

Dept. of Workforce Development: ICYMI: Gov. Evers announces Wisconsin won \$7.3 million to fund new workforce training grants for advanced manufacturing and AI sectors

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MADISON – In his Feb. 17 State of the State address, Gov. Tony Evers announced the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) has received \$7.3 million in competitive grant funding to build workforce skills in advanced manufacturing and artificial intelligence (AI). Wisconsin is one of 14 states awarded an [Industry-Driven Skills Training Fund grant from the U.S. Department of Labor](#) to prepare workers for jobs in high-demand and emerging industries.

DWD will launch the Wisconsin Training for Resilient Advanced Industry Needs (WisTRAIN) employer grant program with the funds to deliver employer-driven, occupational skills training focused on advanced manufacturing and AI. The project builds on the success of Gov. Tony Evers' Workforce Solutions Initiative in supporting local and regional workforce training programs and aligns with recommendations by the [Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence](#).

WisTRAIN will fund worker training programs, including apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, that equip Wisconsin's workforce with the skills necessary to meet rapidly evolving needs. WisTRAIN grant applications are anticipated to open in May 2026 for eligible employers statewide that engage in advanced

manufacturing and AI applications such as data analytics, cybersecurity, predictive maintenance, and robotics.

“We’re excited for the opportunity that this grant brings to Wisconsin employers, offering resources to train workers for the in-demand, high-technology jobs that are already reshaping how we work,” said DWD Secretary Amy Pechacek. “WisTRAIN grants will boost our state’s economic competitiveness and help ensure all Wisconsinites, including workers, employers, and job seekers, benefit from a dynamic, growing economy that increases efficiency with the adoption of new technology.”

Wisconsin’s future is being reshaped by advances in AI and advanced manufacturing technologies, which represent fields that align with the fastest growing occupational groups in the state – computer and mathematical, and architecture and engineering. In addition, manufacturing remains one of the state’s largest employment sectors, representing nearly one in six jobs and contributing more than \$65 billion to the annual national Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

While projections signal rapid growth in technical fields, employer surveys highlight skill shortages among incumbent workers and job seekers. Thanks to this investment, WisTRAIN will provide coordinated training to meet employer-identified needs and help Wisconsin’s workers advance to the next level in the digital age.