

# Make it **REAL**

Regional Earn And Learn jobs initiative



Help reduce our skilled worker shortage.  
Improve regional social and income disparities.



**CATALYST CONNECTION™**  
POWERING THE POTENTIAL OF MANUFACTURING

RK MELLON FOUNDATION

# Work Opportunity Tax Credit Guidelines

All tax credit forms should be filed within 28 days of the individual's date of hire.

Veterans who have been unemployed for 6+ months, and have a service connected disability	\$ 9,600.
Veterans who are being hired within 1 year of discharge, and have a service connected disability	4,800.
Veterans who have been unemployed for 6+ months	5,600.
Veterans who receive SNAP benefits	2,400.
Veterans who have been unemployed for at least 1 month, but less than 6	2,400.
Jobseekers who have been unemployed for 27+ weeks	2,400.
SNAP Recipients	2,400.
TANF Recipients	2,400.
Long-Term Family Assistance recipients whose family has received TANF for 18+ consecutive months	9,000.
Recipients of Supplemental Security Income	2,400.
Vocational Rehabilitation Referrals	2,400.
Returning Citizens (those formerly incarcerated)	2,400.



# Get REAL Benefits

- The REAL program provides companies a valuable opportunity to become *conscious capitalists*. We do this together by enhancing ties to a diverse community of workers while building your technical, sales and distribution, and administrative resources.
- There is no financial obligation to participate in the program beyond paying entry-level trainees and providing them with health benefits.
- Depending who they engage as trainees, many company candidates will be eligible for *Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC)*, retroactive to 2014, as shown in the chart, left. Catalyst can provide WOTC screening and documentation of new hires to increase a company's bottom-line savings.
- Public recognition of participating companies in multiple regional news outlets.
- Satisfaction knowing you have helped bridge the wealth gap for motivated, underserved individuals, providing financial self-sufficiency—and ultimately, a more equitable, robust economy.

# The Business of Doing Better

## **From the Conscious Capitalist Credo**

*We believe that business is good because it creates value, it is ethical because it is based on voluntary exchange, it is noble because it can elevate our existence and it is heroic because it lifts people out of poverty and creates prosperity.*

*Free enterprise capitalism is the most powerful system for social cooperation and human progress ever conceived. It is one of the most compelling ideas we humans have ever had. But we can aspire to even more.*

## **Our region can model the future.**

Being black in Pittsburgh, RAND research has found, means being six times more likely than a white person to go to bed hungry. It means bringing home less than half as much pay, and seeing your children hospitalized with asthma four times more often.

The city has been taking a hard look at race, wealth, and opportunity, in partnership with researchers at RAND's office there. It hasn't just run the numbers on subjects ranging from police contacts to business ownership to graduation rates; it has published them for all to see as part of a commitment to do better.

The results show what disparity looks like in one big American city. But they also provide a case study for other cities, of what they might find if they held up a mirror to their own promises of equity and inclusion.



# The REAL Goals

- Our goal is to place 20 interested and vetted job-seekers into entry-level training opportunities.
- Our candidates' work experiences vary from just-getting-started to more seasoned employees....all looking to pivot their careers toward manufacturing and a sustainable economic future.
- Catalysts Connection's continuing goal is to assist job seekers overcome barriers to employment, and—
- Provide ongoing employment support to participating companies and trainees to ensure successful placements.
- **Our immediate goal is to forge unique working partnerships with small business manufacturers and begin making direct referrals of ready and waiting trainee candidates.**



## **Catalyst makes it REAL— At no cost to you**

### *Before and After Employment...*

As a REAL jobs program company, you would hire an eligible participant for a one-year traineeship for a position in one of these or similar areas: Technical, Sales and Distribution, and Administrative.

***BEFORE employment***, Catalyst recruits applicants from under-represented communities, interviews applicants and conducts individualized vocational assessments to promote employee readiness.

To ensure a fitting match, Catalyst manages interactions between vetted candidates in the REAL jobs program and you, the potential hiring employer.

***AFTER your commitment***, Catalyst provides pre-employment orientation to trainees on basic employability skills, such as prompt arrival times and effective communication.

As important, Catalyst works with trainees on identifying and addressing any personal, real-life challenges, such as transportation and childcare.

To enhance long-term employment possibilities, Catalyst provides long-term training and fellowship.

# How we make it REAL

## **YOU** make it REAL—*by supporting the program*

**BEFORE the program,** provide a supplemental job description (if needed), identify trainee openings or opportunities with a long-term career path. Allow current employees to participate in recruitment videos, and provide a tour of your facility to pre-screened program applicants.

**DURING the program,** interview, and then rank, pre-screened applicants. Hire the trainee for a minimum of one year, providing salary and benefits,\* with the expectation that employment may be long-term upon the successful completion of the traineeship.

Also during the program, provide hands-on training to your REAL program employee to prepare them for lasting employment. Throughout, work with Catalyst on any employee challenges and allow your REAL program trainee to participate in program activities to strengthen work affiliation.

**AFTER the program,** consider employing your REAL program trainee full-time...or providing a reference for another employer. And provide feedback to Catalyst Connection so that where needed we can improve the program for the future.

*\*Note: If you are willing to hire a REAL trainee, but lack the financial resources to do so, Catalyst Connection may be able to help identify programs that provide assistance. Just let us know.*

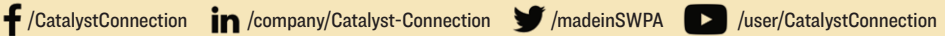
**ABOUT CATALYST CONNECTION** Catalyst Connection is a southwestern Pennsylvania economic development organization dedicated to serving manufacturers. For more than 30 years, Catalyst has operated with a focus on powering potential through delivering technical assistance and management consulting services and developing long-standing partnerships across the region. Catalyst maintains a deeply held commitment to modernizing manufacturing and enabling opportunity across business enterprises, individuals, and throughout communities. Catalyst Connection is supported, in part, by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development, and by the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnerships.



This publication is produced by Catalyst Connection is for informational purposes only and is intended to provide an overview of the subject matter addressed. It is provided on the basis that Catalyst Connection has not been engaged in rendering legal services or providing legal advice. If you require legal advice, please seek the services of an attorney.

**Catalyst Connection | 4501 Lytle Street, Suite 300, Pittsburgh, PA 15207 | [www.catalystconnection.org](http://www.catalystconnection.org)**

**Follow us:**



## Are you interested?

REAL Jobs is a pipeline to entry level employment in manufacturing for underserved groups, bolstered by the unique relationships crafted between Catalyst Connection and our clients.

**Contact Nate Broadus at Catalyst Connection: 412-495-0683  
or email at: [nbroadus@catalystconnection.org](mailto:nbroadus@catalystconnection.org)**

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