



Talent & Innovation Driving Prosperity in the Piedmont Triad

In 2006 the Piedmont Triad Partnership (PTP) successfully competed for a U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant to lead a regional economic transformation initiative in North Carolina's Piedmont Triad Region.

What is the initiative? The WIRED initiative reflects the federal government's beliefs that (i) the United States can best compete in the global economy through innovation, and (ii) regions are the most appropriate geography for innovation. This grant, which supports the integration of workforce development and economic development efforts at the regional level, will support the program of work described in the Piedmont Triad Regional Vision Plan.

The program of work funded by WIRED includes education, workforce development and training, and economic growth and competitiveness in four target industry clusters: advanced manufacturing, logistics, health care, and creative enterprises/arts.

How is this program structured? This initiative is a collaborative effort across the Piedmont Triad Region that is being led by the PTP under the direction of a stakeholder action committee and the PTP board of directors. Program components include industry cluster roundtables, as well as specific activities directed toward education, workforce development, entrepreneurship, innovation and outreach. The primary focus areas of the initiative are (i) identifying and implementing demand-driven solutions to build a high-skill workforce and (ii) developing innovations



and partnerships to enhance the region's ability to compete in the global economy.

What are the initial activities? The first strategies being implemented include: awarding innovative and collaborative Focus grants to build regional workforce skills, establishing a regional Leadership Council, developing industry cluster roundtables, creating a Higher Education Innovations Council, collaborating with the region's K-12 school systems on school-to-work best practices, supporting entrepreneurship, and extending outreach to the region's rural areas and minority and underserved populations.

The success of this initiative depends on the engagement and support of partners across the region. There will be opportunities for leaders from Piedmont Triad businesses, local governments, non-profit organizations, and academic institutions to participate in the WIRED initiative to ensure that the Piedmont Triad Region leverages its existing economic assets, grows its innovation capacity and builds the highly skilled workforce necessary to compete successfully in the global economy.

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