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Northern Border Regional Commission Announces Availability of *Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities Grants*

The Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities program, administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, is available in the Northern Border region for the first time.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DoL) has released the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for the 2023 [Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities \(WORC\) program](#). The program supports initiatives directed at workforce development partnerships in support of local and regional workforces' employment and training needs, while also recognizing the need to expand access to supportive services. The program has run successfully for multiple rounds in partnership with the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Delta Regional Authority (DRA). 2023 will be the first year that funds are available in partnership with the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC). The total pool of funds available across the three Commissions is **\$44.2 Million**.

The WORC initiative seeks to address persistent economic distress and create pathways to high-quality careers for people living or working in the Northern Border, Appalachian, and Lower Mississippi Delta regions, helping them to remain and thrive in these communities. In concert with community partnerships, the initiative aligns with existing economic and workforce development plans to support local and regional workforces' employment and training needs while expanding access to supportive services.

“Workforce Development is part of every conversation we have about how the Commission can support economically vibrant rural economies. This initiative will bring together community partners and employers to help residents of Northern New England and New York gain both skills and opportunities to further their careers within the region,” said Chris Saunders Federal Co-Chair of NBRC.

Administered by the department's Employment and Training Administration, each WORC grant – ranging from \$150,000 to \$1.5 million – will fund projects to provide career training and supportive services to people in the Northern Border, Appalachian and Delta regions so they may secure quality jobs in stable, high-demand occupations.

Successful applicants will design projects that demonstrate collaboration with community partners and coordination with existing economic development strategies. Review the [WORC Funding Opportunity Announcement and apply](#).

Over the next few weeks, the NBRC will announce information sessions hosted by both DoL and the NBRC to provide additional program details, and information on technical assistance available to potential applicants to the program in the region. The sessions will be free and open to the public, and information will be available via a special WORC link on the NBRC's homepage, nbro.gov, and through subsequent releases.

About the Northern Border Regional Commission (www.nbro.gov)

Created in 2008, the Northern Border Regional Commission is a federal-state partnership whose mission is to help alleviate economic distress and encourage private sector job creation in Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont. In its thirteen-year history, including these new awards, the commission has awarded 331 grants, amounting to more than \$90.6 million in direct investment and \$296 million in additional leveraged investments, across the four states through its primary State Economic & Infrastructure Development (SEID) grant program and other special initiatives.