



TEXAS REGIONAL
PATHWAYS NETWORK

PATHWAYS INNOVATION

Over Five Years of the Texas Regional Pathways Network

The Texas Regional Pathways Network (TRPN) brings together state and regional leaders to build strong educational and career pathways that prepare Texans for careers in high-wage, in-demand industries.

MISSION

The TRPN builds regional talent pipelines that spur economic growth across the state and ensures that all Texans have the skills and credentials needed for economic advancement.

VISION

All Texans contribute to an inclusive and competitive Texas economy.

HISTORY OF THE TRPN

Leaders in Texas joined together at the state level to support regions in addressing the challenge that stakeholders in education, industry, and workforce across the country are grappling with: how to develop a skilled talent pipeline to fill high-wage, in-demand jobs. To bolster innovation and to meet the needs of a rapidly changing economy and education landscape, state leaders invested millions of dollars in funding to support regional systems alignment and pathways implementation through an initiative called the Texas Regional Pathways Network (TRPN).

Launched in 2019, the TRPN supports Governor Abbott's Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative, through which the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Texas Workforce Commission are working collaboratively to increase economic prosperity in Texas by linking education and industry.

At the onset of the TRPN, TEA used Perkins Reserve CTE funding to support a competitive grant opportunity and kicked off with an inaugural cohort of nine regional pathway teams from across the state. Since then, there have been four additional cohorts of regional pathway grantee teams and in spring 2023, the Tri-Agency Regional Convener grant was launched to support the development of pathways infrastructure in the state's twenty-eight workforce development regions.

The TRPN is led by a Steering Committee composed of state leaders—representing industry, K-12, and postsecondary education and workforce development—who guide the development of regional efforts that promote our state's economic growth.

WHAT DOES THE TRPN DO

The TRPN supports cross-sector teams of regional stakeholders to build and strengthen regional education and career pathways that align with labor market demand. Members of the network engage in strategic planning and peer learning through the sharing of best practices, challenges, and lessons learned in pathways development. The TRPN convenes annually, and members also have access to an array of Tri-Agency, state and national resources, including funding and technical assistance opportunities.

TIMELINE OF KEY MILESTONES

- 2015**
The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board launches the 60x30 initiative
- 2015**
Texas joins Jobs for the Future's [Pathways to Prosperity Network](#)
- 2016**
Governor Greg Abbott establishes the [Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative](#)
- 2017**
Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (P-TECH) school model is launched
- 2018**
Statewide Tri-Agency Education to Workforce Summit is held, bringing together partners from K-12, higher education, and workforce
- 2019**
Texas Regional Pathways Steering Committee is launched
- 2019-2022**
Competitive funding for the TRPN is released for the four cohorts of regional pathway grantees, focused on implementation
- 2023**
TRPN expands with a new grant program for prospective Tri-Agency Regional Conveners
- 2024-2025**
Competitive funding for a fifth cohort of regional pathways grantees launched. A second round of funding is released for Tri-Agency Regional Conveners

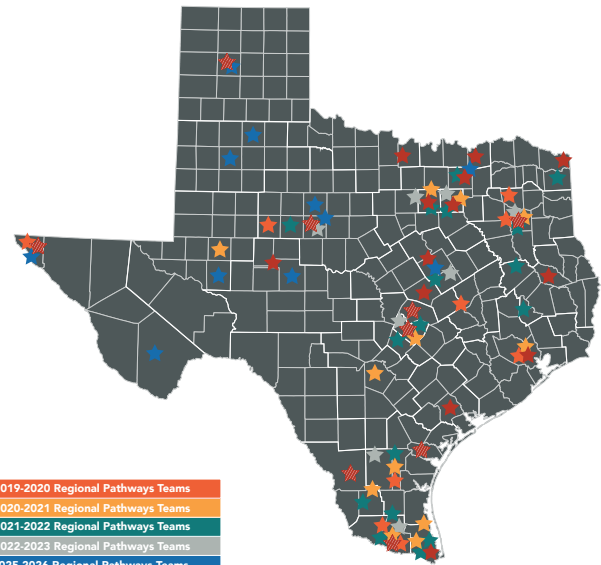
NETWORK MEMBERS

Leaders engaged in the TRPN represent multiple sectors, including K–12 education, postsecondary education, workforce and economic development, business and industry, government, and nonprofit and community-based organizations from across the state.

Members of the TRPN use the seven components of high-quality pathways framework to ground regional pathway design and implementation:

- Cross-sector partnerships
- Alignment with labor market demand
- Links between secondary and postsecondary
- Credentials with value in the labor market
- Integration of rigorous academics and career-focused learning
- Effective advising
- Continuum of work-based learning experiences

2019-2027 Grant Programs



2019-2020 Regional Pathways Teams
2020-2021 Regional Pathways Teams
2021-2022 Regional Pathways Teams
2022-2023 Regional Pathways Teams
2025-2026 Regional Pathways Teams
2025-2027 Tri-Agency Regional Conveners Served as a grantee organization or facilitator of a Regional Pathways Team

THE TRPN CURRENTLY INCLUDES TWO INITIATIVES

REGIONAL CONVENERS

- Funded through flexible funding from the state legislature
- Focuses on developing regional pathways infrastructure
- Develops goals for creating systems that support scalable and sustainable pathways aligned with industry demand
- Each regional convener organization leads a cross-sector Pathways Leadership Team
- These organizations are working towards being designated as the Regional Convener for their workforce development area and are assessed against four leadership domains:
 - » Regional strategic pathways alignment
 - » Regional work-based learning
 - » Regional data infrastructure
 - » Regional communications

REGIONAL PATHWAY TEAMS

- Funded by federal Perkins CTE Reserve funds
- Focuses on implementing pathways aligned to a specific targeted industry
- Develops goals focused on achieving outcomes for students in a specific pathway by aligning programs of study to targeted industries, implementing work-based learning, standing up effective advising interventions, and building partnerships across stakeholders.
- Each pathway team is composed of at least three school districts, two employers, one higher education agency, and one workforce board and is led by a Pathways Team Facilitator.
- Five grantee cohorts to date

IMPACT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE TRPN

FAST FACTS

24 workforce development areas

35+ institutions of higher education

120+ local education agencies

100+ employers

98 grants awarded

Over 20 pathways, including:

- » Aerial Robotics
- » Business Management
- » Construction
- » Education
- » Engineering
- » Healthcare
- » Information Technology
- » Manufacturing
- » Public Service
- » Renewable Energy
- » STEM

IMPACT OF THE TRPN

 **19,530** students earned dual credit from cohort 4

 **9,824** students from cohort 4 concentrating in a program of study aligned with the pathway

 **6,947** students from cohorts 3 and 4 completed a program of study aligned with the pathway

 **3,218** industry-aligned certifications earned by students in cohorts 3 and 4

 **30,320** students from cohorts 3 and 4 participated in career exploration activities

 **8,994** students from cohorts 3 and 4 completed career preparation activities

 **17** regional strategic plans created



Attending the convenings and having the opportunity to meet educators from throughout the state and country ... has expanded our network and helped us set new and higher goals for success.

- Regional Pathway Grantee

[This cohort] was instrumental in helping us obtain our work-based learning goals. During the past year we learned so much about what makes quality work-based learning opportunities for students.

- Regional Pathway Grantee

[We've had] exceptional growth with our LEAs and IHE partnership. This growth developed a confidence among stakeholders to move forward with sustainability of the programs and partnerships.

- Regional Pathway Grantee

[We've] moved past transactional relationships with cross-sector partners to deeper partnership. Partners are now proactively reaching out to us to discuss opportunities and strategies.

- Regional Convener Grantee

This was an opportunity to really see the gaps and needs in the region. Digging deeper uncovered gaps we weren't aware of and allowed us to put stronger pathways strategies in place.

- Regional Convener Grantee

LESSONS LEARNED

As we enter the seventh year of the Texas Regional Pathways Network, there are lessons we've learned along the way that are relevant for pathways work across the state.

- **Regional conveners and pathway team facilitators are essential to building pathways infrastructure and implementation.** Regional pathway team facilitators play three key roles in pathways implementation: 1. convene and lead cross-sector pathways team, 2. ensure cohesive implementation of pathway components, and 3. plan for sustainability of the regional pathways work. The pathway team facilitators make connections across stakeholder groups to align pathway strategies and can dive deep with partners to identify gaps and address challenges quickly. Regional convener organizations play a complementary and necessary role in building the region-wide infrastructure that supports successful pathways implementation across industries. Regional conveners set and monitor regional pathways strategy by developing regional data infrastructure. They also drive a regional approach to strengthening work-based learning and provide support and streamlined communications to align partners across the region.
- **It takes capacity, time, and trust to develop advanced work-based learning opportunities like internships and apprenticeships.** Implementing a continuum of work-based learning is the pathway component that many TRPN members are simultaneously most excited about and find the most challenging to execute. It is rare to see a new partnership between education and industry jump right into creating an apprenticeship program. Data on work-based learning implementation is also limited and not tracked centrally or consistently. To address this, stakeholders must work together to build a foundation of trust and understand the needs of employers and education partners. Starting small is often the right strategic move. If a team launches a pilot program with a small number of high school interns this year, they can learn from that process and grow over time, while also ensuring quality standards are met. Regional conveners are also positioned well to begin building a data infrastructure for their region, ultimately to understand impact and opportunities for scaling work-based learning.
- **Setting regional goals and documenting specific roles and responsibilities form the foundation of success.** Regional pathway grantees sign a stakeholder partnership agreement before the grant starts. This document is a helpful starting point, but successful teams take this agreement and tailor it to the specific goals and needs of their region. Regional pathway teams set 3-5 goals related to the components of a pathway and develop an action plan to achieve them with their partners. Similarly, the work of regional conveners is driven by a cross-sector pathways leadership team with clear responsibilities and goals to advance regional infrastructure. These agreements help clarify expectations, accountabilities, and ways of working together that serve as an important foundation for productive ongoing collaboration.
- **Quality data uncovers new insights for stakeholders to drive new or improved pathway strategies.** A key role of regional conveners is gathering, analyzing, and visualizing labor market information and pathways implementation and outcome data connected to the seven components of pathways. Grounding discussions with data with individual and multi-stakeholder groups helps generate buy-in for new approaches by uncovering gaps and areas for improvement. Additionally, pulling data from multiple sources across stakeholder groups—and covering an entire region—prepares teams to design comprehensive five-year strategic plans that truly transform pathways across a region.

WHAT'S AHEAD

Looking ahead, the TRPN will continue to improve its grant programs and practices in response to regional and statewide needs. Network members will support the understanding and implementation of the Tri-Agency Work-Based Learning Framework and advance future Tri-Agency priorities and strategies within regions. Regional conveners will begin to execute their strategic plans, and a new round of regional pathways grantees will scale effective work-based learning and advising strategies in new and existing programs of study. The network of past and current grantees will continue to convene, collaborate, and engage in learning opportunities to share strategies and align practices across regions.

To learn more about the TRPN and opportunities to engage with the network, visit: txpathways.org.