



Equitable Workforce Development for the Mobility Sector

Facilitated by Detroit Future City

Summary

Detroit Future City and its partners convened a series of eight table talks with 34 participants total to gather insights, identify best practices and potential interventions to guide the development of an advanced mobility talent recruitment strategy and a Spring 2024 symposium aimed at strengthening collaboration between employers, educators, and workers in Detroit’s advanced mobility sector.

Insights from the focus group facilitated by Detroit Future City fell into 3 main themes:

1. Structural racism is a large barrier.
2. There is an information desert.
3. Advocacy using worker voice is needed.

The above themes and their actionable insights and solutions were developed through both data gathered from the initial Detroit Future City table talks as well as a group of manufacturing sector professionals convened by the Urban Manufacturing Alliance.

Insights

Insight 1 — Information Desert

There is a disparity between where mobility organizations distribute information and where community members receive information.

[Submit your actionable ideas here](#)

Insight 2: Information Desert & Worker Voice Advocacy

The Detroit Region mobility ecosystem lacks paid educational opportunities.

[Submit your actionable ideas here](#)

Insight 3: Information Desert

Most traditional employment resources are not up to date on emerging opportunities or growing industries, such as mobility.

[Submit your actionable ideas here](#)

Actionable Solutions

- Understand where your target audience gets information
- Create information in the appropriate language for the audience
- Distribute through channels where the your audience gets information
- Map available programs and intentionally highlight them to workforce assistance practitioners, trusted connectors in the community, and job seekers
- Create and utilize a centralized, standardized referral network for the entire geographic area

- Paid transitional re-skilling
- Paid apprenticeship programs
- Employer-sponsored educational sponsorship with reciprocal commitment from employee
- Expanded community engagement, communications and outreach activities for these programs and services.

- Convene employment organizations and mobility employers so that there is a shared understanding of opportunities, training resources, and requirements
- Understand the current flow of knowledge regarding mobility opportunities— where are they communicated and to whom? What channels are they being communicated on?
- Create a publicly accessible hub for mobility employers and education resources to share new opportunities
- Broaden language around mobility beyond automotive
- Incorporate storytelling with images and language that resonate with the target audience within social media and communications.

Insight 4: Structural Racism

Most charitable giving approaches aren't designed to create systemic impact and lasting change.

[Submit your actionable ideas here](#)

- Creating more volunteer programs for knowledge sharing
- Raising awareness for local technology nonprofits
- Setting up feedback mechanisms for nonprofits to understand community needs and adjust their efforts accordingly

Insight 5: Structural Racism

Covid-19 has exacerbated informational inequity and created new barriers to accessing opportunities.

[Submit your actionable ideas here](#)

- Creating more virtual networking options - online mixers and events
- Creating programs/classes for recent graduates/young people impacted by COVID to build soft-skills
- In-person and remote options for educational training programs
- Provide a "navigator" to help job seekers understand which opportunities are best
- Convene manufacturing coalitions to build networks of support between underrepresented people in manufacturing

Insight 6: Worker Voice Advocacy

Workplace policies and employee evaluation practices aren't designed for equity.

[Submit your actionable ideas here](#)

- Co-creating an equitable employee performance evaluation framework
- Measure an employee's knowledge/skill set at the start of employment and track changes/growth over time
- Setting clear goals for before and after training takes place, and clearly documenting what training has or hasn't taken place
- Set up anonymous feedback avenues for employees that protect privacy and confidentiality
- Create resources for learning self-advocacy in the workplace and building soft skills using multilingual and diverse communication avenues
- Educate both employees and employers about unionization