

## **Good Jobs Challenge Grant Presents Southeastern Pennsylvania with Unique Opportunity for Equitable Growth**

*How \$22.8 million will change the narrative for thousands in our region*

PHILADELPHIA, Aug. 22, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- On August 3, when the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) announced that [Philadelphia Works](#) (PhilaWorks) was one of [32 winners in the Good Jobs Challenge \(GJC\)](#), the award amount became the headline. While \$22.8M is certainly headline-worthy, it is not the only thing that makes this grant opportunity valuable.

The GJC grant, funded by President Biden's [American Rescue Plan](#), invests in communities, helping them to rebuild strong, vibrant, and inclusive economies. The GJC is a challenge because, as the name suggests, it pushes workforce and economic development organizations to be innovative, resourceful, and bold in their approaches to quality job creation.

"We fully understand the significance of the opportunity in front of us," said H. Patrick Clancy, president and CEO at PhilaWorks. "Over the next three years, we have a chance to connect 3,000 people in the region to quality, family-sustaining jobs in high demand occupations and industries."

For Pennsylvania's southeast region, those quality jobs will be connected to careers in the life sciences/healthcare, energy, and the building trades/construction sectors. The employment opportunities and training programs that will develop talent pipelines into these industries will be both of quality and equitably accessible.

"Life sciences and health care are pillars of the region's economy, and represent industries where Philadelphia has exerted global leadership," said Matt Bergheiser, president of University City District, which operates the West Philadelphia Skills Initiative. "The Skills Initiative is honored to help lead this regional effort to continue to lift up and advance local talent into life-changing and region-shaping jobs."

Integral to the success of this investment will be the six workforce and economic development organizations of all six counties in Southeastern PA (Philadelphia, Montgomery, Bucks, Chester Delaware, and Berks). PhilaWorks will lead the grant work along with three "backbone" organizations, [West Philadelphia Skills Initiative](#), [Philadelphia Energy Authority](#), and the [Philadelphia Area Labor Management Committee](#). The collective offers three unique value propositions for the work ahead

– **equitable opportunity, wraparound services, and strong employer commitment.**

Along with dedicated time for system development and program design phases, this opportunity also comes with a community of practice, led by [JFF](#) and data collection supported by the [US Census Bureau](#).

"The excitement around this grant award is warranted," said Patricia Blumenauer, PhilaWorks' vice president of operations and data. "The ability to leverage multiple funding streams and plan for both sustainability and scalability proactively gets us in front of historic workforce challenges and funding gaps. With this structure, we'll be able to implement the full vision, and build something sustainable, a program model that will remain long after the grant period has ended."

To stay informed on grant activity, subscribe to the [GJC list serve](#). Email specific grant questions directly to [Good Jobs Challenge](#).

### **About Philadelphia Works**

Philadelphia Works is the city's Workforce Development Board, investing in solutions and services to grow Philadelphia's economy by connecting employers to workforce talent and career seekers to jobs. We influence the public policies that support economic growth and optimize funding and resources to invest in regional solutions to build a skilled and thriving workforce. For more information about our dedicated board members and staff, workforce research, labor market data, services, and initiatives, and to view success stories, please visit [philaworks.org](https://philaworks.org).

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