City of Cincinnati

801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Agenda - Final

Economic and Cultural Opportunity

Chairperson Jan-Michele Kearney
Vice Chair Seth Walsh
Councilmember Scotty Johnson
Councilmember Albi

Monday, March 9, 2026 | **10:00 AM** | **Council Chambers, Room 300**

PRESENTATION

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

Audrey Treasure, VP & Executive Director

GREATER CINCINNATI MICROENTERPRISE CENTER

Willie Hill III, Executive Director

AGENDA

1. 202601054 **PRESENTATION**, submitted by Vice Mayor Kearney from Audrey Treasure regarding the Workforce Innovation Center.

Sponsors: Kearney

Attachments: PRESENTATION

2. 202601055 **PRESENTATION,** submitted by Vice Mayor Kearney from Willie Hill regarding the Greater Cincinnati Microenterprise Initiative.

Sponsors: Kearney

Attachments: PRESENTATION

ADJOURNMENT

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

City of Cincinnati

Economic & Cultural Opportunity Committee

March 9, 2026

MISSION VISION & VALUES

Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber

MISSION

To grow the vibrancy and economic prosperity of the Cincinnati region.

VISION

Cincinnati is a growing, thriving region where everyone belongs.

VALUES

At the Cincinnati Regional Chamber, we value:

- Being **Informed**
- Making **Connections**
- Operating with **Integrity**
- Staying **Open-Minded**
- Having **Fun**

WHO WE SERVE

Serving the businesses and people in our 15-county MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area)

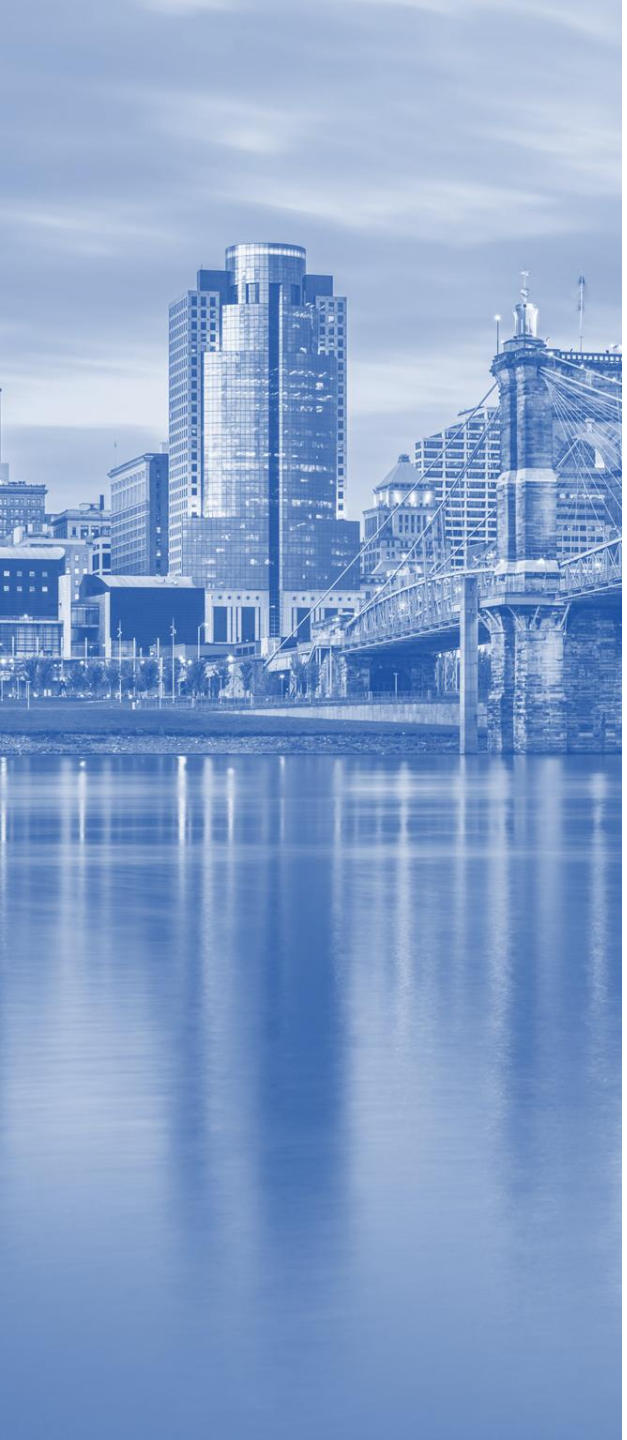
STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2029

GROW

- OUR ECONOMY
- OUR POPULATION
- OUR CULTURAL VIBRANCY

Cincinnati USA
Regional Chamber



Who We Are

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

We are a **hub for information**, **resources** and **strategies** to **support employers** to achieve their talent and culture goals within their workplaces.

- We are a **strategic connector** that connects and convenes the array of **workforce providers** in our region for improved connectivity and new opportunities
- We are a **consulting firm** that delivers solutions with proven results for clients, including:
  - authentic employee engagement
  - increased employee retention
  - modernized workplace policies

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

Our Initiatives & Resources

Partner Organizations

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

CityLink Center

easterseals redwood

LEADERSHIP CENTER
CINCINNATI REGIONAL CHAMBER

Cincinnati State

Hamilton County Addiction Response Coalition

Sunrise TREATMENT CENTER

United Way
United Way of Greater Cincinnati

Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio

GREATER CINCINNATI FDN.

CINCINNATI COMPASS
connecting immigrants & community for a stronger region

WOMEN'S FUND of the GREATER CINCINNATI FDN.

WOMEN HELPING WOMEN

Life Learning Center

ceo Center for Employment Opportunities

BRIGHTON CENTER
A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT

4C for Children
Support. Enrich. Inspire.

LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF GREATER CINCINNATI

Mercy Neighborhood Ministries, Inc.

cincinnati public library

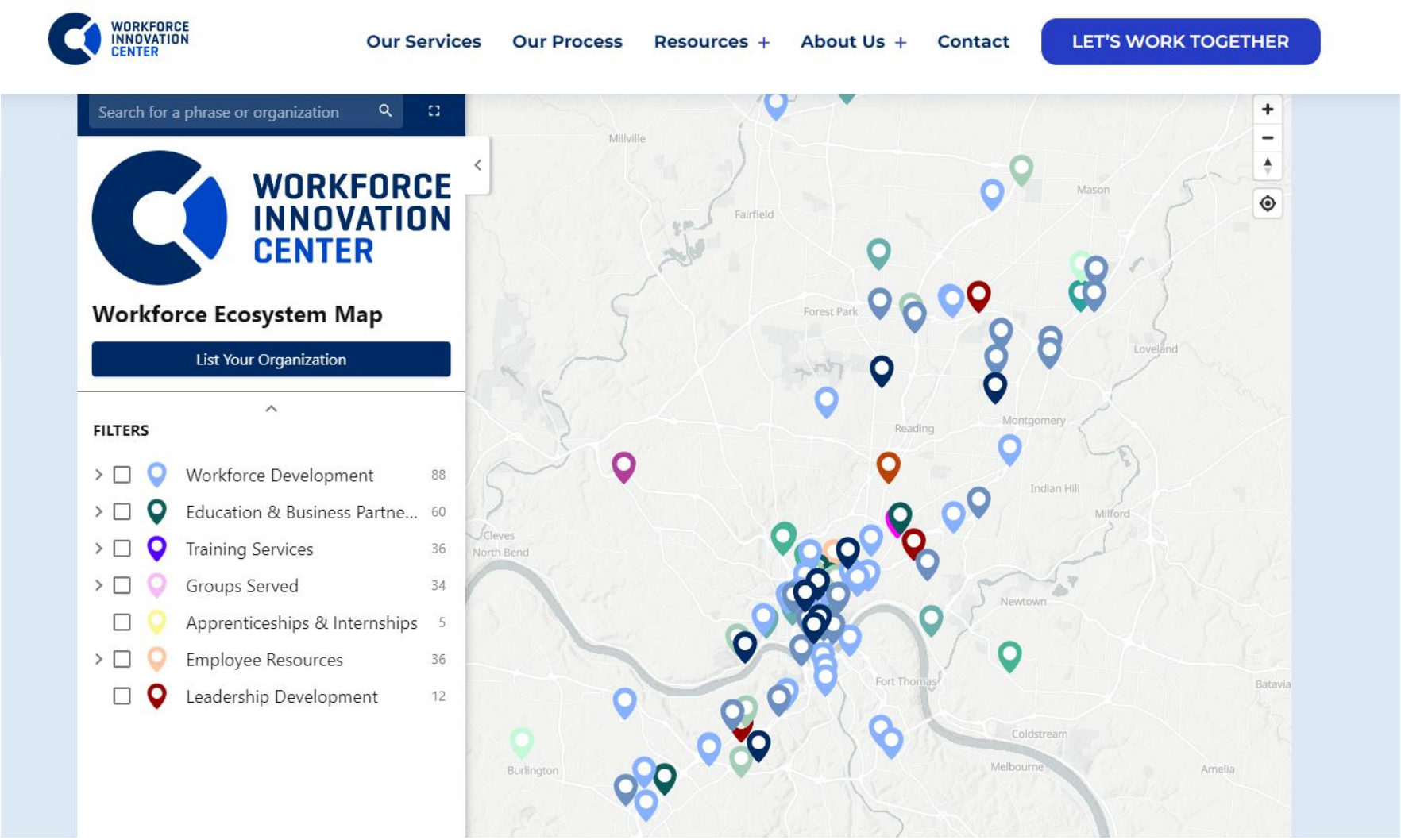
THE HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

Workforce Council of Southwest Ohio

SANTA MARIA COMMUNITY SERVICES
Helping Families Help Themselves Since 1897

AND MANY OTHERS

Workforce & Talent Ecosystem Map



WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

CAREER BOARD | WORKFORCE AND TALENT MAP | BLOG | NEWSLETTER SIGN UP

Our Services | Our Process | Resources + | About Us + | Contact | LET'S WORK TOGETHER

Workforce Innovation Center Career Board

Leverage our network to build your career. Find companies that you will love to work for that have the benefits and perks you need.

Explore the careers Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber Members have to offer.

Add My Company | View Company Perks

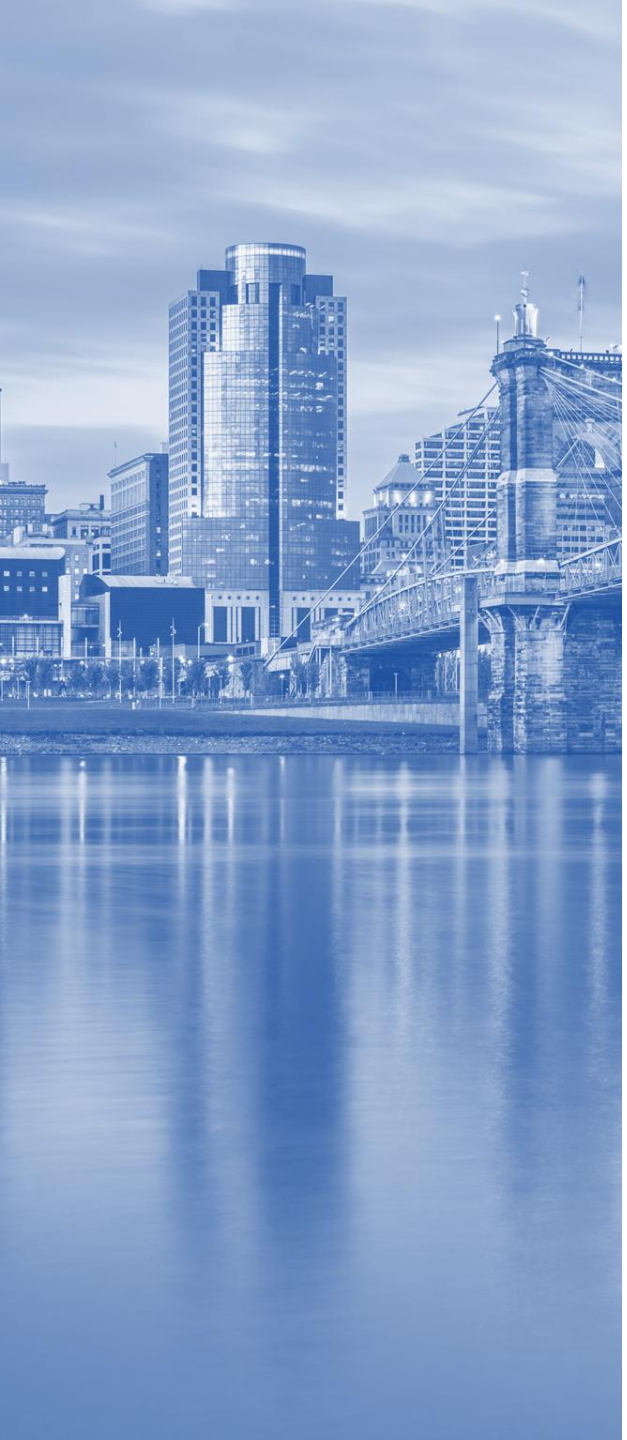
94 COMPANIES

9,254 JOBS

Explore companies | Search jobs | Join talent network | My job alerts

Search by name or keyword

Location



Benefits & Perks Page

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

Employer Name	Benefits Package	Special Perks	Signed the Workforce Innovation Center Pledge	Workforce Innovation Center Client (current or past)	Recovery Friendly	View jobs
Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority / Metro	Medical, Dental, Vision OPERS Retirement Pension No Payment in Social Security Company paid life insurance	OPERS Retirement Pension Plan Employees pay in mandatory 10% and SORTA pays in 14%	No	No	Not designated	VIEW JOBS
3 Rivers Logistics		Uncapped earning potential.	No	No	Not designated	VIEW JOBS
3CDC	All active employees are eligible for our EAP (Employee Assistance Program). For eligible Full-time Employees, we have a robust health care package. For eligible employees, we offer contributions to a 403b.	Flexible schedules and free parking! We're located right downtown, so very walkable for anyone in the OTR, Findlay Market, or Central Business District neighborhoods.	No	No	Yes	VIEW JOBS
Advertising Vehicles	Health, dental, 401-K, Short term disability, free parking		No	No	Not designated	VIEW JOBS

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

WorkOhio

Southwest Ohio Regional Hub –
Southwest Ohio Workforce Innovation Network (SOWIN)

WorkOhio

Reach Your Full Potential

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

Grant Information and Process

- Statewide effort with regional hubs
- Hubs align with the 7 JobsOhio Regions
- Modeled after previous Ohio to Work project
- Each region needed to apply with consortium of specific partners
  - Regional employers
  - Employer network partners
  - Education and training providers
  - Community-based organizations (CBOs)
  - OhioMeansJobs Centers
  - Workforce development boards
  - Career-technical planning districts
  - County departments of Jobs and Family Services
- Application Opened in September; Closed November 7
- Hubs were awarded in late November with embargo until January
- Project runs from January 2026 – June 2027

WorkOhio

Reach Your Full Potential

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

Initial Local Partners

WorkOhio delivers job training, coaching, and placement services to job seekers referred through the State of Ohio's new WorkOhio digital portal. This network includes:

- BCW Workforce Development Board
- United Way of Greater Cincinnati & 211
- OMJ Hamilton County
- OMJ Butler County
- OMJ Warren County
- Easterseals Redwood
- The Care Center
- Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio
- Cincinnati State
- Great Oaks Career Campuses
- Butler Tech
- Cincinnati Public Schools
- Hamilton County Education Service Center
- Employers from multiple industries
- Other nonprofit and community partners

WorkOhio

Reach Your Full Potential

WorkOhio | JIM TRESSEL LT. GOVERNOR OF OHIO

WorkOhio:
Reach Your Full Potential

WorkOhio connects Ohioans to personalized support and trusted job resources, no matter where they live in Ohio. WorkOhio.gov is an easy-to-use starting point for anyone looking for new job opportunities, training programs, or other resources aligned with your background, experience, and goals.

Why WorkOhio?

Under the leadership of Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Tressel, and with the support of the Ohio General Assembly, a wide variety of resources have been created to help Ohioans get great jobs, especially in high demand fields. We know that the job search process can sometimes be hard to navigate and you may be overwhelmed. WorkOhio serves as a "front door" to all the job-help resources Ohio offers, allowing you to navigate the job tools that fit you best, all in one convenient online location.

WorkOhio.gov

Personalized Support

1. Choose where you live or want to work
2. Request one-on-one support
3. A local partner connects with you within 2 business days

Explore Resources For You

Explore the website on your own with resources and guidance tailored to different stages of life or career paths—helping you quickly find the job tools most relevant to you.

Regional Job Hubs

When an Ohioan requests personalized assistance through WorkOhio, the request goes to one of seven WorkOhio Regional Job Hubs. These Job Hubs are trusted local organizations who understand their region's top industries, employers, and unique workforce needs.

- **Northeast Ohio:** MAGNET
- **Eastern Ohio:** Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition
- **Southeast Ohio:** Ohio Valley Employment Resource – Workforce Development Area 15
- **Central Ohio:** Central Ohio Workforce Development Network, powered by Aspyr, Greater Ohio Workforce Board Inc., and South Central Ohio Workforce Partnership
- **Northwest Ohio:** Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce
- **Western Ohio:** Strategic Ohio Council for Higher Education
- **Southwest Ohio:** Cincinnati Regional Chamber of Commerce's Workforce Innovation Center

Statewide Involvement

- Ohio Department of Higher Education
- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
- Ohio Department of Education and Workforce
- Governor's Executive Board of Workforce Transformation

Regional Hubs

- Northeast Ohio: MAGNET
- Northwest Ohio: Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce
- East Ohio: Mahoning Valley Manufacturers' Coalition
- Central Ohio: Central Ohio Workforce Development Network (Aspyr, Greater Ohio Workforce Board Inc., South Central Ohio Workforce Partnership)
- West Ohio: SOCHE
- Southeast Ohio: Ohio Valley Employment Resource

WorkOhio

Reach Your Full Potential

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

Public Rollout

- Announced on January 15, 2026 by Lt. Governor at Governor's Executive Workforce Transformation Board Meeting
- Hosted local rollout on January 21 at the Cincinnati Chamber

WorkOhio

Reach Your Full Potential

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

Current State:

- Accepting job seekers via WorkOhio website and learning more about their needs and interests
- Facilitating connections with partners
- Building out our process with UWGC and regional CBO and OMJ partners
- Connecting with training and education partners
- Engaging employers

CARE CENTER

OhioMeansJobs Warren County
A proud partner of the American Job Center network

easterseals redwood

OhioMeansJobs Hamilton County
A proud partner of the American Job Center network

URBAN LEAGUE GREATER SOUTHWESTERN OHIO

OhioMeansJobs Butler County
A proud partner of the American Job Center network

UNITED WAY Greater Cincinnati

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

Thank you!

WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER

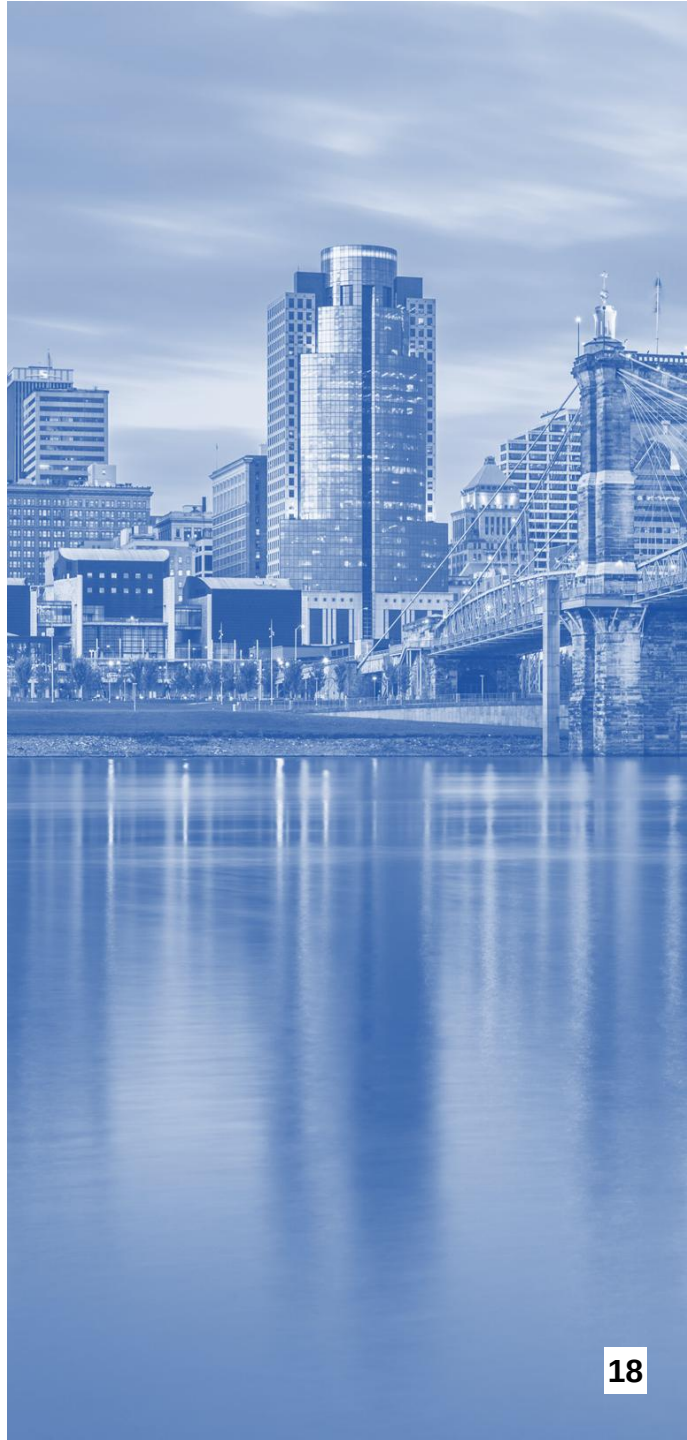
Building Stronger Businesses and Communities – Together.

About The Workforce Innovation Center

The Workforce Innovation Center was established to cultivate mutually beneficial solutions that yield positive outcomes for both employers and employees. Since forming in 2019, we have served more than 25 employers through the advancement of workplace practices that address employers' most pressing talent and human-resources related needs. We have utilized our services to gather direct feedback from employees, especially those in entry-level or frontline positions, that then enable their employers to make data-driven decisions about how to best attract, retain, engage and advance them.

Assets & Resources:

- Consulting Services – two standard offerings as well as customized solutions available to employers to help solve employers' talent issues and achieve their workforce and talent goals
  - Employee Survey – Life Dimensions Assessment
  - Policy and Practice Review
  - Skidmore Enterprises Testimonial and Jostin Construction Testimonial
- Cincinnati Chamber/Workforce Innovation Center Career Board and Benefits & Perks Page
- Connection to more than 80 workforce and talent partners across the Cincinnati region and ability to search for organizations in our Workforce and Talent Ecosystem Map
- Partnership with the Talent Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati for Hamilton County ARPA funding to serve as Workforce Coordination Entity to benefit businesses and residents, including employer tours
- Leading the WorkOhio Southwest Ohio Regional Hub to match jobseekers to training and employment



Contact Us

Workforce Innovation Center

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workforceinnovationcenter.com

Greater Cincinnati Microenterprise Initiative

Economic & Cultural Opportunity Committee
City Council Presentation | March 9, 2026

28+ Years

SERVING CINCINNATI

Presented by Willie Hill, Executive Director | willie@gcmination.org | www.gcmi.org

WHO WE ARE

Our Mission

GCMI is a Certified CDFI serving low-to-moderate income individuals and underserved communities across Greater Cincinnati through:

- Entrepreneurship Education & Training
- Business Coaching & Technical Assistance
- Access to Capital (Microloans $1K–$35K)
- Capital Readiness & Loan Packaging Support
- Youth & Student Entrepreneurship Programs

Certified CDFI

Community Development Financial Institution

GCMI is a minority-led CDFI — one of the few in the Cincinnati region — dedicated to building wealth and economic opportunity in communities that traditional financial institutions have underserved.

Our city partnership is central to our ability to deploy capital and deliver services to Cincinnati's entrepreneurs.

OUR PARTNERS, FUNDERS & COLLABORATORS

Government	Financial Institutions	Community & Ecosystem	Support Organizations
City of Cincinnati Economic Development	US Bank	United Way Greater Cincinnati	LISC
CDFI Fund	Fifth Third Bank	African American Chamber of Commerce	Ohio CDC
	First Financial Bank	Mortar Cincinnati	Community Action Agency
	PNC Bank	Lightship Capital	LKC Foundation
	Truist Bank	Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio (ULGSO)	Represent Cincy
		Cincinnati Business Excellerator	AA Alliance of CDFIs

Every partnership amplifies GCMI's reach — and the City's investment — across Cincinnati's underserved communities.

5-YEAR IMPACT | 2020–2025

Through two distinct phases, GCMI delivered critical economic support to Cincinnati's minority business community.

PHASE 1 | COVID Relief (2020–2022)

400+	Minority Businesses Supported
500+	Relief Grants Provided
$2.4M+	in Relief Grants Deployed
1,800+	Jobs Sustained or Impacted

PHASE 2 | Recovery & Rebuilding (2023–2025)

300+	Minority Businesses Supported
300+	Grants Provided
8	Microloans
$2.0M+	in Grants & Loans Deployed

COMBINED 5-YEAR TOTAL: 700+ businesses served | 800+ grants | $4.4M+ in economic support | 1,800+ jobs impacted

ACTIVE LENDING PORTFOLIO

$325K

Active Loan Portfolio

Deployed to Cincinnati businesses

13

Companies in Portfolio

Active borrowers receiving TA support

$25K–$35K

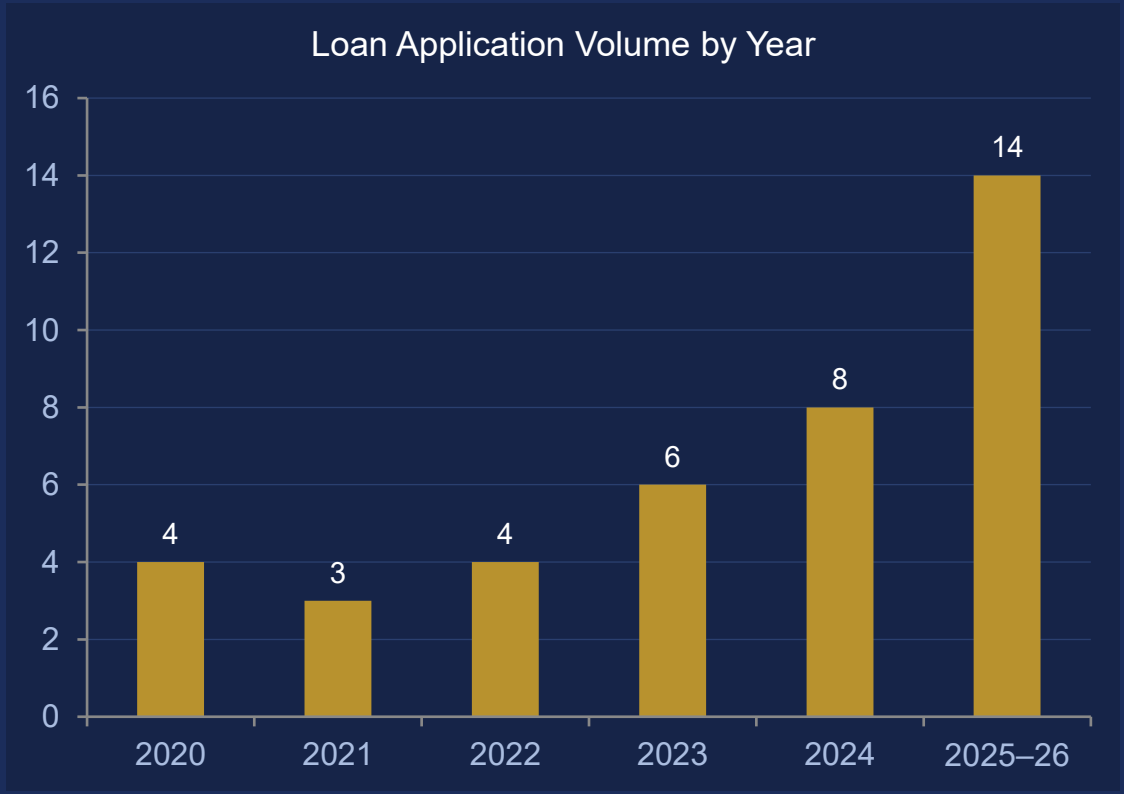
Loan Range

Accessible capital for microbusinesses

Portfolio Context & Momentum

Lending volume slowed during the COVID years as GCMI redirected capacity toward emergency grant management — serving over 700 businesses in crisis. As the economy stabilized, GCMI has strategically shifted back to active lending. **Loan applications have increased significantly in 2025–2026,** driven by rising demand among minority entrepreneurs navigating the current economic climate — higher costs, tighter credit markets, and limited access to traditional bank financing.

DEMAND IS GROWING



Why Demand is Rising

- Higher operating costs & inflation pressure on small businesses
- Traditional banks tightening credit requirements
- Post-COVID entrepreneurs entering the market
- Growing awareness of GCMI's services
- Economic uncertainty driving gig/self-employment demand

CINCINNATI BUSINESSES WE'VE HELPED BUILD

A sampling of GCMI-supported startups and businesses across our neighborhoods:

Mazunte Taqueria

Madisonville & Downtown

Black Coffee

Downtown & Clifton

Cutman Barbershop

Walnut Hills

Muse Fusion Café

Westwood

H&H Demolition

Queensgate

OTR Fun Plex

OTR & Hartwell

6 'n the Mornin'

Walnut Hills

DME Fitness

Bond Hill

OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY

The City's partnership through the Microcity Program is foundational to GCMI's ability to serve Cincinnati entrepreneurs — particularly those in neighborhoods that have historically lacked access to capital and business development resources.

Capital Deployment

City partnership funds enable GCMI to make microloans through the Microcity Program, leveraged alongside GCMI's proprietary loan fund.

Neighborhood Focus

Targeted support to Avondale, Downtown, OTR, Walnut Hills, Bond Hill, Westwood, Madisonville, and other underserved Cincinnati neighborhoods.

Economic Multiplier

Every dollar deployed creates jobs, stabilizes businesses, and generates tax revenue — returning value to the City's investment many times over.

LOOKING AHEAD | GCMI 2026 & BEYOND

New Initiatives Underway

- Revenue-Based Lending product (flexible repayment tied to business cash flow)
- POS-integrated loan products launching Q3 2026
- Expanded Coaching & Technical Assistance capacity
- AI Integration Tools for Capacity Building
- Workforce Development support for small businesses
- Self-Employment & Capital Readiness programming
- Youth Entrepreneurship — gig economy & workforce transition

Our Continued Partnership with the City Of Cincinnati

We are asking for the Committee's continued support of GCMI's partnership with the City of Cincinnati through:

- Continued Microcity Program partnership and funding
- Leverage Funding (1st year in 2025-26)
- Support for expanded microlending capacity as application volume grows
- Alignment with the City's economic equity and neighborhood development goals

With your support, GCMI can scale its impact — reaching more entrepreneurs, deploying more capital, and strengthening Cincinnati's neighborhoods.

Thank You

Greater Cincinnati Microenterprise Initiative

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