

Wasatch Range



North Central Utah, an eight county region known as the Wasatch Range region, is at a critical juncture as the region faces a severe workforce shortage. The region, which includes Salt Lake City and Provo, seeks to develop a well-educated and well-trained workforce and the opportunity to prosper economically.

As part of a collaborative effort of state and local government, academia and private industry, a plan to expand access to workforce training programs and attract high-growth, technology-based businesses has been proposed. With the help from the education entities such as Salt Lake Community College and University of Utah, the plan promotes the training and advanced educational degrees that will create a talent pool capable of filling the innovation jobs of the 21st century. Additionally, the state identified life sciences as an industry capable of yielding many jobs in the Wasatch Range region. High technology jobs – such as those in the life sciences industry – pay 75% higher than the average job in Utah. The region will utilize the resources provided as a Second Generation WIRED region to train and prepare Utahans for jobs in this sector in addition to expanding opportunities for employment in all high-growth industries.

The regional partnership has developed 4 strategies to promote economic and workforce development within the region:

1. Create outreach programs: These programs will help recruit and fully engage available workers and emphasize the region's potential employment strength, such as in the life sciences sector.
2. Expand successful training programs: These programs include lab-based training for students and educators.
3. Partner with research: Partnerships will include research universities and industry research and development laboratories to ensure the Utah biotechnology workforce meets the needs of Utah's most innovative companies.
4. Create a "bioincubator": Local education centers can be utilized by students to carry out small, entrepreneurial life science-based projects.

Strategic partnerships include the Utah Department of Workforce Services, GOED, Utah Centers of Excellence (innovation into commercialization), USTAR (Utah Science, Technology and Research), Salt Lake Community College, technical colleges, state research universities and statewide economic development organizations within the region, professional associations and industry. Using WIRED, the region plans to establish a globally competitive, sustainable life sciences industry in the region and provide the local economy with a significant number of new high growth jobs.

