



# **Creating a Green Jobs Program**

**A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE**



**THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS**



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***Creating a***

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## **Introduction**

This training guide has been designed to assist any local government and nonprofit organization in their efforts to create a green jobs program by providing them with the guidelines and strategies that have proven successful in other communities. Included are the necessary steps to implement a program covering topics including recruitment, placement, funding, and curriculum.

Green job programs help train city residents with the necessary skills aimed to supply the future green workforce. Local residents who acquire these valuable skills will attain higher wage jobs that they can reinvest in the community. These opportunities create stronger communities and a more sustainable environment. Programs across the country train students in a variety of fields including remediation of brownfields, installing solar panels, lead and asbestos abatement, and energy auditing. As we work for a greener economy, there will be increasing demand for workers with vital green skills.

## **Green Jobs Defined**

For purposes of this training guide, The U.S. Conference of Mayors have defined green jobs as agriculture jobs supplying corn or soy for transportation fuel, manufacturing jobs producing goods used in renewable power generation, equipment dealers and wholesalers specializing in renewable energy or energy-efficiency products, construction and installation of energy and pollution management systems including brownfields cleanup, government administration of environmental programs, supporting jobs in the engineering, legal, research and consulting fields, and any activity that generates electricity using renewable or nuclear fuels.

## **Step 1: Identify the Need**

Communities must determine what type of jobs their community needs by talking to employers in the local area. This will help ensure that students have the potential of being hired within their community upon graduation. If the training doesn't provide people a higher wage job; that type of training should not be provided. The employer also can help determine the number of students that should be trained. Take into consideration if the market will employ about 50 people per year, there is little reason to train 100. Keeping up to date with the latest environmental technologies and labor market statistics will assist program leaders know the latest information.

## **Step 2: Creating the Curriculum**

Once a community confirms that local employers plan to hire additional staff; what skill sets will be required to secure the jobs for interested applicants need to be determined. These are the people that need help to build the curriculum. It is imperative that end employers define what training is needed so that the community has the best chance of their graduates being hired. Labor market assessments and communicating with employers will tell the community what they need in terms of skill sets depending on local market. Networking with other training programs is important as to not duplicate their ideas and efforts.

Incorporating soft skills, such as resume writing and money management, with technical skills is also essential to developing well-rounded students. In the classroom, students can participate in class study that helps develop specialized environmental knowledge. Onsite/field-based training can help support classroom study. Gaining certifications as a part of the curriculum can also be very beneficial to students. The amount of hours and weeks vary depending on each program and the type of training that would be required. Internships can be provided to students for an interim period of time to work with professionals in the field for hands on experience. A graduation ceremony at the end of each training cycle is encouraged to celebrate the dedication and hard work of students with teachers, fellow classmates, and family. Examples of classes and training include:

*Soft Skills:*

- Job readiness and work ethic
- Personal and professional development
- Interview training, mock interviewing, resume writing
- Money management
- Leadership development
- Financial literacy
- Computer literacy

*Technical:*

- Basic First Aid and Adult CPR training
- 32-Hour Asbestos Abatement training
- 32-Hour Brownfields Environmental, Technology training
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Training (LEED)
- Building Code Requirements and Blue Print Specifications
- Federal and State Environmental Codes
- Personal Protective Equipment

*Certifications:*

- Environmental Health and Safety Training
- Construction Safety
- Confined Space Operations and Hazardous Waste Site Worker
- Lead and Mold Abatement
- 40-Hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response
- 10-Hour OSHA Construction Safety



### Step 3: Raising the Funds

Once a community identifies that “green job” training is needed and they have identified potential employers who will hire the graduates, the community needs to determine how to fund the program. Federal funders have requirements on how the money can be used. Before an entity gets too far along in the process, they need to understand those requirements and determine if they can work within those parameters. Securing funding support for a program is a critical component to establishing the sustainability in a program.

*Potential Funding Opportunities:*

- City, county, state, or federal programs
- Community development organizations
- Local private industry and corporations
- Various foundations
- Environmental, health, safety or job training, institutions
- Private donors

### Step 4: Establishing Partnerships

Once the community is informed of the funding opportunities available, another critical component is identifying other partners that can be brought to the table, so that they utilize their resources efficiently and meet multiple agendas. These partnerships will usually help provide the required match funding, but also provide additional services that will make a more successful training program. Typically, partners like community organizations become members of an Advisory Committee—that continues to evaluate the program and makes decisions about improving the program when it’s needed. Partnerships can provide teachers, classroom materials, and in field training to students. Companies and non profits may also provide internships to students to gain valuable experience.





*Partners that should be considered include:*

- Program alumni association
- Labor unions or workforce development boards
- Local universities and community colleges
- County, city, state departments (Transportation, Environmental, Workforce Development, Labor, Planning, Employment Services)
- Local environmental nonprofits
- Housing authority
- Youth groups and gang prevention groups
- Local environmental practitioners
- Economic groups
- Brownfield groups
- Community action agencies

## **5 Step 5: Identify Participant Minimum Requirements**

End employers should have input in this area—the community needs to know the type of person the employers will consider hiring. Any hiring requirements or restrictions needs to be discussed with the community. For example, some may only hire people with certain skills in addition to the technical training they will receive in the program, such as people that can lift a certain amount, people that have their own transportation, or even people with a bachelor's degree. This will help ensure a community recruits the right type of people that are most likely to get hired once they complete the training.

## Step 6: Providing Services

Communities need to evaluate the type of people they think will take advantage of the program and what services they will need to be successful. Providing various services can help applicants to enroll in the program and do well in classes. Most students that would like to enroll in green and brownfield job training face barriers that hinder them from applying. Programs that can address these common concerns of potential students can vastly increase their applicant pool.

*Services Include:*

- Child day care
- Transportation
- Work equipment
- Housing
- Stipends
- Money management programs

## Step 7: Recruiting Applicants

A recruitment process needs to be created that allows only determined applicants to be inducted. Working with other job agencies that can provide a steady stream of interested participants is helpful. Programs should have detailed information about the program and application materials readily available for applicants. Before the right kind of people are going to invest the time and energy in going through the training, they need to know exactly what they're going to learn, how much time they have to commit, what they need to know before they begin, how much they can expect to make on the job after placement, and that there are real job opportunities.





Making certain the people you recruit have the highest chance of completing the training and getting a job on the end is very important. Interviewing students and negotiating contracts detailing that upon acceptance students will finish the program are highly recommended. Physical and entry/exit skill assessments should be conducted prior to acceptance to a program. Basic skills testing such as math and reading should be administered. It is also important to have someone manage the program that is highly motivated to work with the students or and to assist them in other ways to get employed. This program is not just about technical training, but also about job readiness.

*Places to Recruit:* One-stop career centers, community colleges and universities, local high schools, community based organizations, and faith-based organizations.

*Strategies:*

- Holding information seminars for potential applications, open house, expos
- Placing advertisements in newspapers
- Word of mouth
- Posting flyers around community
- Community events
- Church newsletter
- Community council meetings, newsletters, websites
- Promoting on local news media, set up website and email notification system

*Recruitment Process Tips:*

- Conduct background checks, drug tests, physical examinations
- Offer workshops and technical assistance (child care services important)
- Requesting reference letters is recommended

## Step 8: Job Placement

It is important to keep potential end employers knowledgeable about the program at all times. Networking with the private community is essential to understanding and assessing the future job market. They need to know that the instructors are well qualified and about the program's successes. They need to be invited to training presentations and graduation events to meet past graduates and other employers that have successfully hired from the program. Employers need to know that the community is making the job training program meet their individual needs. Environmental, engineering, construction, and remediation firms working on brown-fields sites are a good source. If a community determines the needs and trains workers to meet the needs, then it will be successful. Internships given to students for a period of time to work with professionals in the field can provide valuable work experience and increase hiring potential.

Cities sometimes give incentives to employers to hire graduates. These can include receiving city contracts or there are hiring ordinance that requires hiring from the community or from program itself. Programs can work with companies already doing contracted projects for city. Work opportunity tax credit program give employer's tax credits to hire graduates. Invite former graduates to come back and talk about strategies they used to get jobs.

*Strategies:*

- Set up a career fair for students and employers to meet at end of each cycle
- Employer breakfast after each class has graduated.
- Keeping a mailing list of companies and notifying them of graduating students
- Set up email system to keep in touch and have students give updates, check in one month, four months, and twelve months increment
- Placing students in internships to hire jobs
- Working for the city itself





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