

| | |
|---|---|
| Agency Name | Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board |
| Agency 4-digit Code | 3540 |
| Decision Package Name (as submitted in OFM's ABS) | No Wrong Door WF Service Efficiency |
| Email | nova.gattman@wtb.wa.gov |
| A. <input type="checkbox"/> Will this investment renew or procure a facial recognition service? | No |
| B. <input type="checkbox"/> Does this investment provide for acquisition of, or enhancement to, an administrative or financial system as required by technology policy EA-122 - administrative and financial system investment approval? | No |
| D. <input type="checkbox"/> For the Department of Children, Youth and Families, the Department of Health, the Department of Social and Health Services, the Health Care Authority and the Washington Health Benefit Exchange only: Has this project been screened for inclusion in the Health and Human Service (HHS) Coalition portfolio? | Not Applicable to my Agency |
| E. <input type="checkbox"/> Does this decision package support the adoption of modern, cloud-based technologies? | Yes |
| A. <input type="checkbox"/> Is this renewal for an existing software or subscription? | No |
| B. <input type="checkbox"/> Does this continue a current maintenance contract? | No |
| C. <input type="checkbox"/> Does this decision package fund the acquisition or expansion of hardware capacity? | No |

| | |
|---|---|
| D. Is this a routine, planned replacement of aging hardware or equipment? | No |
| E. Has the agency performed research to determine if a modern cloud solution is available for this maintenance investment? | Yes |
| A. Type of Investment - Identify the decision package investment classification from the following list (select only one): | Improves existing service |
| B. Washington's IT Strategic Plan - Identify which goal(s) of the State Strategic plan the decision package aligns with (select all that apply): | Goal #1: Create a Government Experience that leaves no community behind. Goal #2: Better Data, Better Decisions, Better Government, Better Washington Goal #3: Innovative Technology Solutions create a Better Washington Goal #4: Transform how we work. Best workforce ever. |
| C. Agency IT Strategic Plan - provide a public URL for your agency's IT strategic plan. | https://wtb.wa.gov/about-us/workforce-it-strategy |
| D. Does this decision package fund the acquisition, development, enhancement, or replacement of a new or existing software solution? | Yes |
| If Yes, where will the software solution be hosted? | State Data Center |
| E. Do you expect this solution to exchange information with the state financial system (AFRS) or the OneWA solution (Workday)? | No |
| F. Does this decision package fund the acquisition or expansion of hardware capacity? | No |
| G. Does this decision package fund the continuation of a project that is under WaTech oversight? (See Technology policy PM-01 - IT Investments - Approval and Oversight Policy.) | No |

Feasibility of project proposal: Summarize the needs assessment, high-level requirements, feasibility study, or similar due diligence, to understand business needs and complete market research and select technology solution. What is the planned investment approach and implementation staffing/resourcing, including assumptions about onboarding/staffing, etc.

Community Attributes Inc. (CAI) carried out a comprehensive review of Washington's workforce services and provide a needs assessment recommendations to improve service integration across the state workforce system (please refer to the Business Alignment section below for key findings). A supplemental landscape analysis and feasibility study occurred in 2023. This feasibility study captured a landscape analysis of comparable efforts across the country-identifying 44 closely related state data integration efforts. This investigated resourcing needs, governance models, regulatory considerations, other challenges, and best practices. The feasibility study also captured the regulatory landscape that governs education and workforce data from the agency, state, and federal levels. Market research towards this exploratory phase identified viable technology solutions. All of this information combined with the identified business and constituents needs culminated in the requirements and the implementation strategy for the next project phase.

To support this work, the Workforce Board has an established team of three that supports IT administration, database management, and technical project management. With an established IT team needed to support this work, onboarding challenges are significantly minimized. Supplemental support will occur through contracted staff for the development phase, in which all work is ready and able to be transitioned back to the permanent agency staff. Given the strong support of our workforce agency and technical partners, including WaTech's WA.Gov Portal and Enterprise Data Platform teams, significant in-kind resources contributed to the phased development of this project. Work will begin with implementation of Universal ID, following robust validation testing of products and software. Real-time data sharing, supported through the Enterprise Data Platform will follow, culmination in connection to and launch of the coordinated screener tool through WA.Gov Portal.

A decision package was submitted previously for the 25-27 Biennium; however, due to notable state and federal funding constraints, the decision package was not funded. Note however, that the decision package performed well in WaTech's IT Decision Package prioritization process. Across 204 IT decision packages submitted for the 25-27 Biennium, this request ranked at #38 along agency readiness, technical assessment, and business alignment criteria-ranking amongst federally mandated initiatives or efforts continuing implementation.

Technology Adoption & Organizational Readiness: Describe how your agency is preparing its workforce for the successful adoption, use, and support of the proposed technology solution. Summarize strategies for managing change, reskilling or redeploying staff, and embedding new ways of working into business operations. Describe the Organizational Change Management (OCM) approach that supports adoption across impacted groups (e.g., teams, divisions, agencies), and strategies to address communication, engagement, leadership alignment, resistance management, and long-term sustainment.

The Workforce Board has a strong foundation of data-focused culture, having been established as the state's performance accountability agent for the comprehensive state workforce development system over 30 years ago. The Workforce Board has established expertise in IT, including data management and application development. The agency also supports an established research team and carries out federal and state reporting and evaluation requirements for the state's workforce system. Additionally, the agency houses substantive experts in the cloud data platforms, AI/ML models, and use of an agile development framework.

The state workforce system has also undergone notable technology shifts and modernization efforts over recent years.

- WorkSource Integrated Technology (WIT) Replacement Project: Launched in 2023 by Employment Security Department (ESD), the WIT project is set to transform the state's WorkSource case management system by fall 2026. It will replace the existing Efforts-to-Outcomes (ETO) system and facilitate a more seamless enrollment and service path for WorkSource programs, including adult education, dislocated worker services, and youth programs. The new system aims to improve case management, expense tracking, and performance reporting, enhancing the operational efficiency of Washington's American Job Center staff.
- ctclink Technology Project: The ctclink initiative by State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) represents a significant upgrade from the 42-year-old HP Legacy system to a suite of Oracle PeopleSoft products. This transition, completed in May 2022 for all 34 community and technical colleges, provides a modern, centralized system for managing college operations, allowing anywhere access to a more efficient way of conducting college business. Beyond software, ctclink harmonizes business practices across the college system, emphasizing standardized procedures and responsive customer support.
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) System Transition: As part of Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), the DVR's shift to the WAVES platform marks a strategic move to update its case management system. This new platform enhances DVR's service delivery, offering a more user-friendly interface and improved functionality for case management and reporting. The transition supports DVR's strategic objectives to modernize operations and deliver seamless services to its clients.

The implementation design prioritized interagency collaboration and efficiency without jeopardizing individual agency autonomy and operations. It is through the leveraging of the IT capabilities across the workforce system partners and through strategic partnerships with WaTech initiatives like EDP and WA.Gov Portal

that has anchored this project to a robust change management process.

A priority over FY2026 was to ensure strong governance and change management (OCM) processes were in place to kick off project implementation. Anthro-Tech, Inc., an information technology consultancy, completed an organizational change management assessment. The OCM's overall assessment is that the initiative is functioning well across all "change factors", including coalition formation, collaboration, leadership, and risk management and provided smaller recommendations to maintain strong change management across the duration of the project.

A key aspect to change management has been a strong coalition model among the state workforce system partners. The Workforce Board, in collaboration with the workforce system partners, established the Data Governance Council beginning in Jan 2024 (see Figure 4 in the decision package for the organizational structure). The Council is composed of Workforce Board Sponsors, ex-officio members like WaTech, a Steering Committee, and four subcommittees representing subject-matter experts across workforce programs, data privacy and regulations, IT, and research. Frontline and job seeker advisory groups are also in development and will be added to the governance structure. Through this consensus-oriented decision-making process across all partner agencies, change management risks have been minimized.

Strategic /Technical alignment: For each Goal selected in part 4, please provide details on how your proposal aligns.

Goal #1: Create a Government Experience that leaves no community behind.

This initiative is one of the use cases/pilots for the WA.Gov Portal effort. Through this partnership, WA.Gov Portal is developing a prototype for a coordinated workforce system application tool for job seekers to access and navigate the multitude of workforce services in the state. Collaboration with WA.Gov Portal addresses a long-standing problem in workforce systems across the country, where workforce development services are complicated and spread across multiple agencies each with their own administrative policies and procedures. Job seekers often experience "intake fatigue", who must not only share their personal and, often, difficult stories to multiple providers but also experience redundancies of having to complete comparable forms or provide different sets of documentation for similar eligibility requirements. A central place for job seekers to find relevant and eligible programs to achieve employment and self-sufficiency would ensure equitable outcomes and accessibility -particularly for individuals with multiple or significant barriers.

Additionally, a lack of visibility of services a job seeker receives across workforce programs creates challenges for case managers. Case managers expressed an inability to screen for eligibility, bundle services, or identify gaps in services without access to needed information between workforce partners; there is also no system in place to support a consistent and reliable referral system between partners. Surveys, community forums, focus groups, and administrative data have highlighted a lack of information sharing as a major barrier to workforce system integration and improved service delivery for job seekers. This project represents the collective multi-agency state workforce system and its shared goals to realize Washington's mission for a human-centered, "no wrong door" approach to seamless and coordinated workforce service delivery and holistic service excellence for Washingtonians seeking training and employment services.

Goal #2: Better Data, Better Decisions, Better Government, Better Washington

The No Wrong Door project is one of the use cases/pilots for WaTech's enterprise data platform under Goal #2. The Workforce Board has been actively collaborating with staff in WaTech's Architecture and Innovation Division since the fall of 2023 to use the No Wrong Door project to inform the enterprise IT strategic plan and onboarding experience.

The state workforce system's service integration efforts have many shared priorities and goals with the Better Data, Better Decisions, Better Government, Better Washington goal. The

cornerstone of the project is to prioritize improvements to service and experience through data and information sharing. The project breaks down the data silos and fosters transparency throughout the state workforce system, all of which have been continuously identified as challenges and barriers to effectively and optimally serving Washingtonians. Coordinating data and information across workforce-supporting agencies also ensures shared strategic decision-making and building needed system insights to improve the system and its services.

The interagency decision-making to support collective impact is also highlighted in this initiative, with a full governing body established to oversee this effort has already been constructed, representing state and local partners. This strengthened shared governance and a commitment to digital trust of information sharing across partners is a critical step towards heightened service delivery for Washingtonians.

Goal #3: Innovative Technology Solutions create a Better Washington

A comprehensive review of state efforts to integrate workforce data was carried out to understand previous and ongoing efforts to inform procedural and implementation decisions. Common themes arose from state-to-state efforts, including infrastructure (or lack of), developing an identity matching solution, establishing a coordinated intake portal, data security policies, and formalizing data governance and decision-making bodies. The focus included data integration efforts touching the workforce system, with a lens of regulatory, resourcing, technical, and governance considerations that affected project design and implementation. Forty-four related state data integration efforts were identified through an artifact review and supplemental informational interview as needed. The landscape analysis guided and validated the proposed implementation design for this project. Nine closely related operational data sharing efforts showcase shared priorities of a coordinated intake process, a unifying identifier, a centralized data repository, and automated referrals.

This initiative is a use case for the innovative solutions under Goals 1 and 2; additionally, it uses the full spectrum of tools on cloud data platforms, like automating data pipelines, connecting systems, and maximizing on research and machine learning to garner program insights. An early wave of states is adopting innovative and modern solutions towards system integration. Washington has an opportunity to be a leader in successful implementation of a federated data system to break down the silos consistently observed in workforce development across the country and serve as a model and guide for states to similarly modernize and adopt systems improvement. Washington's state

technology priorities reinforce the need for workforce system integration. The state's workforce system is at a critical juncture to harness modern technologies to address a long-standing business need and commit to the courageous innovation needed for a better Washington.

Goal #4: Transform how we work. Best workforce ever.

The Workforce Board is committed to enhancing the agency's skill set and fostering an innovative culture. This decision package request is intentional in leaning into modern and innovative technology and building upon the data-driven culture of the organization by enhancing IT personnel and technical skills in the organization. Through this work, the Workforce Board will be able to retain and leverage an internal IT Program Lead, who has brought several years of experience in the agile development framework, product development, and data management. The organizational change management will position the Workforce Board to be nimble and adaptable to the priorities and direction of the state.

Business process and technology modernization: Describe how this investment incorporates new and innovative technology (examples such as: cloud first solutions, low code / no code, AI etc.) to improve business outcomes and improve the health and alignment to the agency's existing IT portfolio and strategic plan. Summarize your agencies plan to incorporate modern technology solutions into redesigned business processes focused on improving customer experience, service quality, and reducing technical debt within the agency's technology portfolio.

The No Wrong Door project was selected as a part of WaTech's Innovation & Modernization Program second cohort in FY 2025. This is a competitive funding opportunity to support agency effort using innovative and modern solutions to address business problems. Additionally, this initiative has partnerships with WaTech's Enterprise Data Platform and WA.Gov Portal. The service integration initiative not only embodies the use of innovative and modern technologies to create a connected government towards a better and more equitable Washington but is directly tied to key initiatives to accomplish the state's enterprise IT strategic plan as well as the agency's IT strategic plan.

The service integration effort uses cloud-based solutions to support a federated data management model across seven agencies, each with their own data systems and administration. This uses modern technologies to address a limitation without over-solving for the primary business need of connecting data towards improved insights and service delivery. The design of the technology portfolio is modular by design, allowing for items in the technology stack to connect seamlessly-while allotting flexibility for future states. The cloud-based data and analytics platform, web-based application portal, back-end algorithms for data-matching, and a front-end data lookup portal can all seamlessly connect through modern technologies already available through state initiatives. This ensures an efficient solution to business needs and maintaining good stewardship of public funds.

Messages for our partners, including WaTech, highlight the transformative use of technology towards customer experience, service delivery, and service quality:

"This initiative embodies a forward-thinking, people-centered approach to delivering services... We are confident that the No Wrong Door project will not only transform Washington's workforce service delivery but also serve as a model of effective, resident-centered innovation nationwide." -Irene Vidyanti, State Chief Data Officer, WA Technology Solutions (WaTech)

"This initiative is not only timely-it is essential. It reflects national best practices in data governance, interagency collaboration, and human-centered design, and it has the potential to become a model for other states working to improve the accessibility and impact of public services." -Deja Kemp, Dir. of Legal Policy, University of Pennsylvania - AISP

"Too often, our customers face barriers caused by different elements of our system not working in alignment with one

another. This project will allow our state to take quantum leaps forward in understanding and engaging with our customers and then aligning our collective efforts to achieve outcomes more quickly and efficiently." -Mark Mattke, CEO, Spokane Workforce Council

Customer Experience & Access: Describe how the proposed solution improves customer access to business capabilities through technology. Summarize plans for person centered design including: accessibility testing plans, and insights from underserved populations to ensure equitable access to technology.

This initiative directly aligns with Governor Ferguson's Executive Order 25-06: Transforming Customer Experience and Service Delivery in State Government Operations. This initiative fulfills the mandate to establish a comprehensive approach to improve the customer experience, strengthening cross-agency collaboration to have accessible, efficient, effective, and accountable government service delivery. The No Wrong Door project is aligned with state enterprise priorities for improved customer experience and accessibility, including serving as an early use-case for the WA.Gov centralized online portal under Your Washington (superseding Results Washington). Through a partnership with WA.Gov, job seekers will be able to go to one centralized location to navigate an otherwise complex and decentralized workforce service system-breaking down the interagency walls that adversely impact job seekers and lead to high walk-away rates (among federally designated workforce programs operated by state agencies, the percentage of program exiters that discontinued services or could no longer be reached is around 30%).

Through the partnership with WA.Gov, the coordinated intake and eligibility tool for workforce programs and services will provide Washingtonians with a multilingual and accessible portal to get to the right and comprehensive support services as efficiently as possible. This will undergo accessibility audits compliant with WCAG2.1 AA and ADA Title II, with user research with communities that have been historically underserved to ensure inclusivity, equity, and access.

This tool will be available for frontline staff to use when facilitating the early stages of the intake process, including notable improvements to the referral process that has historically been very limited. This is a needed step to ensure Washingtonians receive timely, comprehensive, and effective supports through streamlined and intentional service delivery.

Business driven technology: What are the business problems to be addressed by the proposed investment? These business problems should provide the basis for the outcome discussion below. Describe how end users (internal and external) will be involved in governance and implementation activities.

The Workforce Board had identified the need for service integration as a critical priority for the Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP) state strategic workforce plan since 2016. Early efforts to make progress on this strategic priority included the Workforce Board contracting with Community Attributes Inc. (CAI) to carry out a comprehensive review of Washington's workforce services and provide recommendations for improvements to service integration.

Program eligibility across workforce programs is generally targeted and has unique eligibility requirements. While resources for jobseekers are available to determine eligibility, self-guided eligibility processes may suggest that a jobseeker is eligible for services only to uncover they are not, following a deeper conversation with a case manager. This not only leads to frustration and wasted time, but also confusion for jobseekers in navigating services. Support from case managers, who have expertise and knowledge in navigating the workforce system, is needed. However, intake and even subsequent information sharing between agencies serving the same customer is siloed.

The majority of staff expressed an interest in a coordinated intake form. Respondents largely agreed that an automated, online tool for eligibility determination across workforce programs would allow them to better help customers navigate services for which they are eligible. As one manager stated, "learning eligibility criteria is the least valuable thing my staff spend time on. I wish this was automated." A coordinated intake process enables seamless eligibility determination across workforce programs, even if the case manager services only one program or agency. This fulfills the "no wrong door" approach to service delivery and will also streamline the request for similar information across program intake procedures.

This process would also systematize referrals to appropriate services or programs, which was identified as the third most cited area of need. Presently, there is a lack of a meaningful referrals across programs, with 58 percent of frontline staff respondents saying they never receive any information pertaining to referrals. Part of why communication between programs is limited is due to a burdensome process, concerns about what is allowed or not, or that it is wasted effort and the information won't be utilized. The general lack of consistency regarding referrals or sharing information between case managers was cited as one of the most frustrating experiences for frontline staff. Factors included challenges navigating multiple releases of information, data sharing being largely driven by personal relationships between staff, and not knowing with whom to share information (27 percent).

All of the areas discussed above would necessitate sharing of information through a connected data system. Nearly all frontline staff identified data sharing as a challenge and a need, with 32 percent specifically desiring a common data system. As stated by a survey participant, "Knowing not only where a customer is receiving services but what services they are receiving would make my limited time much more effective, as I wouldn't need to re-do work someone else had already done. I could also be more effective in assisting customers by identifying service gaps." Figure 1 (attached) details the desired information that would support collaborative case management.

The dominant areas of data desired were enrolled services, including employment or training plans and goals. This would support understanding the job seeker's background and needs, identifying gaps in service, coordinating between services, and reducing duplication.

The implementation design has been governed by workforce system needs, expressed in the system integration research study described above as well as ongoing feedback from interviews at the local workforce boards and through public feedback on the state's workforce strategic plan. Additionally, as a part of the Data Governance Council, advisory groups representing frontline staff and job seekers are being established, to ensure a robust feedback loop to align business need with solutions.

Measurable business outcome: Describe and quantify the specific performance outcomes you expect from this funding request. Provide specific examples of business outcomes in use within your agency, and how those outcomes will be improved as a result of this technology investment. Describe how your agency will use customer satisfaction scores, adoption rates, cycle and processing times, etc.

The No Wrong Door project takes an intentional waterfall design and will take performance measures and outcomes into key consideration in a continuous cycle of improvement and to proceed with the next cycle of development. Below are the key measures in which this effort will be benchmarked. As implementation begins, these measures will continuously be evaluated, and measures may be added or modified to best reflect the impact of this project.

- Customer Experience

Qualitative data collection is built into the project governance and implementation design. Through the Frontline Advisory Group, customers will be solicited to inform ideation, provide feedback, and assess development pilots. Baseline information will be gathered to reflect current service delivery and experiences, and improvements will be assessed at key iterations of development launches.

- Intake

Complete information is unavailable to understand the full extent of job seekers walking away from services. Building a technology infrastructure that can provide a complete understanding of individuals seeking and pursuing employment and/or training services will provide insights into improvements that can be made in navigating services and programs during the intake process. An exploration of increases in job seekers receiving services may serve as a proxy for additional service reach through increased accessibility and supports.

- Referral Rate

Examine the existing rates and documentation of referrals between agencies. This will include an understanding of how referrals are documented within existing partner case management systems. This information is notoriously limited and may provide an incomplete picture. Systematically examine referral practices following implementation of the No Wrong Door project and examine trends pre and post development.

- Service Delivery

An examination of frontline staff usage will measure the extent that the service integration platform will be used during intake and service delivery. A combination of logins to data systems, examining improved rates for program completion, as well as qualitative feedback from the Frontline Advisory Group will help evaluate utility and impact for improving timeliness and efficiency in the service delivery process.

- Streamlined Reporting

An intentional information sharing cadence will be coordinated

within current reporting requirements, such as federal reporting requirements for WIOA. An expressed challenge has been underreporting of measurable skill gains or other placement outcomes due to being unable to reach job seekers post-exit with 100 percent success. Measuring the improvement to mandatory reporting (and calculating the increase in corresponding federal funding from these key metrics) will reflect value add of this initiative.

- Program Evaluation and Insights

The availability of key information across the state workforce system will enable more evaluation and insights of the state workforce system. The utilization of data towards more robust and more frequent statewide workforce system evaluations will be used as a key performance indicator.