



Workforce Development Strategy Overview

This toolkit outlines five primary strategies to drive workforce development through infrastructure investments in ways that advance equity and job quality. The strategies build on each other to enable cities to demonstrate an equity-centered vision for workforce from the way the program is designed (*Strategy 1*) to how the policies would support its implementation (*Strategy 2*), how procurement would ensure vendors and subrecipients adhere to the standards (*Strategy 3*), how workers would be protected if they enter BIL or IRA funded projects (*Strategy 4*) and how success would be defined and evaluated (*Strategy 5*), if an award is issued.

Primary Strategies for Workforce Development



Program Design

Sets the approach, goals and areas of focus for the program



Policy

Establishes guidance, regulations, and requirements



Procurement

Deploys funding in alignment with the organization's goals



Education & Enforcement

Ensures compliance and educates shareholders



Monitoring & Evaluation

Collects and analyzes results to determine impact

Workforce Development Strategies for Infrastructure Projects

This is a holistic, integrated approach that considers how such funding can be used by cities to impact the entire lifecycle of the work through the structuring of their grant submissions. It considers not only the programmatic delivery needs but also the assessment and environmental components necessary to successfully launch, monitor and assess the work as these efforts also require dedicated funding and human resources.

Additionally, incorporating all five primary strategies positions cities to use the initial public investment, if awarded, to create far larger impacts on their communities by leveraging the policies, enforcement and assessment approaches in other related areas, effectively uplifting underserved communities. While the strategies can be used individually, policy and practice align when the strategies are used in tandem and will lead to lasting systemic change.

Cities are encouraged to consider the inclusion of one or more of these strategies in their grant applications to demonstrate a robust understanding of and commitment to equitable pathways to good jobs. Each strategy is described below and has been mapped to the job quality principles that it directly supports. Note that all examples included in this guide are based on publicly available information from city, state or federal sources.



Workforce Primary Strategy 1: Program Design

Program Design sets the approach, goals and areas of focus for the program. It sets out how the work will be accomplished and is a powerful way to articulate both the strategy for the work and the stakeholders involved in its development. Competitive BIL and IRA grant submissions require an articulation of how the funding will be used, and the design for the workforce development programming will directly demonstrate the specific model and its associated investments. This includes addressing the use of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, supportive services and essential skill development for barrier removal, provision of occupational training to job seekers or incumbents, and support for small and minority-owned businesses.

Program Design includes five substrategies. Use the links below to jump directly to the strategy of interest.

Program Design Substrategies		
<u>1a - Earn and Learn Models</u>	Apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and subsidized on-the-job training (OJT)	JQ Principles: Earnings, Schedules, Environment and Culture
<u>1b - Occupational Skill Development</u>	Two- or four-year degrees, K-12 dual enrollment, career technical education, credentials and micro credentials	JQ Principles: Learning and Development
<u>1c - Essential Skill Development</u>	English language skills, digital literacy, customer service, problem solving, empathy, collaboration, emotional intelligence, communication, creative & critical thinking, collaboration, dependability and resourcefulness	JQ Principles: Learning and Development, Purpose and Meaning
<u>1d - Supportive Services</u>	Food, shelter, physical/mental health support, childcare, stipends/cash aid, certifications/materials, transportation, and other population-specific needs (e.g., English language, expungement)	JQ Principles: Benefits
<u>1e - Business Support</u>	Subsidies, tax or other incentives and access to capital, incubators, business process evaluation and feasibility studies	JQ Principles: Environment and Culture



Workforce Primary Strategy 2: Policy

Policy establishes guidance, regulations and requirements, setting the standard and the tone for what is encouraged, required or prohibited. Policy changes can be implemented at a variety of levels, some internal to a government agency, some specific to a project or program, and some applicable to the entire geographic jurisdiction.

The development and implementation of policies to protect and uplift workers, ensure underserved communities are engaged and that economic mobility is supported are not only aligned with the spirit of BIL and IRA investments but specifically encouraged or required, such as the use of PLAs for large projects. Many NOFOs require or encourage submissions that address wages, schedules, worker safety, targeted local hiring, and community benefits among others. Inclusion of policy work in city proposals or plans will demonstrate alignment with the goals of the federal investments and signal readiness to receive and steward such funding to maximize transformational impact. Such policies will also position city leadership to transform funding sources beyond the scope of BIL or IRA investments and send a clear message to constituents about the value placed on creating good jobs for all citizens, far beyond the timeframe of even the existing federal investments.

Policy includes seven substrategies. Use the links below to jump directly to the strategy of interest.

Policy Substrategies		
<u>2a - Living Wage/Prevailing Wage</u>	Prevailing wage is the average wage paid to workers in a certain occupation within a specific geographic area. Used to promote fair compensation and prevent undercutting by bidders. Living wage or self-sufficiency wage focus on the cost of living in a geography in order to afford basic needs and the family size. Both are usually higher than minimum wages in a given geographic area.	JQ Principle: Earnings
<u>2b - Scheduling</u>	Outlines guidelines for stable, predictable schedules such as notification periods for schedule changes and on-call practices.	JQ Principle: Schedules
<u>2c - Local Hire</u>	Encourage or require businesses, often those that receive public funding, to recruit and hire workers or apprentices from a specific geographic area in order to boost the local economy, provide work opportunities for unemployed and underserved individuals, and demonstrate benefits to the taxpayers who are funding the work.	JQ Principle: Earnings
<u>2d - Safety Standards</u>	Established to minimize risks associated with various activities, products or processes and to protect the workers who perform them from harm.	JQ Principle: Safety and Security
<u>2e - Project Labor Agreements</u>	Pre-hire collective bargaining agreements that establish the terms of employment, often including wage, schedules and leave.	JQ Principle: Earnings, Safety and Security
<u>2f - Community Benefits Agreements</u>	Negotiated between a developer and a group of community organizations, sometimes including the local government, to ensure that the project benefits the local community directly as well as the developer.	JQ Principle: Earnings, Safety and Security
<u>2g - Responsible Bidder</u>	Ensure that the chosen contractor possesses the necessary qualifications and capabilities to successfully complete the project such as financial stability, safety and security standards, business ethics and compliance.	JQ Principle: Safety and Security



Workforce Primary Strategy 3: Procurement

Procurement enables an agency to align its spending with its values and can be an important way to use required processes to diversify impact and build vendor capacity. The White House through executive order, as well as BIL and IRA, emphasize the importance of engaging underserved organizations in this work so they are the beneficiaries of the investment. This includes small businesses, nonprofits and the workers themselves. Many of the agencies also considered how worker protections will be maintained in any subgranting that will occur under the grant.

Procurement includes three substrategies. Use the links below to jump directly to the strategy of interest.

Procurement Substrategies		
<u>3a - Vendor Diversification</u>	Mindfully creating a diverse group of suppliers that can provide the same or similar products or services while supporting inclusive growth in a community	JQ Principle: Various
<u>3b - Procurement Execution</u>	Procurement practices that embed job quality and equity into each phase of the work	JQ Principle: Various
<u>3c - Active Contract Management</u>	Regular, data-informed meetings between government agencies and social service providers designed to produce action that improves performance ¹	JQ Principle: Various

¹ https://govlab.hks.harvard.edu/files/govlabs/files/six_tools_for_implementing_active_contract_management.pdf



Workforce Primary Strategy 4: Education & Enforcement

Enforcement is a function that local government agencies are uniquely positioned to play in order to protect and uplift workers in their communities while educating and supporting their local businesses. It includes a careful balance of helping businesses understand and adapt processes to keep up with new regulations while enforcing the law through investigations, citations, settlements, fines or other actions to prosecute violations of worker protection laws on behalf of the community.

As cities position themselves to secure funding through BIL and IRA grants, articulating a well-thought-out approach to enforcement demonstrates not only an understanding of this key tool for job quality and equity but also a plan for how the dollars will drive fundamental changes in the community well beyond the jobs created through the BIL funds themselves. Additionally, articulating a plan for enforcement helps to address requirements or strong encouragement by some agencies, such as DOT,² to ensure rights are not being violated, conduct regular pay audits, hold meetings with community members to report on performance, educate workers on their rights and maintain transparency. Enforcement, alongside policy, becomes the mechanism to achieve many of these objectives once funds are awarded. When a design for enforcement supports programmatic elements as well as policy tools, like those laid out in the policy section of this document, it demonstrates a full life-cycle view of how workers will be both connected to work and supported while performing it, which proactively limits or halts violations before they occur.

Enforcement includes three core substrategies. Use the links below to jump directly to the strategy of interest. These can be used individually or in concert to demonstrate how city leadership will multiply the positive impact of the infrastructure investments in the community.

Education and Enforcement Substrategies		
4a - Strategic Enforcement	Employer education, outreach, compliance reporting, as well as application of penalties, fines and other restrictions	JQ Principle: Safety and Security, Earnings, Schedule, Benefits
4b - Worker/Industry Standard Boards	Sector, industry or issue specific worker-led boards	JQ Principle: Safety and Security, Voice & Representation
4c - Worker Education and Engagement	Outreach, education and campaigns that increase worker knowledge and create space for worker voice	JQ Principle: Safety and Security, Voice & Representation, Learning & Development

² <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/grant-application-checklist-for-strong-workforce-and-labor-plan>



Workforce Primary Strategy 5: Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation are mechanisms to ensure that the work is achieving its desired result by establishing outcome and impact goals, and then tracking and validating progress toward them. Monitoring and evaluation includes two core substrategies. Use the links below to jump directly to the strategy of interest.

Monitoring and Evaluation Substrategies		
<u>5a - Logic Models</u>	Graphic representation of the work that is useful for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating an initiative. Outlines desired outcomes and impact.	JQ Principle: Various
<u>5b - Evaluation</u>	A process that critically examines a policy, program or implementation. Often conducted at the end of a phase or project. Generally builds on data collected through ongoing monitoring during the life of a project but may go deeper in particular areas.	JQ Principle: Various