



Snohomish County
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County Executive

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Snohomish County Announces \$6 Million Funding Opportunity for Workforce Recovery Programs

County Seeks Programs Focused on Highly Impacted Populations Including Youth, Individuals with Disabilities, and Immigrants and Refugees

SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash., April 26, 2023 – Executive Dave Somers today announced that Snohomish County is accepting applications for a \$6 million [Workforce Recovery Notice of Funding Availability \(NOFA\)](#). The Workforce Recovery NOFA will fund projects that provide enhanced employment training and/or address challenges to employment, with the goal of connecting individuals to stable jobs or career pathways. The NOFA is funded through the County’s federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocation.

In Snohomish County, an estimated 8,400 fewer people are working today than at the start of the pandemic, largely due to the increasing retirement rates of thousands of workers and the lack of child care availability. Despite countywide unemployment rates near historic lows, some groups are lagging behind. Young people ages 16-24 have an unemployment rate of 11.9 percent, which is more than four times the countywide unemployment rate of 2.6 percent.

“When we talked to the community about their priorities for pandemic recovery, supporting our workforce came up in nearly every conversation we had. Right now, employers are struggling to hire the staff they need, and vulnerable populations are struggling to find good-paying jobs due to systemic challenges,” said Executive Somers. “With these investments, we are creating a gold-standard workforce development system that meets the needs of community members and employers.”

“Snohomish County has made workforce development a high priority even prior to the pandemic. From advanced manufacturing and aerospace to building and construction trades, we must develop a skilled workforce for the future success of our region,” said Vice Chair Nate Nehring ([District 1](#)). These investments will continue the great work we have started and I am excited to see the projects that come forward for this funding.”

“As our county continues to recover from COVID, it’s imperative that we maintain our focus on efforts that do not leave anyone behind,” added Councilmember Megan Dunn ([District 2](#)). “I am proud to support workforce grants which will bolster innovation and provide support for workers from highly impacted populations using a data driven process backed by input from businesses and the community.”

“Not only will these workforce recovery programs help enhance economic development and stability in Snohomish County, they support what both residents and employers are asking for; workforce development throughout our pandemic recovery,” said Councilmember Sam Low ([District 5](#)).

Interested organizations can apply for funding between \$100,000 and \$2 million. Projects proposed by a consortium – a collaborative of organizations working in partnership – can apply for up to \$3 million. The Workforce Recovery NOFA has three key priorities:

1. Scaling, expanding, or replicating existing evidence-based workforce development, job placement, and/or youth career exploration programs by increasing the number of slots available to community members.
2. Enhancing existing evidence-based workforce development, job placement, and/or youth career exploration programs by providing a comprehensive set of supportive services for participants that address challenges to access including transportation, financial assistance, mentorship, and child care.
3. Serving highly impacted populations including but not limited to youth, justice-system involved individuals, individuals with disabilities, individuals with behavioral health challenges, and immigrants and refugees alongside impacted industries and increasing access countywide.

The Office of Recovery & Resilience (ORR) strongly recommends that organizations interested in applying for the Workforce Recovery NOFA attend a virtual information session on May 11 from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. Interested organizations can access the information session [on this website](#). The County is accepting NOFA applications until 4:00 p.m. on May 26, 2023. Anyone with questions about this NOFA can email ORR at SnohomishCounty.Recovers@snoco.org.

Workforce development was identified as a top community priority during the County’s communitywide pandemic recovery [engagement effort](#). As part of the 2023 budget, the Executive proposed and County Council appropriated a total of \$8 million in ARPA funding to support workforce development efforts. The Workforce Recovery NOFA is a central element of that spending plan, and remaining funding will go toward youth employment and efforts to increase connectivity in the workforce system.

Executive Somers established the Office of Recovery & Resilience to guide the County’s recovery work by ensuring federal pandemic relief is administered quickly, effectively, and equitably. Information on the County’s recovery work can be found at www.snohomishcountywa.gov/recovery.

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