

Section 1. Sector Selection.

The Agriculture and Natural Resource Center of Excellence (ANR) submits this proposal in response to the Agriculture Sector Intermediary opportunity. The ANR works statewide to connect industry partners and the state’s community and technical colleges. In serving as a statewide liaison, ANR collaborates, communicates, and convenes partners in business, industry, labor, and education. It aspires to be a local, national, and global model for innovative workforce development and collaboration between industry and education. ANR strives to support economic vitality and be an advocate for Washington as a leader in agriculture and natural resource industries. In this response to the Core Objectives/Prompts, ANR will outline its approach to solving this issue for agriculture in Washington state, bringing together a broad base of stakeholders to engage this complex industry, its employers, as well as education and workforce training providers. This project will enhance, grow, and future-proof the agriculture sector in Washington state. As a result of this work, ANR will solidify its position as the leading driver for positive change in Washington’s agricultural sector.

WA Agriculture Sector Overview.

Washington State is one of the most productive agricultural regions. Its diverse geographic climates include ocean-fueled microclimates that establish a variety of growing regions. Washington’s farms, similarly, drive a diverse economy. The apple industry alone represents 20% of the state’s total agriculture production, as well as 70% of the nation’s total apple production. More than 300 crops are grown in Washington, resulting in \$10.6B+ in annual revenue, and 164K+ jobs through 35K+ farms and ranches.

	Value to Washington’s economy (\$)	Percent of US Total Production	Rank Among US States
Apples	2,095,265,000	67.4%	1
Apricots	4,473,000	6.6%	2
Blueberries	217,467,000	25.9%	1
Cherries (sweet)	561,696,000	62.1%	1
Hops	444,909,000	71.4%	1
Onions	135,843,000	21.4%	2
Pears	175,965,000	51.6%	1
Potatoes	753,377,000	23.7%	2
Raspberries	62,673,000	31.1%	2
Spearmint	24,227,000	6.79%	1
Winter wheat	754,110,000	23.7%	2

Section 2. Core Objectives/Prompts.

Background.

To accomplish the larger goals of this Sector Intermediary role, ANR will prepare a series of work products that support employers and industry at the same time it informs and shapes education, enrichment, and workforce development programs in the state. In each section of this proposal, ANR outlines how these work products will support the successful accomplishment of each Core Objective/Prompt. These work products include:

- Landscape Scan, including an Asset /Gap Analysis
- SWOT Analysis and Strategic Plan
- Agriculture Roadmap
- Resources—including toolkits—for CCW Program Builders, employers, and other stakeholders

These assets are central to the entire project and serve multiple purposes, as they support each Core Objective/Prompt. All distributed materials through this proposed Sector Intermediary work will be prepared in, at minimum, English and Spanish languages. Because these assets support each objective in differing ways, we firstly outline them here:

Landscape Scan. Landscape scans follow a range of approaches. For the purposes of this proposal, ANR seeks to assemble a complete picture of agriculture career connected learning opportunities in Washington State (in this proposal, use of the phrase ‘career connected learning’ comprehends both Career Connected Learning participants as well as organizations and efforts that may not yet be recognized in CCW’s system). Because the agriculture sector is so complex, this landscape scan, by definition, must be prepared and presented through multiple lenses, including:

- *commodities* that are produced;
- natural (and other) *resources* that are required to produce these commodities;
- *geographies, places, environments and contexts* in which these commodities are produced;
- *employers* that hire workers to produce these commodities;
- *formal educational systems* that are preparing future agriculture workers;
- *informal organizations and systems* that play a role in preparing future agriculture workers;
- *governmental and policy-related entities and systems* that participate in fostering—or hindering—the progress of the agriculture sector;
- *taxonomies* that each system uses for skills acquisition and development;
- *career connected learning pathways* and *perceptions* related to those pathways that currently exist among different stakeholders,
- *relationships* across the braided ecosystem related to agriculture in Washington state; and
- *structural inequities* across the sector.

The key research question for the landscape scan will be: *What are effective examples of career connected learning, and how might they be scaled to further support the agriculture and natural resource industries in Washington State?*

The landscape scan will begin by leveraging publicly accessible labor market data (such as Chmura and O*Net). Recognizing, however, that the agriculture sector is, by definition, analog, findings will be confirmed, refined, or challenged through interviews and focus groups with stakeholders, leveraging ANR's existing collaborative partnerships (such as Career Connect Washington Regional Networks). Through this careful mapping, areas of convergence (when assets effectively meet needs) and divergence (when assets and needs do not match up) can be identified. This final step will ensure not only that the landscape scan is complete at the same time it also provides insight on further research questions related to the current state of the agriculture sector and its workforce pipeline in Washington.

With the support of a to-be-developed Agriculture Advisory Leadership Committee, a working group of sector leaders—identified throughout the landscape scan process—these areas of convergence and divergence will then inform the development of a strategic plan.

Strategic Plan. The strategic plan will emerge from the findings of the landscape scan and address areas for sector improvement and refinement. It will comprehend and amass existing resources—such as Regional Networks, the Eastern Region Ag Consortium, industry, employers, education, agriculture enrichment programs and workforce development—to inform the creation of goals across all commodities and stakeholders. To accomplish this, the landscape scan and a SWOT analysis will shape the strategic plan's goals, activities, and KPIs. Further, the strategic plan will also, throughout, articulate cross-sector improvements and infrastructure building required to reduce systemic inequities in agriculture. In building the framework of the strategic plan, feedback will be solicited from stakeholders to ensure that the plan effectively meets the sector's needs.

Agriculture Roadmap. The strategic plan will then form the basis of the work needed to scale. This Agriculture Roadmap will support the scale up of promising and proven career connected learning opportunities, with flexibility to respond to the complex and consistently progressing nature of the agriculture sector. The Agriculture Roadmap will inform the development of new tools that will further support other Career Connect Washington sectors.

Sector Toolkits. Finally, after the Agriculture Roadmap has been carefully crafted, and approved by the Leadership Committee, practical and tactical tools can be developed to support the sector's growth. These tools will include education-to-employment guided pathway templates and support to Program Builders as they seek to create Career Explore, Career Prep, and Career Launch opportunities and programs; they will also support education, enrichment, and workforce development programs and initiatives to support the closing of skills gaps among emergent and existing agricultural workers. These toolkits will include career connected learning options in a range of locations (e.g., worksites, classrooms), and inform best practices for employers.

Project Team. The Landscape Scan, Strategic Plan, Agriculture Roadmap, and Sector Toolkits will be created by the team at ANR, in concert with a consultant with experience in convening wide audiences to assemble landscape scans, strategic plans and scale-up roadmaps, along with supporting programmatic documents and tools. ANR, will, as part of this Sector Intermediary work, secure a FTE in order to effectively manage this ambitious, but achievable, work. The ANR is led by Lindsey Williams, Director of the ANR. Her prior related experience includes the Water and Environmental Center, and USDA-ARS. Leadership in the field includes AgForestry (Class 40), for which she now serves as Program Manager (Class 43). Ms. Williams earned a B.S. in Forestry at Washington State University, and has gained Executive Certificates in Diversity and Inclusion, Marketing Strategy, and Project Management through Cornell University. Ceaná Pacheco, Program Specialist, fosters relationships between industry and education, linking students with jobs in agriculture and natural resources. Prior related experience includes the Johnson Creek Watershed Council and USDA-ARS. She earned a B.S. in Environmental Studies at Portland State University.

Partners. As a sector leader that articulates and drives systemic progress but also provides a system of accountability for that progress, ANR will convene a wide range of stakeholders in order to effectively accomplish the Core Objectives/Prompts. Some stakeholders are already collaborating with ANR, but some of these partnerships will be new. They include:

Industry/employers (e.g., the McGregor Corporation, Pacific Education Institute, Sakuma Brothers Farms and Processing, Sierra Pacific Industries, Ste. Michelle Wine Estates, Taylor Shellfish);

Program Builders (e.g., Pacific Education Institute)

Workforce Development Councils;

K-12 (e.g., school districts, OSPI)

Colleges, universities, and consortia (e.g., SBCTC, Washington State University's College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences, and the Eastern Region Ag Consortium)

ESD's (e.g., 101, 105, and 123)

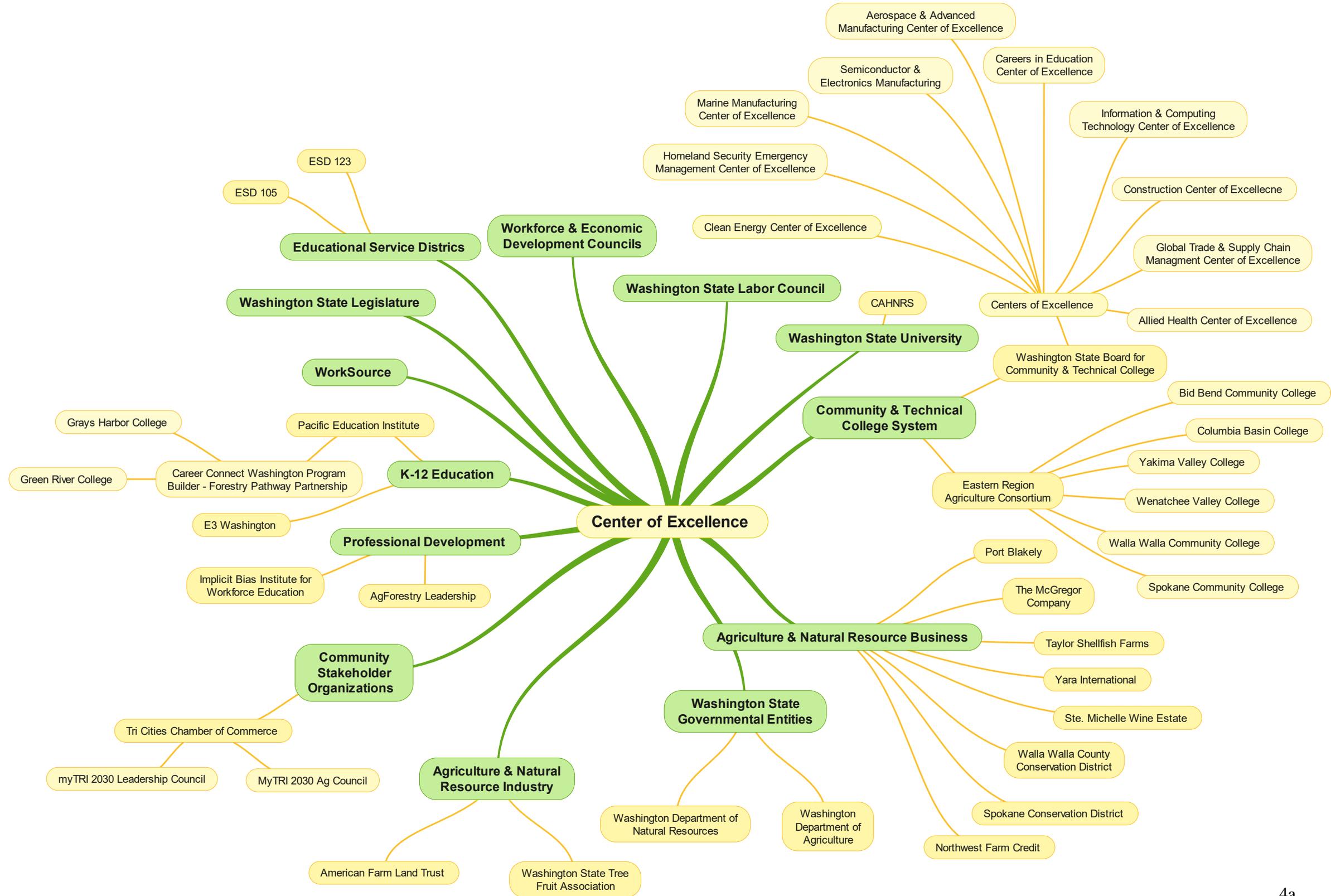
Enrichment / out-of-school time (OST) providers

Tribal leadership

Washington State Department of Commerce

Associations, policy, and industry affinity groups (e.g., the Washington State Tree Fruit Association, Alfalfa Seed Commission; Apple Commission, Asparagus Commission, Beef Commission, Beer Commission, Blueberry Commission, Cranberry Commission, Dairy Products Commission, Fruit Commission, Grain Commission, Hop Commission, Mint Commission, Oilseeds Commission, Pesticide Commission, Potato Commission, Puget Sound Salmon Commission, Pulse Crops Commission, Red Raspberry Commission, Seed Potato Commission, Tree Fruit Research Commission, Turfgrass Seed Commission, Wine Commission, and Conservation Districts)

In addition, the networks among each of these partners will create a 'ripple effect' to increase the range of sector and sector-adjacent partners. Overall, the core elements, the project team, and the project partners will drive the successful completion of the four Core Objectives/Prompts.



1. Employers will have a shared understanding of the workforce development needs in their sector.

Activities.

1. Convene Stakeholders. The project will convene roundtables to capture the current state of agriculture related career connected learning and sector needs from the perspectives of industry, education/enrichment/workforce development, and policy.

1a. Industry data (from sources such as Chmura, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Washington State Department of Agriculture) will support the initial inquiry phase. Overarching research questions will include: *What is the current state of the agriculture sector in Washington State, especially inputs and linkages via industry and education? What assets and needs can be articulated so that gaps can be closed and promising models in certain asset-rich subsectors can be leveraged to inform other, asset-bereft subsectors? How can industry best communicate and share its needs in real time to the education and workforce development communities? Where are diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging gaps, and what strategies should be developed to solve them? How might industry better collaborate to enhance Washington's agriculture sector?*

1b. Education, enrichment, and workforce development data (from sources such as the U.S. Department of Education and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction). Overarching research questions will include: *What is the current state of career preparation for aspirant workers in agriculture and related industries? What education, enrichment, and workforce development pathways are fully articulated, and what education, enrichment, and workforce development pathways have gaps? How might education and workforce development better respond to the needs of agricultural employers? Where are diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging gaps, and what strategies should be developed to solve them? How might education and workforce development better collaborate to enhance Washington's agriculture sector? What basic skills and learning opportunities are necessary for upskilling within the context of existing employment?*

Following this initial sector study, a high-level sector snapshot will be established, with potential information gaps and blind spots identified. This snapshot will serve, firstly, as a way to create shared understanding among and across the sector, to drive the engagement and participation of industry leaders, to engage the education, enrichment, and workforce development community, and to lay the groundwork for the eventual strategic plan. The snapshot will be shared among stakeholders, and interviews/focus groups will be held to confirm, challenge and refine findings to reflect the true current state of the agriculture sector in Washington state.

2. Develop Landscape Scan. Following the roundtables, focus groups, and interviews, more questions will emerge that will be added to the second phase of work, which will be to capture the broad set of data and assets that currently exist among Washington's complex agriculture sector.

2a. Employers. Create a multi-lens perspective that fosters a comprehensive understanding of the complex nature of Washington’s agriculture employers and industry-adjacent employers, including:

- Commodities
- Geography
- Size
- Skills mapping
- Persistent skill gaps
- Persistent vacancies among certain types of positions

2b. Education, enrichment, and workforce development. Identify current state of career connected learning opportunities (Career Explore, Career Prep, and Career Launch) as well as existing programming not comprehended through these three designations. Activities will include:

- Map programs through specific commodities (e.g., shellfish, tree fruit, or forestry), grouped as appropriate (e.g., dryland crops, berries);
- Map programs by geography, size, and capacity;
- Map programs through the lens of program availability: *Emerging, Promising, Accomplished, Proven, or Ready to Scale*;
- Create resource kits for industry and employers.

3. Articulate Needs and Assets. The landscape scan will highlight emergent and existing trends. These will doubtless include comprehending where there are an abundance of assets, where leaky pipelines exist, and where inequities must be addressed. Before drawing assumptions about what the Landscape Scan concludes about the current state of agriculture-related career connected learning in Washington, ANR will invite members of the community to provide further explanation or ‘light’ on an emergent issue, and will also invite members of the community to provide feedback on the Landscape Scan and its findings as a whole. Wherever possible, ANR will use a process to proactively solicit feedback as a way to confirm or counter assumptions, thereby potentially addressing blind spots and capturing emergent issues.

To ensure that the identification of needs and assets effectively represents all stakeholders, ANR will re-convene to gain input and feedback to:

- Refine the needs/assets map;
- Comprehend challenges and potential solutions to attaining a desired future state;
- Identify high-level goals that may be included in the strategic plan; and
- Identify and engage working group to participate in developing the strategic plan.

4. Strategic Plan and Statewide Sector Goals. The strategic plan will articulate short- and long-range goals for the strength, resilience, and future-proofing of Washington’s agriculture sector. While the actual goals of this strategic plan will be identified throughout the convening and landscape scanning process, it is anticipated that goals will likely form across several vectors, including:

- Aligning employer needs with education and workforce preparation;

- Nurturing the agriculture ecosystem between employers and CCW;
- Closing gaps between industry/employer needs and education/workforce development;
- Valuing and enhancing the multidimensional nature of Washington’s agriculture sector;
- Preparing for future industry/employer needs; and
- Ensuring opportunity and equity and rebalancing historic inequities in agriculture.

5. Identify Sector Leaders to support strategic plan goals. After the strategic plan is complete, ANR will activate, inform, educate, and engage the agriculture sector’s ‘Sentinel Network’. This statewide group of leaders will provide continuous feedback loops among the network as a way to accelerate and monitor progress. It is anticipated, continued funding permitting, that the Sentinel Network might continue to support the ANR with sector intelligence beyond the grant period.

Actions include:

- Secure FTE Program Manager to Coordinate Sector Intermediary Activities.
- Convene Industry Roundtables
- Convene Education Roundtables
- Collect Findings
- Secure Landscape Scan Consultant
- Conduct Landscape Scan
- Create/Refine Needs/Assets Map
- Identify High Level Issues for Strategic Plan
- Secure Strategic Plan Consultant
- Develop Strategic Plan
- Convene Stakeholders for Input on Strategic Plan
- Refine / Ratify Strategic Plan
- Identify / Convene Sector Leaders / ‘Sentinel Network’

Outcomes include:

Outcome 1. ANR will convene the varied stakeholders in and among the agriculture community, solicit their input, and incorporate their feedback.

Outcome 2. ANR will develop a landscape scan that is designed to demonstrate the true current state of agriculture in Washington State.

Outcome 3. ANR will develop a strategic plan and statewide sector goals for coordinating and enhancing agriculture-focused education, enrichment, and workforce development opportunities in Washington State.

Outcome 4. ANR will recruit and convene a group of sector leaders to serve as a Sentinel Network.

Summary of Core Objective / Prompt 1.

Overall, ANR's proposed activities as part of Core Element / Prompt 1 will strengthen and deepen connections among agriculture sector stakeholders; formalize a range of networks so that access points are articulated to create pathways to opportunity; address challenges related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging; and create a comprehensive picture of agriculture workforce needs in Washington State.

2. Sector employers use CCW programs to recruit and retain talent.

Activities.

As part of the landscape scan process, occupational skills maps will be created for sub-sector commodities, grouped as appropriate (e.g., dryland crops, berries, forest products). Agricultural-adjacent occupations will also be mapped (e.g., precision agriculture, agricultural accounting). Data will initially be derived from labor market data, including Chmura and O*Net. To drive industry and employer engagement, ANR will convene employer stakeholders to secure their candid feedback about what real-time skills are lacking among their employees and applicants. The overarching question to be answered will be: *What is education/enrichment/workforce development doing well, and how might education, enrichment, and workforce development evolve and grow to meet current/future needs? How are connection points to education and enrichment established, maintained, and nurtured?*

The answer to these questions will determine where employer needs are—and are not—being met. Further inquiry will explore the fundamental challenges that prevent these needs from being met. This overall process will foster industry and employers' interest and engagement with CCW programs as part of their recruitment and retention strategy, and will also inform the strategic plan's goals. With these skills mappings, ANR will, then, liaise with education, enrichment, and workforce development to cultivate new or expand existing programs and training (including upskilling).

In addition, like the skills mapping with employers and industry, a mapping of education, enrichment, and workforce development providers will also be conducted, with gap analysis identifying where content and coordination of education, enrichment, and workforce development efforts might be enhanced. ANR will gain feedback from employers and industry with regard to how the sector might incubate additional educational, enrichment, or workforce development (for example, through potential/future Program Builders, expanding the focus area of successful Program Builders, or other programmatic resource) opportunities, as needed.

Education, enrichment, and workforce development programs will also self-report their ability to respond to identified gaps and be invited to provide insight on how they might participate in closing the identified skills gaps. Education and workforce development programs will be assessed as 'Ready to Scale'. This 'Ready to Scale' analysis will become a central part of the Agriculture Roadmap (outlines in Prompt 3, below). With this mapping, ANR can better connect agriculture-related industry, employers, education, enrichment, and workforce development programs, and provide perspective and best practice resources to help them expand

and grow. These findings, including the maps, will be documented and shared among agriculture sector stakeholders, with CCW stakeholders, policymakers, and agriculture-adjacent industries.

By serving as a driver for positive change that employers in the agriculture sector urgently need, employers will look to ANR as a thoughtleader as well as a vital source of support to enhancing their talent base. By adding value for both employers and industry, they will, in turn, increasingly rely on ANR and CCW programs to solve their talent recruitment and retention challenges.

Actions include:

- Sector and sub-sector occupational skills mapping
- Convene employers/industry to identify gaps
- Rank gaps in order of urgency/importance/solvability
- Education/enrichment/workforce development mapping against sector/sub-sector skills and gaps
- Collect and share data, maps
- Convene employers/industry to solicit feedback on education/enrichment/workforce development mapping
- Education/enrichment/workforce development self-report
- Ascertain expandable or scalable programs
- Findings shape strategic plan goals
- Programs are expanded or established
- Emergent employees will participate in expanded educational/enrichment/workforce programming
- Existing employees will participate in expanded educational/enrichment/workforce programming (upskilling)

Outcomes include:

Outcome 1. Employers will increase their use of CCW resources.

Outcome 2. Skills gaps will be identified, and education / workforce development programs will be established to close those skills gaps.

Outcome 3. Emergent/ new employees will be trained with career connected learning, thereby closing skills gaps.

Outcome 4. Existing employees will engage in upskilling opportunities through community college and other training resources.

Summary of Core Objective/Prompt 2.

ANR, by working with employers and industry to identify the current state of career connected learning opportunities, will liaise with K-12 education, enrichment, and workforce development to increase their awareness of industry needs, so that the education, enrichment, and workforce sector can support better outcomes for students and aspirant agriculture (and

agriculture-adjacent) workers. ANR will leverage existing Career Connected Washington networks—Regional Networks, Program Builders, and others—to limit redundancy. Through the activities in this Core Objective, employers will use CCW programs to recruit and train talent.

3. Successful career connected learning programs are brought to statewide scale and adapted to meet the workforce development needs identified by sector employers.

Activities.

Developing the Agriculture Roadmap will support the successful accomplishment of this goal. With ‘Ready to Scale’ education, enrichment, and workforce development programs identified through the strategic planning process, as well as consistent communication with Regional Networks and Program Builders, ANR will be poised to create a vision for the future state of agriculture career connected learning opportunities in Washington, highlighting the interrelated nature of every strand in the braided pathway. By collaborating with educational, enrichment, and workforce development programs, and creating a space for their own collaboration, ANR will build the capacity of the educational systems within this sector to bolster programming across K-12, college/university, and formal to informal learning. Whenever possible, ANR will advocate for additional funding needed for these initiatives, organizations, and programs so that their efforts to grow and scale can be sustainable.

By bringing together employers/industry and education/enrichment/workforce development along with other stakeholders and identifying ‘Ready to Scale’ programs, capacity among career connected learning programs and initiatives will increase. Enhanced outreach will leverage web-based materials, ANR’s website, ANR’s Pathway to Excellence Program Guide, the CCW website, and industry partner outreach efforts. These activities to expand awareness among parents and students, K-12 educators and career counselors will result in increased student participation in career connected learning.

The Agriculture Roadmap will also consider how internships, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships can play a role in this ecosystem. An example of how ANR has engaged in a similar manner is a current collaboration with the Pacific Education Institute, developing a series of Forestry pathways and career connected learning opportunities, which currently near completion. While many sub-sectors of agriculture are not conducive to apprenticeships, the Agricultural Roadmap will identify the multitude of onramps to different types of agricultural work, and outline where apprenticeships may be an effective onramp for employers and aspirant workers. Paid pre-professional onramps are also important to increasing equity and diversity among a talent pool. With the data that emerge from the landscape scan and the employer/industry mapping, the Agricultural Roadmap will work with employers and industry to determine which occupations would be conducive for pre-professional internships and apprenticeships, sharing out those occupations with the education, enrichment, and workforce development community so that Program Builders can close these resource gaps as they develop new and refine existing programs to expand the number of available onramps to good jobs in the agriculture sector.

Actions include:

- Create Draft of Agriculture Roadmap
- Convene stakeholders to request feedback and input on draft of Roadmap
- Interviews, focus groups to gain input (confirm/challenge/refine) on draft of Roadmap
- Expand awareness and participation in career connected learning as a result of increased capacity among education, enrichment, and workforce development programs

Outcomes include:

Outcome 1. The Agriculture Roadmap will be created, feedback will be incorporated, and final version shared among agriculture stakeholders across the state to gain feedback.

Outcome 2. New and expanded opportunities for internships, apprenticeships, and other pre-professional will be identified. Education, enrichment, and workforce development partners and Program Builders will incorporate these opportunities in developing new or enhancing existing programming.

Outcome 3. Successful career connected learning opportunities are identified for potential replication, calibration, and scale to meet the needs of different communities across the state. Career connected agriculture learning opportunities will be shared out among parents and students, K-12 educators and career counselors, and other partners to drive increased participation in career connected learning.

Outcome 4. Regional Networks are engaged to identify environments where replication and scale will be most effective.

4. The Sector Intermediary is the well-connected resource, for Regional Networks and Program Intermediaries, to engage sector employers and implement a coherent sector strategy.

Activities.

As the statewide convener and sector leader, ANR is already poised to be an effective statewide resource and partner for Regional Networks and other Sector Intermediaries. In addition to serving as the state's agriculture hub for education, ANR has been, for the past year, the Chair of the Consortium of Washington State COE's, which has also cultivated a statewide leadership position; ANR has been tapped to lead the consortium for the upcoming year. In addition, ANR leads the Eastern Region Agriculture Consortium, which is comprised of 6 colleges (Big Bend Community College, Columbia Basin College, Spokane Community College, Walla Walla Community College, Wenatchee Valley College, and Yakima Valley College). Articulation agreements among participating colleges increases the accessibility of agriculture degrees, particularly for underserved and high-need students. Previous work in this consortium has demonstrated ANR's ability to lead cross-agency efforts to streamline process, foster systemic flexibility, and to bring varied stakeholders together. Given the success of the Eastern Region Agriculture Consortium, ANR envisions potential expansion to include colleges in other parts of the state that also offer agriculture pathways.

As a result of the activities outlined in the Background section of this proposal, as well as the activities outlined in the 3 previous Core Objectives / Prompts, above, ANR will serve as the automatic choice for Regional Networks and Program Intermediaries and Program Builders to engage sector employers. The landscape scan and strategic planning processes, in particular, will establish a full picture of all threads in the agriculture braided pathway, as well as intersections (and disconnects) among them. ANR's website will be augmented to include all mapping and planning materials produced as part of the project, and will also grow to serve as a one-stop resource center for employers/industry, education/enrichment/workforce development, and policymakers.

Actions include:

- Develop strategic plan for the state's agriculture sector.
- Communicate the vision for the state's agriculture strategic plan, and what is needed to accomplish goals.
- Engage and lead employers and industry on the strategic plan's goals.
- Engage and lead education, enrichment, and workforce development—including funding streams to support scale up—on the strategic plan's goals.
- Convene other Sector Intermediaries to benchmark progress / set goals as part of both the landscape scan and strategic planning process.
- Convene Sector Intermediaries in agricultural-adjacent sectors to gain insight on effective practices among Sector Intermediaries and Program Builders.
- Expand the Eastern Region Agriculture Consortium to other colleges across Washington.
- Convene Regional Networks.
- At the end of the project, create pathway to sustainability.
- Website: washingtonagriculturecareers.org will be established to communicate, convene, and connect.

Outcomes include:

Outcome 1. Lead the creation of a statewide strategic plan for the agriculture sector, and communicate the aspirations of that strategic plan among stakeholders statewide.

Outcome 2. Lead stakeholders (employer/industry, education/enrichment/workforce development, and policy) to accomplish the strategic plan's goals.

Outcome 3. Support the work of the Regional Networks and leverage their existing structure to support implementation of the proposed project.

Summary.

ANR, given its mission, activities, and expertise, is deeply connected statewide and can efficiently engage a broad and deep range of employers and, through the proposed strategic planning process, can implement an effective sector strategy.

Section 3. Organization Prompts.

1. Why is your organization applying for this CCW grant?

To keep Washington competitive, maintain its vital export markets, and wisely use our resources to feed the world, a stronger braided education pathway among agriculture and its related sectors is needed. The proposed project work is a logical extension of ANR's mission in action. To accomplish this work, ANR envisions bringing a cross-section of partners to the table, identifying needs and assets, and communicating those needs and assets among Career Explorer, Career Prep, and Career Launch programs, thereby enhancing Washington's agricultural landscape.

The role of the Agriculture Sector Intermediary aligns with ANR's work as a statewide sector backbone, supporting the agriculture and natural resource workforce in Washington State. Through partnerships with the 12 Centers of Excellence and, by extension, all of the sectors they support, ANR has demonstrated, much like CCW, its ability to bring multiple partners together to expand statewide access and opportunity. The ANR, in sum, is a natural CCW partner, particularly for the agriculture sector.

2. How does your organization approach planning and performance?

ANR approaches planning expansively and inclusively, given the broad and varied nature of Washington's agriculture sector. While certain sectors (e.g., tree fruit) of the industry play a significant role in the state's agricultural activities, the breadth of the 300+ commodities across the sector (and the range of agriculture producer size, from the very small to the industrial) requires ANR to ensure equity throughout. Likewise, as a convener of the agriculture industry generally, ANR is poised to effectively engage this broad and diverse group of agriculture industry professionals. With the support of an Agriculture Advisory Leadership Committee—which will be formed as the landscape scan is being developed—the process of planning will ensure the engagement of a diverse group of agriculture professionals, agriculture education, enrichment, and workforce development stakeholders, as well as agriculture-adjacent stakeholders.

Similarly, ANR approaches performance measurement very seriously. The strategic plan will provide aspirational, yet attainable, metrics; the materials created as part of the strategic planning process will, by definition, build tracking and accountability structures so that effective progress reporting can be transparent, yet comprehensive. These tools for performance measurement will include project management/timeline Gantt charts as well as red-yellow-green dashboards to determine which elements of project performance are working according to plan, and where additional focus might be required. Additionally, as new detail emerges through the landscape scan process, the system for performance measurement must necessarily be flexible to include these new insights. As a statewide convener on the agriculture sector generally, ANR has deep expertise in developing and implementing these types of structures for reporting and accountability.

With this approach to planning and performance measurement, ANR can be successful in planning an effective sector-wide strategy that is inclusive and responsive, at the same time it clearly demonstrates progress against desired outcomes and metrics.

Section 4. Employer Connections.

Reference 1.

Name of Business: Washington State Tree Fruit Association

Contact Information: Jon DeVaney, President, jon@wstfa.org, (509) 452-8555

Why selected: Jon DeVaney is a critical liaison to the tree fruit industry; given its significant role in the state's agriculture production, input from tree fruit producers is essential. The WSTFA have also demonstrated leadership in the field generally, but also specifically as it relates to workforce development. WSTFA has prepared a series of training and recruitment materials—which can be leveraged as part of this Sector Intermediary initiative—that can inspire ANR's approach to producing high quality training materials.

Reference 2.

Name of Business: The McGregor Company

Contact Information: Leslie Druffel, Outreach Coordinator, Leslie.druffel@mcgregor.com, (509) 397-4355

Why selected: Leslie Druffel has been a champion for both the Agriculture & Natural Resource Center of Excellence (previously Chair of the Advisory Committee) and Career Connect Washington (as part of both the NEWESD 101 Regional Network Leadership Team and Career Launch Endorsement Review Standing Committee). Her focus on both agriculture and workforce education, immense knowledge in these areas, and passion for the agriculture industry makes her the type of person we must partner with on convening, providing exposure to opportunities, and connecting with at every opportunity. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the Pacific Education Institute, expanding her commitment to statewide access to agriculture and natural resource education opportunities.

Reference 3.

Name of Business: Walla Walla County Conservation District

Contact Information: Renee Hadley, District Manager, renee.hadley@wwccd.net, (509) 956-3777

Why Selected: Renee Hadley is a vital industry connection and supporter of workforce development, upskilling and training initiatives. Renee is situated at the intersection of agriculture and conservation, and provides unique perspective on workforce demand and skill gaps in agriculture and conservation pathways. As a partner, ANR has consistently leaned on Walla Walla Conservation District to help us further understand both the needs of industry and how we can enhance working lands. She is involved with the community college system, supports internships, and purposefully hires students. Her perspective in how to better and fully prepare those she hires is critical to understanding the needs of the sector.

Reference 4.

Name of Business: Taylor Shellfish Farms

Contact Information: Erin Ewald, Director of Regulatory Affairs, erine@taylorshellfish.com, (360) 432-3348

Why Selected: Erin Ewald and Taylor Shellfish Farms are committed to supporting workforce training initiatives to guide and mentor a qualified and skilled workforce in the shellfish industry. Erin serves on the Board of Directors for the Pacific Education Institute, and is a champion of career connected learning. She is a graduate of AgForestry Leadership, and has maintained a focus on collaboration across subsectors to best serve Washington's agriculture workforce and economy. She has a keen eye for opportunities, and thinks deeply about how to enhance Washington's workforce in agriculture and natural resources.

Reference 5.

Name of Business: Sierra Pacific Industries

Contact Information: Lisa Perry, Washington Community Relations, lperry@spi-ind.com, (360) 427-8211

Why Selected: Lisa Perry and her team at Sierra Pacific Industries represent one of the largest U.S private forest landowners. Lisa is committed to supporting and growing the workforce in the forestry industry and is a critical connection to providing perspective on career connect learning opportunities in forestry and the scaling of those opportunities statewide. We have seen Lisa commit herself extensively to both learning about and advocating for education, the forestry industry, and workforce development in areas that are often overlooked. Lisa also serves on the Board of Directors for the Pacific Education Institute, bolstering her commitment to developing and expanding statewide career connected learning in forestry.

Reference 6.

Name of Business: Ste. Michelle Wine Estates

Contact Information: Kevin Corliss, Vice President, Kevin.Corliss@smwe.com

Why Selected: Kevin Corliss at Ste. Michelle Wine Estates is an essential industry connection and provides extensive background in the winery industry, with over 35+ years of experience, which provides long-term context into workforce development across Washington. Kevin's perspectives on the workforce needs of the wine industry will be critical in identifying workforce gaps, potential internship opportunities for career connect learning, and identifying scalable programs. He is a graduate of AgForestry Leadership, and possesses a robust network for agriculture contacts that are crucial to further understanding opportunities in the wine grape industry and beyond.

Reference 7.

Name of Business: Center of Excellence for Global Trade and Supply Chain Management

Contact Information: Sam Kaplan, Director, sakaplan@highline.edu

As a Center of Excellence Director, and one for a sector with significant overlap with agriculture, Sam is a connection point for perspectives in this area. In considering career connected learning opportunities, understanding the interconnected nature of growing food and transporting food is essential for long-term success. Sam has a robust network in a region of the state (urban, west side) that ANR is sometimes limited in, making him even more of an asset to this work.

Section 5. Attestation.

Walla Walla Community College agrees to the terms and all function requirements listed in Section 5.