

ABSTRACT
Vermont Works for Women:
Advancing Women in the Trades and Semiconductor Workforce

Founded in 1987, Vermont Works for Women (VWW) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit serving the state of Vermont. Our mission is to promote economic justice by advancing gender equity and supporting women and youth¹ at every stage of their career journeys.

Project purpose: Vermont Works for Women’s proposed project leverages the success of our established trades training programs and gender equity technical assistance expertise to move the needle on gender equity in the trades and semiconductor workforce in Vermont. With WANTO funding, we will harness the momentum of the CHIPS Act by establishing a new quick start pathway to the growing semiconductor and advanced manufacturing industries, expand our successful Trailblazers trades pre-apprenticeship program to reach more rural, low-income women around Vermont, provide extensive gender equity training and technical assistance for employers to support inclusive workplaces, and enhance services for current and future tradeswomen to support their retention and success in A/NTO.

Proposed Activities & Outcomes: With WANTO support, VWW will help more Vermont women prepare for and succeed in A/NTO, through the following activities:

Objective 1. Establish a new quick start pathway to the growing semiconductor and advanced manufacturing industries for entry levels jobs or apprenticeships post-graduation. This new training program builds off the success of our Trailblazers training model, provides new opportunities for women to quickly train for apprenticeships/careers in a fast-growing sector where women are underrepresented, and leverages significant community resources through new partnerships with University of Vermont (UVM), VT Manufacturing Extension Center (VMEC),

¹ VWW’s programs welcome anyone who identifies as a woman or girl regardless of assignment at birth, and individuals who are non-binary or gender-expansive who are comfortable in a female-centered space.

and GlobalFoundries, a leading semiconductor manufacturing company with a fab plant in Essex, VT and recipient of CHIPS Act funding.

- *Expected outcomes:* three training cohorts total, 10 women/cohort; 26 graduates moving directly into employment/apprenticeship.

Objective 2. Expand our Trailblazers pre-apprenticeship trades training program to serve more rural women and increase recruitment of lower income women who are ready to work in the trades and increase their income.

- *Expected outcomes:* three training cohorts/year (six cohorts total) 10 women/cohort; 40 graduates securing employment in the trades.

Objective 3. Enhance our gender equity services and technical assistance for trades employers to create successful environments for women in A/NTO.

- *Expected outcomes:* development of one new workshop offering; delivery of 28 workshops; annual convening of trades employers (two convenings total, 60 employers); targeted technical assistance to one industry (broadband installation and maintenance).

Objective 4. Provide support services and networking for women and girls in A/NTO to improve retention.

- *Expected outcomes:* Convening of two Affinity Groups: Vermont Tradeswomen (10 convenings total, 100 women) and Girls in Nontraditional Tech (4 convenings total, 50 girls).

Intended beneficiaries: Vermont women, with a focus on low-income, rural, and career-motivated individuals; Vermont Employers; Vermont women already working in the trades; and young women enrolled in nontraditional career and technical education programs across Vermont.