Workforce Development Planning Requirement**

**Employer/Applicant TEMPLATE**

**Developing and sustaining sectoral partnerships**

• What efforts have you made to identify employers in your industry and adjacent industries and other organizations to develop a sectoral partnership, including a backbone organization?

Significant efforts have been dedicated by [Organization] to identifying employers within the North Carolina semiconductor industry and adjacent industries, as well as other organizations, in order to establish a sectoral partnership. [Organization] recognizes the importance of fostering collaboration and synergy among key stakeholders. Both public and private entities have actively engaged in this process. Extensive research, networking, and data analysis have been conducted by [Organization] to pinpoint companies operating in the semiconductor sector and related fields, such as electronic manufacturing services, supply chain management, and technology development. Additionally, [Organization] has formed partnerships with industry associations, economic development agencies, educational institutions, and workforce development boards to gather comprehensive information and facilitate substantive connections. These concerted efforts aim to foster a robust sectoral partnership that can drive innovation, address industry-specific challenges, promote workforce development, and ultimately propel the growth and competitiveness of the semiconductor industry in North Carolina utilizing the CHIPS act.

• What structure, norms, and supports are in place to build and sustain the sectoral partnership?

[Organization] is employing a strong framework designed to foster and maintain a thriving semiconductor sectoral partnership in North Carolina. The structure of this initiative involves a collaborative approach, bringing together key stakeholders including industry leaders, government agencies, educational institutions, and research organizations. Regular meetings, conferences, and working groups are planned to facilitate open communication, exchange of ideas, and joint decision-making. To ensure compliance and adherence to industry standards, a set of norms will be established, encompassing ethical practices, fair competition, and the protection of intellectual property rights. Moreover, [Organization] will provide support to its partners, offering technical assistance, and access to lessons learned experience. This comprehensive support system will enable all parties to overcome challenges, foster innovation, and sustain long-term growth in the semiconductor sector in North Carolina as the CHIPS incentives move forward.

• Do you have specific and detailed letters of support from partners describing the roles and responsibilities they will fulfill and the resources they will provide?

[Organization] has gathered a collection of specific and comprehensive letters of support from other semiconductor partners and vendors in North Carolina. These letters outline the roles and responsibilities that these collaborators will fulfill, as well as any resources they are committed to providing. These letters explain the integral role our partners and vendors will play in [Organizations] initiatives, highlighting their expertise, dedication, and commitment to achieving shared goals. The detailed descriptions of roles and responsibilities instill confidence in the sectoral partnerships ability to forge strong relationships, ensuring the success of the project.

**Employer workforce needs assessment**

• Determine the scope and scale of your organization’s workforce needs with specificity. What are the expected workforce needs over the lifecycle of the proposed project? Where is there uncertainty about future workforce needs? How will the applicant continually update its understanding of its workforce needs? Be as specific as possible in detailing, the number of jobs, skills requirements, and the timeframe over which the jobs will be needed. In defining skills requirements, please utilize existing competency frameworks, such as those for advanced manufacturing and semiconductor and nanotechnology manufacturing created by the National Institute for Innovation and Technology (NIIT) in consultation with DOL, and available through the competency model clearinghouse, to the extent possible.

Determining the scope and scale of [Organizations] production workforce requirements for a semiconductor manufacturing process is a crucial element that requires careful analysis and planning. [Organization] understands the consideration of all factors to ensure the accurate number of employees while also reasonably evaluating skill sets and types of employees to meet the requisites of the project. Existing competency frameworks created by the National Institute for Innovation and Technology (NIIT) for advanced manufacturing and semiconductor and nanotechnology manufacturing will be applied to all skills evaluation assessments to ensure maximum compliance with industry standards.

A complete assessment by [Organization] will establish clear, strategic objectives and long-term project plans to ensure the talent and expertise required for the venture. This assessment will include industry evaluations, growth projections, and current technologies.

[Organization] will evaluate its current workforce, considering factors such as employee turnover, retirement, and potential skill gaps. Analyzing workload, productivity, and operational demands will be fundamental factors in determining the optimal workforce size. Market conditions, regulatory requirements, and workforce trends will also be considered on a constant and consistent basis throughout the project lifecycle. Utilizing this evaluation model, [Organization] will accurately determine the scope and scale of workforce production needs and enable well informed decisions regarding recruitment, training, retention, and allocation of employee capital to ensure overall project success.

• What gaps, both in personnel and skillset, will need to be filled? What are the current challenges for filling identified skill and personnel gaps?

[Organization] will effectively fill identified skill and personnel gaps using a strategic and proactive approach. Initially, a comprehensive assessment will be conducted to identify specific skill gaps and personnel needs within the organization. Once these gaps are identified, [Organization] will utilize various strategies to address any staffing deficits. This may involve investing in training and development programs to upskill existing employees thereby enabling them to take on new responsibilities and new roles. Additionally, [Organization] will recruit qualified and experienced individuals externally, seeking candidates with the required expertise and qualifications to fill the identified gaps. Collaborating with educational institutions, professional networks, and industry associations will also widen the potential candidate pool. Apprenticeship programs will be developed, and qualified individuals will be identified using the ApprenticeshipNC program and include existing employees, veterans, high school and college students. Implementation of mentorship and knowledge-sharing programs will allow experienced employees to fast-track skills transfer and expertise to others within the organization. This proactive and multi-faceted approach will enable [Organization] to successfully fill the skill and personnel gaps, ensuring a strong and capable workforce to fulfill project requirements and guarantee success.

• How do you currently train your workforce? What is effective and what needs improvement?

[Organization] prioritizes the continuous growth and development of its workforce through a comprehensive training and constant evaluation process. The organization understands well-trained employees are crucial for staying competitive in a rapidly evolving economy, especially one constantly shifting and developing like the semiconductor development and manufacturing industry. Training at [Organization] encompass various disciplines, including in-person workshops, online courses, mentorship programs, and cross-functional team collaborations. Regular evaluations are conducted to assess the effectiveness of training efforts. The evaluation process involves collecting feedback from employees, analyzing performance metrics, and measuring the application of newly acquired skills on the job. By actively seeking input from employees and tracking their progress, [Organization] identifies areas that require improvement. Based on the evaluation results, [Organization] designs targeted interventions to enhance training modules, update content, and introduce innovative learning techniques. This integral approach ensures the workforce remains well-equipped to meet industry challenges and adapt to the evolving demands of the project on their roles.

**Regional workforce landscape assessment**

• Familiarize yourself with existing analysis of the region. What labor is available regionally? Are there workers with the skills you need or workers with similar skills that can be reskilled? It may be helpful to look at current population, employment, and educational enrollment data, regional economic development strategies such as a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or States’ WIOA State Plans that include workforce analysis and assessment of regions.

[Organization] recognizes conducting an exhaustive analysis of the existing workforce in [Region] is indispensable for making informed decisions and developing effective labor strategies. The organization leverages a combination of data sources, including current population statistics, employment data, educational enrollment figures, and regional economic indicators such as the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy or the state's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) plans to accomplish this systematically and effectively. By carefully analyzation of these data sets, [Organization] gains valuable insights into the demographic composition, skill levels, and economic dynamics of [Region]’s workforce. This statistical study allows [Organization] to identify potential gaps in the labor market, determine emerging skill requirements, and recognize opportunities for collaboration with local educational institutions and government agencies. Armed with this comprehensive understanding, [Organization] can modify its workforce development initiatives to address specific needs of the project and foster economic growth within [Region].

• What are the common avenues for labor recruitment in your region, for recruiting underserved groups (e.g., unions, community-based organizations, etc.)?

[Organization] uses various paths for workforce recruitment to ensure inclusivity and reach historically underserved groups within [Region]. Establishing partnerships with unions, which serve as valuable sources of potential candidates, particularly those who may have faced historical disadvantages in the job market has proved beneficial. Additionally, [Organization] actively collaborates with community-based organizations working within marginalized communities, offering job training programs and employment opportunities to individuals seeking to improve their lives. Recognizing the importance of diversity, [Organization] actively seeks out parents and caregivers returning to the workforce, providing flexible work arrangements and support systems to accommodate their needs. Moreover, the [Organization] is committed to creating an inclusive environment for people with disabilities, actively recruiting individuals with diverse abilities and implementing necessary accommodations to ensure equal opportunities. Commitment to fostering a diverse staff, actively reaching out to minority communities through targeted recruitment efforts and creating an inclusive environment that values different perspectives and backgrounds is essential to rounding out [Organization]’s workforce.

• What training programs are currently available to you for developing industry talent in the region of your proposed project?

NC offers a comprehensive range of education and training programs aimed at developing industry talent from a variety of sources such as the University of North Carolina System and the North Carolina Community College System. These sources, coupled with [Organization]’s in-house and contracted training programs, provide a solid base for recruiting workforce talent. Specialized programs are designed to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in semiconductor manufacturing industry. Offerings include specialized training in technology, engineering, finance, supply management, and project management. Participants in these programs benefit from expert-led workshops, hands-on practical exercises, and access to cutting-edge resources. [Organization] collaborates closely with industry partners within [Region] to provide internships and apprenticeships, allowing participants to gain valuable real-world experience.

• What workforce programs have proven successful in the proposed project regional area or in other areas? Can existing training programs be scaled for the proposed project or is it necessary to develop new training programs? Consider where new financial support may support existing resources such as matching existing financial resource streams with additional support can help support elements of regional workforce systems mostly aligned with the employer's needs.

[Organization] uses a comprehensive evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness of workforce training programs in [Region] Multiple metrics are used to gauge success, including participant feedback, performance indicators, and job placement rates. Through surveys and interviews, [Organization] collects feedback from program participants to understand their level of satisfaction, perceived skills enhancement, and overall impact on their employability. Performance indicators such as completion rates, competency assessments, and post-training job performance to measure the tangible outcomes of the programs are also used. Job placement rates are a key indicator used to measure the extent to which specific training programs contribute to regional workforce development. Once a program is deemed successful based on evaluations, [Organization] examines the scalability potential. Factors such as resource availability, infrastructure requirements, and market demand are assessed to determine if the training program can be effectively expanded to accommodate larger groups without compromising quality. This evaluation process allows [Organization] to ensure training programs are not only effective but also scalable for larger-scale implementation and voiding the need for development of costly development of new training programs.

**Worker recruitment and retention**

• What financial resources (including both CHIPS Incentives Program dollars and non-CHIPS funding) will you commit to workforce development? Applicants should include details on the amount and source of the funding being allocated to workforce development activities (e.g., outreach, training, wraparound services, etc.).

[Organization] is committed to allocating substantial financial resources towards workforce development initiatives. Recognizing the critical importance of a skilled and competent workforce to succeed in the semiconductor manufacturing arena, investments in training programs, infrastructure, and support systems will be prioritized. Financial resources will be utilized to design and deliver high-quality training curricula, hire experienced trainers and educators, and provide necessary learning materials and equipment to trainees. [Organization] will dedicate funds to research and development keeping programs up to date with industry trends and technological advancements. Industry partnerships with other employers and industry stakeholders will be developed, fostering collaborations that boost program effectiveness and increase employment opportunities for participants.

• What targeted efforts do you plan to take or are you already taking to recruit from new and diverse sources of labor?

[Organization] will actively engage in focused actions to recruit from new and diverse sources of labor. Strategies such as outreach programs, partnerships with community organizations, and targeted advertising campaigns will be used to ensure a broad and inclusive representation of candidates engaged in workforce development programs.

• What pre-apprenticeship programs and other training organizations will you be partnering with to expand employment opportunities for individuals from underserved communities?

[Organization] conducts thorough evaluations assessing a program's curriculum, trainer qualifications, track record of success, participant feedback, and alignment with company goals of promoting diversity and inclusivity, ensuring that the selected partners will effectively contribute [Organization]’s mission of empowering individuals from underserved communities.

• How do you plan to implement policies on hiring workers based on skills required for the job rather than degrees earned? This may include changing job requirements or re-writing job descriptions based on common skills competency models.

[Organization] is committed to implementing policies that prioritize hiring workers based on the skills required for the job rather than degrees earned. This may involve adapting job requirements and rewriting job descriptions based on common skills competency models, ensuring a more inclusive and equitable hiring process that values practical abilities over formal qualifications.

• Do you track employee turnover and conduct exit interviews with separating employees to understand their reason for leaving your organization?

[Organization] will proactively track employee turnover and conduct thorough exit interviews with separating employees, aiming to gain insights into their reasons for leaving the organization. This will help [Organization] to identify potential areas for improvement in worker satisfaction, adjust retention strategies, and nurture a more satisfying and engaging workplace experience.

• Do you conduct employee surveys to understand services your organization may be able to provide or policies your organization may be able to implement to improve employee retention?

[Organization] conducts regular employee surveys to gain valuable feedback and insights from employees. This allows [Organization] to identify areas where additional services/benefits can be provide and policies to increase employee retention can be implemented, fostering a supportive and fulfilling work environment.

**Good Jobs Principles approach**

• Have you reviewed the Good Jobs Principles and evaluated your organization’s recruitment, training, hiring, retention, and advancement policies against the identified principles?

[Organization] has undertaken a complete review of the Good Jobs Principles and carefully evaluated company recruitment, training, hiring, retention, and advancement policies in alignment with these principles. [Organization] has assessed existing practices to ensure adherence to the standards of the policy. By evaluating the company recruitment process, [Organization] affirms its commitment to the promotion of diversity and equal opportunity throughout its local community and [Region]. Training programs have also been designed to provide accessible and skill-enhancing opportunities that empower employees to grow and advance within the organization.

In terms of hiring, [Organization] has evaluated company practices to ensure that offers of employment are based on merit, skills, and qualifications rather than arbitrary biases or discriminatory factors. [Organization] strives for transparency and fairness throughout the hiring process, promoting equal access to employment opportunities for all.

Regarding employee retention, [Organization] has reviewed company policies and implemented strategies to create a supportive and inclusive work environment. The well-being and satisfaction of employees is valued by the company, which recognizes the significance of work-life balance, competitive compensation, a living wage, and comprehensive benefits packages. By creating a positive workplace culture and addressing the needs of their employees, [Organization] strives to increase retention rates.

Advancement opportunities have also been carefully examined by [Organization]. Promotion policies have been assessed to provide equitable access to advancement and career development opportunities. Through mentorship programs, training initiatives, and clear performance evaluation criteria, [Organization] supports the professional growth and advancement of employees.

• What new policies or strategies can your organization implement to provide “good jobs” to the semiconductor industry?

[Organization] will actively collaborate with industry stakeholders, trade associations, and sector partnerships to identify and address labor market needs. Investing in specialized training programs to develop a skilled semiconductor workforce and establishing educational/training partnerships to produce a strong, skilled labor force will create job opportunities and promote career advancement within the industry across [Region]. [Organization] will commit to fair wages, benefits, and worker protections to ensure that employees are provided with a supportive and fulfilling work environment.

• What practices will your organization follow to ensure that the Good Jobs Principles remain applicable to the jobs your organization creates and maintains?

[Organization] is committed to ensuring that fair wages, quality benefits, and worker protections remain applicable to jobs created in pursuit of CHIPS funding. Equitable compensation practices and fair wage standards that reflect the value and demands of the industry will be upheld within all projects directly and indirectly affected by grant funding. [Organization] X will pursue the highest provision of comprehensive benefits packages, including healthcare, retirement plans, and paid time off, to promote the well-being and financial security of employees while being fiscally viable. Collaboration with regulatory agencies will establish and enforce worker protection regulations that safeguard employees' rights, ensuring a safe and healthy working environment.

**Determining training needs for both new and incumbent worker**

• Based on your workforce assessment of needed competencies and available skilled workforce in section 3.1 of this Guide, how many workers will require training to build the competencies or skills needed to fill the available work roles?

[Organization]will use the prior assessment to determine the number of workers who will require training and upskilling in order to effectively available work roles. This analyzation and timely updates to the assessment will ensure a targeted and efficient allocation of resources to meet the [Organization]’s staffing needs throughout the project lifecycle.

• What share of each skill set do you expect to be addressed by external training partners including pre-hiring, versus by your own in-house training and/or apprenticeships? How much specific internal company training will be needed for the various roles in your workforce? How can you scale up internal programs? What wraparound services are available and appropriate for internal training?

[Organization] will employ a strategic approach to determine the percentage of training that will be handled by outside partners versus in-house training. The expertise and capacity of external partners will be thoroughly evaluated and will consider factors such as track record, resources, and ability to deliver high-quality training. Based on this assessment, [Organization] will collaborate with strategic external partners to provide specialized training that complements existing and developing in-house programs.

To meet increased demand, [Organization] will implement a scalable approach for internal training programs. Assessment of current infrastructure, resources, and trainer availability will be used to identify areas for expansion. By investing in additional trainers, developing comprehensive training materials, and leveraging technology for remote learning, [Organization] will scale up internal programs to accommodate larger numbers of participants while maintaining quality standards. Constant evaluation and feedback assessments will be used continuously to gauge effectiveness and scalability of these programs., ensuring that they can adapt to changing demands and efficiently meet the training needs of a growing workforce.

• What external groups do you or will you work with to train your workforce? What resources can you provide to strengthen and support that partnership (e.g., experiential learning opportunities, funding for wraparound services)? What resources can be shared more broadly across the semiconductor training ecosystem to reduce fragmentation?

[Organization] will fully engage with [External Training Group] in a collaborative approach to strengthen and support the training partnership as much as possible. A commitment to open communication channels will foster regular meetings and discussions to ensure objectives are aligned and adjusted as need. Funding, infrastructure, and access to subject matter experts to enhance the capabilities of the external training groups will be provided by [Organization]. The company will offer guidance and support in curriculum development, instructional design, and program evaluation to [External Training Group]. Additionally, [Organization] will provide access to their industry partners network allowing for internship, apprenticeship, and job placement opportunities for the trainees.

• What competency standards will you use for training? Is there an official, industry-wide standard for each area or will a competency standard need to be developed? How will you assess if these competency standards are sufficient? How do you update the standard to keep pace with technological changes?

[Organization] will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of training competency standards, researching whether industry-wide competency standards exist and are appropriate for required training or if new standards need to be developed. Existing standards within the industry will be examined, seeking alignment and consistency with recognized framework requirements of the project. If industry-wide standards are lacking or insufficient, [Organization] and [External Training Group] will develop internal competency standards, drawing upon industry best practices, expert input, and emerging trends.

To ensure these standards keep pace with technology changes, [Organization] will use a dynamic evaluation process that will closely monitor technological advancements, industry trends, and evolving job requirements. Regular reviews and updates of the competency standards will be conducted to reflect the changing field of semiconductor manufacturing. Assessments will involve collaboration with industry experts, participation in industry forums and associations, and industry-wide research to identify emerging skill sets and shared knowledge.

• What role do you see your organization playing in the existing training structure, especially in relation to sectoral partners?

[Operation] will play a pivotal role in current and future training structure, particularly through its active involvement in sectoral partnerships within the semiconductor manufacturing industry, collaborating with industry stakeholders and external training organizations to develop and deliver specialized training programs that meet the evolving needs of the sector, growing a skilled workforce and promoting sustainable growth in [Region].

**Provision of wraparound services**

• Do you have a strategy to provide wraparound supportive services?

• What wraparound services are currently available to workers in your organization beyond those in training programs? Are they sufficient to meet workers’ needs? What are the barriers to provide new or expanded wraparound services?

• Have you assessed your region’s most critical supportive service’s needs? These might include linkages to community services, assistance with transportation, childcare and dependent care, housing, needs-related payments, educational testing, work-related tools, reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, legal aid services, referrals to health care, or payment and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications.

• In what supportive services gaps in the community do you plan to invest?

• Have you established partnerships with human services agencies, a state or local workforce board, or community-based organizations to support or provide wraparound supportive services? What community-based organizations exist to support this work?

• What other sources of funding (federal, state, etc.) are available and will be tapped (if any) to assist with the provision of wraparound services?

[Organization] has developed a comprehensive strategy to provide access to wraparound services for its workforce, recognizing the importance of supporting employees in areas beyond their immediate job roles. Active collaboration with a variety of stakeholders, including human services agencies, state or local workforce boards, and community-based organizations will help alleviate barriers to service access and development of new and expanded wraparound services. By partnering with these entities, [Organization] aims to assess and address the diverse needs of its workforce in [Region], such as transportation, child and dependent care, housing, disability accommodations, and continuing education just to name a few. Additional funding not available by [Organization] will be sought through a variety of external sources. These funding options will be accessed by dynamic partnerships with government agencies and community-based groups in [Region]. Through these collaborations, [Organization]’s employees can benefit from valuable resources, referrals, and assistance in accessing essential services, ultimately fostering a supportive work environment that enhances employee well-being, job satisfaction, and overall success.

**Workforce metrics**

• Have you set workforce development goals that are SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound?

[Organization] is committed to setting workforce development goals that align with the SMART acronym that stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. This strategy will allow establishment of appropriate goals to improve outcomes, execution, and stakeholder understanding.

• How do you plan to develop systems and a process for accessing and reporting specific and disaggregated data on a timely basis?

[Organization] is committed to developing robust systems and processes for accessing and reporting specific and disaggregated workforce data. The company recognizes the importance of accurate and detailed information to shape decision-making, identify trends, and measure the effectiveness of programs. To accomplish this, [Organization] will invest in cutting edge data management systems and tools that allow for efficient data collection, storage, and analysis. Clear protocols will establish guidelines for gathering and measuring data, ensuring the collection of specific and disaggregated data points relevant to their goals and objectives.

[Organization] prioritizes data privacy and security, implementing measures to protect sensitive information. Regular reporting mechanisms will be established to disseminate the findings in a clear and accessible manner, enabling stakeholders to make informed decisions and drive evidence-based strategies.

• What administrative data sources can be leveraged to report on your metrics of interest?

[Organization] has access to various resources to develop data systems and reporting capabilities for assessing and reporting on metrics of interest. The company will allocate resources for acquiring and implementing advanced data management tools, software, and infrastructure necessary for efficient data collection, analysis, and reporting.

• What resources are available to your organization for developing data systems and people to assess and report data and evaluate success?

[Organization] has invested in building a skilled team of data analysts and experts who specialize in assessing and reporting data, ensuring the accurate interpretation and meaningful analysis of collected metrics.

• What is your plan for evaluating workforce development activities over time?

[Organization] will employ a comprehensive evaluation framework that includes gathering feedback from program participants, analyzing performance indicators, and tracking job placement rates to evaluate workforce development activities. Through surveys, interviews, and data analysis, the company will assess the effectiveness of workforce development initiatives on a continual basis.. These evaluations will enable [Organization] to make data-driven decisions, identify areas for improvement, and refine programs to be more responsive to workforce needs and [Region]’s employment demands.

**Construction workforce plan**

• Have you formed a project labor agreement that includes best practice provisions and dispute resolution processes?

• How do you plan to ensure compliance with federal and state labor law? Have you implemented discrete strategies to monitor compliance?

• What initiatives are you using to increase access to opportunity for women in the trades?

[Organization] is committed to developing a construction project labor agreement that incorporates best practice provisions, strong dispute resolution processes, and stringent compliance with federal and state labor laws. The company will prioritize the inclusion of provisions that promote living wages, safe working conditions, and equitable treatment for all workers involved in construction projects. [Organization] will emphasize the implementation of comprehensive and discrete compliance monitoring mechanisms to ensure adherence to labor laws and regulations throughout the duration of any construction project. Emphasis will be placed on increasing opportunities and access for women in the trades by establishing goals, implementing outreach programs, and providing support and resources to promote their participation and advancement in the construction industry.