



KING COUNTY CLIMATE AND WORKFORCE STRATEGY



King County

2025



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

King County thanks residents and partners for guiding this plan and staff and community members not listed who contributed.

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LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

CleanTech Alliance

Emerald Cities Collaborative

EnviroStars Business Network

Seattle College Wood Technology Center

Seattle Good Business Network

Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County

KING COUNTY GOVERNMENT

King County Climate Staff

King County Department of Executive Services

King County Department of Local Services

King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks

King County Executive Climate Office

King County Metro

CONSULTANT TEAMS

Culture Shift Consulting

Cascadia Consulting Group, Inc.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE

King County Neighbors,

This is an exciting and critical moment for workforce development in King County. Advancements in clean energy deployment bring sustainable, living-wage career opportunities, and it is essential that all communities have access to those benefits. The investments we make today shape the possibilities of the future, and the 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy offers a roadmap to ensure our region flourishes even amid changing policy and economic landscapes.

The county has made significant progress since launching its first Green Jobs Strategy in 2023. We have built public-private partnerships, launched workforce development and business engagement programs focused on the green economy, and supported our county workforce in upskilling to advance climate action while supporting career development. We continue to explore new ways to grow programs connecting frontline communities to economic opportunity in the green economy.

The new Climate and Workforce Strategy expands efforts to achieve our goals and weave a direct relationship between climate initiatives and employment opportunities in our region. County departments will hold recruitment events in local communities to promote green careers and create job opportunities for young adults to work directly with local businesses and start sustainable careers. Wraparound support services will help eliminate employment barriers and promote long-term career aspirations through public-private partnerships and funding sources. Most importantly, we will ensure our neighbors know they will not be left behind in the clean energy transition.

Collaboration with local employers, education and training providers, schools, community colleges, labor partners, and national and community-based organizations strengthens the fabric of our communities. Thank you to the organizations, workforce development professionals, employers, local governments, labor partners, youth, and community members who have partnered with King County to support a thriving economy. This strategy is possible because of you.

By working together, we can create pathways to economic opportunity through local climate action. Our approach prepares our community to tackle the challenges posed by climate change while acknowledging that the impending transition is an invitation, not a barrier, for all residents to succeed.

With Gratitude,



Shannon Braddock
King County Executive



KING COUNTY 2025 CLIMATE AND WORKFORCE STRATEGY:

TURNING THE CLIMATE CRISIS INTO OPPORTUNITY THROUGH LOCAL ACTION

The climate crisis presents both a challenge and a significant opportunity to adapt our local economy. By making it more resilient and equitable, we can create pathways to prosperity for all King County residents. The 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy acknowledges the critical role local government can play in turning challenges into opportunities by focusing on local actions that directly impact residents' lives through quality employment.

King County's strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to:

- ✓ Leverage the transition to a clean energy economy to grow careers
- ✓ Build accessible bridges to living-wage employment in frontline communities affected by climate change
- ✓ Invest in local industry networks
- ✓ Equip King County employees to contribute to climate action



THE MISSION

Connect frontline communities to living-wage employment opportunities to build a skilled and diverse workforce across the career spectrum.

Our mission reflects King County's dedication to ensuring accessible economic benefits tied to the clean energy transition. Through engaging community events, innovative programs, and sustainable career opportunities for County residents, we have achieved key goals outlined in the 2023 Green Jobs Strategy. The foundation established by our previous strategy has improved King County's ability to integrate workforce development into its climate action efforts. The County has achieved this by collaborating with local partners and utilizing existing County policies and departmental resources. While King County has made significant progress, our work is ongoing. Future efforts will build on successes and identify new opportunities to advance King County's mission.

OUR IMPACT

King County will continue to cultivate a robust network of informed and engaged employers, local businesses, workers, educational institutions, labor partners, and community organizations to accelerate energy and decarbonization progress. This collaborative approach will address labor and business needs for emissions reduction. By offering climate-focused training programs and partnering with employers, the County will ensure the workforce is prepared for its clean energy goals. King County will also focus on securing sustainable public-private funding for climate workforce development. At the same time, it will create clear, measurable pathways to County employment for frontline communities, supporting departmental recruitment.

Finally, the strategy will strengthen the link between climate action and economic opportunity by supporting policies and procedures that enhance labor and economic benefits for workers involved in capital projects, a key area of opportunity in fighting climate change. The following interconnected goals frame the key actions King County is taking to ensure meaningful and tangible impact toward fulfillment of strategy and mission.

GOAL 1 Grow careers and employment opportunities through regional partnerships.

King County will prioritize creating quality career opportunities by weaving workforce development into County clean energy initiatives and climate action. King County will continue to grow resource networks supporting career growth within communities disproportionately affected by climate change by partnering with the public and private sectors. The 2024 U.S. Energy and Employment Jobs report shows clean energy jobs growing at more than twice the overall economy rate (4.9 percent vs. 2 percent). Locally, key sectors like transportation, manufacturing, and construction are projected for above-average growth through 2030. New initiatives like King County JumpStart connect youth with paid work-based learning in the clean energy sector. They also educate contractors on climate initiatives, demonstrating our commitment to integrating climate action and economic opportunity.

GOAL 2 Build accessible bridges to living-wage careers addressing climate change within frontline communities.

As a major employer, King County is committed to improving and diversifying its hiring practices through community engagement, workforce partnerships, and better coordination between recruitment, skills training, and workforce development programs. The success of application clinics with organizations like the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle highlights the effectiveness of this approach. Future efforts will enhance digital outreach and expand key community engagement events, such as the Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit. Additionally, King County will complete a feasibility study for KC PATH (Partnership for Advancement and Training in Hiring), an initiative designed to create clear pathways to County employment from County environmental programs.

GOAL 3 Invest in building labor and business networks within local high-demand industry sectors essential to clean energy deployment.

A 2022 analysis identified transportation, manufacturing, construction, and professional services/technology sectors as high-growth sectors in King County through 2030. King County will invest in building labor and business partnerships within high-growth sectors to increase access to economic opportunity through climate initiatives. Moving forward, the County will enhance business and technical assistance for clean energy contractors and conduct a regional industry sector analysis for 2030-2040. This analysis will proactively anticipate future needs and partnership opportunities from a data-driven lens.

GOAL 4 Advance climate action in partnership with King County employees.

King County will leverage its internal resources and workforce expertise to strengthen local pathways to careers and economic opportunities. In practice, this work includes further developing County green career pathways and upskilling the County workforce through industry-recognized sustainability credentialing while empowering project managers to integrate workforce development into capital projects. Moving forward, the County will conduct a feasibility study for a “1% for Workforce” initiative mirroring the “1% for Art Program”. This proposed funding stream aims to provide durable, cost-saving, and capacity-building resources and education to support staff in enhancing the economic benefits of County capital projects in local communities.

King County will continue taking the lead locally, while working with partners across multiple sectors. Together, we will center sustainable, economic benefits for frontline communities as an essential element of our commitment to action on climate change.

		Integration with Strategy Goals			
Performance Actions		Grow careers and employment opportunities through regional partnerships	Build accessible bridges to living-wage careers addressing climate change in frontline communities	Invest in building labor and business networks within local high demand industry sectors essential to clean energy deployment	Advance climate action in partnership with King County employees
1.1	Integrate workforce development training and employment opportunities into County climate initiatives.	●	●	●	
1.2	Collaborate with the Coalition for Climate Careers (C3) to fill essential gaps in workforce development service delivery and regional coordination.	●	●	●	
2.1	Scale and enhance green career pathways to recruit from frontline communities most affected by climate change.	●	●	●	●
2.2	Expand youth and middle-skill worker-oriented outreach campaigns and events for early career and high school-age youth.	●	●		●
2.3	Conduct a feasibility study to explore KC PATH to fill critical and applicable roles within key King County departments.		●		●
2.4	Expand wraparound supportive services within workforce development programming to emphasize direct income assistance.		●		
3.1	Increase contractor education and resources to improve the quantity and diversity of local contractors participating in King County-led clean energy projects.			●	
3.2	Conduct a localized Industry Sector analysis for emerging high-growth sectors across a four-county region projected through 2030-2040.			●	
4.1	Expand the Green Skills Development Fund to lead the scaling up of sustainability and energy conservation credentialing and certifications for King County employees.				●
4.2	Develop training resources for capital project managers on how to include workforce development and skills training initiatives, such as paid work-based learning, into capital projects.		●	●	●
4.3	Strengthen department-level coordination to support implementation of 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy				●
4.4	Explore establishing a “1% for workforce” funding stream for skilled trades and career on-ramps tied to County capital projects.	●	●	●	●

INTRODUCTION

MISSION

Building on the 2023 King County Green Jobs Strategy, the 2025 King County Climate and Workforce Strategy continues the mission of connecting frontline communities with living-wage employment opportunities to build a skilled and diverse workforce across the green career spectrum. This commitment reflects King County's dedication to ensuring accessible, equitable economic benefits and impacts tied to the clean energy transition. The progress made through events, job placements, programs, and initiatives stemming from the 2023 Green Jobs Strategy has been instrumental in laying necessary groundwork. By strengthening partnerships and leveraging existing policies and resources, King County is positioned to more effectively integrate workforce development into its climate action efforts.

Supporting Job Seekers from Frontline Communities

King County's 2020 King County Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) recognizes that frontline communities often bear the brunt of climate change effects and may have limited resource networks to take advantage of the economic opportunities emerging within the clean energy sector.¹ Addressing this disparity with intentional investment is vital to shaping a sustainable future for the region. While increasing frontline communities' economic mobility and empowering them to benefit from the transition to a clean energy economy, King County also builds local capacity to implement and sustain climate solutions.

King County aims to holistically support frontline communities by prioritizing partnerships, programs, and initiatives designed explicitly for middle-skill workers and youth (ages 16-24). Current data from the [American Community Survey](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/kingcountywashington/PST045224#qf-flag-NA)² indicates that, as of 2023, 44.1 percent of residents in King County fall within the middle-skill category. By serving youth and middle-skill workers, King County can continue to direct

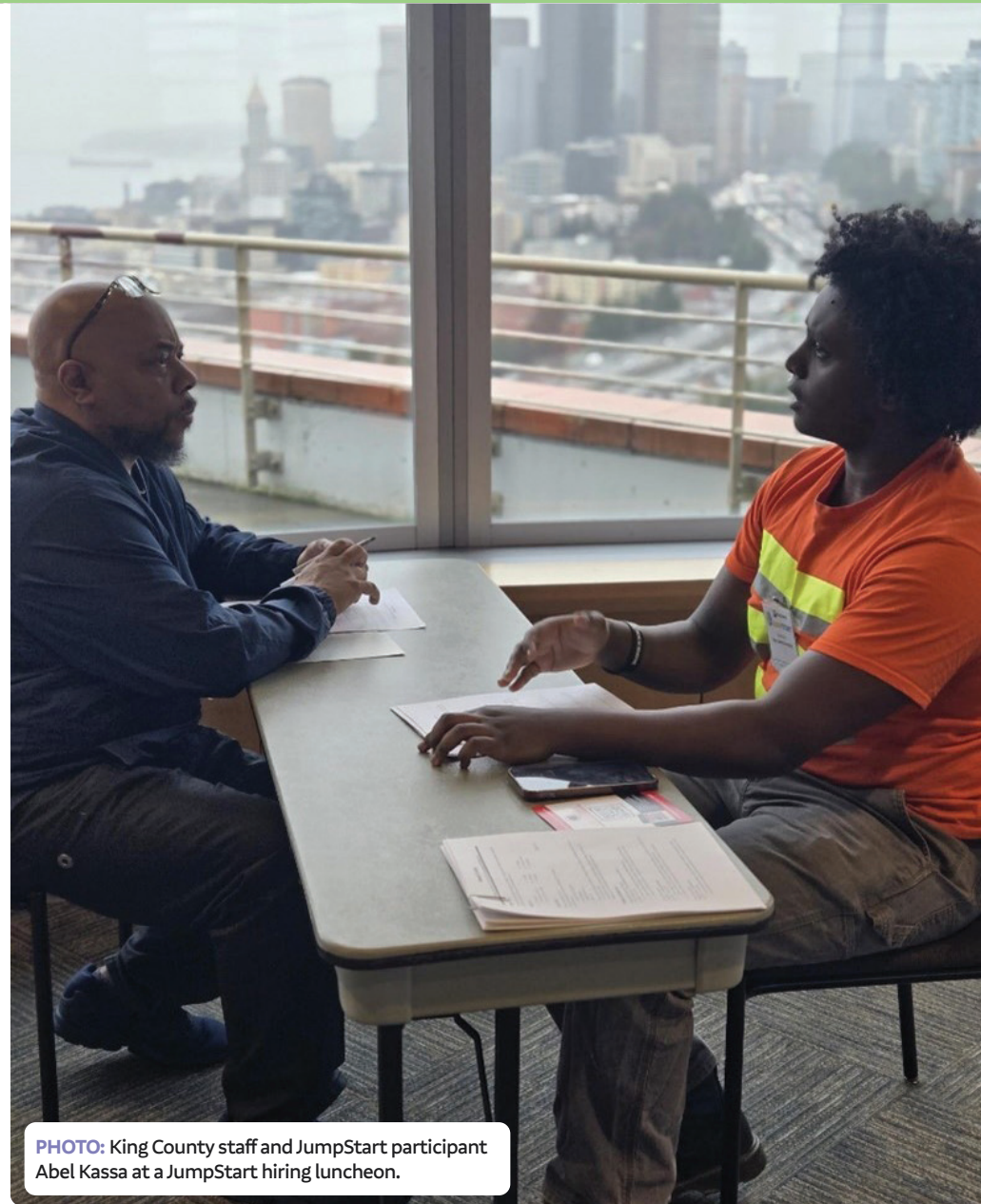


PHOTO: King County staff and JumpStart participant Abel Kassa at a JumpStart hiring luncheon.

¹ SCAP Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities section [<https://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/climate/documents/scap-2020-approved/2020-king-county-strategic-climate-action-plan.pdf>]

² U.S. Census Bureau, QuickFacts: King County, Washington [www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/kingcountywashington/PST045224#qf-flag-NA]

2030 CLIMATE AND WORKFORCE VISION

To meet the goals outlined in the Strategic Climate Action Plan, King County must build a network of employers, local businesses, workers, educational institutions, labor partners, and community-based organizations that are well-informed and positioned to scale up energy and decarbonization efforts. The 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy will establish a clear roadmap and resource network for:



Meeting labor and business needs for reducing emissions

Climate-focused training programs and employer partnerships to meet critical labor and local business engagement needs for King County's clean energy deployment goals.



Securing sustainable funding sources

Identifying and establishing durable public-private funding streams to support climate workforce development needs.



Improving employment pathways for frontline communities

Clear and measurable pathways to secure county employment opportunities, supporting departmental recruitment goals.



Strengthening the connection between climate & economic opportunity

Policies and procedures to enhance labor and economic benefits for workers involved in capital projects essential to clean energy deployment.



PHOTO: Antowne Escalona working onsite for Puget Sound Solar.

Shift from a Green Jobs Strategy to a Climate and Workforce Strategy

The new title of this report, “Climate and Workforce Strategy,” emphasizes the County’s dedication to ensuring greater access to career and economic opportunities stemming from climate action efforts. The County has seen rapid success in implementing what was first issued as the “Green Jobs Strategy” in 2023. This new name, developed after thorough discussion among community partners and county staff, keeps that original mission intact while more holistically capturing King County’s intent and efforts. That includes better addressing the region’s evolving needs and emphasizing an urgency to boost workforce and economic benefits driven by climate action over the next five years, in line with the County’s SCAP. The strategic change underscores the interconnectedness of climate initiatives and workforce development, ensuring that both objectives can progress in tandem – not opposition – for the benefit of all County residents.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Apprenticeship	A structured, paid training program that combines on-the-job training with related supplemental instruction (RSI).	On-the-job Training (OJT)	A method of teaching the skills, knowledge, and competencies required for employees to perform a specific job within the workplace or work environment. This form of training takes place while an individual is actively performing and carrying out their job functions.
Employment On-Ramps	Opportunities for workers who have completed training to participate in paid work using their skills while providing an entry point into employment. Examples include apprenticeships or paid internships with guaranteed interviews for full-time roles upon completion.	On-Ramp Programs	Specific time bound workforce development of internship programs aimed at preparing participants for employment.
Frontline Communities	Communities disproportionately impacted by climate change due to existing and historical racial, social, environmental, and economic inequities and with limited resources and/or capacity to adapt.	Related Supplemental Instruction	Classroom instruction associated with an apprenticeship.
Green Jobs	Living wage positions providing environmental benefits (such as clean energy deployment) in high-demand industry sectors of construction, manufacturing, transportation, and professional services.	Upskilling	Improving a person's professional aptitude through additional training or education; increasing or enhancing a person's current skill set.
Living Wages	The hourly rate that individuals in a household must earn to support themselves and their families. The assumption is that the sole provider is working fulltime (2,080 hours per year). King County will assess how participants are connected to an opportunity to earn a living wage, as calculated by the MIT Living Wage Calculator, when supporting or designing workforce collaborations.	Work-Based Learning	Short-term (up to 240 hours) paid training designed to support participants in obtaining resume-ready work experience within their field of interest.
Middle-Skill Workers	Workers who have a high school diploma but do not have a four-year degree.	Wraparound Services	Holistic, coordinated, and solution-focused approach to case management for job seekers in frontline communities, including youth, centered around relationships and tailored toward building strengths and promoting success
Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs)	A business is considered a "Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise" or "MWBE" if at least 51% of the business is owned, operated, and controlled by one or more U.S. citizens or U.S. permanent residents who are women and/or members of designated minority groups.	Workforce Development	The practices of preparing a local workforce to meet the local labor market demands. Workforce development includes outreach to job seekers from trusted sources to connect them with training programs offering industry-recognized credentials and preparing them to transition into employment within their area of training. Comprehensive workforce development requires active engagement from local governments, workforce development boards, community organizations, education and training providers, and labor and employers.

**BACK2
BESA**

COMMUNITY IMPACT

High-quality community engagement is crucial to driving effective and impactful workforce development and building long-lasting employment pipelines for youth and middle-skill workers. King County's Green Jobs Strategy (2023) underscored the importance of events and engagement campaigns aimed at creatively connecting with communities around emerging economic opportunity across the high-growth green industry sectors of construction, manufacturing,

transportation, and professional services/tech. Since the Green Jobs Strategy's launch, the King County has hosted or sponsored over twenty community-centered events providing large scale exposure for hundreds of local residents to green industries, generating interest in the region's growing green economy, and strengthening recruitment pipelines from frontline communities.

PHOTO: Scene from the Back2Besa show highlighting a student connecting with King County Metro staff at the 2023 Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit .

CLIMATE AND WORKFORCE IMPACT TIMELINE

FEBRUARY 2023

Application Clinic for Parks Mobile Engagement Team (MET)

Two-hour application clinic to support youth in applying for positions on the Department of Natural Resources and Parks MET.

FEBRUARY 2023

Wastewater Treatment Division Operator-in-Training Information Session

Tailored information session to connect community partners to the King County Wastewater Treatment Division Operator-in-Training (OIT) Program. This event resulted in an increased number and diversity of applications to the OIT Program.

MAY 2023

Green Digital Media Marketing Program Information Session, in collaboration with King County Center for Education and Career Opportunities

The King County Climate and Workforce team, in partnership with the Department of Community and Human Services' CECO Program, held an information session at Shoreline Community College to promote the Green Digital Media Marketing Program. This event successfully raised awareness of the program and led to an increase in student applications.

MAY 2023

ENERGIZE Information Session, in partnership with King County YouthSource and PACT

Information session in partnership with YouthSource and PACT, to promote paid, work-based learning opportunities tied to the ENERGIZE program.

SEPTEMBER 2023

WeldWorks/Department of Executive Services Application Clinic

Two-hour application clinic for WeldWorks participants, providing tailored resume and application support for open roles in the Department of Executive Services. This application clinic equipped community members with the necessary tools to be competitive applicants while growing and diversifying the County's pool of qualified applicants.

SEPTEMBER 2023

Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit

First Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit, bringing together over 400 attendees from Seattle high schools, community-based organizations, and the general public. The interactive event featured engaging demonstrations from green industry employers, showcasing the variety of green career opportunities available in the region and generating excitement about this growing sector.

SEPTEMBER 2023

Green Jobs Talent Jam

The King County Climate and Workforce team hosted its first "Green Jobs Talent Jam," a one-of-a-kind event designed to foster connections between local contractors, including minority- and women-owned businesses, and key players in the clean energy industry, including industry professionals and government procurement staff. The event generated promising new business relationships and expanded networking opportunities for participating small businesses.

DECEMBER 2023

Youth in Climate Luncheon

Luncheon to celebrate the achievements of students graduating from the ENERGIZE work-based learning pilot and connect them to local contractors with hiring needs. This event resulted in networking and employment opportunities for participating youth.

NOVEMBER 2023

Community Passageways / Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Solid Waste Division Application Clinic

Two-hour application clinic for members of Community Passageways, providing tailored resume and application support for open roles in the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Solid Waste Division. This application clinic equipped community members with the necessary tools to be competitive applicants while growing and diversifying the County's pool of qualified applicants.

AUGUST 2024

Burien SolarPunk Festival Sponsorship

The Burien SolarPunk Festival is a one-day event organized by KeyTech Labs, showcasing local eco-friendly businesses and employers.

SEPTEMBER 2024

Department of Executive Services, Facilities Management Division – Green Janitor Education Program Graduation

Through sponsorship from the Green Skills Development Fund, 25 Department of Executive Services Facilities Management Division custodians graduated from the Green Janitor Health Education Program.

SEPTEMBER 2024

2024 Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit

Second annual Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit to provide youth from local high schools and pre-apprenticeship programs exposure to high growth sectors of the green economy. This event yielded 300+ attendees and engagement from over 15 local businesses and employers.

NOVEMBER 2024

Career Connect Washington / JumpStart Celebration

Career Connect Washington recognized and celebrated its partnership with JumpStart at a roundtable event with former Washington State Governor, Jay Inslee.

NOVEMBER 2024

JumpStart Contractor Reception

Second JumpStart Contractor Reception to continue to grow the JumpStart contractor network.

AUGUST 2022

WeldWorks/Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Solid Waste Division Application Clinic

Two-hour application clinic for WeldWorks participants, providing tailored resume and application support for open roles in the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Solid Waste Division. This application clinic equipped community members with the necessary tools to be competitive applicants while growing and diversifying the County's pool of qualified applicants.

AUGUST 2022

Burien SolarPunk Festival

The King County Climate and Workforce team hosted a booth at the Burien SolarPunk Festival to solicit public feedback and engagement for the first iteration of the Green Jobs Strategy. The Burien SolarPunk Festival is a one-day event organized by KeyTech Labs, showcasing local eco-friendly businesses and employers.

APRIL 2023

Seattle Good Business Network – Green Job Pathways Program Sponsorship

This sponsorship supported the launch of Seattle Good Business Network's Green Job Pathways Program, which connects youth with summer internships at local sustainable businesses.

APRIL 2023

University of Washington Climate Solutions Summit Sponsorship

This sponsorship supported the University of Washington's 2023 Climate Solutions Summit, a student-led conference bringing together climate action leaders and featuring a student case competition.

SEPTEMBER 2023

Emerald Cities Collaborative – Electric Vehicle (EV) Workshop Series

The King County Climate and Workforce team, in collaboration with Emerald Cities Collaborative, hosted a series of EV Charging Workshops for women and minority-owned electrical contractors. The workshops were designed to educate participants about current and upcoming opportunities in EV charging installation work, including federal and state funding, EV certification and training, and EV infrastructure work opportunities. This event series saw a high turnout of electrical contractors, many of whom reported having directly benefited from the information and resources shared.

AUGUST 2023

Burien SolarPunk Festival Sponsorship

This sponsorship provided support in organizing the 2023 Burien SolarPunk Festival. The Burien SolarPunk Festival is a one-day event organized by KeyTech Labs, showcasing local eco-friendly businesses and employers.

APRIL 2024

King County Metro- Green Custodian Health Program Graduation

Through sponsorship from the Green Skills Development Fund, 45 Metro Transit Facilities Specialists graduated from the Green Custodian Health Program.

MARCH 2024

Pro-Equity Contracting Event

The King County Executive Climate Office, in collaboration with the Department of Executive Services Office of Business Development and Contract Compliance, King County Metro, and the Department of Natural Resources and Parks hosted the Pro-Equity Contracting Event to educate small businesses on upcoming County contracting opportunities.

SEPTEMBER 2024

JumpStart Hiring Event

First JumpStart hiring event to connect work-based learning graduates to full-time employment opportunities with local contractors.

SEPTEMBER 2024

Coalition for Climate Careers (C3) Reception

The C3 Reception celebrated the formation of the newly appointed Executive Steering Committee, launching a formal governance structure for the coalition.

DECEMBER 2024

Wastewater Treatment Division Operator-in-Training Program/JumpStart Application Clinic

The King County Climate and Workforce team, in partnership with the King County Wastewater Treatment Division, hosted a 2-hour application clinic to prepare JumpStart work-based learning graduates for the Operator-in-Training Program recruitment process.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK PROCESS

Building on extensive community engagement [conducted in 2023](#),³ the development of the 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy features a leaner community engagement process, distilling input from key implementers and stakeholders.

To inform the development of the 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy, King County contracted with Culture Shift Consulting to conduct an independent community engagement feedback process tailored to key implementers and partners crucial to the success of the strategy. A total of 89 participants contributed to this community engagement process.

This process consisted of listening sessions and focus groups with key stakeholder groups, including King County departments, labor and community partners, business owners, youth, and other external partners. Culture Shift Consulting facilitated these sessions to gather input on the implementation of existing Green Jobs Strategy initiatives and to solicit feedback to inform King County in updating the strategy.

For each group, discussions centered on:

- **Reactions to completed work** under the initial Green Jobs Strategy.
- **Proposed actions** for the 2025-2030 timeframe.
- **Factors that would enhance collaborative implementation** of the updated strategy.
- **Recommendations** for how to improve communication and community engagement in strategy implementation.

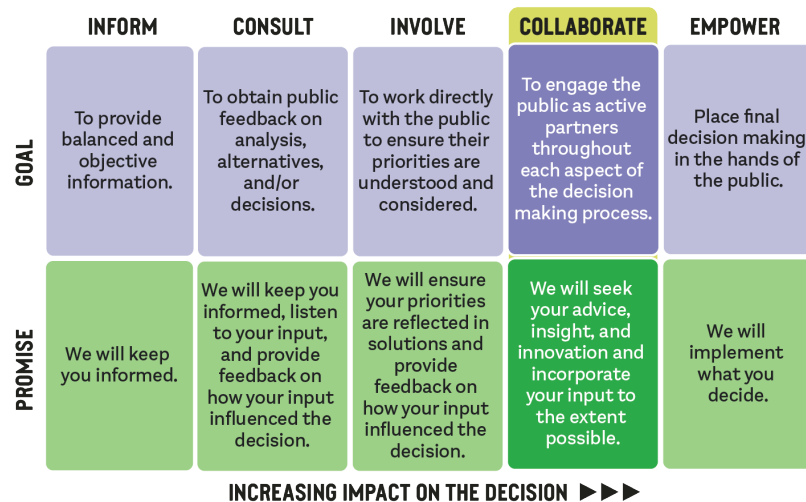
TABLE 1. Below is an excerpt from summary findings from the Culture Shift Consulting report received across listening sessions and focus groups. For the full community engagement feedback report, including participation data, methodology, and key findings, please refer to Appendix A.

Audience	Reaction to current work	How to expand	Motivators	Communications recommendations
Youth	Short-term training opportunities enable exploration and adding new qualifications to their resumes.	Conclude programs such as JumpStart with workshops that help translate new skills into future job opportunities.	Understanding the career advancement opportunities and earning potential in the green jobs sector.	Incorporate both digital communications and in-person connection reach young people.
Business owners	Wages for entry-level positions in certain trades are out of alignment with ECO's definition of a living wage.	Prioritize hands-on learning for business owners to complete the administrative tasks related to contracting with King County.	Programs need to be simple to enroll in and the benefits of participating need to outweigh the administrative burden they pose.	Streamline outreach across opportunities so that information is not dependent on an individual project manager's contacts.
Key implementers	Short-term programs like JumpStart have the potential to provide entry-level workers a foothold into the industry.	Focus on cross-sector partnerships (government, labor, industry, philanthropy) to ensure training turns into job placements.	A clearly articulated vision for where ECO intends short-term programs like JumpStart to lead in 6 months, one year, etc.	Pull out key points and calls to action from lengthy reports and share through interactive settings like Lunch and Learns.
Community partners	Short-term programs like JumpStart are a good starting point to increase access to the sector.	Build on short-term programs by expanding who is eligible and what sectors are included and providing support to connect with long-term opportunities.	Evidence that initiatives are leading to well-paying jobs with respectful work environments for frontline communities.	Directly share communications that focus on information that is relevant to community partners.
Labor partners	Initial collaboration on Green Skills Development Fund was productive but would have liked for it to be sustained.	Collaborate with labor organizations that have strategic priorities related to climate justice on developing initiatives that advance the goals of both the GJS and those organizations.	Learning the outcomes of collaborative efforts so labor organizations can see what value came out of their time and effort.	Host information sessions about new programs and share opportunities relevant to union members with representatives.
King County staff	Career pathways are the cornerstone to the success of the GJS, since career advancement will motivate workers to stay in the field.	Deepen the impact of the GJS by expanding the audiences served and sectors encompassed by the strategy, and by creating long-term opportunities for program participants.	Clarity on how the GJS connects with their departmental priorities and county-wide priorities, and clarity on when it is appropriate to use GJS resources versus department-specific resources.	Increase visibility of GJS initiatives and share successes and lessons learned that can enable departments to justify spending time and budget on initiatives.

3 King County Green Jobs Strategy Report, February 2023 [<https://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/climate/documents/kc-green-jobs-strategy/full-report.pdf>]

Participation Spectrum

The International Association for Public Participation's Spectrum of Public Participation⁴ outlines five levels of community involvement in democratic decision-making, representing a continuum of increasing public influence. King County aimed for a "collaborate" level of participation. Participants in listening sessions and focus groups were asked to provide feedback on both the intent and implementation of the initial Green Jobs Strategy's goals, and to offer input on the design and implementation of the Climate and Workforce Strategy itself.



Timeline of Engagement Activities



ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

Six listening sessions

King County departments

- Department of Executive Services
- Department of Local Services
- Department of Natural Resources & Parks
- Metro
- King County Climate Team

Community partners

whose work aligns with the Green Jobs Strategy

These sessions began with an overview of the 2023 Green Jobs Strategy's goals and implementation updates, followed by a one-hour feedback session with participants.

Three focus groups

Youth

in partnership with the Seattle Good Business Network's Green Job Pathways Program

Key implementers

a mixture of County staff and external workforce development organizations

Business owners

These sessions presented synthesized feedback from the listening sessions and facilitated in-depth qualitative feedback from participants.

The focus groups provided extensive input on the 2023 Green Jobs Strategy's implementation and offered tailored feedback on proposed programs and initiatives for the 2025-2030 Climate and Workforce Strategy.

⁴ The International Association for Public Participation's Spectrum of Public Participation [<https://iap2.org.au/resources/spectrum/#:~:text=The%20Spectrum%20shows%20that%20differing%20levels%20of%20participation,made%20to%20the%20public%20at%20each%20participation%20level>]

GOALS AND ACTIONS OF THE CLIMATE & WORKFORCE STRATEGY

This section details the four key goals of the 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy, along with the specific actions King County will implement between 2025 and 2030 to achieve them. These goals and actions were developed using a targeted community engagement process, data from the local workforce development landscape, and lessons learned from the implementation of the 2023 Green Jobs Strategy.

Each section below is structured to provide a comprehensive overview of the goal area.

“THE OPPORTUNITY”

establishes the context and rationale for the goal

“OUR PROGRESS”

highlights achievements and progress made to date under the 2023 Green Jobs Strategy

“MOVING FORWARD”

outlines the key actions advancing the goal in the coming years

GOAL 4

ADVANCE CLIMATE ACTION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH KING COUNTY EMPLOYEES

King County will harness departmental resources to further develop and expand green career pathways, upskill its workforce through industry-recognized sustainability credentialing, and connect project managers with resources to integrate workforce development into climate action-focused capital projects.

The Opportunity

King County staff are essential to achieving the ambitious climate action goals outlined in the SCAP. As a large organization with a significant workforce, King County has a unique opportunity to upskill its employees with sustainability and energy conservation credentialing, while simultaneously empowering capital project managers to incorporate skills-based training into climate action-focused contracts. This integrated approach will weave workforce and economic development directly into internal County initiatives and projects, maximizing the impact of climate action investments. Doing so will not only require strengthened interdepartmental coordination but also the establishment of long-term funding streams and resource networks to advance skills training and workforce development within capital projects.



PHOTO: 35 Department of Executive Services, Facilities Management Division custodians graduate with certifications from the Green Janitor Health Education Program, through sponsorship from the Green Skills Development Fund.

Our Progress



Developed resources for capital project managers to integrate skills training and career on-ramps directly into capital projects.



Supported over 100 King County employees in accessing sustainability and energy conservation credentialing through the Green Skills Development Fund, doubling the goal outlined in the 2023 Green Jobs Strategy.

Moving Forward

- **Complete a feasibility study** for a proposed “1% for Workforce” initiative to scale and expand staff capacity and community partnerships for skills trades and career on-ramp opportunities on capital projects across King County.
- **Develop a resource guide** for County departments to integrate skills training and JumpStart work-based learning into capital projects.
- **Publish a contract language library** available to capital project managers that provides guidance on integrating work-based learning and skills training into capital projects.
- **Launch web-based training videos** to share knowledge with capital project managers on effectively utilizing Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) credits within the Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard.



PHOTO: Green Jobs, Green Futures attendees outside the Sphere Solar Energy demo station.

GOAL 1

GROW CAREERS AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

King County will prioritize creating quality career opportunities while expanding clean energy initiatives and advancing climate action. King County will partner with the public and private sectors to establish resource networks supporting clean energy employment opportunities in frontline communities regionally.

The Opportunity

According to the [2024 U.S. Energy and Employment Jobs report](#),⁵ clean energy jobs grew at more than double the rate of job growth in the overall economy. Specifically, clean energy jobs increased by 4.9%, compared to just 2.0% for the rest of the economy, adding 149,000 new jobs in 2023. Locally, industries impacted by the clean energy transition—such as transportation, manufacturing, and construction—are projected to grow at above-average rates through 2030 in King County. By fostering collaboration among employers, training providers, community-based organizations, schools, and municipalities, our region can proactively develop and expand programs and partnerships. This will help prepare our local workforce for employment in growing sectors and attract new businesses to the area, thereby strengthening the link between climate action and economic opportunity.



PHOTO: Scene from King 5 news segment highlighting JumpStart participant Matthew Rodriguez working on site for Puget Sound Solar, a JumpStart contractor who hired him full time.

Our Progress



Launched King County JumpStart. This growing network of over 20 local employers, eight education and training providers, and community partners connects youth ages 18-24 with paid, work-based learning and employment opportunities in the clean energy sector.



Developed community-facing events and campaigns in local frontline communities to highlight the clean energy sector and the green economy, connecting with hundreds of residents.



Established the Coalition for Climate Careers (C3), a public-private partnership in collaboration with the City of Seattle and the Port of Seattle, to lead regional growth initiatives and establish a community of practice for climate workforce development.



Piloted contract language that enables paid work-based learning tied to County climate action initiatives, such as ENERGIZE, which innovates how County projects can offer private economic co-benefits and career launch opportunities.

5 United States Energy & Employment Report 2024 [www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/USEER_2024_COMPLETE_1002.pdf]

Moving Forward

King County plans to improve workforce development and support climate action initiatives through several key actions:

- **Scale connections for contractors and sub-contractors** working on climate action projects, including ENERGIZE⁶, to paid, work-based learning opportunities through JumpStart.
- **Launch a communications campaign** to raise awareness of the JumpStart program. This campaign will include a website, news articles, and other multimedia materials to promote the program's benefits.
- **Secure public-private funding** to cover 50 percent of the costs for paid, work-based learning opportunities on climate action projects for youth and middle-skill workers in frontline communities.
- **Partner with C3 to offer micro-grants to employers** and clean energy contractors focused on building capacity and developing businesses.
- **Serve 200 young adults across the four-county region** through JumpStart, ensuring that over \$10 million in wages are directly invested in young adults from frontline communities through paid opportunities generated by climate initiatives in the surrounding area.

JumpStart is a growing network of local employers, education and training providers, local government, and community partners connecting youth aged 18-24 with paid work-based learning and employment opportunities in the clean energy sector.

6 King County Energize heat pump program website [<https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/executive/governance-leadership/climate-office/focus-areas/building-decarbonization/energize/>]



PHOTO: Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit attendees exploring a solar panel at the Northwest Electric & Solar demo station.

Action 1.1 Integrate JumpStart training and employment opportunities into County climate initiatives

King County has made significant progress in building partnerships across key industries to develop employment pathways through ongoing climate initiatives. The JumpStart program collaborates with training providers to equip participants with skills training and paid, work-based learning. This includes 240-hour on-the-job training internship experiences with a network of employers in the clean energy sector, including solar, HVAC (heat pumps), plumbing, and electrical contractors.

JumpStart actively recruits women, people of color, and other underrepresented communities in the trades and infrastructure sector. This is accomplished through local community partnerships, direct outreach events, and digital marketing strategies. The program collaborates with local pre-apprenticeship training providers such as the [Seattle Central College PACT program](#),⁷ the [Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle](#),⁸ [Emerald Cities Collaborative Northwest](#),⁹ and [Seattle YouthBuild](#)¹⁰ to refer trainees to the JumpStart network. JumpStart staff members attend multicultural community events to recruit residents and participate in the annual Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit. This summit aims to reach frontline communities and promote employment in the green economy. With federal funding from the [WA Good Jobs Challenge Initiative](#),¹¹ JumpStart will connect 80 youth to paid, work-based learning and employment opportunities in the clean energy sector by December 2025.

The Executive Climate Office (ECO) will collaborate with JumpStart staff and partners in the Department of Community and Human Services to scale the program. They will require contractors involved in capital projects and programs led by ECO to join the JumpStart network. This initiative will

enable these contractors to host paid, work-based learning opportunities for JumpStart participants, providing project-connected, on-the-job experiences for members of frontline communities

King County will also invest in a sponsored communications campaign to increase awareness and promote the benefits of the JumpStart program by December 2025. This campaign will include creating a dedicated website, news articles, and multimedia resources. Moving forward, King County aims to directly connect a minimum of 200 youth to living-wage job opportunities through JumpStart, resulting in over \$20 million in wages generated within frontline communities.



Strategy in Action Connecting County Contracting and Workforce Development

King County champions economic co-benefits for local communities when planning climate change-related projects. King County created contract language that requires contractors involved in County-funded clean energy projects under the Executive Climate Office to join the JumpStart Contractor Network. For instance, contractors working with King County through the ENERGIZE program became part of the JumpStart Network and provided paid, work-based learning opportunities on their projects. Integrating paid, work-based learning into County projects helps create career exposure and clear local economic benefits to climate action projects across King County.

7 Seattle Central College Wood Technology Programs Pre-Apprenticeship Construction Training (PACT) [<https://woodtech.seattlecentral.edu/programs/pre-apprenticeship-construction-training/pre-apprenticeship-construction-training-pact>]

8 Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle Career Bridge [<https://urbanleague.org/careerbridge/>]

9 Emerald Cities Collaborative Northwest [<https://emeraldcities.org/our-presence/northwest/>]

10 Seattle YouthBuild [<https://youthcare.org/homeless-youth-services/employment/youthbuild/>]

11 Washington Student Achievement Council: Washington Jobs Initiative [wsac.wa.gov/wji]

Action 1.2 Collaborate with C3 to fill essential gaps in workforce development service delivery and regional coordination

The [C3](#) represents a dynamic alliance formed among diverse public and private entities, as well as frontline communities. Its mission centers on cultivating an inclusive and thriving green workforce in King County. In the spring of 2024, King County initiated C3 in collaboration with the City of Seattle and the Port of Seattle, bringing together a diverse executive steering committee. This committee is made up of both former and current apprentices from skilled trades, alongside community leaders, non-profit advocates, union representatives, government officials, employers, and educators. Together, they are guiding the coalition's efforts to serve the four-county region, focusing on coordinated, high-quality workforce development partnerships that effectively leverage both public and private funding.

King County is firmly committed to empowering C3 to innovate and expand its initiatives. This commitment involves utilizing private funding to establish paid, work-based learning experiences for youth — an opportunity that is often restricted under federal funding guidelines. Additionally, the coalition will explore employer- and contractor-led capacity-building grants that provide small businesses engaged in clean energy deployment with essential tools and resources to enhance their operational capabilities. C3's executive steering committee is focused on fostering cross-sector partnerships that elevate career exposure and placement activities within frontline communities, ensuring initiatives are accessible to all.

Public-private partnerships are indispensable in addressing current funding disparities and creating flexible programs that can effectively respond to labor needs within the still-emerging green economy. Through these collective efforts, King County is taking significant steps toward building a sustainable, equitable future.

Strategy in Action Coalition for Climate Careers (C3)

King County has collaborated with the City of Seattle and the Port of Seattle to launch the Coalition for Climate Careers, C3, a strategic collaboration among public and private organizations and frontline communities dedicated to establishing an inclusive and prosperous green workforce in the Puget Sound Region. Coalition Members work together to shape C3's strategic direction and provide public and private sector support for regional programs and initiatives that increase equal access to green careers.



PHOTO: Coalition members celebrating the launch of the Executive Steering Committee.

GOAL 2

BUILD ACCESSIBLE BRIDGES TO LIVING-WAGE CAREERS ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE IN FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

King County aims to enhance and expand pathways for accessible, living-wage green careers in frontline communities across the region and within its departments.

The Opportunity

With over [17,000 employees](#),¹² King County is a top employer in Washington state. The County will focus on engaging the community, building workforce partnerships, and connecting recruitment with skills training and workforce development programs to improve and diversify its hiring. In the past two years, better coordination among departments has enhanced online and in-person outreach efforts. King County has already piloted several successful initiatives to broaden workforce community recruitment partnerships and can benefit from applying these ideas more widely across different departments and programs.

Our Progress



Developed and scaled the application clinic model with local organizations such as the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle to offer on-site application clinics (2-hour informative workshops ending in completed applications for King County roles). These clinics connect residents to County career opportunities in the environmental sector in collaboration with King County recruiters.



Connected hundreds of local youth to career opportunities in the green economy through the Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit. This initiative has not only provided real-world climate action experience for young people but also inspired them to contribute to the future of clean energy.



Facilitated access for trainees in JumpStart to participate in [Guaranteed Basic Income \(GBI\) programs](#)¹³ for flexible cash stipends to overcome employment barriers.



PHOTO: JumpStart participants receiving instruction on solar panels from Sarah Ali at Sphere SolarEnergy, a Seattle-based company.

¹² King County Department of Human Resources [<https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dhr/about-king-county/jobs-benefits/find-a-job#:~:text=King%20County%20is%20one%20of,critical%20to%20our%20continued%20success>]

¹³ Workforce Development Council of Seattle - King County [www.seakingwdc.org/latest-news/gbi-report]

Moving Forward

King County plans to improve workforce development and support climate action initiatives through several key actions:

- **Support County departments in improving digital outreach** for green careers pathways work and County job board updates for enhanced data tracking of recruitment and outreach efforts.
- **Scale the Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit event** to include younger audiences and more than double in size.
- **Complete a feasibility study for KC PATH** (Partnership for Advancement and Training in Hiring) to strengthen direct pathways into employment across King County departments.
- **Expand wraparound supportive services** for signature workforce development program JumpStart.

Action 2.1 Scale and enhance County green career pathways to recruit from frontline communities most affected by climate change.

King County is working to support County departments in continuing and scaling the green career pathways work advanced during the implementation of the 2023 Green Jobs Strategy. King County aims to create accessible green career paths within departments to encourage more diverse outreach for County jobs, especially from frontline communities. King County plans to improve recruitment tools and methods, including updating the County's job board to highlight green jobs as a specific searchable category. This will help people find jobs in County departments that focus on green careers and allow the County to track the growth and diversity of applicants for select positions. Career pathways provide prospective employees with insight into the full range of career growth opportunities at King County, while also offering current employees a clear plan for career advancement. King County will also continue to support outreach efforts, such as application clinics, in collaboration and consultation with departmental Human Resource teams. These workshops bridge an awareness gap by helping middle-skill workers seek employment with King County. These efforts aim to build strong recruitment partnerships between County departments and local organizations that serve career-ready clients.

Strategy in Action Application Clinic Outreach

Application clinics are two-hour workshops designed to directly connect career-ready job seekers with county recruiters to review open job opportunities and answer questions before staff and community partners assist applicants in completing county applications. Application clinics help local workforce development organizations connect participants with accessible entry-level county employment opportunities, quality wages, and benefits. King County has continued collaborating with trusted community-based partners like the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle to connect county recruiters and job seekers to available positions, emphasizing roles within County green career pathways.



PHOTO: Young adults listening to a presentation from King County staff on applying for the Wastewater Treatment Division [Operator in Training program](#).

Action 2.2 Expand youth and middle-skill worker-oriented outreach campaigns and events for early career and high-school-age youth

During the Climate and Workforce Strategy community engagement process, various partners and dedicated County employees underscored a critical need to connect with younger job seekers. Particularly, those in the demographics below the typical 18-24 age range that King County initiatives, such as JumpStart, often focus on.

In response, King County will broaden the audience for the [Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit](#)¹⁴ by including younger high school students and expanding the age range for career exposure events to include 16-24-year-olds. This innovative Summit reimagines the conventional job fair format by putting a spotlight on hands-on learning experiences. The Summit showcases dynamic demonstrations from key local industries, including transportation, construction, and technology. Attendees engage with interactive stations designed to ignite interest and enthusiasm among local students, encouraging them to explore potential career paths connected to advancing climate solutions and contributing to the green economy. Through this expansion, the Climate and Workforce team aims to achieve an ambitious 200 percent increase in attendance at the Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit, using the participation data from the 2024 event as a benchmark.

King County is also exploring expansion of the NextGen Climate Internship Program. This program was developed in response to the recommended actions outlined in the 2020 SCAP. It provides undergraduate and graduate students with hands-on experience in addressing and mitigating the effects of climate change through SCAP implementation. Interns work directly with various County teams and projects, gaining insights into how policies are put in place at the County level to support communities and engage stakeholders. Throughout the program, interns receive direct mentorship and guidance to aid in their career development.

¹⁴ C3 Summit [www.climatecareerscoalition.org/summit]

¹⁵ King County Parks Youth Conservation Corps [<https://kcpyouthcorps.org/>]

¹⁶ King County Wastewater Treatment Division Operator-in-Training Program [<https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnwp/waste-services/wastewater-treatment/about/join-our-team/operator-in-training>]

The proposed expansion aims to include external host sites through partnerships with trusted local businesses and organizations.

To bolster the efforts in engaging youth and middle-skilled workers, King County plans to actively spotlight youth/middle-skill worker-focused environmental initiatives spearheaded by King County departments. By December 2030, King County will complete promotional campaigns highlighting existing King County programs, such as the Parks [Youth Conservation Corps](#)¹⁵ program, the Solid Waste Division's upcoming deconstruction program, and the Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) [Operator-in-Training](#)¹⁶ programs.



PHOTO: Youth in VR headset exploring virtual solar installation training module at 2024 Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit.

Strategy in Action 2024 Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit

Developing strong relationships and connections in frontline communities is essential to career exposure and engagement. Events like the 2024 Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit create an opportunity to engage youth from underrepresented backgrounds in career exploration through a climate-informed lens. The summit works with diverse high schools and community organizations in underrepresented areas to connect attendees to interactive demo stations designed to highlight essential skills in various careers.

Action 2.3 Conduct a feasibility study to explore KC PATH to fill critical and applicable roles within key King County departments

King County offers a variety of on-ramp programs, such as the WLRD WA Conservation Corps Program, WTD [Clean Water Ambassadors](#),¹⁷ JumpStart, [DLS Road Engineering Internship Program](#),¹⁸ and the [Jobs and Housing Program](#).¹⁹ Many of these programs focus on environmental initiatives. Graduates from these programs gain valuable skills and a solid foundation for employment within King County.

The KC PATH Program is designed to emulate [L.A. County's PLACE](#) (Preparing Los Angeles for County Employment) Program.²⁰ PLACE's goal is to facilitate the transition of eligible participants from L.A. County's on-ramp programs to full-time, permanent positions within the county. The PLACE Program prepares individuals facing significant barriers to employment for entry-level permanent county jobs, providing a clear career pathway. This model encourages collaboration among key labor and community-based workforce development organizations to identify

participants who are job-ready and to provide them with specialized training for roles within the county. This approach is similar to previous County initiatives, like the Jobs and Housing Program.

To enhance collaboration and coordinated action, King County will work with relevant departments to conduct a feasibility study for the KC PATH model. This study, developed in partnership with the County's departments and labor organizations, will align workforce planning needs among stakeholders in the KC PATH development process. Currently, workforce development programs across the County operate in isolation. Establishing more centralized resources has the potential to enhance support for participants in County programs seeking long-term career opportunities.

As the County workforce ages, the demand for skilled workers in high-demand roles increases, particularly in departments essential to environmental stewardship. By adapting the PLACE model into the KC PATH Program, King County — as a major regional employer — can take the lead in developing and hiring local talent, especially from frontline communities.

17 King County Natural Resources and Parks Internships and Career Exploration [<https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnpr/waste-services/wastewater-treatment/education/learn-about-water/internships>]

18 King County Road Services' Internships Program [<https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/local-services/transit-transportation-roads/roads-and-bridges/projects-and-programs/internship-program>]

19 King County Jobs and Housing Program [<https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/executive/governance-leadership/performance-strategy-budget/jobs-housing>]

20 Los Angeles Department of Economic Opportunity Biannual PLACE Program Report [https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/bc/1143280_PLACEProgramReportBack_2023.06.05Final.pdf]

Strategy in Action

NextGen Climate Internship 2024 Annual Report

King County recognizes youth as vital partners in addressing the climate crisis. The NextGen Climate Internship program empowers undergraduate and graduate students to contribute to the King County 2020 SCAP. Co-designed with young people, this program provides a cohort of students with professional development, training, and mentorship as they work alongside County staff on year-long SCAP implementation projects. While some NextGen interns have transitioned into full-time County positions, the proposed PATH program will create more formal pathways and entry points from programs like NextGen into full-time County roles.

IMAGE: 2024 NextGen Climate Annual Report Cover.



Action 2.4 Expand wraparound supportive services within workforce development programming to emphasize direct income assistance



PHOTO: King County staff and JumpStart participant Hekmatullah Salim at a JumpStart hiring luncheon.

Since 2022, King County has piloted workforce development initiatives that provide direct income assistance through paid, work-based learning for graduates of workforce training and pre-apprenticeship programs like JumpStart. This paid, work-based learning allows successful graduates of pre-apprenticeship programs to participate in 240 hours of paid internship experiences, enabling them to apply the skills they acquired during training. Graduates affiliated with King County receive a compensation rate of \$25 per hour, totaling \$6,000 before taxes. This financial support enables pre-apprenticeship graduates to gain valuable work experience in their fields of interest while earning compensation to help alleviate employment barriers.

JumpStart has also partnered with the Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council (Sea-King WDC) to support participants of the JumpStart program through Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) funds. These GBI funds are designed to address poverty by providing flexible cash assistance that helps individuals move towards achieving stable careers, housing, and educational goals. King County plans to expand its partnership with Sea-King WDC to ensure all eligible JumpStart participants can access GBI resources by 2027. By combining paid, work-based learning with GBI support, King County aims to enhance supportive services in workforce programs, reduce the administrative burden of paperwork and lengthy intake meetings, and empower individuals to have more control over how they use the funds to overcome job-related challenges.

This work will include streamlining paid, work-based learning through digital scheduling and direct deposit for payments, as well as securing reliable funding sources. King County strives to establish a strong support system to help participants succeed in their careers.



PHOTO: J'brea Napoles-Ibarra, hired on at Veritas, a women owned and operated Electrical company, and accepted into CITC Electrical Apprenticeship program.

Strategy in Action JumpStart & GBI Collaboration

King County recognizes the value of co-benefits and wraparound support services for workforce development programs like JumpStart. JumpStart has partnered with the Seattle King County Workforce Development Council (Sea-King WDC) to offer (Guaranteed Basic Income) GBI services to eligible JumpStart participants. Participants use flexible stipend funds to overcome employment barriers such as limited childcare and/or transportation access. King County is looking forward to expanding the partnership to offer this essential resource to more participants in the future.



PHOTO: JumpStart participant Tony Gill-Slack posing with the car he bought with funds from GBI participation.

GOAL 3

INVEST IN BUILDING LABOR AND BUSINESS NETWORKS WITHIN LOCAL HIGH-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS ESSENTIAL TO CLEAN ENERGY DEPLOYMENT

King County will invest County resources in building labor and business partnerships within existing high-growth sectors to increase access to economic opportunity through climate action initiatives.

The Opportunity

Supporting workforce development across the local green economy requires a strong understanding of the local economic landscape. A 2022 analysis identified transportation, manufacturing, construction, and professional services/technology as key high-growth green job sectors in King County. To support these sectors, King County has actively cultivated relationships and fostered collaboration with local businesses and contractors. However, feedback from these businesses highlights the need for improved information sharing and streamlined County contracting procedures.

By focusing on these key industry sectors, the County can strengthen relationships and clarify processes. This ensures that the existing community, especially Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs), can take advantage of the clean energy transition and are not left behind, while highlighting the value of decarbonizing and electrifying business and labor networks.

Our Progress



Developed and launched the JumpStart contractor network, offering local businesses clean energy and contracting-focused resource sharing, educational workshops, and direct connections to County staff implementing climate action initiatives across King County.



Collaborated across County departments for large-scale outreach events, highlighting contracting opportunities across County projects.



Connected contractors in the JumpStart network to nearly \$2.5 million in King County climate action project contracts.



PHOTO: A flyer for the 2024 Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit hanging in the halls of the Fremont Foundry.

Moving Forward

- **Enhance and scale business and technical assistance** focused on clean energy contractors, including online resource libraries and direct connection to ongoing County climate action projects in the EV charging and building decarbonization sectors.
- **Conduct a local industry sector analysis** for 2030-2040 to forecast key industries and partnerships for collaboration to support Climate and Workforce Strategy goals.

Action 3.1 Increase contractor education and resources to improve the quantity and diversity of local contractors participating in King County-led clean energy projects

King County initiated a pro-equity contracting initiative in April 2021 through an [Executive Order](#) aimed at increasing the participation of MWBE in the Contracting Opportunities Program. In 2024, the Department of Executive Services launched a [disparity study](#) to identify policy and program recommendations for improving program delivery. The study's recommendations included increasing communication and outreach to MWBE and small contractor and supplier firms, as well as partnering with other agencies and local organizations to provide technical assistance programs.

As King County and its partners continue to lead the way toward clean energy, there will be opportunities to align pro-equity contracting initiatives with additional opportunities for the local contractor community through contracts with King County for clean energy deployment projects.

To effectively implement these initiatives and meet the County's greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction goals, it is essential to have a diverse, skilled, and well-informed contractor base. Through 2030, King County plans to prioritize contractor outreach and knowledge-sharing related to emerging clean energy projects. This includes creating printed and web-based capacity-building resources and making innovative changes to County contracting processes to establish a diverse network of local contractors involved in County-funded GHG emissions reduction work, specifically focusing on electrification and building decarbonization.

Proactive actions to enhance contractor resources include ECO-sponsored workshops on emerging King County projects, County policies, and procedures. Additionally, a resource library of printed and online capacity-building materials will be developed in collaboration with local networks, specifically addressing contracting opportunities related to clean energy deployment, such as state, local, and federal programs. Leveraging existing support networks, there will also be enhanced collaboration with the King County Business Development and Contract Compliance Office (BDCC) to connect contractors from the JumpStart network to existing technical assistance for bidding on County projects.

Strategy in Action Building the JumpStart Contractor Network

As King County contributes to clean energy deployment in local communities through initiatives like the [King County ENERGIZE heat pump program](#), it has identified a need to create relationships with local contractors to bridge a significant knowledge gap and for government contracting. The JumpStart Contractor network launched in 2024 supports local HVAC, solar plumbing, and electrical businesses with informative workshops and resources about how their companies can benefit from clean energy deployment. The network has grown to support over 20 local businesses in six months and is projected to double in size before the end of 2025.



PHOTO: Contractors and local business owners gathering at a JumpStart contractor reception.

Action 3.2 Conduct a localized Industry Sector analysis for emerging high-growth sectors across four county regions from 2030-2040



PHOTO: Key Tech Labs, a local non-profit, hosting a demo station at the 2023 Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit.

In June 2022, King County commissioned the Seattle Jobs Initiative to conduct an [independent industry sector analysis](#), identifying high-growth green sectors within the County. This analysis examined local industry and market opportunities, workforce trends, and high-demand occupations. It revealed that construction, manufacturing, transportation, and professional services/technology were key high-growth sectors in King County and offered recommendations on

how to integrate these industry, market, and occupational assessments into the development of King County's 2023 Green Jobs Strategy.

Further analysis of key industry sectors will take place in 2029 to inform King County's next Climate and Workforce Strategy update planned for 2030. As the political landscape evolves at the federal, state, and local levels, reassessing local growth sectors for 2030-2040 will be crucial for informing and shaping future partnership development efforts and strategic partnerships in the County.

King County will share the industry sector analysis with County departments and significant regional employers to enhance their long-term workforce planning. The analysis will provide a region-wide overview of key growth sectors and high-demand occupations related to the green economy, enabling proactive, data-driven strategic action.

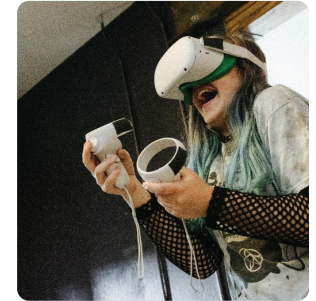


PHOTO: Youth in VR headset exploring virtual solar installation training module at the 2024 Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit.

Strategy in Action 2024 King County Pro-Equity Contracting Event

King County ECO, BDCC, Metro, and the Department of Natural Resources and Parks hosted the 2024 Pro-Equity Contracting event at Tabor 100 to connect with the local MWBE community. Over 60 businesses participated in workshops to learn about upcoming contracting opportunities with the County's capital project managers. County staff had the chance to build relationships with a broader network of potential MWBE contractors, share information about upcoming Pro-Equity Contracting projects, and share knowledge with community members about King County's project processes, procurement procedures, and outreach methods including upcoming climate action-focused projects.



PHOTO: Former King County Executive, Dow Constantine, addressing business owners and contractors at the 2024 Pro-Equity Contracting Event.

GOAL 4

ADVANCE CLIMATE ACTION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH KING COUNTY EMPLOYEES

King County will harness departmental resources to further develop and expand green career pathways, upskill its workforce through industry-recognized sustainability credentialing, and connect project managers with resources to integrate workforce development into climate action-focused capital projects.

The Opportunity

King County staff are essential to achieving the ambitious climate action goals outlined in the SCAP. As a large organization with a significant workforce, King County has a unique opportunity to upskill its employees with sustainability and energy conservation credentialing, while simultaneously empowering capital project managers to incorporate skills-based training into climate action-focused contracts. This integrated approach will weave workforce and economic development directly into internal County initiatives and projects, maximizing the impact of climate action investments. Doing so will not only require strengthened interdepartmental coordination but also the establishment of long-term funding streams and resource networks to advance skills training and workforce development within capital projects.



PHOTO: 25 Department of Executive Services, Facilities Management Division custodians graduate with certifications from the Green Janitor Health Education Program, through sponsorship from the Green Skills Development Fund.

Our Progress



Developed resources for capital project managers to integrate skills training and career on-ramps directly into capital projects.



Supported over 100 King County employees in accessing sustainability and energy conservation credentialing through the Green Skills Development Fund, doubling the goal outlined in the 2023 Green Jobs Strategy.

Moving Forward

- **Complete a feasibility study** for a proposed “1% for Workforce” initiative to scale and expand staff capacity and community partnerships for skills trades and career on-ramp opportunities on capital projects across King County.
- **Develop a resource guide** for County departments to integrate skills training and JumpStart work-based learning into capital projects.
- **Publish a contract language library** available to capital project managers that provides guidance on integrating work-based learning and skills training into capital projects.
- **Launch web-based training videos** to share knowledge with capital project managers on effectively utilizing Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) credits within the Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard.

Action 4.1 Expand the Green Skills Development Fund to lead the scaling up of sustainability and energy conservation credentialing and certifications for King County employees

As part of the 2023 Green Jobs Strategy, King County has launched a pilot program for the Green Skills Development Fund. By December 2024, this pilot program had provided energy conservation and sustainability training, including certifications, to over 100 King County employees. County staff collaborated with key labor partners and the Department of Human Resources to design the scope of the pilot. Key certifications offered include the Green Janitor Education Certification, developed by SEIU and the U.S. Green Building Council, as well as the LEED Green Associate and ENVISION sustainability certifications.

In its efforts to enhance workforce skills, King County aims to connect at least 500 employees with energy conservation and sustainability

credentials by 2030. The ECO will work with various King County departments and subject matter experts to identify training and certifications that align with the GHG emission reduction and climate preparedness goals outlined in the 2025 SCAP. At least 50 percent of the training opportunities offered through the Green Skills Development Fund will be recommended by King County departments, while the ECO and other partners may suggest additional training options.

King County is also proud to collaborate with the University of Washington Evans School of Public Policy to develop a report on future certifications and training opportunities for County employees, while exploring ways to scale the Green Skills Development Fund in the future. During listening and feedback sessions, County labor partners expressed a desire to be more involved in promoting the Green Skills Development Fund and to receive updates on its progress. In response to this request, the ECO will provide annual updates in collaboration with the Office of Labor Relations, following the completion of report findings from the UW Evans School in 2025.



PHOTO: King County Metro employees celebrating graduation from the Green Custodial Health program.

Strategy in Action Green Skills Development Fund Pilot

In 2024, King County piloted the Green Skills Development Fund to help upskill its workforce to meet climate action goals. The ECO worked with departments and County human resources to design the fund and provide training opportunities to over 100 employees across various trainings and certifications. The fund has connected frontline workers and County capital project managers to relevant certifications in their field, including the [U.S. Green Building Council's Green Janitor certification](#),²¹ [Envision Sustainability Professional certification](#),²² and the [LEED Green Associate certification](#).²³ These certifications help County employees across the organization sharpen their sustainability and energy conservation skills to advance climate action in their roles.

²¹ Building Skills Green Janitor Education Program [www.buildingskills.org/green-janitor-education-program]

²² Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure Envision Sustainability Professional Certification [<https://sustainableinfrastructure.org/credentialing/envision-sustainability-professional-env-sp/>]

²³ GBES LEED Green Associate Overview [<https://gbes.com/credentials-overview/leed-green-associate-overview/>]

Action 4.2 Further develop training resources for capital project managers on how to include workforce development and skills training initiatives, such as paid, work-based learning, into capital projects

As King County advances its goals related to clean energy, there will be opportunities for capital project managers and King County staff to integrate economic and skills training initiatives, such as JumpStart, into applicable phases of project execution more effectively. Integration can improve project results and help communicate the economic co-benefits of climate change and sustainability-informed capital projects to residents and decision-makers.

King County will promote enhanced training and resources within the [sustainable infrastructure scorecard's ESJ credit section](#)²⁴ to share best practices. Training resources for capital project managers will improve

outreach, engagement, and the use of credits during the design and construction phases of County projects. The training will include a mix of in-person workshops and online sessions based on the needs of project managers. By 2030, King County aims to develop a robust learning resource network for capital project managers. This network is intended to empower project managers to leverage the economic benefits of their projects by directly connecting members of frontline communities to local projects.



PHOTO: JumpStart participants Laura Garcia and Antwone Escalona attending a climate workshop.

²⁴ King County Natural Resources and Parks Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard Capital Project Guidelines [<https://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/solid-waste/programs/green-building/sustainable-infrastructure-scorecard-guidelines.pdf>]



PHOTO: Valley View Sewer District staff working onsite with newly hired JumpStart trainee, Timmothy Miller.

Strategy in Action

Equitable Wastewater Futures Capital Project

As a part of the Climate Equity Capital Pool Project, Public Health Seattle-King County collaborated with the ECO to require the installing contractors in local sewer districts receiving grant funding to update residential on-site septic systems to provide paid, work-based learning to pre-apprenticeship program graduates participating in County programs like JumpStart. The collaboration enabled youth to gain hands-on experience and learn about the essential roles and functions of a local sewer district, which resulted in one of the participating youth being hired full-time by the Valley View Sewer District. This collaboration is an excellent example of capital projects advancing economic opportunity for residents while claiming ESJ credits in their implementation.

Action 4.3 Strengthen department-level coordination to support implementation of 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy

During the community engagement and feedback process that shaped the 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy, employees across King County departments expressed a desire for deeper involvement in the implementation of climate action and workforce initiatives. By integrating department climate action priorities with workforce development efforts, King County can enhance cross-county collaboration and increase its overall impact.

King County plans to develop resources and supportive guidance for departments to implement climate and workforce initiatives effectively. Additionally, the County will conduct resource mapping to track progress in implementing the Climate and Workforce Strategy. The ECO will lead the effort to engage King County employees throughout the implementation phase by organizing employee-focused Climate Action Talks (virtual lunch-and-learn sessions), information sessions to share key insights across departments, and regular interdepartmental meetings to streamline implementation processes and identify best practices.

King County recognizes the importance of leveraging collective resources and professional networks to accelerate the implementation of the Climate and Workforce Strategy. Building connections and collaboration among departments is crucial for meeting the County's climate action and workforce objectives, ensuring their long-term impact.

Action 4.4 Explore establishing a “1% for Workforce” funding stream for skilled trades and career on-ramps tied to County capital projects

King County is committed to clearly articulating the co-benefits of capital projects within the county (this includes County-owned, leased, or financed building projects), especially from a climate change-informed lens. Capital project managers must complete the [Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard \(SIS\)](#)²⁵ as part of King County's Green Building Ordinance. The scorecard provides a framework for integrating cost-effective, sustainable development practices into infrastructure projects. All capital projects must achieve an acceptable rating regarding King County's ESJ credits, which are designed to advance the County's values regarding economic opportunity and diversity in project design and execution. King County is already leading the way in integrating skills training and workforce development into select projects. However, few enterprise-wide capacity-building resources exist to translate the lessons



PHOTO: BioFiber Industries hosting a demo station at the 2023 Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit.

25 King County Natural Resources and Parks Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard Capital Project Guidelines [<https://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/solid-waste/programs/green-building/sustainable-infrastructure-scorecard-guidelines.pdf>]

of successful projects across the entire County. With many competing demands, it isn't easy for project managers to become experts in navigating the required partnerships to integrate workforce development while still completing their other duties.

Inspired by the existing 1% for Art Program, 1% for Workforce would create a funding stream to support County-wide resources and capacity-building project support to departments. This funding would make it possible to weave skills training, workforce development, MWBE engagement, and living wage career on-ramps, along with other duties highlighted in the ESJ credits section of the SIS, into applicable County capital projects. Specifically, King County is interested in exploring third-party resources to provide project-by-project assistance to departments as requested, including direct project support, creating resource materials, and partnership development directly linked to implementing ESJ credits within capital projects.

King County will lead a feasibility study to explore a "1% for Workforce" funding framework that would set aside funding equal to at least one percent of applicable agency Capital Improvement Project operating budgets. The funds obtained would be used for activities aligned with the 2023 guidance in the SIS to advance project applicable skills training and workforce development within King County capital projects (i.e., ESJ credits). The study will assess the framework's potential for cost savings, identify eligible workforce development activities and capital project selection criteria, and explore suitable administrative structures for fund management, including potential partnerships and implementation timelines.

The 1% for Workforce framework is an ideal opportunity for King County to lead at the local level on connecting the economic benefit of capital projects (skills training, paid, work-based learning, MWBE contractor outreach, and more) to frontline communities.



PHOTO: NextGen Climate Intern, Sunny Song, participating in a 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan workshop.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

LOGIC MODEL

Mission: Connect frontline communities to living wage employment opportunities to build a skilled and diverse workforce across the green career spectrum.

GOAL 1

Grow careers and employment opportunities through regional partnerships

King County will prioritize creating quality career opportunities while expanding clean energy initiatives and advancing climate action. King County will partner with the public and private sectors to establish resource networks supporting regional clean energy employment opportunities in frontline communities.

OUR STRATEGY (INPUTS)	OUR TACTICS (ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS)	OUR INTENDED RESULTS (OUTCOMES)
<p>ACTION 1.1</p> <p>Integrate workforce development training and employment opportunities into county climate initiatives.</p> <p>RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public and private grant funding dollars will be utilized to support the implementation and sustainability of the initiatives. ECO staff time Department of Community and Human Services staff time. <p>FOCUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> External 	<p>WHAT WE WILL DO</p> <p>By December 2025, King County will lead the integration of contract specific language requiring all contractors and sub-contractors performing duties associated with its climate initiatives, such as ENERGIZE, to act as host sites for JumpStart paid work-based learning opportunities.</p> <p>By December 2025, King County will launch a sponsored communications campaign to raise awareness and promote the benefits of the JumpStart program, including a dedicated website, news articles, and multimedia resources.</p> <p>By December 2030, King County will connect 200 young adults across the four-county region to employment through JumpStart.</p>	<p>WHAT WE WILL SEE</p> <p>County residents and partners will see a direct correlation between climate initiatives and employment and training on ramps in our four-county region through ECO climate projects such as ENERGIZE.</p> <p>ECO communicates evidence that JumpStart participation is supporting members of frontline communities with access to living wage career opportunities with room for advancement and long-term career growth.</p> <p>Through JumpStart expansion across the four-county region, 200 young adults are connected to employment, resulting in over \$20 million in wages generated within frontline communities.</p>



OUR STRATEGY (INPUTS)	OUR TACTICS (ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS)	OUR INTENDED RESULTS (OUTCOMES)
<p>ACTION 1.2</p> <p>Collaborate with the Coalition for Climate Careers (C3) to fill essential gaps in workforce development service delivery and regional coordination.</p> <p>RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Public and private funding dollars and coalition membership contributions from King County <p>FOCUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">External	<p>WHAT WE WILL DO</p> <p>By December 2027, the ECO will develop funding streams focused on unrestricted private dollars to fund 50 percent of paid work-based learning opportunities for youth and middle skill workers within frontline communities.</p> <p>By December 2028, King County will collaborate with C3 to develop employer and clean energy contractor-led micro grants focused on capacity building and business development.</p>	<p>WHAT WE WILL SEE</p> <p>A regional public-private coalition, composed of local government, employers, training and education providers, union partners, and community-based organizations, will collaborate to build high-performing workforce development partnerships, utilizing federal, state, and local resource networks and funding.</p>

GOAL 2

Build accessible bridges to living wage careers addressing climate change within frontline communities

King County aims to enhance and expand pathways for accessible, living-wage green careers in frontline communities across the region and within its operations.

OUR STRATEGY (INPUTS)	OUR TACTICS (ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS)	OUR INTENDED RESULTS (OUTCOMES)
<p>ACTION 2.1</p> <p>Scale and enhance green career pathways to recruit from frontline communities most affected by climate change.</p> <p>RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECO staff time • King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks staff time • Department of Executive Services staff time • Department of Local Services staff time • King County Metro Staff time <p>FOCUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal 	<p>WHAT WE WILL DO</p> <p>By December 2028, participating King County departments will enact green careers pathway implementation plans including but not limited to: dedicated digital interfaces on county websites highlighting green career pathways positions, a “Green Jobs” designated job category on the King County public-facing job board, and enabled job alerts for newly created green jobs category.</p> <p>By December 2030, ECO’s Climate and Workforce team will collaborate with participating departments to plan and complete no less than twenty (one per quarter) specialized recruitment events and/or social media campaigns highlighting green career pathways within participating departments.</p>	<p>WHAT WE WILL SEE</p> <p>Participating King County departments implement plans for green career pathway development that align with and support existing department recruitment while highlighting green career options in frontline communities.</p> <p>Participating King County departments receive support in designing and implementing specialized recruitment events within frontline communities highlighting green career pathways from a climate informed recruitment lens.</p>

OUR STRATEGY (INPUTS)

ACTION 2.2

Expand youth and middle-skill worker-oriented outreach campaigns and events for early career and high school-age youth.

RESOURCES

- ECO staff time

FOCUS

- External

OUR TACTICS (ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS)

WHAT WE WILL DO

By September 2027, the Climate and Workforce team will expand the Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit to see a 200 percent increase in attendance (based on 2024 Summit attendance data).

By December 2030, the Climate and Workforce team will partner on outreach for department led initiatives to engage youth and middle skill workers on existing King County on-ramps programs (Parks Youth conservation corps, SWD deconstruction program, WTD OIT program etc.).

By 2030, the Climate and Workforce team will expand the NextGen Climate Internship program to include external host sites, through partnership with trusted local businesses and organizations.

OUR INTENDED RESULTS (OUTCOMES)

WHAT WE WILL SEE

The Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit is positioned to make a larger regional impact on King County, as evidenced by increased attendance and employer engagement.

Identification and implementation of best practices in engaging middle-skill workers and youth for recruitment into green careers in construction, manufacturing, transportation, and professional services.

An expanded NextGen Climate Internship Program provides opportunities for young adults to work directly with local businesses and organizations to launch careers focused in sustainability.

ACTION 2.3

Conduct a feasibility study to explore KC PATH to fill critical and applicable roles within key King County departments.

RESOURCES

- ECO staff time
- Department of Human Resources (DHR) staff time
- King County Executive Office, Office of Labor Relations (OLR) staff time

FOCUS

- Internal

WHAT WE WILL DO

By December 2026, the Climate and Workforce team will conduct a feasibility study to determine a best fit model for KC PATH among select departments and internal county resource networks.

WHAT WE WILL SEE

Shared understanding on the feasibility of KC PATH and formalized on-ramps to County roles for qualified applicants from frontline communities.



OUR STRATEGY (INPUTS)	OUR TACTICS (ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS)	OUR INTENDED RESULTS (OUTCOMES)
<p>ACTION 2.4</p> <p>Expand wraparound supportive services within workforce development programming to emphasize direct income assistance.</p> <p>RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ECO staff time• Public private partners, in collaboration with Coalition for Climate Careers (C3) <p>FOCUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• External	<p>WHAT WE WILL DO</p> <p>By December 2027, expand and scale paid work-based learning host sites connected to JumpStart including identification of new revenue sources for paid work-based learning.</p> <p>By December 2028, streamline and enhance operational logistics for paid work-based learning and guaranteed basic income (GBI) funding for King County JumpStart including enhanced scheduling digitization and direct deposit payment options.</p> <p>By December 2030, King County will collaborate with the Seattle King County Workforce Development Council (WDC) to expand GBI resources to all eligible King County JumpStart participants.</p>	<p>WHAT WE WILL SEE</p> <p>Wraparound supportive services help remove employment barriers and support long-term career goals for King County JumpStart participants.</p>

GOAL 3

Invest in building labor and business networks within local high-demand industry sectors essential to clean energy deployment

King County will invest County resources in building labor and business partnerships within existing high-growth sectors to increase access to economic opportunity through climate initiatives.

OUR STRATEGY (INPUTS)	OUR TACTICS (ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS)	OUR INTENDED RESULTS (OUTCOMES)
<p>ACTION 3.1</p> <p>Increase contractor education and resources to improve the quantity and diversity of local contractors participating in King County-led clean energy projects.</p> <p>RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECO staff time • Department of Executive Service, Business Development and Contract Compliance staff time • Collaboration with community-based organizations focused on contracting best practices <p>FOCUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External 	<p>WHAT WE WILL DO</p> <p>From 2025-2030, the Climate and Workforce team will host no less than 4 ECO sponsored contractor workshops per year on emerging King County projects, policies and procedures.</p> <p>From 2025-2030, the Climate and Workforce team will develop a resource library of printed and web-based capacity building resources specifically on contracting opportunities tied to clean energy deployment such as state local and federal programs.</p> <p>From 2025-2030, the Climate and Workforce team will partner with the Office of Business Development and Contract Compliance to provide educational resources and support to contractors in the JumpStart network.</p>	<p>WHAT WE WILL SEE</p> <p>Equip local contractors with information and resources to be prepared to bid on King County projects focused on clean energy deployment.</p> <p>Develop relationships and resource networks to reduce the administrative burden for smaller and MWBE contractors to access clean energy projects.</p>



OUR STRATEGY (INPUTS)	OUR TACTICS (ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS)	OUR INTENDED RESULTS (OUTCOMES)
<p>ACTION 3.2</p> <p>Conduct a localized Industry Sector analysis for emerging high-growth sectors across the four-county region from 2030-2040.</p> <p>RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ECO staff time• Independent consultant team <p>FOCUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• External	<p>WHAT WE WILL DO</p> <p>By December 2029, the Climate and Workforce team will commission an independent third-party analysis of high-growth sectors. The Climate and Workforce team will concurrently consult with county departments and large-scale employers in the region on their key workforce planning priorities related to the industry sector analysis.</p>	<p>WHAT WE WILL SEE</p> <p>Re-evaluation of the economic landscape projected for 2030-2040 to support investment in newly identified key industry sectors. This re-evaluation will position King County to meet its climate goals through workforce development initiatives tied to high-growth industry sectors.</p>

GOAL 4

Build accessible bridges to living wage careers addressing climate change within frontline communities

King County aims to enhance and expand pathways for accessible, living-wage green careers in frontline communities across the region and within its operations.

OUR STRATEGY (INPUTS)	OUR TACTICS (ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS)	OUR INTENDED RESULTS (OUTCOMES)
<p>ACTION 4.1</p> <p>Expand the Green Skills Development Fund to lead the scaling up of sustainability and energy conservation credentialing and certifications for King County employees.</p> <p>RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECO Staff Time • King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks staff time • Department of Executive Services staff time • Department of Local Services staff time • King County Metro staff time • King County Office of Labor Relations staff time • Department of Human Resources Learning and Development Team staff time • King County Executive Office, Office of Labor Relations (OLR) staff time <p>FOCUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal 	<p>WHAT WE WILL DO</p> <p>Beginning in January 2025, the Climate and Workforce team will ensure that no less than 50 percent of the trainings and certifications offered through the fund be directed by recommendations from county departments.</p> <p>From 2025 to 2030, the Climate and Workforce team will provide updates on the progress of the Green Skills Development Fund for county labor partners through the Office of Labor Relations. These updates will focus on fund progress, the number of employees served, and new training opportunities available for King County staff who are eligible for the Green Skills Development Fund.</p> <p>By December 2030, the Green Skills Development fund will serve no less than 500 employees across county departments including but not limited to DES, DLS, Metro and DNRP.</p>	<p>WHAT WE WILL SEE</p> <p>The scaling of employee energy conservation credentialing to support identified emission reduction goals within the SCAP.</p> <p>Coordinated communication regarding Green Skills Development Fund outcomes allow partner labor organizations to recognize the value of their time and efforts in designing and promoting the fund.</p>

OUR STRATEGY (INPUTS)

ACTION 4.2

Develop training resources for capital project managers on how to include workforce development and skills training initiatives, such as paid work-based learning, into capital projects.

RESOURCES

- King County Capital Project Management Training Team staff time
- ECO staff time
- Third party training consultants

FOCUS

- Internal

OUR TACTICS (ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS)

WHAT WE WILL DO

By December 2026, the Climate and Workforce team will develop a resource guide for county departments – specifically Metro, DES, DLS, and DNR – to integrate skills training and JumpStart work-based learning into capital projects.

By December 2026, the Climate and Workforce team will launch a series of web-based video trainings for capital project managers tied to accessing ESJ credits on capital projects.

By December 2027, the Climate and Workforce team will publish a contract language library available to King County capital project managers on integrating paid work-based learning and skills training in their projects.

OUR INTENDED RESULTS (OUTCOMES)

WHAT WE WILL SEE

A broad network of learning materials available to capital project managers for innovative workforce development projects and partnerships. These connections create more opportunities for members of frontline communities to access economic opportunities through capital projects.

OUR STRATEGY (INPUTS)

ACTION 4.3

Strengthen department-level coordination to support implementation of 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy

RESOURCES

- ECO Staff time
- King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks staff time
- Department of Executive Services staff time
- Department of Local Services staff time
- King County Metro staff time
- King County Office of Labor Relations staff time
- Department of Human Resources Learning and Development Team staff time
- King County Executive Office, Office of Labor Relations (OLR) staff time

FOCUS

- Internal

OUR TACTICS (ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS)

WHAT WE WILL DO

By December 2025, the Executive Climate office will begin hosting interdepartmental meetings to share updates on Climate and Workforce Strategy implementation.

By December 2025, the Executive Climate Office will lead in enhancing interdepartmental communication regarding the climate and workforce strategy by creating a climate resource hub page for sharing interdepartmental updates, resources, and successes.

By December 2026, King County will create clear department guidance on resource mapping and branding for programs and services aligned with climate and workforce strategy implementation.

OUR INTENDED RESULTS (OUTCOMES)

WHAT WE WILL SEE

County departments can clearly articulate how their department is able to collaborate with and benefit from the implementation of the Climate and Workforce Strategy.

County departments are able to effectively weave their own workforce development initiatives into Climate and Workforce Strategy implementation when they deem it applicable.



OUR STRATEGY (INPUTS)	OUR TACTICS (ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS)	OUR INTENDED RESULTS (OUTCOMES)
<p>ACTION 4.4</p> <p>Explore establishing a “1% for workforce” funding stream for skilled trades and career on-ramps tied to county capital projects.</p>		
<p>RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks staff time• Department of Executive Services staff time• Department of Local Services staff time• King County Metro staff time• King County Office of Labor Relations staff time• Department of Human Resources Learning and Development Team staff time• King County Executive Office, Office of Labor Relations (OLR) staff time	<p>WHAT WE WILL DO</p> <p>By December 2026, conduct feasibility study on 1% for workforce frameworks for funding contractor outreach/ engagement, skills training, paid work-based learning, internships, connections to unsubsidized employment for persons from economically disadvantaged areas during planning, design and construction project phases of county capital projects.</p>	<p>WHAT WE WILL SEE</p> <p>Shared understanding on the feasibility of developing a resource network for King County project managers to fund ESJ credit opportunities tied to advancing economic justice within the Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard (aka Green Building Scorecard).</p> <p>Identification of sustainable funding streams to support workforce development, contractor engagement and long-term workforce planning tied to King County capital projects including those with clear emission reduction goals.</p>
<p>FOCUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal		

APPENDIX

CULTURE SHIFT CONSULTING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

2024 NEXTGEN ANNUAL REPORT



GREEN JOBS STRATEGY LISTENING SESSIONS AND FOCUS GROUPS FEEDBACK REPORT

Prepared by :

Culture Shift Consulting



October 18, 2024



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Executive Summary

The Executive Climate Office (ECO) convened a series of listening sessions and focus groups, the feedback from which will inform the revision process guiding the development of the 2025-2030 Green Jobs Strategy (GJS). Participants included youth, businesses and contractors, community partners, labor partners, key implementers, and King County staff. Key findings for each audience were:

Youth

- Short-term training opportunities like JumpStart enable **exploration** and provide value by adding **new qualifications** to their resumes
- **Career advancement** and **earning potential** are their top priorities when considering whether to pursue work in a particular sector
- Reaching youth requires a combination of **in-person outreach** through trusted spaces and **digital communication**

Business owners

- Business owners have limited time, and to engage with the GJS they require **simple processes** and **hands-on support** on applying for/enrolling in GJS opportunities
- The benefits of programs need to **outweigh the administrative burden** they carry for business owners to participate
- Outreach and communications to business owners appear dependent on relationships with individual King County staff rather than streamlined within and across departments

Key implementers

- Build industry relationships to help translate short-term opportunities such as JumpStart into **long-term employment** for frontline community members
- Articulate a vision for where short-term programs will lead participants in the long run
- Include **summaries of key, relevant points** when sharing GJS opportunities or outcomes, paired with opportunities for deeper information sharing and dialogue such as **lunch-and-learns**

Community partners

- Build on short-term programs by **expanding who is eligible** and what sectors are included
- Share stories that demonstrate that short-term programs are leading to **long-term, well-paid work** for frontline community members
- Directly share **tailored information** between King County staff and community partners

Labor partners

- Foster reciprocal relationships by collaborating with labor organizations on **advancing their own climate priorities**
- **Communicate the outcomes** of initiatives that are co-designed or implemented in partnership with labor organizations
- Develop **tailored ongoing communications** for labor organizations

King County Staff

- Clarify how the GJS connects with their **departmental priorities** and **county-wide priorities**
- Clarify when departments should tap into GJS resources and when they should use their own departmental resources
- Foster **interdepartmental communications** about the GJS by developing a shared communications platform (through SharePoint, Teams, etc.) and cross-department meetings to share updates and accomplishments

Common themes that emerged across all audiences

- JumpStart is the most widely known GJS initiative, and participants would like to see ECO **expand and scale JumpStart**
- Career pathways that demonstrate the potential for **long-term opportunities and advancement** in the green jobs sector are critical to attract and retain workers
- To amplify the impact of the GJS, King County must remove **barriers** that the County's overarching **contracting and finance processes** create
- A **comprehensive GJS communications strategy** that responds to different audiences messaging and communications needs will require allocating dedicated resources to developing and implementing a communications strategy

Process

The Executive Climate Office (ECO) convened a series of listening sessions and focus groups, the feedback from which will inform the revision process guiding the development of the 2025-2030 Green Jobs Strategy (GJS). The following listening sessions and focus groups took place:

	Audience	Date	# of participants
Listening Sessions	DES/DLS	7/16/2024	2
	DNRP	7/17/2024	11
	Labor partners	7/23/2024	3
	Climate team	7/24/2024	11
	Community partners	7/30/2024	17
	King County Metro	7/30/2024	10
Focus Groups	Youth	8/22/2024	9
	Key implementers	9/17/2024	20
	Business owners	9/19/2024	6
Total			89

At each listening session and focus group, ECO staff shared a presentation on the Green Jobs Strategy (GJS), including who it serves and key programs that support its goals. Afterwards, Culture Shift Consulting facilitated discussions to gather input on existing GJS initiatives and ideas for the next iteration of the strategy.

Findings

Findings are organized in the following topics for each audience:

- Reactions to the work completed so far
- How the GJS should expand in 2025-2030
- What would motivate them to engage
- Communications and engagement recommendations

Youth

Reactions to the work completed so far

Short-term opportunities such as JumpStart provide young people an avenue to add more qualifications to their toolbox and introduce them to new career pathways.

How could the GJS expand in 2025-2030?

- Build on **career pathways** and broaden outside of jobs within King County.
- Offer **workshops** at the end of training opportunities or internships to help young people map what their next steps should be to accomplish their career goals. Help them translate the skills they learned into **resumes** and **job interview responses** that would help them get the next job they need to follow their desired career pathway.
- Incorporate a **shadowing** component in the JumpStart curriculum for participants to learn about other jobs at King County that are in alignment with their career goals.

What would motivate young people to engage more deeply with the GJS?

Youth feel uncertain about their future job stability and are focused on their future earnings and job prospects. For green jobs to appeal to them, they need to understand how they would advance their career and increase their income over time in this field. They would like to deepen their understanding of why the GJS is focusing on the construction, manufacturing, transportation, and professional services/tech industries and what the career pathways and earning potential are in these sectors.

- Leverage social media, particularly **short form videos and graphics**.
- Share information through **newsletters and online portals** that university students access to check assignments and grades.

Business Owners

Reactions to the work completed so far

The JumpStart program benefits both trainees and business owners – it provides trainees a way to gain skills and determine whether it is a line of work they would like to pursue, and for small business owners it can be a way to test expanding their teams.

The \$25/hour wage for JumpStart can be a sticking point. On the one hand, after trainees complete JumpStart, they may find that future job opportunities for their experience level do not pay \$25/hour, particularly in the HVAC field. On the other hand, community partners who support job placements may hesitate to place one of their clients in a physical job for \$25/hour when they could earn \$20-22/hour working in a safer environment (for example, retail).

How could the GJS expand in 2025-2030?

- Providing opportunities for small businesses to **network with large businesses**, so that they can enter prime consultant/sub-consultant relationships. This can be a more feasible pathway for small businesses to start working with King County and contributes to their economic success.
- Create opportunities for **peer-to-peer learning** for administrative business practices. For example, an established business that has experience documenting prevailing wage for King County contracts will be more easily able to explain how to do this to a small, emerging business than a King County staff person who has never had to do it.
 - While workshops are helpful, some questions require **1:1 support**. Offering an individual, one-hour follow-up with the workshop trainer would provide more practical learning.
- **Transportation to job sites** has posed a barrier for JumpStart trainees – participants have observed a gap in hiring post-program for trainees who have a driver's license and reliable transportation and those who do not. Providing trainees with support to obtain their driver's licenses would help close this gap.

- Expand focus from entry-level jobs to also include **career pathways** for more senior jobs, such as engineering and project management.
- Offer training programs that are followed with **small contracts** for graduates to practice their skills right away and demonstrate on-the-job experience.
- Offer trainings about complying with **prevailing wage**, including examples of how businesses track their employees' time in the field, particularly when employees are working on different functions that pay different rates all within the same shift.
- Offer **assistance in responding to RFPs**, following the model used for Racism is a Public Health Crisis funding opportunities.
- **Simplify the process to apply for a C-PACER loan** and provide resources such as a phone line to answer questions about filling out applications.
- Create an office that can help small businesses and contractors with the **administrative tasks** required to work on government projects at a subsidized rate.
 - Finding a provider to deliver these services can be the greatest challenge; therefore, receiving grant funding would not alleviate administrative burden if it does not also come with a recommendation for a vendor or software to use.
 - Business owners weigh how cumbersome it is to apply for a grant against the benefit they would derive from the funding. When an application is too time consuming or the parameters of how the funds can be used are too narrow, business owners tend to decide against applying.

Overall, business owners felt that simplifying procurement processes should be a priority for businesses and contractors to participate in GJS opportunities.

- Simplify the process for businesses to earn a King County **Small Contractor Supplier (SCS) certification**.
- Reduce **wait times** from invoicing to payment.
- Reevaluate **insurance requirements** and ensure that they are in alignment with the scope of the project (for example, requiring the same level of insurance coverage for all projects may be prohibitive for smaller businesses).
- Revamp **procurement portal** for better user experience.
 - Participants mentioned the Port of Seattle procurement website as a more user-friendly example. The website does not require log-in before seeing opportunities, it is easily searchable by text rather than contract codes and displays pertinent information such as contract dollar value and contract manager at a first glance.

What would motivate business owners to engage more deeply with the GJS?

Business owners have many competing priorities. Their attention and capacity to participate in programs is greater when processes are simple. Reducing paperwork and streamlining the requirements to access an opportunity will make it more likely for them to participate.

Communications and engagement recommendations

- Focus on sharing opportunities on publications that don't have paywalls, such as **Northwest Agent weekly, Tabor 100, and community-based organization newsletters**
- Develop partnerships with organizations such as Villa Comunitaria in South Park that already implement **workforce development programs**
- Deepen existing partnerships with organizations that serve as **conveners** for businesses, such as the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce with the Business Connector program
- Compile lists of businesses and contractors held by different project managers to develop a more **comprehensive email list** for sharing opportunities

Key Implementers

Reactions to the work completed so far

Traditionally, entry-level positions have given workers a foothold into long-term, stable employment at King County. Current initiatives like JumpStart provide that initial entry into the workforce, and participants would like to see a similar trajectory for these sorts of initiatives, where they result in long-term careers inside and outside of King County.

How could the GJS expand in 2025-2030?

- Build on **career pathways** work to develop more holistic pathways that are interdepartmental and even interagency. For example, a worker may begin their career in the Department of Natural Resources and Parks and may continue on in another King County department, or at a city government.
- Conduct a **gap analysis** to understand what jobs are available in the market and focus on trainings that build the skillsets needed for those jobs.
- Deepen **industry relationships** to learn what they are looking for in new employees. Organizations such as Workforce Development Council and Puget Sound Regional Council may offer entry points to broad industry networks.

- Deepen **partnerships with labor unions**, such as MLK Labor and Central Labor Council, and Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committees.
- Bring **Equity and Belonging Managers** into the work to help ensure that initiatives lead to equitable outcomes.
- Seek out like-minded **philanthropic organizations** that may be able to provide funding that is more flexible than government funding.
- Implement direct communications with community members who may be eligible for programs, like **direct mail**.

Key implementers also noted that when new funding is available, King County policy can pose difficulties to using the funding for what is needed. For example, restrictions on how to use funding can make it difficult use funds to bring on new staff. For funding to achieve desired goals, overall King County policy needs to be examined and changed.

What would motivate key implementers to engage more deeply with the GJS?

Key implementers want to understand the long-term vision for GJS initiatives. For example, after someone participates in a short-term program like JumpStart, what is the vision for where participants will be in 6 months, in a year, etc., and what ongoing support will be provided to achieve this vision.

Communications and engagement recommendations

Host a **Lunch and Learn** or **informational series** that highlights the key points in lengthy reports. Be intentional about the audience; it should include people who could truly benefit from an initiative, rather than a catch-all list of every ECO contact.

Community Partners

Reactions to the work completed so far

Existing programs such as JumpStart have been a good starting point to increase opportunities for youth and middle skill workers in green jobs. Now, participants would like to see these programs scale up and a more concrete vision for what happens when someone finishes the program.

How could the GJS expand in 2025-2030?

- After completing the JumpStart program, provide participants with **connections to job opportunities** or further training that can help them obtain the jobs they are looking for.
- Scale JumpStart to prepare more workers, since the volume of workers needed for the energy transition is enormous. **Expand the sectors that are part Jumpstart.**
- Keep a **list of employers** categorized by the type of work they do, including small firms, that can be shared with participants after they complete the JumpStart program as a job search resource.
- Research how people in the 18-24 age range seek out and receive information and focus external communications on those channels.
- Start **outreach at a younger age**, at the middle school and elementary school level, to raise awareness of these types of jobs.
- Deepen **industry relationships** so that more workplaces are tapping into GJS initiatives to find workers.
- Include **justice-involved community members** as part of the key audiences that GJS serves.

What would motivate community partners to engage more deeply with the GJS?

Community partners are invested in connecting the communities they serve with quality jobs that pay good wages and offer a respectful job environment. They would like to see examples of success stories that demonstrate programs like JumpStart are achieving that goal.

Communications and engagement recommendations

Create communications that have relevant information for community partners and send them these communications directly.

Labor Partners

Reactions to the work completed so far

Labor partners were engaged in the initial stages of the Green Skills Development Fund and appreciated being invited to collaborate. However, follow up communication was lacking and they did not know how the initiative continued to be carried out.

How could the GJS expand in 2025-2030?

Develop partnerships with labor organizations that have climate justice as a strategic priority and co-create mutually beneficial programs.

What would motivate labor partners to engage more deeply with the GJS?

Labor partners want to know the outcomes of the programs they have helped shape. Ongoing communications to share new developments and results will help keep labor organizations interested in continuing to work on the GJS.

Communications and engagement recommendations

- Host **information sessions** about programs that are relevant to labor partners, like the Green Skill Development Fund.
- Share information with **union representatives** who can then share it with the broader membership.
- Develop **continuous communications** so labor partners can stay up to date on initiatives that they were involved in and new opportunities that they can share with union members.

King County Staff

Reactions to the work completed so far

Career pathways are key to the success of GJS. Getting workers in the door is the first step, afterwards advancement opportunities are key to keep them engaged.

How could the GJS expand in 2025-2030?

- Build ways for JumpStart program participants to connect with **long-term job opportunities** after the end of their work-based learning.
- Create programs that provide **longer-term temporary positions** than 6 weeks. For example, King County interns report that they get the most out of 1-2-year internships rather than ones that last a few months.
- Create a **container for interdepartmental thought partnership**, where new ideas can be generated and tested before rolling out across King County.
- Create a **pool of funds** that different departments can access to implement projects that advance GJS goals.
- Conduct outreach to raise awareness of green jobs earlier than the 18-24 age range, through high schools. Consider a pathway for **high school students** to start earning certifications for trades, just like there are programs for high school students to take community college courses.

- **Expand the sectors** encompassed by the GJS to include other industries focused on climate preparedness and sustainability.
- Expand the types of jobs encompassed by the GJS to **include professional careers** like engineering, architecture, and sustainability consulting.
- In addition to trainings for specific technical skills, offer trainings in more **general job-seeking skills**, such as preparing for interviews.
- Ensure GJS goals are in alignment with **broader Equity and Social Justice goals** by examining whether the long-term impact of initiatives benefits frontline communities and whether there are unintended consequences.

King County staff have experienced structural barriers to engage with GJS initiatives, such as rigid procurement processes that make it more difficult to contract with community-based organizations and small businesses. Addressing these barriers would require changes to overarching King County policies.

What would motivate King County staff to engage more deeply with the GJS?

King County staff would like for the connections between GJS goals, county-wide goals, and their departments' priorities to be articulated more clearly. They emphasized that their ability to support GJS initiatives was contingent on their departmental leadership's buy-in. ECO needs to establish that the GJS advances King County priorities related to the climate crisis, and to emphasize that it is a priority for all departments to support the county's work related to climate. A statement from the King County Executive goes a long way to ensure leadership buy-in at the department level.

Project managers see connections with their own departments' goals, and they could use support making these connections clear for leadership so that they can better justify spending their time involved in GJS initiatives. There are strong linkages between skills building and green jobs workforce development and the electrification of King County Metro's fleet, heat mitigation and adaptation projects, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

There can be confusion about when they should tap into GJS resources and when they should tap into their departmental resources. For example, some departments have funds that fulfill similar functions as the Green Skills Development Fund, and departments have their own workforce development initiatives to diversify their staff. They would like to see both better coordination to streamline these disparate efforts, and guidance about when they should tap GJS resources rather than their own departmental resources.

Communications and engagement recommendations

- Create a **user-friendly information base** with updates about GJS initiatives and resources such as relevant job listings, a calendar of activities, and outreach materials.
- Host meetings to showcase **success stories** of different departments tapping into GJS initiatives, including how they were able to get approval to invest time and budget in the work and what community partners they engaged.
- Share **achievements** more often to help justify spending time and budget collaborating with GJS initiatives.
- Explain how each program will lead to the broader goal of **increasing frontline community members full-time positions**

Common Themes

The following themes emerged across listening sessions and focus groups:

Jumpstart is a valuable program

Of the initiatives that ECO shared in their presentations, JumpStart was the program that had the most existing awareness among participants. Across all audiences, participants saw value in a program like JumpStart that provides an entry point into the green jobs sector.

Participants shared the following ideas to scale JumpStart:

- **Expand program eligibility** to include other audiences who have been excluded from the workforce, such as justice-involved people community members
- **Expand sectors** that can participate in the program to include employers and/or projects that work more broadly in the climate preparedness and sustainability sectors
- Strengthen the **links to long-term employment** to make the program more appealing to potential participants

Listening session and focus group participants highlighted feedback around the discrepancy between the wage paid by the JumpStart program and the entry-level wages for long-term positions, particularly in the HVAC sector. JumpStart

wages are higher than typical entry-level wages, which may dissuade participants from continuing to work in the field.

The implication was that JumpStart wages should be adjusted to match the market. However, this would not be in alignment with ECO's commitment to a living wage. Instead, a more values-aligned alternative may be to advocate for market wages to catch up with living wages, and to explore ways to support small businesses with this increase.

Career pathways are critical to attract workers

All audiences emphasized the importance of career advancement to attract and retain workers. For youth, the decision to give the green jobs sector a chance relied heavily on the earning potential and career advancement opportunities that the field may offer. Across other audiences, participants noted that to sustain the number of workers needed for a green energy transition, it is critical for workers who enter the sector to stay in the sector, and they see strong career pathways as one of the main strategies to accomplish this.

To strengthen career pathways, participants recommended:

- Strengthen links between short-term programs and long-term employment through additional resources like **job application support** and **job matching and/or placement support**
- Collaborate with employers outside of King County government to develop a **shared vision of career advancement** in these fields
- Develop **stronger industry connections** to help place workers in long-term jobs after they complete short-term programs like JumpStart

Supporting the GJS requires changes in County-wide processes

Participants mentioned that existing King County finance and contracting processes present barriers to achieving the vision of the GJA. Examples included complex contracting processes that make it difficult for small businesses to receive funds from King County and limitations to how departments can use funds generated by programs like the proposed 1% for Workforce.

ECO can help alleviate these barriers by sharing feedback with the appropriate decision-makers and advocating for changes that remove barriers.

Meeting all communications needs requires a multi-channel strategy

Different messages resonate with different audiences, and different audiences are attuned to different communications channels. Serving all these needs will require ECO to develop a comprehensive communications plan and allocate dedicated resources to developing and managing different communications assets and channels.

Communications recommendations summary

Audience	Messages	Channels
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people are entering a challenging labor market and have valid concerns about their future financial stability • Green jobs provide a career option with job stability, advancement opportunities, and earning potential to lead a comfortable life • In addition to the personal benefits of pursuing a career in the green jobs sector, by working in this field people can contribute to climate change mitigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with colleges and universities to share information through events, on-campus information, college/university newsletters, and existing online portals where students check grades and assignments • Establish communication platform (such as a Slack channel) for current and former participants of programs such as JumpStart to network and find opportunities • Short-form video content through social media

Audience	Messages	Channels
Business owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concise explanations of opportunities with clear instructions of how to apply • Simple applications; the level of effort required to apply is commensurate with the benefit of the opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-based organization newsletters • Business association newsletters • Direct email communications from King County staff
Key implementers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear vision for where a short-term opportunity can lead participants in the long run • Summaries of key points of relevant initiatives; avoid sending blanket communications that are not applicable or long reports without a summary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct email communications from King County staff • Lunch-and-learn or similar meetings to cover key points and provide opportunity for dialogue
Community partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summaries of key points of relevant initiatives; avoid sending blanket communications that are not applicable or long reports without a summary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct email communications from King County staff
Labor partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summaries of key points of relevant initiatives; avoid sending blanket communications that are not applicable or long reports without a summary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct email communications from King County staff to union representatives

Audience	Messages	Channels
Labor partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcomes of initiatives that labor organizations co-designed or helped implement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular GJS newsletter focused on information relevant to labor partners Informational meetings about relevant initiatives to cover key points and provide opportunity for dialogue
King County staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear connection between GJS goals and county-wide climate and equity goals Clear connection between GJS goals and departmental goals Celebrations of achievements to demonstrate the value of the GJS Statements from the King County Executive affirming the importance of the GJS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal shared information repository with resources such as relevant job listings, a calendar of activities, and outreach materials (on SharePoint, Teams, etc.) Informational meetings to share updates and achievements

Summary of Key Findings

Audience	Reaction to current work	How to expand	Motivators	Communications recommendations
Youth	Short-term training opportunities enable exploration and adding new qualifications to their resumes.	Conclude programs such as JumpStart with workshops that help translate new skills into future job opportunities.	Understanding the career advancement opportunities and earning potential in the green jobs sector.	Incorporate both digital communications and in-person connection to reach young people.
Business owners	Wages for entry-level positions in certain trades are out of alignment with ECO's definition of a living wage.	Prioritize hands-on learning for business owners to complete the administrative tasks related to contracting with King County.	Programs need to be simple to enroll in and the benefits of participating need to outweigh the administrative burden they pose.	Streamline outreach across all opportunities so that information is not dependent on an individual project manager's contacts.
Key implementers	Short-term programs like JumpStart have the potential to provide entry-level workers a foothold into the industry.	Focus on cross-sector partnerships (government, labor, industry, philanthropy) to ensure training turns into job placements.	A clearly articulated vision for where ECO intends short-term programs like JumpStart to lead in 6 months, one year, etc.	Pull out key points and calls to action from lengthy reports and share through interactive settings like Lunch and Learns

Summary of Key Findings

Audience	Reaction to current work	How to expand	Motivators	Communications recommendations
Community partners	Short-term programs like JumpStart are a good starting point to increase access to the sector.	Build on short-term programs by expanding who is eligible and what sectors are included and providing support to connect with long-term opportunities.	Evidence that initiatives are leading to well-paying jobs with respectful work environments for frontline communities	Directly share communications that focus on information that is relevant to community partners.
Labor partners	Initial collaboration on Green Skills Development Fund was productive but would have liked for it to be sustained.	Collaborate with labor organizations that have strategic priorities related to climate justice on developing initiatives that advance the goals of both the GJS and those organizations.	Learning the outcomes of collaborative efforts so labor organizations can see what value came out of their time and effort.	Host information sessions about new programs and share opportunities relevant to union members with representatives.
King County staff	Career pathways are the cornerstone to the success of the GJS, since career advancement will motivate workers to stay in the field.	Deepen the impact of the GJS by expanding the audiences served and sectors encompassed by the strategy, and by creating long-term opportunities for program participants.	Clarity on how the GJS connects with their departmental priorities and county-wide priorities, and clarity on when it is appropriate to use GJS resources versus department-specific resources.	Increase visibility of GJS initiatives and share successes and lessons learned that can enable departments to justify spending time and budget on initiatives.

2024-2025

NextGen Climate Internship Annual Report



King County

Executive Summary

Introduction

Community Engagement

Goals and Actions

Looking Ahead

Performance Measures

Appendix



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INTERNSHIP GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The NextGen Climate Internship Program gives students hands on experience to address and mitigate the effects of climate change on a macro level.

Climate Policy Implementation Through working directly with different teams and projects, interns gained insight into how policy envisioned at the county level gets implemented to incorporate and support communities and stakeholders.

Mentorship & Guidance: Interns were guided by experienced mentors who could offer advice, constructive feedback, and guidance on career development. Additional opportunities to meet with professionals in various stages of their careers in government, policy, and other climate career paths expanded interns' network of professionals.

Career Readiness: Working alongside professionals allowed interns to gain exposure to real-world practices, technical skills and insight, and general education to advance their careers with a focus on government and climate work.

NextGen interns worked on different projects across divisions and teams in King County, working towards advancing action items identified in the **Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP)**.



STRATEGIC CLIMATE ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW



King County's Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) is the county's five-year blue print for climate action, integrating climate change into all areas of County operations and work with cities, partners, communities, and residents within King County. The SCAP has three sections

- Reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions section
- Preparing for Climate Change section
- Sustainable & Resilient Frontline Communities (SRFC)

Each intern was placed on a project to a department to help implement a section of the SCAP



OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

NextGen Interns receive a professional development budget to spend on opportunities like conferences and symposia, online courses, and certifications, and can be spent on anything that will advance an intern's professional development.

CAREER SPOTLIGHT SESSIONS

Career spotlight sessions give NextGen interns the opportunity to network with climate professionals, both within and outside of King County. In small group settings, interns learn about career journeys, ask questions, and continue discussions through individual coffee chats. Interns are also encouraged to form individual connections with people they meet along the way. Notable career spotlight sessions include the Climate Justice Director for the City of Seattle, Microsoft's Chief Sustainability Officer, and many more.

COURSE CERTIFICATIONS

Interns must complete online courses from Coursera to develop skills relevant to their selected projects. These courses include everything from project management to specific data analysis skills.

PORTFOLIO

Upon completing the NextGen internship, interns present a portfolio showcasing their achievements and learnings to King County employees, offering insights gained during their projects.



ALYSSA YANAGI *(She/Her)*

CONNECTING COUNTY AND COMMUNITY EFFORTS THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSUMPTION EMISSIONS TOOLKIT

Consumption Emissions Toolkit

A climate resource being developed to support residents, organizations, and businesses in making well-informed decisions to drive action and reduce carbon emissions.

Steering and Managing

- Led quarterly eight-person steering committee meetings to present project progress and discuss collaboration across county, city, and community efforts.
- Consulting the expertise of climate, emissions, policy, and circular economy professionals while developing the Toolkit.



Community Engagement

- Engaged with the Re+ Community Panel: residents, workers, and volunteers of King County who have lived experiences as frontline community members.
- Worked with consultant to organize engagement and presentations with Re+ Community Panel members.
- Expanded regional partnerships, engagement, and outreach to community-based organizations, cities, and businesses.

“

ALYSSA PLAYED A PIVOTAL ROLE IN LEADING AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE KING COUNTY CONSUMPTION EMISSIONS TOOLKIT (CET), IN PARALLEL WITH THE 2025 STRATEGIC CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE PROCESS. HER SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CET WERE INSTRUMENTAL, PARTICULARLY THROUGH HER COLLABORATION WITH AND EMPOWERMENT OF FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES, WHOSE CONSUMPTION REDUCTION EXPERIENCES ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN THE TOOLKIT. ACHIEVING THIS DELIVERABLE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT HER!

-NINA OLIVIER, CIRCULAR ECONOMY PROGRAM MANAGER

”

Additional Work

- Supported onboarding and turn-over of project work to incoming RES intern.
- Strengthened JumpStart’s employer outreach efforts by conducting 27 cold emails and calls.
- Supported JumpStart’s Green Futures Summit.
- Obtained certifications in Sustainable Materials Management and Project Management.

ERIN TSAI *(They/She)*

DESIGNING EVENTS AND EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS TO CONNECT YOUTH TO CLEAN ENERGY CAREERS



As a part of my project, I helped develop engaging events and campaigns encouraging youth to pursue green careers.

Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit

- Created informational packet about the GJGF Summit to provide to potential sponsors, increasing total sponsorship for event from \$12,000 the previous year to \$20,000 this year.
- Analyzed successful poster designs to optimize the visual impact and messaging of the poster for the 2024 Summit.
- Provided key administrative support to the steering committee, including managing communications and tracking project timelines.
- Created comprehensive report about improvements and ideas to implemented for future Summits and events.



“ERIN HAS BEEN AN INVALUABLE ASSET TO THE EXECUTIVE CLIMATE OFFICE CLIMATE AND WORKFORCE TEAM. HER WORK HAS ADVANCED SEVERAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES, INCLUDING THE SUCCESSFUL PLANNING AND COORDINATION OF THE 2024 GREEN JOBS, GREEN FUTURES SUMMIT, AND HER INSTRUMENTAL ROLE IN CO-DESIGNING AND LEADING KEY ASPECTS OF THE JUMPSTART PROGRAM.”

-ANOUSHKA ADHAV, CLIMATE & WORKFORCE PROJECT MANAGER

”

JumpStart

- Designed and implemented a 4-hour climate workshop as part of the 12-hour JumpStart training program. Developed the workshop to educate JumpStart trainees on:
 - Climate Science Basics: Provide a solid foundation in climate science concepts.
 - Climate Justice: Explore the social and environmental implications of climate change.
 - Personal Connection: Empower trainees on their role in addressing climate change.
- Provided key logistical support for JumpStart contractor and hiring events.
- Represented JumpStart at clean energy events and led the program's booth at the GJGF Summit, using VR simulations to engage youth in a creative and interactive way.
- Created content for brand new JumpStart website, ensuring consistent language and messaging.
- Gained certification in project management covering project life cycles, project management methodologies, and leadership skills.

JOHN DUNSTAN *(He/Him)*

DIVERSIFYING METRO'S ELECTRIFICATION CONTRACTORS

Contractor Engagement

- Researched Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) and Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBs) around King County
- Attended and supported the Capital Division of King County Metro to meet with prospective contractors to connect them with upcoming capital projects



Community Engagement

- Researched and mapped out apprenticeship pathways to jobs on the south annex base capital projects
- Supported planning and outreach of King County Metro's green job fair through developing materials accessible to people outside the agency, distribution of event flyers around priority hiring communities, and event set-up

“PART OF METRO'S COMMITMENT TO AN EQUITABLE CLIMATE FUTURE IS MAKING SURE THAT WE DELIVER ECONOMIC EQUITY WITH OUR JOBS AND CONTRACTING. JOHN CREATE OUTREACH AMTERIALS THAT WILL CONNECT JOB SEEKERS TO OUR GREEN JOBS AND HELPED US ENGAGE WITH HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES TO INFORM THEM ABOUT FUTURE GREEN CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES. WITH AN OUTSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE AND THE LENS OF A SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONAL, HE HELPED DEMYSTIFY OUR PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES, MKAING THEM MORE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL.

-JEN MAYER, ESJ IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM MANAGER

Additional Work

- Synthesized results of multiple IT project equity reviews; focusing on project achievements, lessons learned, and work still to be done in future projects
- Provided research and facilitation support on the south campus area mobility plan (SCAMP)
- Gained a certificate in Sustainable Cities covering sustainable regional principles, sustainable neighborhoods, sustainable transportation networks, and green construction



PARKER LYNAS *(He/Him)*

DESIGNING OUTREACH FOR STORMWATER SERVICES

Events & the “Clean Water Connects Us All” Campaign

- Researched the connection between mental health, water pollution, and climate change messaging to incorporate into our stormwater campaign.
- Designed communication materials that centered community action and mental health.
 - Included fliers, social media graphics, blog posts, and more.
- Hosted a booth at the Greenbridge Health Fair in White Center, Washington.
 - Showcased “Life of a Drop of Water” by Hernan Paganini, the 2019 Stormwater Artist in Residence. The design was installed using Rainworks invisible paint.
- Hosted a booth at DeafNation Expo in Seattle, Washington.
 - Featured 5 video interviews of King County employees with captions and side-by-side ASL interpretation.
 - Opened the expo with a sign-and-sing along performance of Home by Publish the Quest. This was then followed by a visual vernacular poem.
- Helped facilitate Stormwater’s ethnic media tour of Renton’s green stormwater infrastructure (GSI).



“

PARKER WAS ABLE TO TEST THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL TACTICS FOR COMMUNICATIONS, BUT HIS SHIFT IN UNDERSTANDING FROM THEORETICAL TO EXPERIENTIAL IS VALUABLE TO MAKING DEEPER CONNECTIONS, UNDERSTANDING IMPACT AND INFLUENCE. PARKER’S ENTHUSIASM AND CURIOSITY WILL MAKE HIS FUTURE WORK PERSONALLY ENRICHING, BUT I BELIEVE VALUABLE TO COMMUNITIES HE MAY SERVE. ROCK ON!

-MARY RABOURN, STORMWATER SERVICES COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

”



Additional Work

- Assisted with the Executive Climate Office’s work to revise the Strategic Climate Action Plan.
- Worked with Stormwater Outreach for Regional Municipalities (STORM) to facilitate STORM-Fest and presented at the annual STORM Symposium.
- Attended the Department of Local Services’s event for ethnic media representatives: “Local Services wants to speak your language”.
- Drafted initial surveys for a self-administered survey on racial equity in the workplace.
- Earned the Plastics: Impacts and Action certificate from Cornell University.
- Attended a conferences on Science Communications and Social Marketing

SUNNY SONG:

Evaluating GHG Reduction Strategies



“UPDATING THE 2025 SCAP IS AN ALL HANDS ON DECK EFFORT. SUNNY’S CONTRIBUTIONS WERE A HUGE HELP TO MOVE THIS BODY OF WORK FORWARD.

**-CARRIE LEE,
GHG
REDUCTION
MANAGER**

”

SCAP 2025

- Updated 2020 SCAP GHG performance measurement tracker to include 2023 and 2024 data points. Coordinated and organized with 17 of staff leads to ensure data updates were complete and trouble shoot barriers.
 - Streamlined quality assurance processes by updating tracking systems to align GHG performance measures and SCAP priority action progress with the latest Biennial Report
- Documented key insights from interactive Climate Team workshops and external 2025 SCAP workshops to inform policy development and strategic planning.

Climate Action Plans

- Conducted comparative analyses of Climate Action Plans (CAP) from C40 and other cities to identify best practices and enhance clarity in plan structures
- Developed a detailed comparison spreadsheet of King Counties-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C), Climate Action Plan, and Joint Commitment policies to identify overlaps and gaps.
- Created and delivered a presentation highlighting actionable policies King County can adopt to strengthen alignment with K4C commitments.

Additional Work

LEED for Communities

- Led an informational session on SCAP and LEED project to guide King County’s recertification process
 - Facilitated applicant interviews and Q&A sessions to evaluate and onboard candidates for the project.
- Developed a comprehensive guideline and workflow plan to streamline project implementation and certification efforts.





THANK YOU FOR THE RIDE

This internship, our experiences, and the projects we completed are owed to the support and insight of our supervisors, professional staff, and community members we have had the pleasure of working with and learning from.

EXTENDING GRATITUDE

Project Supervisors

Anoushka Adhav - *Climate & Workforce Project Manager*

Carrie Lee - *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Program Manager*

Jen Mayer - *ESJ Implementation Program Manager*

Nina Olivier - *Circular Economy Program Manager*

Mary Rabourn - *Stormwater Services Communications Specialist*

Intern Supervisor

Michael Carter - *Climate & Workforce Manager*

NextGen Cohort Lead

Medha Kumar

Career Spotlight Sessions Speakers

Thank you for your continued support of the NextGen Internship Program!

CONTACT

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