

# SKILLS ECONOMY TOOLKIT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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**Workforce Development Boards have long understood that skills are the currency of opportunity. As employers, educators, and technology platforms increasingly align with this skills approach, WDBs are uniquely positioned to lead the infrastructure that makes skills transparent, portable, and actionable across systems.**

WDBs sit at the critical intersection of employers, educators, job seekers, and policymakers. You understand local labor markets, broker regional partnerships, and directly connect people to opportunity. As hiring practices evolve and technology reshapes how we learn, work, and advance, your role is more essential than ever.

*The opportunity is clear: A skills economy approach can unlock talent, accelerate hiring, address recognition gaps, and drive economic mobility. Yet the path forward requires new strategies, partnerships, and practices.*

This Skills Economy Toolkit provides an action-oriented resource. Developed by NAWB with input from workforce leaders nationwide, this comprehensive resource equips board members, executive directors, and employers with everything needed to implement skills practices and activities across your operations.

The toolkit includes multiple action guides focused on board readiness and implementation. Each action guide includes step-by-step processes, embedded tools (checklists, templates, frameworks), and real-world examples. Use them independently to address specific challenges, or deploy the full toolkit to transform your entire approach.

This toolkit will help your board:

- Align strategic plans with regional skills intelligence

- Champion skills-based and skills-first hiring, advancement, and credentialing
- Leverage technology and AI responsibly
- Ensure equitable access to career pathways for all workers
- Measure and communicate impact through skills-aligned metrics

Whether you're exploring skills practices for the first time or deepening existing work, this toolkit meets you where you are and supports your next step forward.

The skills economy isn't coming; it is here. Workforce Development Boards that act now will define the future of work in their regions and create lasting opportunities for the workers and employers you serve.

*Let's build it together.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Bercich', written over a light gray rectangular background.

Andrew Bercich  
Chief Executive Officer, NAWB