SKILLFUL
A MARKLE INITIATIVE

SKILLFUL STATE NETWORK

States have always been laboratories for innovation. One hundred years ago, as jobs shifted from farms to factories, states developed high schools so that Americans could succeed in the industrial economy. Today we face a similar transition, and it is again time for governors to lead the way to enable all Americans to thrive in the digital economy. **The Skillful State Network is a collaboration to transform the U.S. labor market at scale to one that is skills-based, in which people can demonstrate or obtain the skills needed for good digital economy jobs.** Network members will share assets, foster partnerships, and hone methods of engagement within their labor markets. The first asset shared is the **Skillful State Playbook**, a step-by-step guide to building a skills-based labor market, which includes tools and resources for implementation.

Skillful State Network Founding Members

- Colorado — Gov. John Hickenlooper
- Arkansas — Gov. Asa Hutchinson
- Delaware – Gov. John Carney
- Illinois – Gov. Bruce Rauner
- Indiana — Gov. Eric Holcomb
- Massachusetts — Gov. Charlie Baker
- Montana — Gov. Steve Bullock
- New Jersey — Gov. Phil Murphy
- North Carolina — Gov. Roy Cooper
- North Dakota — Gov. Doug Burgum

- Ohio — Gov. John Kasich
- Oklahoma – Gov. Mary Fallin
- Rhode Island — Gov. Gina Raimondo
- South Dakota — Gov. Dennis Daugaard
- Tennessee – Gov. Bill Haslam
- Utah – Gov. Gary Herbert
- Vermont – Gov. Phil Scott
- Virginia – Gov. Ralph Northam
- Washington — Gov. Jay Inslee
- Wisconsin — Gov. Scott Walker

The Network marks the national expansion of Skillful, a Markle Foundation initiative incubated in Colorado, which leverages data and the very technologies that are disrupting the economy to achieve a skills-based labor market where employers are able to find the talent they need and individuals can continuously acquire new skills and keep up with the pace of change. Founding governors are committed to sharing what works and have made partnership and innovation in workforce development a state priority to enable their residents and local employers to thrive in the digital economy.

The Skillful State Network will support transformation at a scale and pace not possible through individual state actions. The Network will elevate and advance practices and ideas that states can adopt to achieve their workforce goals, including aligning education with industry; providing robust data to jobseekers; or training employers on skills-based practices.

The Network is open to all interested states.

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SKILLFUL STATE PLAYBOOK

As part of the Skillful State Network's developing portfolio of tools, the Skillful State Playbook lays out the steps needed to create a skills-based labor market. The Playbook offers tools and resources jointly developed by Skillful, the state of Colorado, and numerous employers, tech companies including Microsoft and LinkedIn, educators, and community organizations. The free and public availability of the Skillful State Playbook establishes a model for the open sharing of best practices. Skillful State Network members may tailor or improve tools in the Playbook and add their own tools and resources to the Network's portfolio.

The Skillful State Playbook includes assets and tools to implement each step and spur systemic change:

1. Align your partners.
2. Assess your labor market and identify the hot jobs.
3. Empower employers to recruit and hire based on competencies.
4. Incentivize educators and trainers to teach based on competencies.
5. Help job coaches help job seekers.
6. Prepare job seekers to make the transition to a skills-based workforce.
7. Assess your policy levers.

Let's build a labor market that works for everyone.

As governors, we are joining together around a shared commitment to support a variety of career paths to good-paying jobs, and expand the talent pool for employers who need skilled workers to grow.
John Hickenlooper, *Governor of Colorado*

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