

National Fund Selects Four Cities to Participate in Job Quality Initiative

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Local partners will assist employers in changing their business practices to improve hiring, retention and engagement of frontline workers

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 11, 2017) – Today, the National Fund announced that it is awarding \$400,000 in grants to [workforce collaboratives](#) in Boston, Atlanta, Dallas and Hartford to advance job quality strategies in the healthcare, construction, manufacturing and hospitality industries. The grants, made possible through [The Prudential Foundation](#), will enable local employers to incorporate new skill development strategies and/or business practices that will improve their competitiveness and result in better jobs for workers.

The National Fund’s Job Quality Initiative is focused on expanding the number of good jobs for American workers by promoting business practices and community investments that support workers and businesses. National Fund collaboratives will partner with companies to implement new hiring and training strategies that will enhance productivity and growth while improving key conditions for workers such as learning new skills, higher wages, better benefits, improved supervision, incentive bonuses, and opportunities for advancement.

“From our work with thousands of employers, we understand that a ‘good job’ is key for workers, companies and communities to succeed,” said Fred Dedrick, President and CEO of the National Fund. “By effectively hiring, training, engaging and empowering entry-level staff, companies create a competitive advantage. That is why our local partners are working directly with businesses to help them understand what ‘makes a good job’ and how to institute practices that sustain them.”

A total of seven cities will be participating in the program. An additional three cities will be announced in late spring. Each collaborative will be developing strategies tailored to their labor market, workforce system, employer partners and unique challenges.

Atlanta CareerRise, in partnership with the Construction Ready Program, is addressing job quality issues impacting the retention and advancement of new hires within Georgia’s construction industry. The project will identify and document best practices for retention and employee advancement among 30 construction employers hiring from the Construction Education Foundation of Georgia’s (CEFGA) Construction Ready Program and will help three companies implement the most promising practices. To reach greater scale, CareerRise will develop a toolkit and incentives for adoption for the more than 300 CEFGA partners statewide.

Pathways to Work, the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, and the DFW Hospital Council Foundation will work with members of the Dallas Healthcare Learning Consortium to solve a shared workforce challenge: improving job quality of the Patient Care Technician (PCT) position. With a focus on reducing vacancies and turnover as well as promoting career advancement for healthcare workers, this project will advance three strategies to address this

challenge: 1) Participating employers will use a range of internal strategies to raise engagement and recognition of PCTs; 2) Pathways to Work will develop a learning community among the organizations to spread successful practices; and 3) At the conclusion of the project, Pathways to Work will provide case studies on successful efforts for further replication.

SkillWorks, Boston is partnering with JVS Boston to help businesses in the healthcare and hospitality industries more effectively hire and retain frontline workers. For all healthcare employers, this project will focus on securing fair and equitable wages, creating career pathways to higher paying jobs, providing peer mentoring and access to academic and career coaching, and a series of process changes including job redesign, cross-training, scheduling design, financial counseling, and supervisory training. For all fast-dining employers, this project will focus on helping entry-level workers access benefits, full-time hours, employer-sponsored training, additional education, and supervisory training for promotion potential.

The Workforce Solutions Collaborative of Metro Hartford is partnering with the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technologies to help four companies increase the productivity of their employees and the quality of their jobs. The participating companies will implement three strategies to improve operations: 1) Training frontline supervisors or mid-management to ensure that frontline, younger and diverse workers are effectively engaged and managed; 2) Workforce Solutions will provide an on-site career navigator to help entry-level workers address barriers to their success on the job, and 3) Companies will be recognized for their leadership in developing quality jobs and promoted as effective examples for other companies.

Lata Ready, senior vice president, diversity, inclusion & impact, Prudential Financial and Chair and President, The Prudential Foundation, discussed why Prudential has chosen to partner with the National Fund saying, “To help people build a strong financial future, we strive to invest in both local communities committed to supporting workers and businesses but also building an infrastructure that can accelerate the dissemination of successful efforts. The National Fund provides an avenue for us to deepen and expand our impact, create more workforce programs that meet industry needs and to seed innovative practices that generate good jobs.”

Each community will be given up to \$100,000 through the National Fund with subsequent payments based on progress reports from each program. The National Fund will support each of the local efforts and spread key lessons and effective practices to its network of [more than 30 partner communities](#).

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About National Fund for Workforce Solutions

The National Fund for Workforce Solutions is a national network promoting economic opportunity and prosperous communities through investment and innovation. Based in Washington D.C., the National Fund partners with philanthropy, employers, workers, public and private community organizations, and more than 30 regional collaboratives to invest in skills, improve systems, and generate good jobs. The National Fund supports civic and business leaders in promoting evidence-based practices and policies that build shared prosperity. Learn more about the National Fund and its local partners at www.NationalFund.org.

About Prudential Financial

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