



Investing in Good Jobs for North Carolina

Business leaders in North Carolina and across the globe say their number one priority for creating new jobs is a well-trained workforce. Hearing that call, Governor Roy Cooper's budget prioritizes training and growing our state's talented workforce through the NC Job Ready initiative, which is built on key principles for improving our workforce: education and skills training, partnering with employers, and tapping into local innovation. Read more about NC Job Ready [here](#).

Preparing North Carolinians for the Jobs of Today and Tomorrow

Many of the good-paying jobs available now and in the future require skilled workers with specialized training. Governor Cooper's budget invests \$30 million to create NC GROW (Getting Ready for Opportunities in the Workforce), a financial aid program that covers tuition and selected fees for community college students enrolled in two-year degree programs leading to good-paying jobs in high-demand fields. The plan also helps students earn community college workforce credentials, by investing \$15 million over two years to create NC GROW Aid for Students Seeking Industry Credentials. Students could get awards of up to \$1,000 to pursue credentials in high-demand fields such as information technology, health sciences, electrical line worker, and advanced manufacturing.

Expanding Finish Line Grants

Governor Cooper's Finish Line Grants provide up to \$1,000 per student to pay for car repairs, medical needs, dependent care, or other emergencies that might prevent them from completing their training. Since 2018, when Governor Cooper launched the Finish Line Grants program at community colleges using federal funding, more than 500 Finish Line Grants have helped students stay on track to complete their training. Governor Cooper's budget proposes expanding the Finish Line Grants to all North Carolina colleges and universities, providing \$5 million to continue to program for community college students and \$10 million to expand it to public and independent four-year colleges and universities.

Developing Talent Through Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning gives students and job seekers beyond-the-classroom learning opportunities to prepare for the working world. It also allows employers to develop their own talent pool through tailored, hands-on training. Governor Cooper's budget proposes a \$10 million Work-Based Learning Fund to provide grants for employers to develop their workforce. Funds may be used to establish or expand paid internships, youth and adult apprenticeships, and up-skilling initiatives to provide new training for existing employees and open entry-level positions to new employees.

Increasing Access to Workforce Training

Governor Cooper's budget includes over \$11 million for community colleges to offer more short-term continuing education and workforce development courses leading to industry credentials. The budget also supports the Regional Advanced Manufacturing Pipeline-East (RAMP-East) program, a regional partnership to improve recruitment of underserved populations in ten counties for advanced manufacturing jobs.

Modernizing Community College Campuses

To invest in crucial state infrastructure, Governor Cooper's budget proposes putting a bond worth \$3.9 billion to a vote of the people, which would include \$500 million for facility improvements at community colleges across the state.