

SECTION 1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND OVERVIEW

Section 1A. Executive Summary The proposed *Miami Tech Works* sectoral partnership requests \$9,999,939 over three years to serve 1,000 participants (with opportunities to receive training, wraparound services, and job placement services in high-quality technology jobs). Through a three-phase (System Development-Program Design-Program Implementation) project, *Miami Tech Works* seeks to strengthen the regional approach to provide the local community with a full pathway to employment in the growing #MiamiTech ecosystem. Strategic partners will collaborate to (1) establish a Tech Talent Coalition to more actively engage employer partners and ensure processes exist to translate employers' skills needs into training models, (2) deliver quality skills training (e.g., education/credentials, upskilling, reskilling); (3) provide wraparound services to participants during training through to job placement and up to at least a year after hire; (4) create connections among employers and participants (e.g., leveraging networking events, such as Tech Hiring Fairs, Talent Summits, Talent Town Halls); and (5) place participants in high-quality jobs. Miami Dade College will serve as the backbone organization; strategic partners include CareerSource South Florida (local workforce board); Florida International University, Florida Memorial University (local universities); the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County (local government); Miami-Dade Beacon Council (Miami-Dade County's official economic development organization); OIC of South Florida (community-based workforce development non-profit); Refresh Miami (community-based tech and start-up support non-profit); Talent Development Network (a career development partnership of local K-12 and higher education institutions); and committed employer partners. Plans call to bring on additional employer, government, education and training, and non-profit partners during the project period.

Section 1B. Backbone Organization's Capacity and Staffing Plan

Miami Dade College Capacity As a local community leader and anchor institution, Miami Dade College (MDC) will serve as the backbone organization on behalf of *Miami Tech Works*. MDC is one of the largest colleges in the U.S., enrolling 100,000+ students in its credit and non-credit programs across eight campuses and online. Since MDC opened in 1960, more than 2.5 million students have been served, and 390,000 degrees and certificates have been awarded. *Committed support of regional executive leadership from the region and buy-in from appropriate stakeholders.* MDC has the support of Miami-Dade County and the City of Miami (and other key strategic partners) to lead the proposed *Miami Tech Works* sectoral partnership.

Regional convening power and relationships/credibility with key industry leaders/workforce system. MDC has a successful history of partnering with industry and workforce leaders to inform and design workforce-focused programs that meet employer needs, as described in Examples of Prior Sectoral Partner Success section below.

Track Record of Success. Over the past several years, MDC has grown in its intentionality in being responsive to industry, employer, and overall community needs in tech:

- In 2018, in partnership with Cyberbit, the leading provider of hyper-realistic cyber range platforms, MDC opened Cyber Range, part of its Cybersecurity Center of the Americas.
- In 2019, MDC opened a Cloud Computing Center, the only venue of its kind in Florida.
- In April 2021, MDC partnered with Softbank and Correlation One to offer students access free training and career guidance to prepare them for success in data science roles.
- Partnership with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to develop cloud computing undergraduate courses that lead to AWS certifications, equipping graduates to meet employer requirements.
- Partnership with Microsoft to provide upskilling and cross-skilling tech.

- Partnership with Growth with Google to become the first institution of higher education to offer the Google IT Automation with Python Certificate and other tech-related certificates. *Strong fundraising capabilities.* MDC effectively manages over \$80,000,000 in grant funding and over 150 grant projects annually, not including funding from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, or HEERF (i.e., Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, or America Recovery Plan Act funding). MDC raises an average \$30 million in grant funding annually.

Ability to reach underserved workers. MDC’s “open door” policy ensures that all persons seeking a higher education will have that opportunity. This open-access policy guarantees that the student population at MDC reflects the racial and ethnic diversity of the 2.4 million residents of its service area¹. In fact, MDC enrolls more Hispanic undergraduates (59,703) than any other college or university in the US, and has the third largest Black, non-Hispanic undergraduate enrollment (12,466)². MDC is #1 in the U.S. in terms of Hispanic students earning Associate degrees, and 3rd in the nation in the number of Black students earning Associate degrees.

Dedicated full-time employee. MDC will hire a dedicated full-time Project Director who will manage the work of the *Miami Tech Works* partnership.

Proposed Staffing Plan Key team members include one representative for each partner institution, who will serve on the proposed Tech Talent Coalition. From MDC, this includes Dr. Loretta Ovueraye (Vice President of Workforce Programs and Professional Learning), Manuel Perez (Dean of School of Engineering and Technology), Dana Dellacamera (Director of MDCWorks, MDC’s career studio), and Antonio Delgado (Vice President of Innovation and Technology Partnerships). *Miami Tech Works* will hire a Grant Director; five Project Coordinators, who will serve as liaisons to (1) education/training partners / students, (2) local government, CBOs, employer-facing organizations / other partners, (3) employer partners, (4) workforce / placement partners, and (5) will assist the proposed Grant Director; a Data Specialist; three Career Advisor Specialists, and an Office Specialist. Details on these positions’ responsibilities are included in the Budget Narrative and Staffing Plan attachment. These positions will reside at the MDC Work Career Studio, MDC’s career services/job placement arm.

SECTION 2. EMPLOYER LEADERSHIP AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Section 2A. Employer Leadership and Commitments

Method for Ensuring Employment of Project Participants *Miami Tech Works* proposes to ensure that project participants are placed in high-quality jobs through (1) commitment from employer partners through the proposed Tech Talent Coalition to hire directly or through paid internships; (2) commitment from training provider partners to offer employer needs-aligned training to participants (education/credentials, upskilling/reskilling) and employability skills training; (3) provision of wraparound services to participants during training through job placement and up to at least a year after hire; (4) creation of appropriate and fruitful connections among employers and participants (e.g., leveraging networking events, such as Tech Hiring Fairs, Talent Summits, Talent Town Halls); and (5) setting up accountability processes through Tech Talent Coalition to translate written employer commitments into actual job placements.

Description of Employer Leadership and Commitments to Hire Already in Place and Anticipated Companies within the local tech ecosystem are eager to hire tech talent to meet their growing employment needs—a need which can be met by local tech talent. At the time of the submission of this proposal, 34 employer commitments to hire have been secured (see letters of

¹ U.S. Census, 2019

² U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2019; MDC, 2020

commitment attached), or commitments towards 3,554 job placements over the project period. It is anticipated that additional employer commitments will continue to be secured via strategic partners. For example, City of Miami will leverage Venture Miami (its innovation ecosystem and economy initiative that delivers concierge support to employers and connects local workers to jobs); the Talent Development Network will leverage its partnerships with 600+ local employers; Refresh Miami will leverage its 13k+ membership of local entrepreneurs and technology professionals; and the Miami-Dade Beacon Council will leverage its Technology Committee, and MCV employer partnerships, to attract and engage tech employers.

How Additional Employers Will Be Identified to Participate in Project The Miami-Dade Beacon Council will leverage its Tech Committee members, its Private Sector member-investors, and its visits to 300 companies a year to identify local prospective employers. Miami-Dade County will leverage its Mom and Pop Small Business Grant Program and Office of Small Business Development to identify small businesses and start-up employers who can join that project. The City of Miami will leverage existing employer connections through the City’s ACCESS Miami program—a nationally recognized, comprehensive financial empowerment strategy. Refresh Miami will leverage its membership of 13k+ local entrepreneurs and tech professionals and encourage them to sign commitments to hire.

How Employers Have Been Involved in Creation of Training Programs Employer feedback is sought by all training provider partners when creating training programs. Creation of tech training programs is led by employer feedback. Employer engagement is sought through members of advisory committees and through established industry partnerships. Employer-identified knowledge, skills, and abilities are taken into consideration in the creation of training programs as is labor market data to ensure that there are jobs within a given industry area for students to be placed upon program completion. The *Tech Talent Coalition* will align all the advisory committees from tech training providers under one umbrella to collect the same information and adapt/create programs, as needed.

How Employers Will Participate in Implementation, Evaluation, and Ongoing Refinement of Training Programs Through the *Tech Talent Coalition*, employers will provide additional input and guidance on the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for tech positions. *Miami Tech Works* will implement a series of surveys and focus groups aimed at better understanding employer’s hiring and workforce qualification needs—especially as it relates to the local workforce. Surveys would capture data on employers’ experience with hiring local workers (e.g., *What challenges were encountered? What best practices were learned? What resources were needed?*) and providing the basis for refining the process from worker recruitment into training programs through the actual trainings and into job placement. Tech Talent Coalition members will develop and deploy a feedback process in collaboration with employers to help training providers become more accountable in terms of training quality and continued refinement.

How Employers Are Active in Creation of Recruitment Requirements OIC’s Employment Services team works with tech employers to ensure participant application, screening, and interview procedures are established that meet both employer needs, as well as each target population needs and employment readiness. *Miami Tech Works* will use OIC’s Employment Service’s model to engage Tech Talent Coalition employers in recruitment efforts.

Section 2B. Other Stakeholder and Partnerships

Description of Relevant Stakeholders for System MDC will serve as the backbone organization for the proposed *Miami Tech Works*. Strategic partners include two government entities—*Miami-Dade County* and *City of Miami*. City of Miami will leverage its Opportunity

Center workforce program to support the creation and expansion of new tech jobs by providing space, system, and staff through their Opportunity Center at the City’s GreenLab facility.

CareerSource South Florida is responsible for administering and initiating state and federally-funded workforce development programs in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. CareerSource South Florida assists employers and job seekers with free employment services, labor market information, and provides training for economically disadvantaged adults, youth, dislocated workers, individuals transitioning from welfare to work, and refugees.

Florida International University is Miami's public research university. Offering bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees, both on campus and fully online. With a student body of nearly 54,000, they are among the top 10 largest universities in the nation and have collectively graduated more than 200,000 alumni—115,000 of whom live and work in South Florida.

Florida Memorial University has provided students with educational opportunities for more than 140 years. As South Florida’s only historically Black university, and one of the State’s oldest academic institutions, they have a long history and commitment to the free exchange of ideas, the pursuit of knowledge, and the ongoing transmission of African American history and culture.

Miami-Dade Beacon Council is responsible for the growth and recruitment of companies in Miami-Dade County, including with tech and tech-enabled companies in the target industries. As a result of the ongoing interaction with these sectors, there is an up-to-date knowledge regarding the needs of these companies. The Council will leverage its Miami Community Ventures, which provides recruitment, job placement, and wrap-around services for up to a year after hire for low-income unemployed residents; this is a proven award-winning model.

OIC of South Florida has 20 years of experience serving underserved Miami-Dade County communities and 20+ established relationships with nonprofit and government organizations to recruit the target population. Their training program enables unemployed and underemployed residents to acquire industry-recognized credentials and obtain and retain high quality jobs.

Refresh Miami is South Florida’s oldest and largest tech and startup community. Refresh Miami has served as the main storyteller/aggregator of Miami’s tech community for over a decade, bringing much needed awareness to the companies launching/ scaling here. Refresh Miami will play a key role reaching out to employers that are start-ups, disseminating project successes, championing project communications, and encouraging employer participation in data collection.

Talent Development Network is a unique collaboration among Miami-Dade County’s academic institutions (Barry University, Florida International University, Florida Memorial University, St. Thomas University, University of Miami, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, and MDC).

Table 1. Miami Tech Works Partners’ Role and Responsibilities

Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
Miami Dade College (MDC)	Serve as backbone organization; Serve on Tech Talent Coalition; leverage existing programs, resources, staff time, and employer partners to assist with outreach and recruitment; align/deploy training with employer needs and industry-recognized credentials; contract consultant and evaluation team; hire <i>Miami Tech Works</i> staff
CareerSource South Florida (CSSF)	Serve on Tech Talent Coalition; refer participants (especially individuals who receive SNAP/TANF and unemployment compensation) to training programs at sectoral partner institutions; assist participants with registration on Employ Florida upon completion of their education and training programs; leverage its job placement specialists to work with participants upon completion of training.

City of Miami	Serve on Tech Talent Coalition; leverage existing employer connections through ACCESS Miami; leverage City’s Opportunity Center to recruit candidates for tech training programs; help participants to get placed in quality jobs; leverage Salesforce, its new free job-matching platform
Florida International University (FIU), Florida Memorial University (FMU)	Serve on Tech Talent Coalition; align/deploy training with employer needs and industry-recognized credentials; leverage existing employer connections; leverage wraparound services
Miami-Dade Beacon Council (M-DBC) and Miami Community Ventures (MCV)	Serve on Tech Talent Coalition; review and analysis of local labor market/industry and employer needs; engage multiple employers within demand industry sectors and those willing to hire participants through outreach and recruitment activities; provide holistic and wrap-around support services through MCV
Miami-Dade County	Serve on Tech Talent Coalition; assist with marketing and promotion of the proposed project activities
OIC of South Florida (OIC)	Serve on Tech Talent Coalition; leverage network of employers; align/deploy training with employer needs and industry-recognized credentials; place participants in paid employment, on-the-job training, registered apprenticeships, paid internships, work experiences
Refresh Miami	Serve on Tech Talent Coalition; leverage of 13k+ local entrepreneurs and tech professionals to make them aware of training programs; encourage employers to sign commitments to hire; leverage job board to extract data on what skills are most in-demand by employers; use Refresh Miami News section to tell <i>Miami Tech Works</i> success stories
Talent Development Network (TDN)	Serve on Tech Talent Coalition; leverage employer network of employers; assist with job placement and placement in paid internships; member institutions to provide training and wraparound services

Examples of Prior Sectoral Partner Success MDC has prior experience leading consortia on similar projects, e.g., USDOL TAACCCT-funded project in partnership with three other Florida community colleges, CSSF, and 20 employers and industry associations. The project established a certificate program in manufactured construction that aligns existing programs at Florida institutions of higher education with nationally recognized certification programs and accelerates completion through stacked credentials, articulation agreements, work-based learning, and online and tech-enabled learning. MDC leads the Hospitality Employment Training project—in collaboration with CSSF, Hilton Hotels, Carnival Cruise Lines, the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association, and other employers and industry associations—which trains participants in “soft skills,” prepares them for customer service/industry operations certifications, and places them in hospitality jobs. Through an NSF grant, MDC developed a Business Industry Leadership Team (BILT) with industry leaders in cybersecurity that helped developed multiple cybersecurity degrees. BILT meetings continue after the project period to maintain members engaged in implementation of cybersecurity programs and connect students with jobs.

OIC regularly convenes industry advisory councils per sector and has successfully engaged them for effective sector-based training and job placement strategies for federal programs. M-DBC work on its One Community One Goal Economic Strategic Plan (2011-2020), led to the establishment of TDN. The Council also spearheaded, together with Miami-Dade County, the response to the Amazon HQ2 requests for proposals, pulling data and participation commitments from about 120 organizations in South Florida over a six-month period.

SECTION 3. REGIONAL DESCRIPTION

Description of Project Location/Region, Including Primary Service Areas and Key Industries

South Florida is experiencing an exponential growth of its tech ecosystem. In 2021, Miami welcomed a “flood of new investors, founders and tech startups”: many tech companies relocated to the region (e.g., Swagup, Eight Sleep, Silicon Valley Bank, Red 6, Pareto Holdings, Zilch, Zumper, StatusPro, CourMed, DNALabs); other larger tech companies—like Microsoft—are building regional hubs in the area³. The Miami Downtown Development Authority reported that it has tracked 100+ companies that have moved or plan to move to Miami; collectively, the companies are expected to create 5,000+ jobs (e.g., Blackstone Group: 200+ jobs; REEF: 1,000+ jobs; Ingram Micro Cloud doubling its Miami area workforce to 400 jobs).⁴

The increasing number of companies moving to Miami has created a need for a skilled workforce to support economic development and cover the increasing talent demand. According to the Miami Herald, South Florida critically lacks graduates with degrees in the fields driving tech development (e.g., computer, mathematics, engineering) in which South Florida ranks dead last of all national metropolitan areas. Yet the problem for recent graduates in engineering and tech is the same: It’s hard to get a local job in their field. Employers bemoan the lack of talent, while graduates lament the lack of jobs, seemingly unaware of the cognitive dissonance.

Identification of Regional Needs/Assessment of Region’s Economic State While local unemployment has returned to pre-pandemic levels (1.4% as of January 2022), “the majority of jobs lost in the [pandemic] crisis have been in industries that pay low average wages, with the lowest-paying industries accounting for 30 percent of all jobs but 58 percent of the jobs lost...Jobs in low-paying industries were down more than twice as much ... (11.3 percent) as jobs in medium-wage industries (4.9 percent) and nearly four times as much as in high-wage industries (3.0 percent)”⁵. The jobs least vulnerable to layoffs during the pandemic crisis tended to require some postsecondary education and training. Further, occupations with some of the fastest job growth rates in Miami-Dade County are projected to come from the tech industry.

For over 20 years, there has been a steady growth in tech and tech-enabled companies in Miami-Dade County. Companies that have added large numbers of tech workers include the cruise lines (the major ones are headquartered in Miami), hospitals, and large employers headquartered in Miami (e.g., Ryder System, Perry Ellis, Bacardi, Burger King, World Fuel). In the past several years, Miami has seen an even more rapid increase in tech jobs, particularly at tech companies, as well as through the local emergence of new unicorn companies, like Kaseya (i.e., privately held startup company with a value of over \$1 billion).

Most Significant and Difficult-To-Meet Skills Needs in the Region Local tech employers are looking beyond degrees and credentials, and they see a dearth of soft skills and professionalism in the Miami hiring pool. MDC often hears this from employers when following up on internships experiences and job placements. While the quality of the technical work may be good, there is a skills gap in areas such as communication, professionalism, and teamwork. Lack of skills in resume writing, interviewing, and building a portfolio and LinkedIn profile also prevent some students from even getting through the door for an internship.

In terms of technical skills, in a survey conducted by the M-DBC in 2019, responding companies indicated that after critical thinking skills, computer skills were the most important skills for recent graduates. When asked what tech subsets companies expect to see an increase in,

³ Dahlberg, N. 2021, December, BOOM! #MiamiTech 2021. Refresh Miami. <https://www.refreshmiami.com/boom-miamitech-2021/>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. 2021. Tracking the COVID-19 Recession’s Effects on Food, Housing, and Employment Hardships. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/tracking-the-covid-19-recessions-effects-on-food-housing-and>

the top ones were artificial intelligence, cloud computing, big data, software development and cybersecurity. During the pandemic, these needs for skills and technologies have only increased. The EMSI labor statistics data platform shows the following top 15 skills listed in job postings for companies in the tech field, in order of demand: agile methodology, software as a service, software engineering, automation, product development, Java (computer language), computer science, software development, Amazon Web Services, scalability, Microsoft Azure, Python (computer language), project management, new product development, and operating systems.

How Proposed Strengthening of Sectorial Partnership Is Consistent with Region’s CEDS

Miami Tech Works is consistent with the South Florida Regional Planning Council’s 2017-2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Specifically, the proposed project furthers CEDS Goal 2: Opportunity and Prosperity as it (1) supports the development of a diversified economy by expanding the quantity and quality of job opportunities; (2) prepares a skilled workforce that supports the business community through programs and tools that address education, training, and the attraction/retention of qualified workers; and (3) promotes the retention and continued improvement of existing partnerships, and the creation of new partnerships to meet South Florida’s economic challenges.

SECTION 4. IMPACTS OF THE REGIONAL WORKFORCE TRAINING SYSTEM

Section 4a. Proposed Project

(1) System Development Phase (approximately September 30, 2022 to January 31, 2023):

As the backbone organization, MDC will organize and lead a Tech Talent Coalition—inspired in part by Chicago’s P33 model—to connect industry, government, community-facing, and academic organizations to collectively develop employer-driven training models and pathways that lead to local talent employment and economic growth. Employers will commit the time of “C-suite technology and talent leaders” and their “willingness to help develop, test and scale solutions” to employ local talent⁶. Over four to six months, proposed System Development activities include:

- Hire grant staff, as described in Budget Narrative and Staffing Plan attachment.
- Establish a Tech Talent Coalition—with strategic partners from government, training, community-based, and local employers, coordinate Coalition meetings, and extend invitation to join Coalition to additional partners.
- Define Coalition’s formal structure, standard operating procedures, and deliverables.
- Develop a process to gather data on employers’ skills needs and translate needs into training.
- Meet with employers to determine baseline understanding of local workforce to develop appropriate employer technical assistance—specifically examine awareness and understanding of tech company personnel involved in hiring (e.g., human resources, recruiters), C-level positions, and other tech employer personnel “on the front lines” working directly with local workers.
- Hire consultant to:
 - Conduct environmental scan and gap analysis of services of strategic partners and other organizations in the region.
 - Lead strategic planning and solution-design sessions; topic-focused group forums; and one-on-one conversations with Coalition members, especially tech company executives.
 - Gather and synthesize data (e.g., existing surveys and reports, college enrollment and graduation data); create and distribute new surveys to capture data still needed (from participants, start-ups, and corporations). Consultant will go through existing surveys and

⁶ P33. 2021, November. The State of Chicago Tech Talent: Strategies to Build a More Inclusive Tech Workforce for Chicago

ask “*Are we asking the right questions? Are we targeting survey questions to the right audiences? Can this data be better or more efficiently captured?*”

- Provide technical assistance to Coalition; examine models of cross-sector collaboration that can serve as foundation for Coalition’s formal structure and operating procedures.
- Deliver initial “Status of Miami Tech Ecosystem” report to Coalition.
- Follow the Coalition throughout the project phases, providing guidance as needed.
- Hire evaluation team and begin formative evaluation process.

(2) Program Design Phase (approximately February 1, 2023 to August 31, 2023):

Over approximately seven months, proposed Program Design activities will include:

- Conduct Tech Talent Coalition meetings.
- Map employers’ identified in-demand tech skills needs to training programs.
- Develop new—and improve existing—training models to meet outstanding skills needs.
- Design employer technical assistance to improve employers’ understanding of—and ability to better serve—local workforce (e.g., skills-based hiring practices to reduce bias, improve return on investment, and promote people-centered practices; how apprenticeships work especially for tech companies that do not have a clear of understanding of the concept; how job descriptions can be better listed/written to get local, qualified applicants; how companies can find the right talent locally; how to create an internship and get the most out of it).
- Develop plan to recruit underserved workers to serve as project participants across the training programs available.
- Launch Talent Database where local workers can add themselves to be considered for open positions. Use database to gather data on local workforce’s current skills. Compare the skills on database to skills requested on local job boards to identify where skills gaps.
- Launch initial phase of *Miami Tech Works* awareness campaign (to participants, to let them know about program; to employers, to better understand how to find/work with applicants); and to community, to make them aware of success stories); develop marketing, outreach, and recruitment (e.g., website, social media, event marketing, broadcast, outdoor marketing).

(3) Program Implementation Phase (approximately September 1, 2023 to September 29, 2025): From Year 1 to Year 3, proposed Program Implementation activities will include:

- Continue work of Tech Talent Coalition and use of Talent Database.
- Recruit underserved workers to serve as project participants.
- Implement training solutions, meeting participants “where they are” whether through provision of education and credentials for individuals who are starting out in the workforce, upskilling existing tech workers, or reskilling those that want to change careers.
- Leverage wraparound services, to be implemented during and after training, through job placement, and up to at least one year after hire.
- Implement participant networking and job placements activities (e.g., tech hiring fair, paid internships, talent summits, talent town halls, CEO for a Day).
- Deploy employer technical assistance to improve employers’ understanding of—and ability to better serve—local workforce.
- Track participant data (e.g., enrollment, completion, employment, retention, wages, wage growth, cost per participant).
- Expand *Miami Tech Works* awareness campaign (e.g., publishing success stories).

Regional Workforce Training System Already in Place The regional workforce training system, or “talent ecosystem” in Miami-Dade County is made up of five types of stakeholders: local workers/talent; the business community/employers; government; education and workforce;

and civic organizations. There are key strategic partners in each of the categories that are involved in most of the talent and workforce initiatives in the community. Depending on the initiative, other organizations that are part of the larger talent ecosystem are pulled into these partnerships, e.g., other higher education institutions, chambers of commerce, and municipalities.

Table 2. Prior Sectoral Work/Initiatives and Key Strategic Partners Involved				
Sectoral Work	Business	Government	Education/Workforce	Civic
Talent Development Network	Miami-Dade Beacon Council	–	FIU, FMU, MDC, other higher education institutions, local school system	–
Miami Community Ventures	Miami-Dade Beacon Council	Miami-Dade County/ City of Miami	FIU, MDC, CSSF, OIC, FMU, local school system	United Way/ Catalyst Miami
South Florida Anchor Alliance (workforce component)	Miami-Dade Beacon Council, Baptist Health	Miami-Dade County/City of Miami	FIU, MDC, OIC, CSSF, other higher education institutions	Miami Foundation
Opportunity Miami	Miami-Dade Beacon Council	–	CSSF, local school system	United Way

Though the local talent ecosystem does yet have a formal structure (e.g., governance, standard operating procedures), the same organizations have been working on a variety of initiatives for years. This gives the talent ecosystem stability. Further, this enables *Miami Tech Works* to build on lessons learned and data collection from prior successful collaborations among the strategic partners—resulting in less duplications of efforts and ensuring that no segment of the community is left out during development, design, and implementation of the project.

The partners recognize that this is just the first step in supporting local workers and that much of the work to be done by the partners is similar and often overlapping but not always, or necessarily, moving together, or in the same direction towards the same goals. As the backbone organization, MDC will hire a Project Director that will work alongside with VP Delgado to plan, manage, and support the Tech Talent Coalition through ongoing facilitation of communications, data collection, and reporting, as well as handling day-to-day logistical and administrative details of the project⁷. Over a series of meetings, the partners will work towards developing a common vision, vocabulary, understanding, and agenda⁸; collecting feedback; making suggestions on how the partnership should move forward at their own organizations and in collaboration with each of the partners' respective partners; discussing progress; developing reports to share with stakeholders; and working with an external.

Miami-Dade County's Workforce Training Strengths and Challenges

Challenge: Employer involvement. There still exists a potential for employers to play a larger and more active role in the sectoral initiatives that are already taking place locally. With so many new tech players moving into the local workforce as employers, this adds to the challenge of getting a critical mass of employers working together to meet the goals of these initiatives.

⁷ Kania, J., & Kramer, M. 2011. Collective Impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review, Winter 2011*. Retrieved from https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact

⁸ Ibid.

Complementary Strength: Multiple partners across sectors and willingness for players to work together. The *Miami Tech Works* strategic partners will combine their collective abilities to mobilize local employer partners to get them more engaged through the Tech Talent Coalition.

Challenge: How to better connect employers needs with workers qualifications. South Florida is home to over 250,000 students from higher education institutions that are engaged in world class research in fields. Yet, there remains a disconnect between industry and academia. Employers are concerned that there is a shortage of talent at their organizations and that the local talent they hire is not prepared to take on challenges at their companies. Thus, they hire talent from out of the region, further diminishing the already limited opportunities to which the existing talent in the region has access. As a result, employers also take on higher relocating and onboarding costs.

Complementary Strength: The local, growing tech industry is resulting in greater support of support for higher education institutions to expand training programs, as evidenced by FIU receiving \$10 million to expand its Knight Foundation School of Computing and Information Sciences; University of Miami (UM) receiving \$4.3 million to grow its Institute of Data Science and Computing; and SoftBank granting FIU, UM, and MDC to the opportunities to become SoftBank Operator Schools.⁹ *Miami Tech Works* presents an opportunity to bridge the disconnect between employers and workers by leveraging and coordinating education, skills training, and wraparound services to make workers more attractive to prospective employers as well as by providing employers with technical assistance to learn more about Miami-Dade County’s talent ecosystem and how to improve their human resource return on investment.

Section 4B. Alignment to EDA Priorities

How *Miami Tech Works* Will Meet the EDA’s Recovery and Resilience Investment Priority

COVID-19 brought much of the nation to a standstill. Miami-Dade County was no exception. However, while many businesses and industries were adversely impacted, the pandemic did not slow down emerging tech fields. In fact, COVID-19 has accelerated their growth and deployment. Disruptive technologies are playing a key role in supporting the COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. Miami-Dade County has seen the tech boom occurring in real time. As the region emerges from the pandemic, there is a definite employer need to rapidly credential and deploy a workforce that can meet growing emerging tech industry demand. MDC’s proposed *Miami Tech Works* will address EDA’s Recovery & Resilience priority by providing training to participants who lost their jobs due to the pandemic: educating, upskilling, and reskilling them to work in higher paying jobs in targeted tech-related industries. By training individuals to work in more economically resilient jobs, *Miami Tech Works* will contribute to Miami-Dade County’s efforts of building resilience via economic diversification and contribute to the long-term recovery from pandemics and their resulting economic shocks.

How *Miami Tech Works* Will Meet Any of EDA’s Other Investment Priorities

Equity *Miami Tech Works* will leverage and build upon past outreach, recruiting, and service efforts to serve underserved workers more equitably, especially communities of color, women, and other groups facing labor market barriers (e.g., persons with disabilities; disconnected youth; individuals in recovery; individuals with past criminal records; individuals participating in SNAP, TANF, and WIC; and individuals from the 67 Miami-Dade County Opportunity Zones).

Programs leveraged include Miami Community Ventures, a program that assists structurally-unemployed individuals, and the Talent Development Network, a collaboration among multiple institutions of higher education designed to benefit a broad spectrum of lower income and first-generation college students who may not otherwise have access to internships and professional

⁹ Dahlberg, N. 2021, December, BOOM! #MiamiTech 2021. Refresh Miami.

networks—thereby addressing the disadvantages these students face in professional pursuits and in building their own social capital. OIC will leverage its relationship with Florida Department Children and Families and Florida Department of Health to recruit and enroll benefits recipients (e.g., WIC, TANF, SNAP) and help them reach financial independence and self-sufficiency.

Workforce Development In terms of project impact, the proposed *Miami Tech Works* will serve approximately 1,000 participants. *Miami Tech Works* will support the Workforce Development priority by directly connecting participants to (1) local employers who have committed to hiring them as well as (2) to the skills needed by these local employers and business community. The combination of workforce education and skills training provided through *Miami Tech Works* will result in well-paying, high-quality jobs that offer wages at or above the prevailing rate.

Technology-Based Economic Development With local municipalities and the Miami-Dade Beacon Council as key members of the proposed Tech Talent Coalition, *Miami Tech Works* will support the Technology-Based Economic Development priority by incorporating economic development planning into the work proposed during the project’s System Development and Program Design phases. Through the proposed work of the Tech Talent Coalition, *Miami Tech Works* will advance regional knowledge ecosystems that support tech-focused entrepreneurs, start-ups, and small businesses creating the high-skilled, well-paying jobs of the future.

Section 4C. Job-Related Projections

Number and Type of Jobs Expected to Be Available to Workers Who Successfully

Complete Training, Projected Wages and Wage Growth Expected jobs include, but are not limited to, computer and information systems managers, computer systems analysts, information security analysts, computer and information research scientists, computer network architects, network and computer systems administrators, database administrators and architects, computer programmers, software developers, software quality assurance analyst and testers, web developers, digital interface designers, and computer hardware engineers, according to EMSI data, with an average 12,361 monthly postings and 3,066 average monthly hires, with 14.1% job growth over the next five years. Projected wages are expected at an average \$108,434 (average earnings per job), with 13.3% wage growth over the next five years.

How Miami Tech Works Will Leverage Available Resources to Sectoral Partnership

Implementation Strategic partners’ resources that will be leveraged across the various phases of the proposed project include: *System Development phase*: collective convening powers to engage employers through Tech Talent Coalition and convene employers outside of signed commitments to hire as well as to unify and assess existing resources to determine most effective and efficient way to serve participants; *Program Design phase*: existing curriculum, faculty capacity, and that can be mapped with in-demand tech skills identified by employers; and *Program Implementation phase*: existing recruitment/outreach activities, education/training services, wraparound services, scholarships/tuition, and job placement and employer networking activities, (e.g., paid internships, Talent Town Hall, Talent Summits, CEO for a Day).

Project Measurement and Tracking of Key Outcomes and Metrics Evaluation will track all required key project outcomes and metrics including, but not limited to, training enrollment, training completion, job placement and retention, and wages of placed workers. To provide the Tech Talent Coalition with data that goes beyond the requirement in terms of usefulness, the evaluation will also provide formative feedback that can be used for continuous improvement, sustainability, and future replication and scaling of the *Miami Tech Works* model. Summary reports of data analysis will be developed after each data collection opportunity to provide grant staff with timely feedback. The evaluation team will discuss findings during update calls. Each

phase of the evaluation will culminate in an evaluation report demonstrating how the project has achieved the goals of that phase. As best practices are identified for successful engagement with employers in hiring training participants, these findings will be shared with grant staff, the Tech Talent Coalition, and other stakeholders. In cases where project outcomes (e.g., job retention, wage growth) may be achieved after the grant period, evaluation staff will develop a data collection plan that they can train MDC staff to implement after the grant ends.

Data Collection and Participant Tracking OIC will leverage its established model of participant tracking. At enrollment, participants complete a contact information form allowing staff multiple ways to reach the participant and continue tracking participant outcomes (e.g., training completion, certificates and degrees attainment, placement in employment or apprenticeships, job retention, wage earnings). In order to track participants' employment and wage outcomes, *Miami Tech Works* will leverage the Employ Florida system. When participants are registered in the Employ Florida system—the state job bank—participants' information can be run daily. CSSF has access to this system, which confirms employment information. Participants will be assisted with registration in Employ Florida upon completion of their training. A Project Coordinator will help coordinate placement activities. CSSF will also leverage its job placement specialists to work with students upon completion of the training programs.

Section 4D. Why the Proposed Partnership is Achievable

This partnership is achievable because the strategic partners: (1) Represent diverse types of organizations across sectors, e.g., government, education, workforce, community-based, and employers, with a strong commitment to close the region's tech talent gap; (2) Have the capacity and expertise to carry out proposed project activities (see Examples of Prior Sectoral Partner Success section); and (3) Have well-established relationships with one another for many years and across a variety of initiatives in the county (see Table 2 above).

Section 4E. Target Demographics of Participants and Estimated Impact

Target Demographics of Participants and Specific Stakeholder Groups Impacted by Project Miami-Dade County is Florida's most populous county, with 34 municipalities and a population over 2.7 million¹⁰. The county is a majority-minority community, with the majority of residents identifying as either Hispanic or black non-Hispanic. Within the county, over 75% of residents speak languages other than English at home, primarily Spanish and Haitian-Creole¹¹.

Close to a third of Miami-Dade County residents are considered low-income¹². Close to half a million of those individuals live below poverty level¹³. A considerable percentage of families in Miami-Dade are also poor. The rate is higher for black families, with over 20% of black families living below the poverty level¹⁴. Almost a quarter of county residents receive support from SNAP¹⁵. It should be noted that since the outbreak of COVID-19, the number of SNAP cases in Florida increased by at least 44%¹⁶. Major disparities are apparent in the percentage of families living in poverty based on family structure. While female-headed households represent 18.2% of all families in Miami-Dade, 25.6% of these families live below the poverty level¹⁷.

The situation for low-income and below-poverty individuals in the county is further exacerbated by the financial distress that many residents of Miami-Dade County have suffered

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, One-Year Estimates, 2019; Miami-Dade County At-A-Glance, 2018

¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, One-Year Estimates, Language Spoken at Home, 2019

¹² U.S. Census Bureau, ACS Five-Year Estimates, Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months

¹³ U.S. Census Bureau, ACS Five-Year Estimates, Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months, 2019

¹⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months of Families

¹⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, Five-Year Estimates, Food Stamps/SNAP 2019

¹⁶ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. 2021. Tracking the COVID-19 Recession's Effects on Food, Housing, and Employment Hardships. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/tracking-the-covid-19-recessions-effects-on-food-housing-and>

¹⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, Five-Year Estimates: Household and Families, 2019; and Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months of Families, 2019

since the beginning of the pandemic. Notably, Miami ranks 14th in bankruptcy filings, 8th for searches for loan information, and 6th for people with accounts in distress¹⁸. In addition, 48.2% of residents report difficulty paying usual household expenses, compared to 36.8% and 35.1% state- and nationwide respectively; and as much as 11.1% of individuals over the age of 18 (or 261,659 individuals) in Miami-Dade County are housing insecure as a result of the COVID-19, as compared to 8.9% state- and nationwide, with likelihood of eviction or foreclosure at 22.2% in the county, as compared to 37.2% state- or 34.2% nationwide¹⁹.

Table 3. Estimated Numbers Impacted By Project		
People	Organizations/Communities	Employers
Training: 1,000 Wraparound Services: 1,000 Training Program Completion (projected): 750 Job Placement (projected): 500	<u>Committed</u> Higher education institutions: 6 Non-Profits: 3 Workforce Development: 1 Communities/local government: 2	Committed tech employers: 32 Potential tech employers: 120

SECTION 5: FUNDING REQUEST; PROGRAM DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION

Section 5A. Estimated Funding Request and Proposed Match; Project Sustainability

Estimated Funding Request *Miami Tech Works* requests \$9,999,939 over three years to implement one tech industry focused sectoral partnership for Miami-Dade County, including System Development phase (\$1,000,000); Program Design phase expenses (\$2,000,000); and Program Implementation phase expenses (\$6,999,939). Three-year costs include personnel (\$2,028,215), fringe benefits (\$719,459), travel (\$3,000), supplies (\$17,000), contractual (2,002,000), subawards (\$4,558,491), other (\$417,000), and indirect costs (\$254,774). Approximate cost is \$10,000 per participant for 1,000 participants.

Costs to Track and Measure Key Metrics Student tracking costs include software at \$103,500 over three years, plus the leveraged cost of student tracking via Employ Florida, and evaluation at \$402,000 over three years (inclusive of travel and nearly 1,800 hours of evaluators’ time).

How *Miami Tech Works* Will Leverage Other (Non-EDA) Funds and Past Fundraising Experience MDC effectively manages millions in grant funding annually. In the most recently completed fiscal year (FY 2020-21), MDC raised over \$50 million in grant funds—not including HEERF funds. MDC will match the proposed project with \$5,600,000 from other grant funds (see attached match commitment letter), which will cover project participant tuition for education, training, and wraparound services; and for faculty capacity building to teach emerging tech programs. OIC has effectively administered nearly 60 federal, state, and local grants, totaling more than \$78 million, and has consistently been awarded as a result of successful program performance and achievement of outcomes. OIC will match over \$261,000 from other funders as well as from its own operating funds (see attached match commitment letter).

Section 5B. Relationship of Budget to Project Design

Anticipated Project Activities and How They Relate to the Budget Project activities costs include hiring/equipping grant staff (\$2,767,674), establishing and coordinating the Tech Talent Coalition (\$126,000); participant tracking and project evaluation (\$505,500); design/deployment of employer technical assistance (\$150,000); system gap analysis (\$250,000); education, reskilling, upskilling and wraparound services by strategic partners and bootcamp providers (\$4,722,106); interview and other soft skills training (\$162,500); outreach, recruitment, communications, and placement activities (\$1,061,385); and indirect costs (\$254,774).

¹⁸ WalletHub, Cities in the Most Financial Distress; December 16, 2020; <https://wallethub.com/edu/cities-financial-distress/79863>

¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey

Workers Served and Job Placements Expected Table 4 summarizes the projected number of individuals recruited for the program, who successfully complete the program, and placed in quality jobs, all with target demographic breakdowns.

Additional proposed outcomes are included in Table 5. While placements into 3,554 high-quality jobs have been committed by employers, the partners recognize that the reality is that many of the openings will be for mid- to senior-level positions (EMSI shows that 30.6% of job postings require 4 to 6 years' experience and another 15.8% require more than six years' experience). Indeed, only 14% of job postings are for entry-level jobs (e.g., require 0-1 years experience), as projected via EMSI data. As such, the proposed *Miami Tech Works* activities propose to design and deploy education, training, and job placement activities leading to high-quality entry-level jobs, (approximately 500 high-quality job placements) or approximately 14% of job postings.

Section 5C. Barriers and Feasibility
Anticipated Barriers to Worker Participation and Plan to Mitigate Impact of Barriers

Barriers may include lack of job seeking and employment experience, past criminal records, and inadequate access to resources,

such as childcare and transportation. *Miami Tech Works* will leverage partners' existing resources to mitigate barriers. For example, OIC uses participant's Barriers to Employment Success Inventory and U.S. Department of Labor O*NET assessment results to develop a customized program of employment and career services. Participants complete OIC's foundational Employability Skills Training, consisting of lessons on workplace etiquette, personal branding, basic computer skills, critical thinking, and teamwork. Upon completion, participants have a sample job application, resume, references, and demonstrated interviewing skills. Participants are connected to wrap-around services, as needed. CSSF will especially provide referrals to TANF/SNAP-eligible, Veterans, or disabled individuals to training provider partners for skills training or other education services, as appropriate.

Another barrier is the lack of entry level positions available. Most relevant job postings require at least three years' experience in the field to meet the minimum job requirements; a

Table 4. Projected Number of Participants			
	Recruited	Completed*	Placed
American Indian	2	1	1
Asian	12	9	6
Black, non-Hispanic	170	128	85
Hispanic	750	563	375
Multiracial	10	8	5
Pacific Islander	1	0	0
White, non-Hispanic	56	42	28
TOTAL	1,000	750	500
<small>*This amount includes the number of training program completers within the project period; it is anticipated that there will be additional program completers after the project period and that some training program completers may be placed in high-quality jobs before they complete their training programs.</small>			

Table 5. Deliverables and Outcomes	
Deliverables	Proposed Outcomes
Projected number of quality job placements committed by employers	3,554 high-quality jobs placements committed by employers (per letters of commitment); 500 participants will be placed during project period
Projected wages for jobs	At least \$60,000 a year, per EMSI data projections
Size of credibly-projected income gains for workers	13.3% over next five years, per EMSI data projections
Projected training cost per worker	\$10,000, inclusive comprehensive wrap-around services and training by bootcamp providers

prerequisite that recent graduate just cannot meet. To mitigate this, *Miami Tech Works* plans to develop and deploy technical assistance to help employers learn more about Miami-Dade County's talent ecosystem and how to improve their human resource return on investment by capitalizing on local talent, regardless of years of experience.

Feasibility Project feasibility (e.g., workers served, placements made) will be built into the proposed project design via (1) *Partner accountability* Proposed strategic partners will leverage existing relationships with local employers, as well as lessons learned from the prior sectoral successes, to ensure job placement. One of the roles of the proposed Project Coordinators will be to check in with strategic partners to ensure that project outcomes are being met on time and within budget. The results of these check-ins will be shared at periodic Tech Talent Coalition meetings; and (2) *Prior partner success*. Based on historical CSSF and MDC completion and placement rates, it is projected that 75% of participants will complete their education, training, or credentialing, and that 2 out of 3 of completers will be placed in high-quality jobs.

Proposed, Wrap-Around Services To Be Provided To During and After Training *Miami Tech Works* partners will leverage and coordinate existing wraparound services provided through their organizations. All project participants will receive wraparound services. Training providers—MDC, OIC, FMU, FIU, and other TDN member institutions—will provide support to participants they train; MCV will provide wraparound services to participants trained by bootcamps. Examples of wraparound services to be provided includes, but is not limited to:

- MDC will leverage its SingleStop program, where participants can be provided with both direct services and referrals to services such as free benefits screenings, financial coaching, legal assistance, tax preparation services, food pantry, mentoring, mental health counseling services, and health insurance assistance; services through other departments include access to libraries, computer labs, and other resource centers on campus as well as accommodations for individuals with disabilities, tutoring, online and in-person tutoring using an individual learning style approach; concierge advisement that assesses course requirements and participant academic, non-cognitive, and workforce needs; and exam prep workshops.
- OIC will leverage remediation, tutoring, intensive job coaching, job placement/retention assistance, transportation, referrals for housing and legal assistance, and access to childcare.
- MCV will provide wrap-around services after participants have completed training and up to one year after hire, e.g., success coaching, transportation, childcare, social services, financial literacy—personalized to participants' specific needs.
- TDN will provide transportation for students who otherwise do not have access to it, in partnership with member academic institutions.

Regional Investment and Sustainability Tech Talent Coalition members will conduct cost analyses to identify funding processes that may be deployed to sustain the sectoral partnership efforts after the project period. The Project Director, in collaboration with the evaluator, will identify components of the program that had the greatest impact and components deemed most effective by workers and employers. *Miami Tech Works* will leverage the collective fundraising capacities of its committed and prospective strategic partners to secure additional public and private funding to supplement the federal award after the project period. *Miami Tech Works* will also leverage in-kind resources and methods to support its work. In terms of local leverage to augment the federal award, two local municipalities—the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County—are key, committed partners of *Miami Tech Works* and have already invested \$7 million collectively in the work of the tech sectoral partnership.