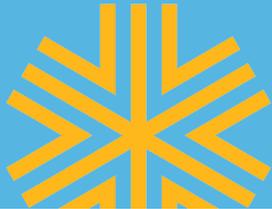
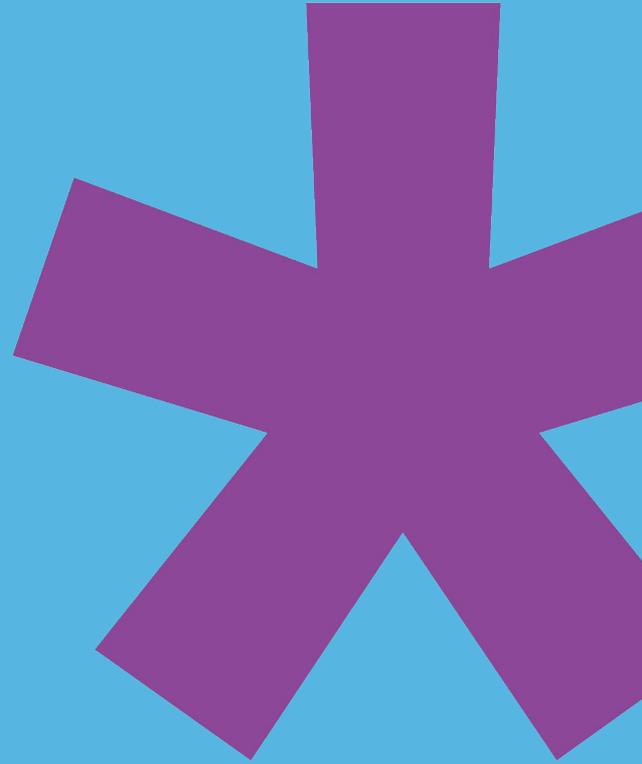
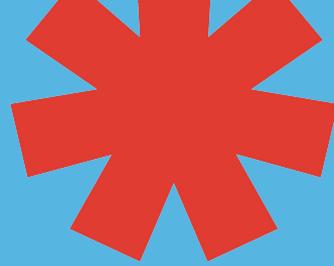


# 2026 Transformers in the Public Sector



Opportunity  
@Work.

**STARS**   
SKILLED THROUGH  
ALTERNATIVE ROUTES..

# Transformers in the Public Sector Cohort

## Building on Success, Expanding Impact

State and local governments across the country are reimagining how they hire and advance talent by shifting to skills-based practices. The *Transformers in the Public Sector Cohort*, led by Opportunity@Work with support from The Volcker Alliance and Third Sector Capital, was launched as the first-ever cohort designed to help public-sector leaders implement these practices.

The [inaugural cohort – with participants from Arizona, California, Colorado, Louisiana, and Utah](#) – demonstrated the power of collaboration in breaking down barriers and creating equitable opportunities for workers, including those [Skilled Through Alternative Routes \(STARs\)](#). STARs make up half of the U.S. workforce but hold only 36% of state jobs. By embedding measurable goals in hiring and advancement, states piloted new approaches to expand economic mobility, strengthen government workforces, and increase access to careers in public service.

Building on this success, *Transformers in the Public Sector* is launching a 2026 cohort with two new tracks and an expanded focus on leaders across all levels of government.

# Track 1 – Technical Assistance

# Track 1: Technical Assistance Cohort (Year-Long, Higher-Touch)

- Designed for public sector teams actively driving implementation of skills-based practices in priority roles: budget/finance (including auditing and procurement), HR/data analysis, or IT/cybersecurity. Teams receive:
  - Tailored coaching and implementation support from a dedicated team of experts
  - Recurring coaching sessions to address challenges, share best practices, and deliver customized guidance
  - Hands-on support such as reviewing job descriptions, stakeholder surveys, and workforce data
  - Exposure to a network of peers working on similar challenges

# How it works: Snapshot of ~12 month engagement Track 1

Participate in two, short 8 week sprints to lead into a 32 week implementation phase



- Government teams will be grouped with peer public sector teams focused on a similar role.
- During Phase 1 and Goal Setting, Opportunity@Work and its partners will support each team as they take stock of their current skills-first talent practices and skills needs in key roles. Teams will join cohort meetings to share progress, learn from others, and receive group technical assistance. This phase will culminate in an in-person convening in spring at which the team will commit to a specific goal for the remainder of the cohort.
- Additional individualized technical assistance conversations are available as needed for teams who would like additional support through Office Hours.

# Track 2 – Skills-Based Foundations

## Track 2: Skills-Based Foundations Cohort (Year-Long, Lower-Touch)

- Designed for teams from any level of government seeking foundational skills-based expertise.

Participants gain:

- Foundational training and leadership development
- Peer learning opportunities and access to expert resources
- Practical tools for implementing skills-first practices in their agencies
- Optional participation in in-person convenings

# How it works: Snapshot of ~12 month engagement Track 2

Participate in quarterly foundational meetings with occasional office hours support



- Each quarterly meeting will be focused on one foundational skills-based talent practice concept (e.g., building a skills-based narrative, skills-based job postings, etc.).
- The Office Hours will be open to both tracks of the cohort and will be open time for teams to ask questions of the other cohort members or support staff.
- In March there will be a optional in-person convening for track 2 participants

# Important Dates

# Dates to Remember

1

**October 22 &  
November 3, 2025**

Application Informational Sessions. These sessions will go over the cohort experience, application, and answer questions.

**Sign up:**

[October 22, 2025 - 2 pm - 3 pm EST](#)

[November 3, 2025 - 12 pm - 1 pm EST](#)

2

**November 15,  
2025**

Application Deadline at 5pm ET/8pm PT

[Apply Here](#)

3

**December 15,  
2025**

Applications reviewed and state teams contacted

4

**January 7, 2026**

Cohorts confirmed and announced \*

5

**January 22, 2026**

Virtual kick-off event from 12 pm - 1 pm EST

\*In order to provide a meaningful cohort experience, cohort sizes will be capped.