

## A NEW APPROACH

The National Fund for Workforce Solutions is a five-year, \$30 million effort to strengthen and expand high-impact workforce development initiatives around the country. The Fund is a catalyst for lower-skilled workers to advance in their careers and for employers to meet their skill needs. Its dollars, provided by regional and national funders, support employers, workforce partnerships, and educational institutions in 21 regions of the country.

The National Fund is also a discovery mechanism—finding and sharing the right lessons to improve policy and practice. Perhaps even more notable is that the National Fund is breaking the mold of philanthropy:

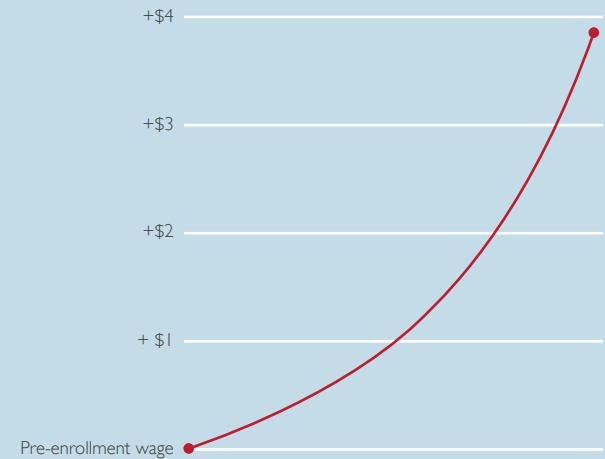
- **A new model of investment.** The National Fund can do more on a broader scale because national, regional, and local funders strategically leverage their collective resources.
- **Flexible funding.** These resources can flow outside the traditional funding boundaries, fill gaps, and enable new innovations and incentives.
- **A focus on results.** The investors are driven by outcomes, and they have linked evaluation efforts on the national and local levels to determine the return on resources invested.

## THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Well before the current economic recession, traditional ideas that define work in America were shifting. The United States is a part of an intensely global economy, yet more than a third of our workforce lacks the skills our industries need to compete. Entire industries are stymied by skill shortages, low productivity, and threats to regional competitiveness. Despite escalating unemployment, many jobs remain unfilled, and sharp disparities exist between those with and those without the tools to advance.

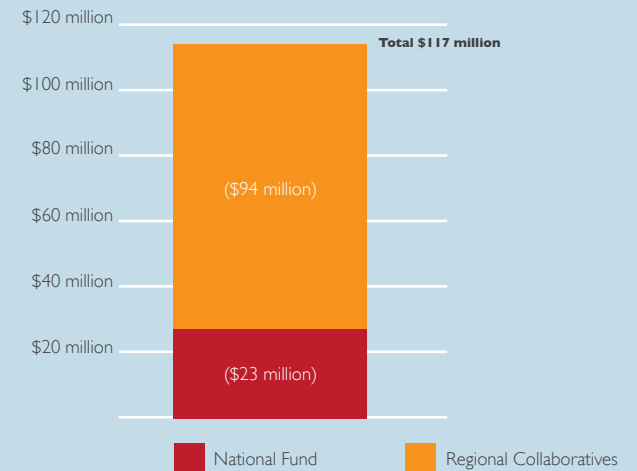
The country needs workforce development solutions for the twenty-first century. Today, businesses are decentralized, networked, adaptive, and technologically adept. Workers in every type of job must exercise judgment, use technology, learn continuously, and respond to change. An effective workforce system must create value for employers and workers. It must be nimble, networked, decentralized, and operate in real time and for the long haul.

## Better Jobs



Employed participants in Boston's SkillWorks partnership, one of the National Fund's earliest grantees, earn an average of almost \$4/hour more than pre-enrollment wages.

## Leveraged Funding



The 21 regional collaboratives that currently receive investments from the National Fund leverage a 4:1 match raised at the local level, for a total investment of \$117 million.

## PROMISING PARTNERSHIPS

NO SINGLE SOLUTION CAN MEET THE RANGE OF NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS ACROSS THE NATION. HOWEVER, THE NATIONAL FUND AND ITS PARTNERS ARE IMPLEMENTING ENTREPRENEURIAL, LOCALLY DESIGNED STRATEGIES THAT SHOW ENORMOUS PROMISE:

- **Local funders work together to assemble civic capacity and contribute new, flexible resources** to encourage skill development and career advancement. Every \$1 from the National Fund is leveraging \$4 at the local level for the creation and support of their partnerships.
- **Workforce partnerships organize local stakeholders and resources in new ways** to help workers gain skills and help businesses access and cultivate talent. These partnerships share some common characteristics. They are results-driven and entrepreneurial, and they engender trust from both employers and workers. They organize multiple institutions and funding streams to achieve shared goals. They act as brokers in helping individuals gain access to training and support services, particularly for lower-skilled, lower-wage workers and job seekers.
- **Service providers test and adapt new, innovative approaches** to respond effectively to employer and worker needs. They are sparking changes in business employment practices and in public systems. In the process, they are making American workers and businesses more successful players on the global economic stage.

The National Fund for Workforce Solutions is a powerful civic network linking hundreds of funders, businesses, nonprofits, and public institutions. It brings together social, intellectual, and political capital to reinforce effective practice, provide a highly efficient means for discovering and diffusing ideas, and catalyze change to help workers and businesses succeed.

The current national investors include the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Hitachi Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Microsoft Corporation, the Prudential Foundation, the Wal-Mart Foundation, the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Labor. These funders have committed more than \$23 million to the National Fund for the next five years. They are raising additional national investments of \$30 million.

## Fast Facts

<b>Mission</b>	The National Fund is dedicated to moving low-wage workers into higher-paying jobs while providing employers with the skilled employees they need.  This "dual customer" approach is necessary so that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers have access to qualified employees;</li> <li>• Regions are economically competitive; and</li> <li>• People who work earn family-sustaining wages.</li> </ul>
<b>Investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Fund investors raised more than \$23 million.</li> <li>• 216 regional funders have contributed an additional \$94 million.</li> </ul>
<b>Locations</b>	21 partner regions: Baltimore, Boston, Central Wisconsin, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dan River Region (VA), Denver, Des Moines, Hartford, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, New York City, Omaha, Pennsylvania (statewide), Philadelphia, Providence, San Diego, San Francisco Bay Area, Seattle, Washington, DC, Wichita
<b>Five-Year Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage \$200 million in local/regional investments</li> <li>• Place 50,000+ people into promising, career-oriented jobs</li> <li>• Support 1,000+ employers to better recruit and retain employees and advance them into mid-skill-level jobs</li> </ul>
<b>Industries</b>	20 industry sectors: Health care, construction, transportation, aviation, and manufacturing are the most common.