



Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence



CONTACT: aitaskforce@dwd.wisconsin.gov
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WEBSITE: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/ai-taskforce>

Overview of Progress

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies are profoundly shaping the nature of work, altering the skills workers need for success, changing the competitive landscape for employers, and forcing educational and workforce development systems to overhaul their offerings to sustain a thriving Wisconsin economy. AI technologies are evolving rapidly, simulating human intelligence in computer systems, and enabling them to perform a wide range of tasks, from simple to complex. Already, Wisconsin employers and educational institutions are implementing AI applications in fields ranging from manufacturing and health care to transportation, agriculture, and the sciences.

At the same time, the rise of generative AI offers the potential to advance equity and economic opportunity for the people of Wisconsin. To help harness these technologies and strengthen Wisconsin's workforce for the 21st century and beyond, Gov. Tony Evers signed Executive Order #211, creating the Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence.

Administered by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) in coordination with the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), the task force has brought together private and public sector leaders to identify policies and investments that will continue to advance Wisconsin workers, employers, and job seekers through this technological transformation.

The Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence is charged with gathering and analyzing information to produce an advisory action plan for the governor. The action plan is expected to:

- Identify the current state of generative AI's impact on Wisconsin's labor market,
- Develop informed predictions regarding opportunities and impact for the near term and into the future,
- Identify how these workforce opportunities and impacts may touch Wisconsin's key industries, occupations, and foundational skillsets,
- Explore initiatives to advance equity and economic opportunity in the face of these changes, and
- Based on these findings, recommend policy directions and investments related to workforce development and educational systems to capitalize on the AI transformation.

To date, the work of the task force has been carried out by three subcommittees:

- **Industries, Occupations, and Skills:** This subcommittee has been working to identify the industries, occupations, and functional skillsets most likely to benefit or experience disruption from AI. Based on this understanding, and a review of existing training and other programs, the group has focused its efforts on identifying opportunities to advance workers, employers, job seekers, and a thriving Wisconsin economy. Both employee and employer needs have been considered.
- **Equity and Economic Opportunity:** The rise of generative AI offers the potential to advance equity and economic opportunity. This committee was tasked with exploring existing programs designed to connect underutilized talent pools with in-demand skills, identify gaps, and propose solutions that lead to career advancement in these new fields. The subcommittee has focused on advancing equity and economic opportunity as part of the AI transformation.
- **Workforce Development and Educational Solutions:** Based on the work of the previous two groups as well as research by DWD labor market economists and others, this subcommittee is identifying policy, educational, and budget solutions to prepare Wisconsin's workforce, drive economic development, and sustain thriving communities.

The following document reflects the collective efforts of the task force at the midpoint of its work. Next steps include efforts to obtain high-level feedback on these concepts, additional research and refinement of the concepts, opportunities for public input, and completion of a final plan. For the purposes of research, review, and policy responsiveness, the concepts focus on education, government, workforce development, and economic development as outlined below.

Education

The advancement of AI technologies appears likely to alter the skill landscape for workers in the state, driving an increased demand for some skills and reducing the demand for others. To respond to these shifting needs, the state should increase support for education and access to technical skill building opportunities for students in K-12 through higher education.

Principles

- "Kidstart" the workforce of the future through the K-12 experience with equitable access and fresh initiatives that boost digital literacy, technological and human-centered skills at every grade level and integrated within all academic areas.
 - Balance prioritizing development of technological skills and human-centered skills as the latter will become increasingly more valuable due to automation.
 - Foster an innovation mindset and create a culture of lifelong learning.
- Wisconsin's higher educational institutions are critical to developing a population and workforce that can productively use the latest technologies, develop next generation technologies, and discern and thwart sophisticated misinformation and disinformation efforts. Higher education in Wisconsin should expose students to new technologies across all programs and majors while increasing opportunities for students to specialize in AI and other digital skills.
- Establish key points of collaboration and instill consistent communication across Wisconsin's educational institutions to combine resources, share best practices, and ensure synergy in these efforts to best prepare the workforce of tomorrow.
- Establish key points of collaboration and instill consistent communication with Wisconsin's educational institutions and the government's public communication and educational initiatives as well as industries and workforce development partners to combine resources, share best practices, and ensure synergy in these efforts to best prepare the workforce of tomorrow.

Policy Concepts

1. Provide the necessary resources, as determined by Wisconsin's educational institutions, to invest in curriculum development and/or curriculum enhancement at all education levels and across disciplines in digital literacy, ethics, computer science, AI base training, cybersecurity, data science, coding, entrepreneurship, critical thinking, civics, academic career planning, and human-centered skills development.
 - Balance prioritizing technology-based skills and human-centered skills in curriculum.
 - Allow flexibility for educational institutions and disciplines within those institutions to identify solutions that best fit their needs and their students' needs.
 - Establish technology-focused micro-credentials.
 - Provide funding to develop computer science, data science, AI, and media literacy foundational courses that are compatible with all college majors.
2. Invest in educator recruitment and retention efforts to increase instructional capacity and invest in educators' professional development in these curriculum areas.
 - Consistent with accreditation standards, expand talent pipelines.
 - Create micro-credentials for educators.
 - Incentivize K-12 teachers to participate in professional development.
 - Provide the Universities of Wisconsin funding to hire faculty in these curriculum areas at a competitive pay rate.
3. Offer pathways for the existing workforce to affordably upskill, especially in high-demand fields.
 - Further support micro-credentials.
4. Increase investment in schools' infrastructure to support education and research in AI, such as:

- Using Wisconsin Fast Forward grant funds in K-12 schools to aid AI training development.
- Investing in university research institutions and leveraging these institutions to create new AI tools by funding competitive research grants both for faculty, staff, and student-run projects.
- Increasing investment in Universities of Wisconsin computer science and media literacy programs.
- Implementing new approaches and public-private partnerships to increase student access to advanced tools and equipment, software, automation systems, and worker augmentation technologies.

Government

The emergence of AI technologies presents opportunities to help government work more efficiently and effectively to serve the people of Wisconsin. At the same time, developments in AI make the management and application of data within the state even more critical for the basic functions of government and productivity of the public sector workforce. Moreover, state, and local governments bear critical responsibility for managing and protecting sensitive personal data, critical infrastructure, and systems essential to maintain our democracy. Securing public trust in the face of AI-driven technological change must be a priority. Government also plays a critical role in providing workers a seat at the table, promoting technologies that enhance rather than replace workers, and securing protections for workers and their families with an economy that works for everyone.

Key Concepts

- Continue investments to expand equitable access to broadband technology. Fund broadband expansion and digital literacy to ensure everyone has affordable, equitable access to broadband across the state at sufficient speeds to utilize AI related tools in ways that increase their employability at local businesses. Specifically, state government should ensure high speed broadband is available and affordable everywhere, including rural areas.
 - Add funding to existing broadband expansion to ensure individuals who are both underserved and unserved are covered with affordable access.
 - Ensure access is affordable for all.
 - Provide equitable affordable access in both urban and rural areas.
 - Build capacity and establish parameters to ensure speed is fast enough for individuals to access and use AI resources and tools.
- Adopt AI literacy training for state leaders, employees, and workforce development regional leaders.
- Provide training on AI for politicians, public officials, and community leaders across the state from municipalities and small businesses to large businesses and state officials.
- Invest in public projects that foster Data and AI readiness and develop AI job opportunities, such as investments in "Smart City" infrastructure projects, AI-empowered public health initiatives, and digital access.
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 - Apply "Smart Cities" concepts to public projects such as smart energy management, traffic control, and wastewater treatment.
- Follow the federal government's guidance on AI and take advantage of opportunities for funding that becomes available to states.
- Establish the role of chief data and privacy officer with authority across state government to help foster AI implementation, connect data sources across state government, develop Wisconsin's data policies and ensure compliance.
 - Initiate a broad review of policies with an AI lens.
 - Identify opportunities to leverage federal funding to advance local and regional projects throughout the state.
- Build trust and increase awareness of the successful implementation of AI technologies and guardrails within the state through a comprehensive communication plan.
 - Create a media communication plan, using diverse channels such as social media, traditional media, podcasts, academic forums etc. to reach the broadest possible audience and make it easy for people to consume and digest information about the state of AI in Wisconsin.
 - Sponsor white papers to show how organizations have successfully implemented AI within industry, government and academia.
 - Provide messaging for workers, employers and education stakeholders and the broader public to

- increase AI literacy and to empower people to constructively engage with new technologies.
- Provide Training on Equitable Practices when Implementing and Using AI.
 - Develop trainings on how businesses can increase equity as they adopt AI into business practices. Training should include best practices on secure and equitable use of AI technology. Training should include information on proper cyber security protocols, and how AI users can use data governance to ensure high quality data, and how data models should be built considering equity. Training should include how data and data models should represent all demographics and account for bias. Training should be consistent with current regulations and recommend enhanced regulations if current regulations do not sufficiently address security and/or bias. Training should include how businesses can improve hiring practices to ensure equity working with local training entities for alternative ways to identify skills and ensuring AI technologies used for hiring practices are equitable.
 - Training should be developed with worker, business, education, training, career service, government, and workforce board input.
 - Note: Training should reflect President Biden's Executive Order on Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence
 - <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/10/30/fact-sheet-president-biden-issues-executive-order-on-safe-secure-and-trustworthy-artificial-intelligence/>.
 - Advancing Equity and Civil Rights - "Address algorithmic discrimination through training, technical assistance, and coordination between the Department of Justice and Federal civil rights offices on best practices for investigating and prosecuting civil rights violations related to AI."
 - Note: Work with DWD's Equal Rights Division (ERD) on how best to implement.
 - *Research: DWD and DOA staff should research what funding, staffing, and infrastructure would be needed to implement this recommendation.*
- Identify approaches to support local governments in implementing public sector workforce training and AI technology modernization.
- Wisconsin government should ensure worker input in AI implementation.
 - Wisconsin government should encourage employers to include worker input in the decisions to use and how to implement AI technology and requires a process for including worker voices in any support and transition assistance supported or funded by government.
 - When implementing AI technology, Wisconsin government should anticipate the needs of workers and include their voices in implementation.
 - Workers must have a seat at the table and input on protections.
 - Establishing feedback from workers:
 - Input on the implementation of AI.
 - Input on training needed.
 - Share how AI technology implementation affects their work, wage, and benefits.
 - Input on protection for workers.
- Promote methods where AI technology enhances and not replaces workers.
- Recommend/promote/encourage gains in productivity (successes) from AI are reinvested in workers: in programs and opportunities to support them.
- If AI technology impacts workers, provide wage support and skill training for good jobs and/or career advancement opportunities.
- Governor to share that workers are an instrumental part of the success and should have a seat at the table in directing agencies how to implement this with workers and businesses.
 - Note: Work with DWD's Equal Rights Division (ERD) and Unemployment Insurance (UI) on how best to implement.
 - *Research: DWD staff should research how this recommendation can be logistically implemented. Identify who is responsible to make sure space is available for workers for this purpose.*
- Foster interdisciplinary collaboration by removing sector silos in state funding.
- Simplify application process for state funded projects.
- Develop guidelines around best practices in AI development and use, including ethical decision making, risk

assessments, and policy/laws governing social impacts.

Workforce Development

Wisconsin's workforce development system encompasses public, private, and nonprofit partners that draw funding from a variety of federal and state resources to build and strengthen a labor force capable of tackling today's challenges while anticipating the opportunities of tomorrow. The advent of AI requires innovative approaches to remove barriers to employment and training, provide support for dislocated workers, expand access to training opportunities, and maintain a robust labor market data collection system. In devising and implementing strategies that advance workers, employers, and job seekers, it is critical for all partners to have a seat at the table and for workers to share in the benefits of the AI transformation.

Key concepts

To continue removing workforce barriers:

- Apply state funding to continue efforts to remove workforce barriers through proven approaches such as the Worker Connection program and Worker Advancement Initiative as well as novel approaches through the Workforce Innovation Grant program.

To deliver support for dislocated workers:

- Support ongoing modernization for effective management of the state labor market exchange system, Unemployment Insurance system, and Worker's Compensation system.
 - This may require a combination of state and federal supports.
- Provide support for workers displaced or otherwise affected by AI in the workplace.
 - This may include a combination of state and federal funds.
- Provide skill reassessment and development to workers displaced due to AI adoption.
- Provide Equitable Access to Training for Workers Displaced or Otherwise Affected by AI in the Workplace.
 - DWD should fund and as needed develop workforce training and support for individuals displaced from the workforce because of AI (e.g., Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) or Workforce Opportunity and Innovation Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker or Worker Connection or other similar programming). Provide funding for needed support services during training (e.g., housing, food, transportation, childcare, technology access, etc.).
 - Funding for outreach and services should focus on underutilized talent pools (e.g., low-income individuals, individuals with disabilities, justice-involved individuals, veterans, and youth and young adults) and workers dislocated because of AI.
 - Invest in both AI training and/or in education for human-centered skills that will not be supplanted by AI to help provide equitable access to good jobs and career advancement opportunities.
 - Work with employers to identify needed skills and ensure training, credentials, and skills development to meet current workforce needs and qualifications for jobs.
- Continue funding of Worker Connection pilot program, which has proven effectiveness conducting targeted outreach, career navigation, and WorkAdvance training opportunities to reach these populations.
 - Targeted outreach. Use data to identify individuals who are unemployed, underemployed, and not in the labor force but would be with the right supports. Network with local community organizations to better identify and engage underutilized talent pools and workers displaced because of AI.
 - Career navigation. Use person-centered career coaching to identify worker/job seeker's interests, skills, abilities, and conditions of work and match to changing workforce needs. Connect workers/job seekers to career, training, and support services (e.g., housing, food, transportation, childcare, technology access, etc.) that will help them find and maintain good jobs.
 - WorkAdvance training. Fund short term trainings that allow for skill advancement that will help underutilized talent pools and workers displaced by AI have the skills needed to find and maintain good jobs.
- Continued funding for Workforce Advancement Initiative (WAI) through workforce boards and/or Workforce Innovation Grants (WIG; community grants) to offer targeted approaches to address regional workforce needs affected by AI.
- Expand the Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) grant program to provide funding to support employers to

develop training programs to reskill or upskill their existing employees whose jobs are affected by AI to maximize retention and career advancement opportunities.

- Provide funding for Apprenticeship opportunities for workers whose jobs are affected by AI.

To expand equitable access to AI training:

- Expand access to training for underutilized labor pools.
 - Ensure opportunity youth (diverse youth, including youth who are marginalized, have disabilities, are at-risk, homeless, or low-income, and/or in foster care, etc.) are considered when determining equitable access.
 - Consider options to expand training delivery to people with disabilities, veterans, and other underrepresented urban and rural communities.
- Provide educational grants to employers, trade organizations, unions to help upskill the workforce.
- Create and deliver a standardized entry level curriculum on what AI is and how it can affect the workforce.

Training should be for youth, working age adults, and employers.

- Develop a committee, workgroup, or identify staff who are required to regularly monitor AI changes and update curriculum accordingly, so the curriculum continues to be relevant as AI changes.
- Research: DWD staff should research what funding, staffing, and infrastructure would be needed to implement this recommendation.
- Provide digital literacy training to increase equitable access to AI resources and training. Digital literacy should include hands on instruction on how to use and understand technology.
 - Digital literacy training should take into account that some people who need digital literacy training may not be able to read so should incorporate underlying literacy support as needed.
 - Consider using existing digital literacy resources.
 - Some examples:
 - From Wisconsin Literacy: <https://wisconsinliteracy.org/resources/resources/digital-literacy.html>
 - From the Department of Public Instruction: <https://dpi.wi.gov/imt>
 - From Employ Milwaukee: <https://www.employmilwaukee.org/Employ-Milwaukee/Digital-Literacy.htm>
 - *Research: DWD staff should research what existing funding and training is already available to provide digital literacy training for those who need it to access AI resources and training. DWD staff should identify any gaps in needed funding, staffing, and infrastructure to fully implement this recommendation.*
- Provide infrastructure support for educating the public about AI related career pathways based on data findings and employer input, including but not limited to funding incentives for AI education in local community tech hubs and training providers.
 - Create and fund AI related apprenticeships to provide a work-based training option in the AI career pathway.
 - Expand the Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) grant program to invest in AI related technology in K-12 schools to aid in early training.
 - Identify (and if needed fund) other existing training infrastructure through Wisconsin technical colleges, local community tech hubs, University of Wisconsin schools, and/or other local trainers.
 - Facilitate conversations between education, training systems, tech developers, and industries to work together to develop curriculum.
 - Ensure opportunity youth (include diverse youth, including youth who are marginalized, have disabilities, at-risk, homeless, or low-income, and/or in foster care, etc.) are considered when determining equitable access.
 - *Research: DWD staff should research what existing funding and training programs are already available. DWD staff should identify gaps in needed funding, staffing, and infrastructure to fully implement this recommendation.*
- Identify (and if needed fund) the full complement of existing training infrastructure through Wisconsin technical colleges, local community tech hubs, University of Wisconsin schools, or other local trainers.
 - This may include a combination of state and federal funds.

- Provide funding for new Registered Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship pathways.
- Ensure that themes of equity are incorporated in training. For example, provide training on equitable practices when implementing and Using AI. This could be done by providing information/training on existing guidance such as that from the Biden Executive order rather creating a new set of guidance.

To maintain a robust labor market and data collection system:

- Ensure availability of timely and high-quality labor market data, including improved analytical capacity to remove bias and support public and private sector decision making.
 - The availability of timely wage and employment data empowers workers and enhances their ability to share in the economic benefits of the AI transformation.
 - This may require a combination of state and federal supports.
- Improve Labor Market Data to Inform Equitable Responses to AI's Impact on the Workforce. (Equity)
 - Improve workforce data to better assess the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on workers and jobs. Leverage Wisconsin's State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) and Longitudinal Workforce Database (LWD) to link and integrate longitudinal datasets to match individual-level education, training to workforce service, jobs, and outcome data together to allow for data analytics, machine learning, and AI in forming workforce development activities across education, training, and career programs and resources. Connect labor market information to individuals (skills, interests, and abilities) and job requirements data (including AI skill requirements).
 - Ensure good data quality through processes to check the data and analytics for biases.
 - Data matching and analytics should be done a way that protects personal identifiable information.
 - Continued government data ownership should be maintained to ensure improved government funded education, training, career, and support services to help Wisconsin citizens best reach their career goals.
 - Use the data set to:
 - Track education, training, career, and support services that create career pathways that lead to good jobs and career advancement opportunities.
 - Track AI influence on career opportunities and changes in the job market. Facilitate the collection and sharing of up-to-date data fast enough to allow for quicker responses to industry changes such as increases or decreases in job skills needed (e.g., increased need for cyber security skills).
 - Build and/or maintain the data infrastructure to allow for continuous data-based decision-making because the need to use data to understand AI's impact on the workforce will be ongoing.
 - *Research: DWD and DOA staff should research what funding, staffing, and infrastructure changes would be needed to implement this recommendation.*
- Develop and support a broad-based research agenda focused on the impacts of AI on governance and economic development. AI has the potential to transform business, government, and everyday life for the people of Wisconsin. Understanding this potential, both positive and potentially negative, is critical to the effective integration of technology in all aspects of the state's government, workforce, and economy. The agenda should include:
 - A catalog of areas of industry and government that are most likely to be impacted immediately, and how AI might be used to inform development and problem-solving in those areas.
 - A review of occupations that will be affected in the short and medium term and the impact on needed skills and professional development.
 - The broader impact of AI on individuals, families and communities in Wisconsin, and their ability to ensure the state's future prosperity.

Economic Development

A thriving economy benefits workers, employers, job seekers, and the sustainability of the communities in which they live and work. To this end, strategic measures to modernize key economic sectors including manufacturing, agriculture, and emerging technology sectors will help promote Wisconsin's economic competitiveness.

Key concepts

- Provide Equitable Opportunities to Invest in AI Technology
 - Provide funding for community tech hubs and businesses to build AI infrastructure. Ensure equitable access for AI technology investments by focusing on investments in diverse community tech hubs, small business, and businesses in diverse geographical areas (including both underserved rural and urban communities).
 - Consult with community tech hubs, businesses, and industry partners who are early adopters of technology to inform funding needs. Develop incentives and opportunities for later adaptors.
- Invest in AI related technology in business and community tech hubs through Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF), Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) or other state program.
 - *Research: DWD staff should work with WEDC staff to identify existing WFF and WEDC grant programs and determine if the existing grant structures will cover this recommendation and/or if additional grant funds or changes in the grant funding structure(s) are needed to implement this recommendation.*
- Other innovative business investment strategies under discussion:
 - Increase incentives for businesses to productively adopt new technologies while maintaining high quality jobs.
 - Fund innovation hubs and industry incubators to help foster digital entrepreneurship and constructive inter-business partnerships.
 - Engage with chambers of commerce and statewide trade associations to support training initiatives for business leadership.
 - Provide AI retreats where people can gain familiarity with AI tools and hear from employers about how AI is impacting their businesses.
 - Support mentorship programs to foster partnerships among large and small businesses.
- Expand the Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) program to offer competitive grant funding for employers to retain workers whose jobs are affected by AI.
 - Worker input should be considered as part of the grantmaking process.
- Extend business incentives to add jobs that build value widely, such as adding AI roles and leadership.
 - *Research: Taks force members and staff should work to clarify this recommendation.*
- Incentivize businesses to invest in modern technology systems, digitization, data security, and data-readiness.
- Increase funding for the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation initiatives that support adoption of productivity tools.

TIMELINE

