

BUSINESS U AUTHORS BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT REPORT WITH CALIFORNIA FORWARD
Strategies for Workforce Taskforce Unveiled at California Economic Summit

Los Angeles, Calif. — Business U has authored a report with California Forward that now becomes a working document as part of the **2018 Roadmap to Shared Prosperity** that seeks to grow 1M more skilled workers in California. One of the key strategies in 2018 includes advancing employer engagement to prepare more students with the skills that employers needs. Business U's report, "Investing in a Business Engagement Ecosystem," details strategies for California policymakers and workforce system stakeholders to consider as they continue to develop a 21st-century workforce system.

"The report identifies strategies for consideration to create a business engagement ecosystem to ensure a coordinated, regional approach by partner agencies to align outcomes with business and industry needs, resulting in expanded opportunities for job seekers and students," said Business U's CEO/Co-founder, Dr. Christine Bosworth.

The catalyst for these recommendations are driven from the results of Business U's national study that it funded in 2016, to determine the methods that workforce development system stakeholders and partners (education institutions, workforce development boards, economic development organizations) are using to meet the expectations for business engagement, as articulated through the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act. The survey asked these various audiences a multitude of questions to uncover their perceptions about business engagement and the "sticking points" they encountered when attempting to maximize their efforts within their respective organizations and among their regional partners.

Thirty-eight states participated in the survey including California. "While there are pockets of business engagement success across the state, employer engagement in workforce and education initiatives reported as low as 28 percent in California," said Celina Shands, co-founder of Business U. "The report takes a look at workforce issues from the employer perspective and the opportunities that workforce and education stakeholders have in creating a more coordinated and responsive system to solve the broad issues of businesses to help them grow."

The following recommendations are being considered to support workforce development stakeholders to serve the needs of industry more effectively:

- Have California's high-growth sector businesses identify demand-side measures that would be of high value if they were to engage with education and workforce initiatives.
- Create state-level and regional cross-agency teams between workforce and education to identify strategies, funding streams, resources that can be leveraged across organizations.
- Create incentive funding and accountability for workforce system stakeholders to coordinate regional engagement strategies that align with demand-side measures.
- Support investments in sector partnerships, convening employers with education, training, labor, and community-based organizations to close the skills gap.
- Create regional pilot partnerships with business-engagement cross-agency teams that align with the demand-side measures as identified by high-growth sector businesses.
- Document results from the regional pilot projects to help identify promising practices to benchmark and mandate statewide business-engagement measures for workforce and education initiatives that are focused on bridging the skills gap and building a talent pipeline.

To read the full report, [click here](#), and [contact California Forward](#) to work with the workforce taskforce to support California in achieving its workforce goals.

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Business U is the only institutionally accredited organization in the nation that focuses on business engagement within three vertical markets including workforce, education, and economic development. Business U recently won the global award from their accrediting agency, [International Association for Continuing Education and Training \(IACET\)](#), for the 2017 Innovation of the Year Award for Learner Engagement. Through professional development, business engagement strategic plans and CRM technology, Business U certifies public organizations to effectively meet industry's workforce needs resulting in jobseeker and student success. More at www.Business-U.net

