

TAP INTO NORTH CAROLINA'S TOP WORKFORCE

North Carolina has long pioneered innovation in workforce, from establishing the nation's first public university in 1789 to launching the first customized training program in 1958. Now, North Carolina is the ninth most populous state in the country with a diverse labor force of over five million professionals that is growing every day to meet the needs of businesses. North Carolina offers the largest manufacturing workforce in the Southeast; the Research Triangle Park, the largest research park in the nation; and the second-largest financial center in the country in Charlotte.

Our state is growing at the third-fastest rate in the country, adding over 400 new residents per day and ushering in a diverse range of professionals looking for a great career and high quality of life.

OUR EVER-GROWING TALENT POOL IS SUPPORTED BY:

- **52 universities**, including five Tier-1 research universities
- **58 community colleges**
- **10 Historically Black Colleges and Universities**
- **8 military bases** with 20,000 exiting service members annually

Each year, more than 50,000 begin promising careers in one of North Carolina's key industries including advanced manufacturing, life sciences, technology, aerospace, and finance. Our state is investing in programs to build our STEM talent pool and prepare students for careers in in-demand fields.

The Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, in conjunction with local community economic development organizations, connects prospective and existing companies with workforce resources.

NORTH CAROLINA CUSTOMIZED TRAINING PROGRAM

To offset costs associated with relocating, opening, or expanding a business facility, North Carolina offers NCEdge, a customized training program that provides education, training, certifications, and support services through our expansive network of 58 community colleges.

Training directors at each college connect with the company to identify its workforce needs then work to build out a customized training program. Eligible industries and sectors include, but are not limited to, advanced manufacturing, information technology, life sciences, regional or national warehousing and distribution centers, customer support, and air courier services. Funds may be used to support training assessments, instructional design, instructional costs, and training delivery.

CORNING



ThermoFisher
SCIENTIFIC

FUJIFILM
FUJIFILM Biotechnologies

HANES
Brands Inc

BY THE NUMBERS

In fiscal year 2024-2025,
the Customized Training
Program supported:

100+
NEW BUSINESSES

800+
TOTAL BUSINESSES SERVED

30,800+
EMPLOYEES TRAINED

\$13.3
MILLION INVESTED
IN TRAINING

NORTH CAROLINA WORKFORCE AT A GLANCE

North Carolina is committed to maintaining its ranking as the #1 state for business, supported by a highly skilled workforce. The North Carolina Department of Commerce created First In Talent, a statewide strategic economic development plan and road map to ensure our workforce remains competitive. Key tenets of the plan include investments in K-12 education, enhanced support for populations with barriers to employment, and enabling businesses to create meaningful work experiences. MyFutureNC, a statewide nonprofit, is an important driver of this work, engaging workforce leaders in education, business, and government to increase college and career access and postsecondary completion for North Carolina's students.



ADDITIONAL WORKFORCE RESOURCES

NORTH CAROLINA UNIVERSITIES

Our university system is one of the highest-rated in the country, consisting of 52 universities including five Tier-1 research universities and 10 historically Black colleges and universities. The University of North Carolina public university system features 16 member schools, including the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, and North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University and graduates over 66,000 students each year. Adding to our rich network of higher learning are private and independent universities like Duke University, Wake Forest University, and Davidson College.

Global corporations have well-established partnerships with all universities in North Carolina and active alumni networks provide a strong and ongoing talent pool to recruit from.

VETERANS AND TRANSITIONING MILITARY

Each year, nearly 20,000 servicemembers transition out of North Carolina's eight military installations into civilian jobs, joining a pool of over 620,000 veterans already living in North Carolina. Servicemembers entering the civilian workforce bring an extensive array of experience to civilian jobs with skills in engineering, aviation and aerospace, machinery, automotive, maintenance, and more.

There are several organizations in North Carolina that connect companies directly with exiting military talent including North Carolina for Military Employment (NC4ME), the North Carolina Military Business Center, and the North Carolina Division of Workforce Solutions. Federal tax credits are available for companies hiring veterans and transitioning servicemembers for entry-level up to leadership positions.

NCWORKS CAREER CENTERS

North Carolina jobseekers access career services through NCWorks Career Centers, a statewide network of 70+ centers administered by the North Carolina Department of Commerce Division of Workforce Solutions. NCWorks Career Centers serve adults currently unemployed or underemployed as well as youth aged 16-24. Certified career counselors assist jobseekers with basic career services including job assessments, resume and cover letter preparation, interview practice, and job searches. Jobseekers with barriers to employment may receive intensive services including soft skills training and paid training that leads to an industry-recognized credential.

NCWorks provides companies an array of services including hiring fairs, job candidate screenings and referrals, space to conduct interviews, information on tax credits and federal bonding, and layoff/closure prevention services. NCWorks administers the On-the-Job Training program wherein eligible companies may be reimbursed for wages paid to new employees in training.

NCWorks Career Centers served approximately 84,000 jobseekers and 23,000 employers in the 2024-2025 year.

APPRENTICESHIPNC

Companies may register an apprenticeship program that provides structured on-the-job training with related instruction, typically in partnership with the local community college, through ApprenticeshipNC.

Working with an ApprenticeshipNC Consultant, companies are able to build a program tailored to their training needs. When the program is approved and the apprenticeship is registered, companies may take on apprentices who go on to earn state and national credentials certifying their skills.