



February 2, 2022

Alejandra Y. Castillo
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development
U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Suite 71014
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Castillo,

On behalf of the Technology Councils of North America (TECNA), I am pleased to support the Washington Technology Industry Association's EDA Good Jobs Challenge Grant application for their program, Apprenti.

TECNA represents more than 60 technology trade organizations that, in turn, represent more than 22,000 technology-related companies in North America. TECNA serves members and the technology industry through strong peer-to-peer networks and has a core purpose of empowering regional technology organizations to serve their region's technology ecosystems. TECNA also serves as their collective voice in growing the North American technology economy.

Attracting and retaining a qualified, diverse workforce is the prevalent issue TECNA's member organizations hear from the companies in their region. Apprenti is a remarkable and time-tested way in addressing this fast-growing vast problem in the United States. The application of apprenticeship as a diversity driver and system for developing net new talent for the tech sector is a critical need for keeping up with industry growth.

Apprenti's collective proposal aims to reduce historic workforce barriers for talented jobseekers, and creates opportunity for women, veterans, persons of color and persons with disabilities to access higher wage jobs without the requirement of a STEM degree. With funding, Apprenti can expand education and training opportunities in service to Boeing and Amazon Web Services – a model that can expand to serve hundreds of other companies building an integrated web of apprenticeship.

We're excited about the possibilities and solutions this funding could bring and look forward to working with Apprenti on expanding opportunities for the workforce – opportunities that may have never existed before for them.

Cordially,

Jennifer Grundy Young
CEO
Technology Councils of North America