

Your Company and The LAOC Regional Consortium

What is The LAOC Regional Consortium?

The Los Angeles/Orange County Regional Consortium (LAOCRC) consists of 28 community colleges. It serves as a regional framework to communicate, coordinate, collaborate, promote and plan a career and technical education, and workforce and economic development system in the Los Angeles/Orange County Region.

In today's world, community colleges play a leading and vital role in preparing students to enter a rapidly changing employment landscape. Calibrated training and specialized skills are particularly needed for students to succeed in the Los Angeles/Orange County region's highly competitive, knowledge-driven industries.

To meet this challenge, the Los Angeles/ Orange County Regional Consortium, the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, Goodwill Southern California and Bixel Exchange have partnered to ramp up workforce training for students from underrepresented backgrounds in key industry sectors with bright futures.

This effort aims to systematically create more and better quality work-based learning opportunities for students by engaging and inspiring employers and educators to invest in training our next generation of workers. This is especially crucial in a region that has become a major hub for emerging industries and new work models that are fueling future job growth.

What are the benefits of my company's participation?

Partnering with the LAOCRC can help you build and retain your future workforce.

The LAOC Regional Consortium is a direct response to the ongoing skills gap that can exert a drag on the local economy and frustrate employers as they seek to hire qualified and experienced candidates. By opening their place of business to students and providing them with high-value, work-based learning opportunities, employers are able to expose students to their business and industry and benefit from productive student work. Employers can observe potential future employees in a "long-term interview" context and participate in shaping their future workforce by connecting with college faculty and the classroom. Students also provide access to a customer resource and a fresh point of view. An employer benefits from a more productive and engaged workforce and by offering leadership and supervisory skills development opportunities to its current workers.

LAOCRC is first and foremost an opportunity for companies to support and develop highly skilled and productive future potential employees. Participation in LAOCRC also helps build awareness of the employer's role in the community and offers a public relations benefit.

Why is LAOCRC important for students, schools and my community?

LAOCRC fast tracks students to their personal career goals.

Students pursue a career pathway focused on their long-term goals through a course of study with an area community college, which provides an incentive to persist and complete their education. They earn an industry-recognized credential and/or graduate with an AA/AS degree, direct workplace experience with partner employers and a firm foundation for entry into the workforce.

LAOCRC promotes better outcomes for schools and increases college completion rates.

LAOCRC helps our community colleges deliver a 21st century education. The community college structure provides multiple pathways for students, incentives for project-based and applied learning and opportunities for cross-disciplinary integration in the classroom. It offers students the chance to explore a career path while preparing them to become contributing members of their community. Participation in a LAOCRC career pathway expands the college's awareness of the economy and increases educator knowledge of area businesses and jobs as well as an understanding of the challenges industry faces.

LAOCRC strengthens communities.

It helps align education, workforce and service systems to promote a strong economic future and build an engaged citizenry. LAOCRC provides a robust local talent pipeline and helps the local economy grow and retain its workforce.

How can my company participate?

There are many ways that employers can partner with LAOCRC. While employer involvement in each of the following activities is critical to the program's success, employer partners are not expected to participate in all activities. LAOCRC partner intermediaries will work with you to help select the activities that make the most sense for your business. Here are some options to consider:

- 1. Serve on an Industry Advisory Board or Steering Committee.**
- 2. Help us map the skills needed for success in high-demand occupations in your industry.**
- 3. Provide work-based learning experiences for LAOCRC students:**
 - ✓ **Guest Speaker** – a career awareness activity where an employer partner visits a classroom and provides a presentation on their company, industry and occupation. Guest speakers also address the application of academics in a real-world context.
 - ✓ **Workplace Tour** – a career awareness activity in which small groups of students visit a workplace, learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions and observe work in progress. Teachers also benefit from exposure to the workplace.
 - ✓ **Immersive Workshops** – a career exploration activity that introduces students to a core component of your business by providing a hands-on learning experience. Examples include hackathons, business competitions and design and product challenges.
 - ✓ **Informational Interview** – a career exploration activity where a student interviews an employee of a partner business about his/her career and industry.
 - ✓ **Job Shadowing** – a career exploration activity where a student is paired with an employee of a partner business and follows that employee during much of a regular workday, experiences the workplace, explores a particular occupation, learns about the business, connects with a working adult and observes work in progress.
 - ✓ **Work Experience** – a career preparation activity where a student develops and demonstrates professional and occupational skills by working for pay with a partner employer. The primary relationship for the student is as an employee. In some cases, schools can offer credit for the experience, through a number of programs.

- ✓ **Internship** – a career preparation activity where a student has the opportunity to learn by doing real work and being productively engaged in the workplace. Students may work in teams, rotate through a number of departments and job functions, or work on a project of interest to the student and productive value to the employer partner. The primary relationship is student to learning with the job being the conduit to the learning.
- ✓ **Workplace Challenge** – a career preparation activity where small groups of students (4-6 per team) are engaged in solving a problem or challenge issued by a partner employer in consultation with an LAOCRC faculty member.
- ✓ **Career Mentoring** – a career exploration activity in which a student is matched one-on-one or in small groups with an adult professional in a chosen field of interest to explore potential careers and related educational issues.
- ✓ **Apprenticeship** – a career preparation activity designed to prepare an individual—generally a high school graduate—for (primarily) careers in the skilled crafts and trades, although many new industry sectors have launched apprenticeship programs in recent years. Apprenticeships consist of paid, on-the-job training supplemented by related classroom instruction. Apprenticeship training usually requires one to five years to complete, depending on which occupation is chosen.

The Los Angeles/Orange County Regional Consortium delivers authentic workplace experiences for its students in partnership with intermediary partners and employers. The program offers strategies and support to limit the burden on employers and increase the educational value of these experiences for students. All workplace experiences are highly structured and supported by LAOCRC partner staff. While the full range of authentic work-based learning experiences is provided to every student, employer partners provide the opportunities that are a good fit with their business.