

General:

1. What is the Where It Starts: Build Better Careers Initiative?

- The Build Better Careers Initiative is a six-year, five city project to improve connections between postsecondary institutions, the financial services sector, and workforce development organizations to strengthen career pathways to jobs that lead to economic mobility.

2. Why is this needed/why was the initiative established?

- Industries, workforce development organizations, and postsecondary education institutions historically have not developed strategies to collaborate in order to meet the needs of 1) people who seek employment or better employment, and 2) employers who need to recruit, retain, skill-up, and advance employees, increase diversity, and strengthen equity and inclusion. Particularly in cities where in-demand jobs remain unfilled, workforce organizations and educational institutions need to improve collaboration to redefine and strengthen career pathways to jobs that lead to economic mobility for all.
- Postsecondary attainment, including certificates, credentials and associate/bachelor's degrees, is a significant factor toward putting people on a path to living wages and wealth generation. Yet many frontline workers, unemployed adults, women, and people of color have not sought or obtained education beyond high school.

3. Who are the key partners in this initiative?

- Truist Foundation
 - i. The Truist Foundation is committed to Truist Financial Corporation's (NYSE: TFC) purpose to inspire and build better lives and communities. Established in 2020, the foundation makes strategic investments in nonprofit organizations to help ensure the communities it serves have more opportunities for a better quality of life. The Truist Foundation's grants and activities focus on building career pathways to economic mobility and strengthening small businesses. Learn more at Truist.com/Foundation.
- CAEL
 - i. The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) is a national nonprofit working to improve education-to-career pathways for adult learners. We help organizations succeed by providing expertise, resources, and innovative solutions that effectively support adult learners as they navigate on- and off-ramps between education and employment. Learn more at cael.org.

4. How many grant dollars are committed to this initiative?

- The full award amount of this grant from the Truist Foundation is \$15.7 million over six years.

5. In what cities/regions will this work take place?

- The new Build Better Careers Initiative will launch in five cities in the southeastern United States, to be announced individually. Each regional launch will have a duration of three years.
- The first three regions in which the Build Better Careers Initiative will launch are:
 - i. Charlotte, NC
 - ii. Memphis, TN
 - iii. South Florida

6. How were the cities/regions identified and what criteria were used to select them?

- The cities were identified using labor market data showing the current and/or potential growth of the financial services sector including the need to fill a large number of vacant or newly created entry and mid-level positions.
- CAEL and the Truist Foundation also examined data on postsecondary education completion rates, and its own connections to postsecondary institutions and workforce development organizations.

7. How can my city be a part of this initiative?

- You can reach out to Ashley Wilhelm at awilhelm@cael.org to express your interest in becoming a service region for this initiative.

8. When will this initiative officially start?

- The project team will work with each selected region to identify regional partners and determine a start date that aligns best with the lead agency.

9. What industries are the focus of this initiative?

- The initiative will focus primarily on the financial services sector and adjacent services/support industries.

10. How many people will be impacted, and what is the target population for Build Better Careers?

- Through this project, CAEL anticipates reaching 6,000 individuals over a three-year period.
- The initiative redefines and strengthens career pathways to jobs that lead to economic mobility for all, focusing on low to moderate income (LMI) workers, women, and Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).

Local Level:

1. Who are the ultimate beneficiaries of this work?

- The beneficiaries are not only those noted above, but also communities will benefit from more jobs, employers will have access to a steady pipeline of qualified, diverse employees, and postsecondary institutions will develop stronger connections with industry within the region.

2. What kinds/types of partners are needed?

- Finance industry leaders
- Workforce development organizations
- Educational providers
- Community-based organizations that serve specific populations (BIPOC, women, low-income, unemployed, underemployed, etc.)

3. Are prospective partners required to have a physical presence in the selected city/region?

- Prospective partners are not required to have a physical presence in the selected city/region although they should be providing services within the selected city/region and already have established credibility within the community.

4. How are you identifying local partners?

- Interested local partners should contact CAEL at: www.cael.org/truist. The project manager will walk the interested partners through a vetting process that will in-turn identify the applicant as a local partner.

5. What is the process for becoming a partner?

- Interested local partners should speak directly with the project manager, Ashley Wilhelm (please see contact information below).

6. Do partners have to provide funding toward the initiative (in-kind or dollars leveraged)?

- There is no requirement to provide funding towards the initiative although it is anticipated that there may be opportunities to leverage additional funding towards assisting the population being served.

7. Where can I apply to be considered as a potential partner?

- Interested organizations can learn more about the application process and locate contact information if interested in engaging with us at www.cael.org/truist.

8. Who are the contacts for questions about this initiative?

- CAEL: Ashley Wilhelm, Project Manager, awilhelm@cael.org (for project involvement)
- CAEL: Elizabeth Brandes, Vice President, Marketing & Communications, ebrandes@cael.org (media inquiries)