



# PROPOSED PROGRAM SCOPE FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING INITIATIVE

September 20, 2022  
Economic Initiatives Committee

Department of Economic Initiatives and Department of Family Services

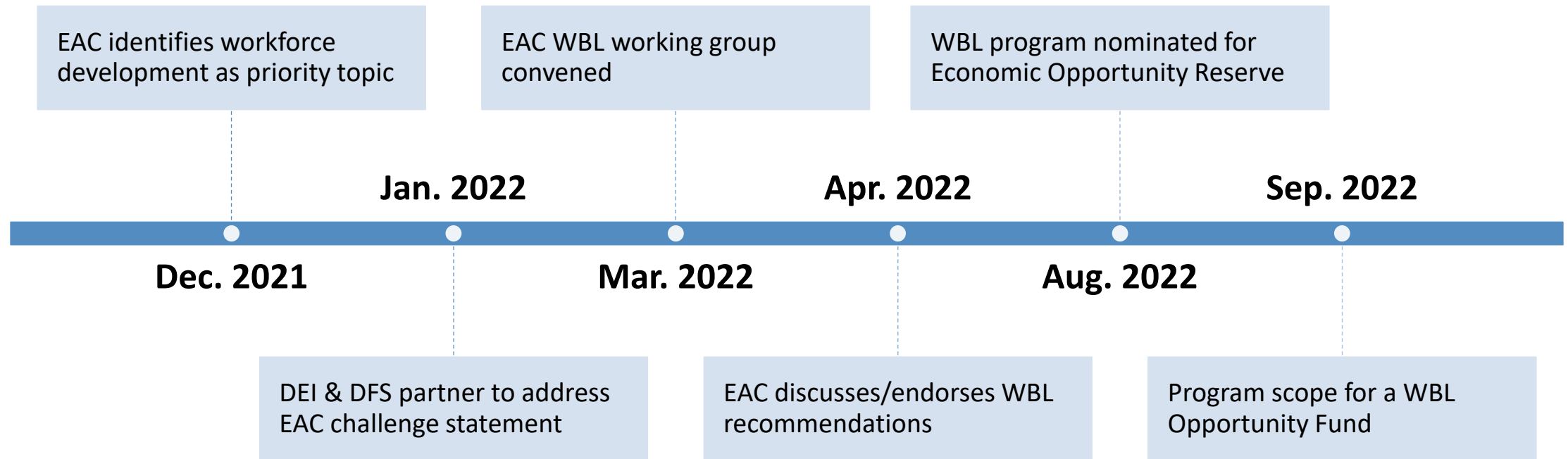
# GOALS AND TOPICS

1. Introduce the DEI - DFS Innovative Workforce Solutions Approach
2. Present the work-based learning (WBL) opportunity fund program proposal, including draft metrics and budget
3. Share market research and workforce development landscape findings
4. Outline next steps

Objective: Gather Board of Supervisors feedback and answer questions on a proposed work-based learning opportunity fund program

# WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAM EVOLUTION

**2022 Economic Advisory Commission (EAC) Challenge: *How can Fairfax County employers use Work-based Learning (WBL) to Expand Talent Pools?***



# DFS IS A CORNERSTONE OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN FAIRFAX

DFS is the one-stop job center operator for the County and region, as part of the Northern Virginia Career Works Consortium.

- Assisted more than 3,500 individuals with employment services per year, including those receiving medical, food, and temporary cash assistance.
- Provide person-centered services to people aged 14 and older, including refugees, individuals with disabilities, dislocated and under employed workers.
- Collaborate with employers and training providers, nonprofit workforce programs, and other public agencies (e.g., DEI, DARS, and VEC) to develop a network of employers to engage, train, and onboard the individuals we serve.
- Our services are on a continuum that includes application assistance and resume writing, employment coaching, counseling, financial assistance for education and training, and job placement and support services.

# WBL STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS

- **COUNTYWIDE STRATEGIC PLAN**

- ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
- LIFELONG EDUCATION AND LEARNING

- **CHAIRMAN'S TASK FORCE ON EQUITY AND OPPORTUNITY**

- CRADLE TO CAREER SUCCESS
- EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES

- **LOCAL AND REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS SUPPORT LANDSCAPE**

- WISH CENTER
- SCYPT-SPONSORED INITIATIVE FOR OPPORTUNITY YOUTH EMPLOYMENT
- ECONOMIC MOBILITY PILOT

# DFS AND DEI'S PARTNERSHIP AROUND WORK-BASED LEARNING

- DEI brings an employer lens, credibility and a network of relationships with hundreds of small to medium-size employers
- As a cornerstone in the workforce system, DFS can tap into a talent pipeline of several thousand job-seekers
- Work-based learning aligns DEI's mission to address business talent bottlenecks and DFS's mission to create greater opportunity for previously-overlooked job-seekers

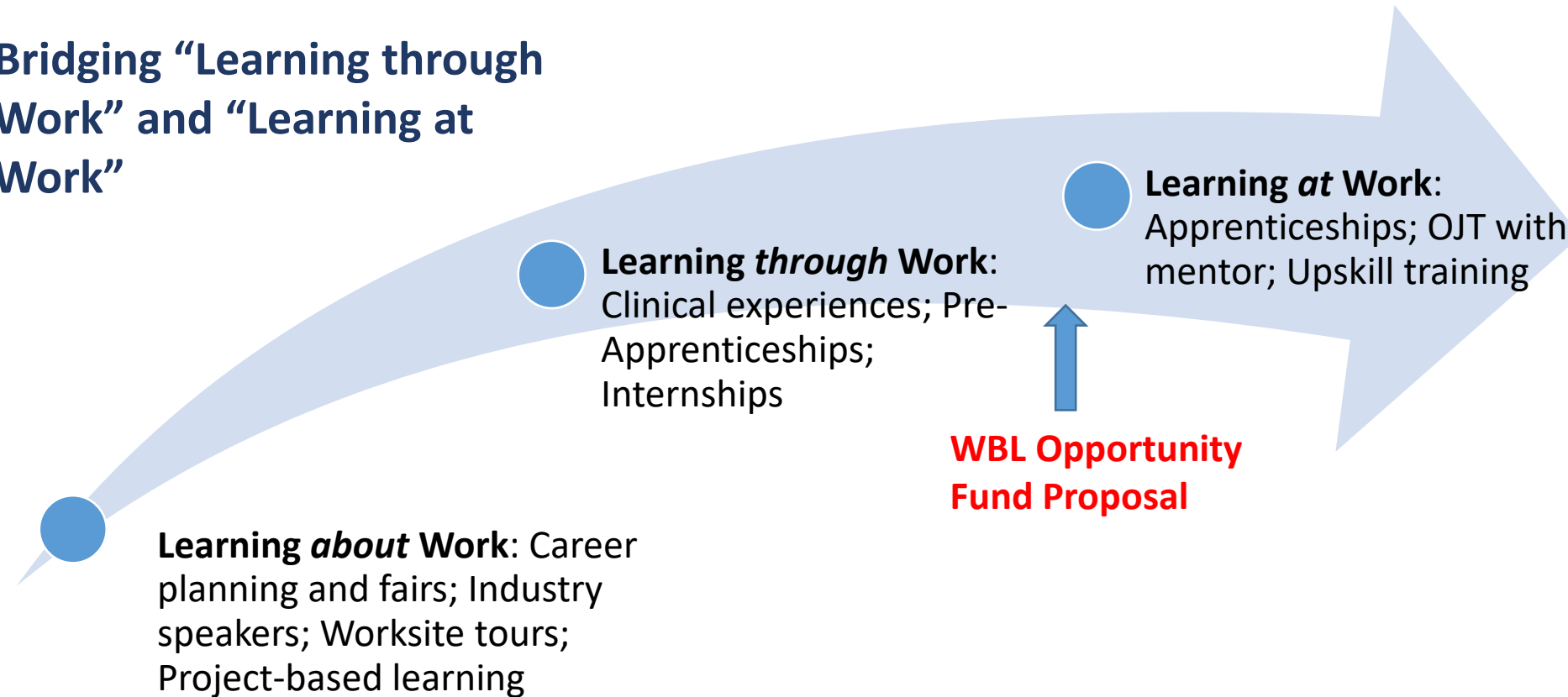
# WBL ALIGNS URGENT BUSINESS NEED AND WORKER OPPORTUNITY

- Finding and keeping workers is a top challenge for business across sectors
- WBL is a proven solution but requires a willingness among business leaders to adapt their talent system to attract and support qualified but previously-overlooked talent sources
- Demand for WBL as an onramp for new careers exceeds the supply of WBL slots
- DFS and our education and workforce partners have access to 1,000's of these "STARS" (Workers Skilled Through Alternative Routes) to open up a new talent pool for talent-hungry employers

**Work-Based Learning is a Bridge Connecting Business Needs and Worker Opportunities**

# WORK-BASED LEARNING CONTINUUM

Bridging “Learning through Work” and “Learning at Work”





# WORK-BASED LEARNING (WBL) OPPORTUNITY FUND

## Overview:

- Match employers with qualified but previously-overlooked and diverse talent
- Provide support for wages for a work-based learning period
- Support workers and employers to increase success and conversion to full-time employment
- Two-year pilot project

## Goals:

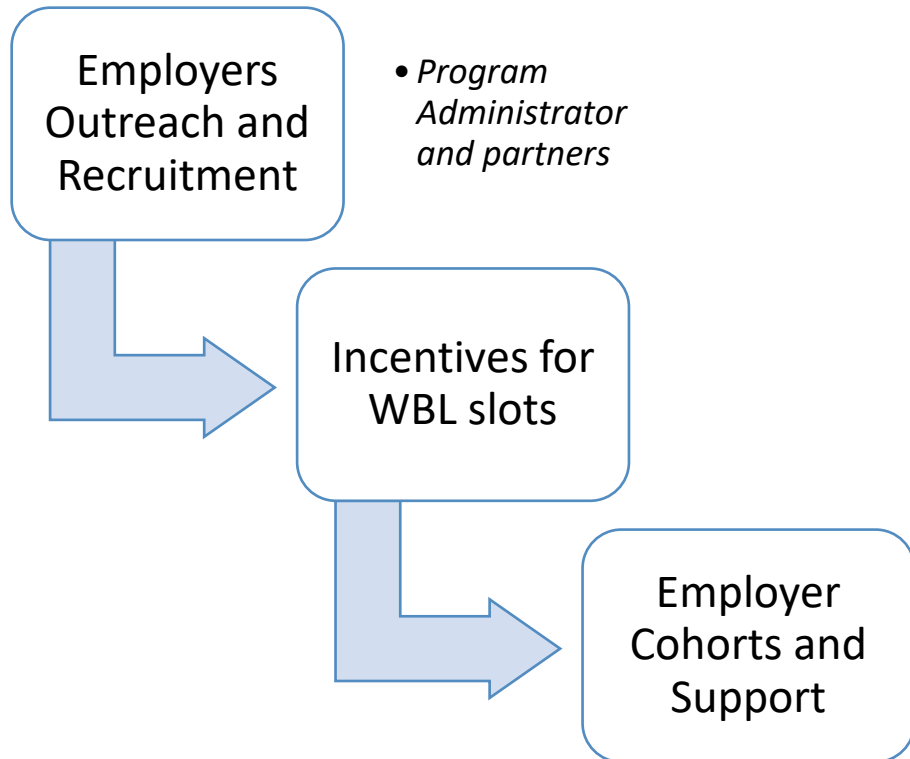
- Help employers open talent pools, fill jobs and retain talent, diversify talent
- Connect previously overlooked talent with new career opportunities
- Build a consortium of regional talent supply partners and participating employers to integrate WBL as sustainable, ongoing solution

# BUILDING AN OPPORTUNITY FUND KEY COMPONENTS

1. **Work-based Learning Incentives** - Wage incentives to attract and engage cohorts of employers and attract workers
2. **Employer Recruiter & WBL Specialist** – New staff WBL expert to support employer development of new WBL opportunities
3. **WBL Talent Supplier Network** – Coordination of a network of college, community-based nonprofit and public (DFS) workforce development programs
4. **Supplemental Training** – Some WBL cohorts will need customized pre-placement training; some workers will need just-in-time upskill training
5. **Job Coaching** – Part-time success coaches support cohorts of trainees and worksite mentors/supervisors to increase success rates

# SAMPLE OPERATION FLOW

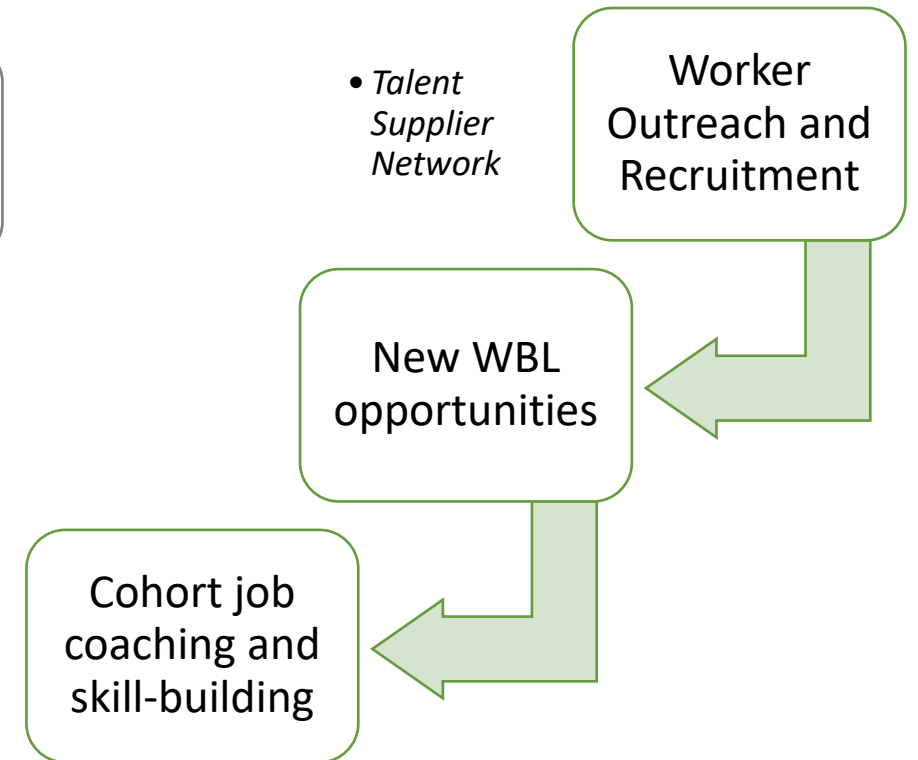
## Employers



Program Administrator Manages Program with County Oversight

Work-Based Learning Match

## Workers



# RESEARCH AND MARKET-TESTING

- **Employers and Experts:** EDA Talent Initiative, Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce (Greater Washington Apprenticeship Network), private sector employers
- **Talent Suppliers:** NOVA, FCPS, FCPS Adult Education (ACE), 10+ NCS Inclusive Prosperity and Employment Subcommittee nonprofits
- **Benchmarking:** LEAD4IT, Alexandria City Government Work-Based Learning Program

# FINDINGS THAT INFORM OPPORTUNITY FUND

- ✓ **High interest** in WBL by employers and talent suppliers
- ✓ WBL incentives are likely to be **more attractive to small and mid-sized businesses**
- ✓ Several WBL program partners **have identified training programs and partnering employers needing a WBL onramp**
- ✓ Key ingredient for success is worker and employer support through program
- ✓ **Less paperwork and restrictions** = higher WBL take-up rate with employers. Simpler is better!

# MAPPING: BUILDING UPON THE CURRENT WBL ECOSYSTEM

Mapping **10 current regional public workforce WBL programs**

**Collectively, these programs:**

- **Smaller in scope** – Combined 182 annual WBL placements with 66 employers
- **More nonprofits and government employers** participate in WBL than private employers
- Private employers are **mostly small to medium size businesses**
- Programs serve workers with **varying challenges to access professional careers**, including dislocated workers, less experienced youth, older workers, parents with young children, and career-switchers

*WBL Opportunity Fund aims to complement, not duplicate existing programs*

# EMPLOYERS TARGETED FOR OPPORTUNITY FUND

- Has a physical work location in Fairfax County
- Can be either private or non-profit
- Strong preference for engaging cohorts of multiple employers with similar talent needs
- Confirmed interest in using WBL opportunity as temp-to-perm employment tryouts
- Average wages for targeted occupations above \$15-\$20/hour

# MATCH WBL TO REAL-TIME LABOR MARKET DATA AND DRIVERS

**Occupations with the greatest demand and/or with supply gaps tend to cluster in following sectors:**

- Information Technology
- Management/Business Operations
- Health Care/Social Services

*Source: Occupational Demand and Supply Gaps in Fairfax County – EDA*

**Entry-level job postings with highest numbers of days on market – Examples**

- Computer User Specialists
- Business Operations Specialists
- Sales Representatives of Services
- Administrative Assistants

*Source: Jobs EQ – data and analysis provided by EDA*



# WORKERS TARGETED FOR OPPORTUNITY FUND

- Through our existing talent 'suppliers' (e.g., DFS/Northern Virginia Career Works, EDA, NOVA, nonprofits, other), vetted for employer needs
- May be experienced workers reskilling for a new career or upskilling for a promotion, post-high school youth launching career
- Lack of experience to secure career-track job or other barriers pointing towards need for WBL
- Can qualify for specific WBL placement with transferable skills and/or additional short-term upskilling

# PROPOSED SUCCESS METRICS OVER TWO PILOT YEARS

<b>Outcome Metric Category</b>	<b>Example of Outcome Statement</b>
<b>Grow Business Partner Engagement</b>	Rising engagement over 2 years with 50-100 active business partners and 5-10 talent supply partners
<b>Increase WBL Slots</b>	Develop and fill 100-250 'temp-to-perm' traineeships
<b>Increase Success Rates of WBL Matches</b>	Convert a rising percentage of WBL matches into job offers, with a goal of 40% in year 1 and 50+% in year 2
<b>Demonstrate Progress on Sustainability</b>	Seek funding beyond pilot to for additional support and establish business ROI and business champions of WBL

# COST ESTIMATE FOR TWO-YEAR PILOT

Line items based on assumptions that could vary; \$/hr. avg. wage; employer avg. wage incentive; WBL duration; program administrator-related costs

Budget Line Item	2-Year County Cost
Employer recruiter, workforce specialists (2 positions)	\$426,000
Work-based learning incentive	\$1,944,000
Part-time coaching services	\$300,000
Custom training	\$80,000
Other (ex: program administration, indirect)	\$135,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,885,000</b>

**Funding Consideration:** Potential for ARPA funding. Staff considering in place of EOR.

# NEXT STEPS

- Finalize market testing with employers, mapping WBL programs, and evaluating EDA market data to confirm target occupations and/or sectors
- Confirm funding source, budget, and metrics
- Identify a Program Administrator and refine program components and operations
- Return to the Board with program details for approval (estimate, early 2023)



# QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION