

Care First Community Investment Town Hall

Workforce, Economic Mobility, and Small Business Programs
Director Kelly LoBianco - April 30, 2026

Overview and Focus

Purpose: Provide the CFCI Committee and the public with a status update on Years 3 and 5 CFCI-funded programs, a focus on how these investments are advancing implementation, generating early results, and laying the foundation for systems change and innovation in economic and workforce development.



Portfolio Snapshot

A high-level look at the CFCI portfolio



Systems Change and Innovation

How CFCI investments are seeding new approaches and building a foundation for future work



Program Updates for Key Investments

Status, early successes, challenges, and outcomes



On the Horizon

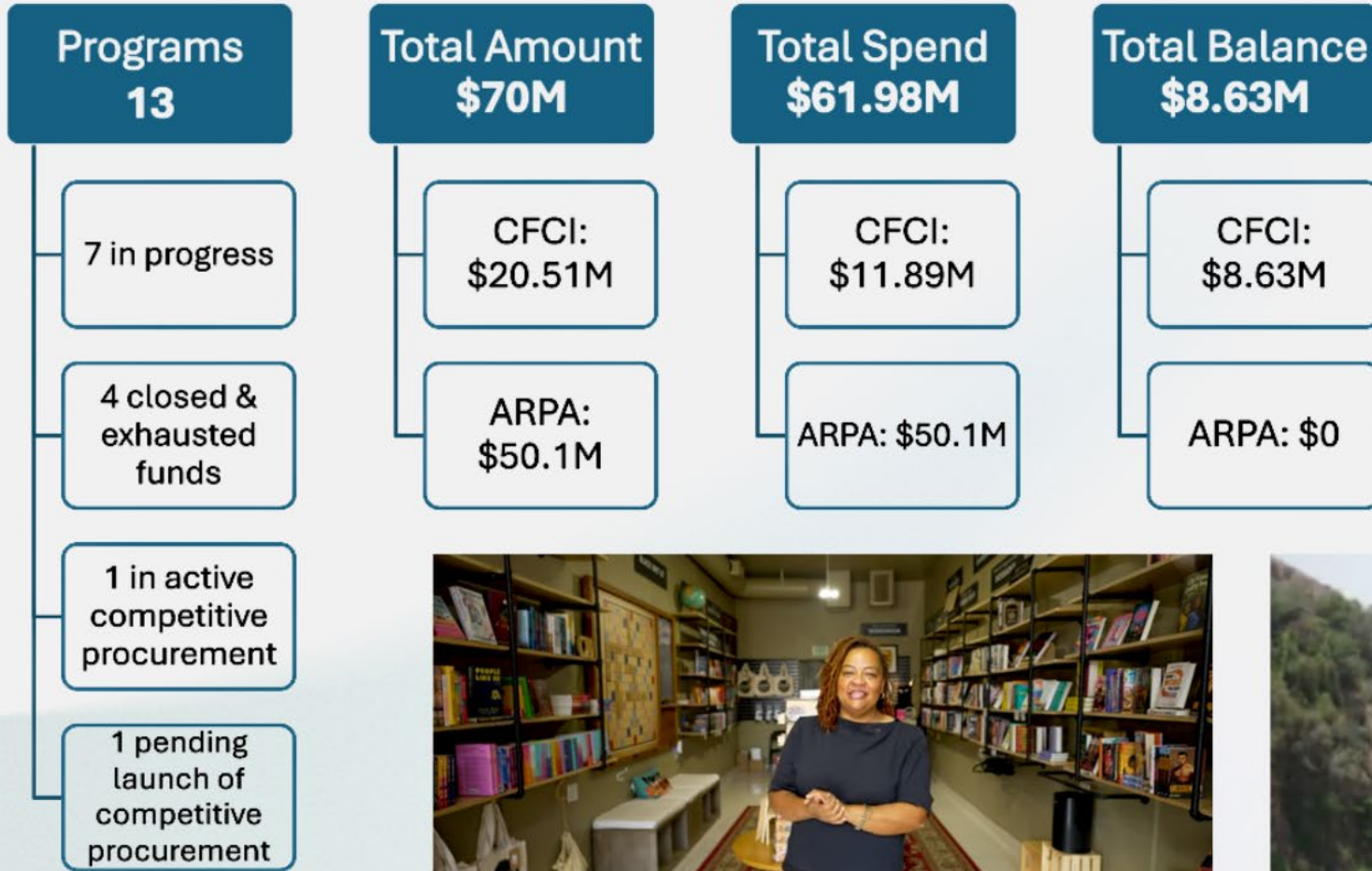
Upcoming milestones, and opportunities to strengthen impact




Questions and Discussion

Feedback, discussion, and next steps




Portfolio Snapshot



Portfolio Snapshot – Workforce & Economic Mobility

	PROGRAM NAME AS APPROVED	PUBLIC NAME	AMOUNT	SOURCE	LEVERAGED FUNDS
	Job Readiness, Training and Placements for Adults	High Road Training Partnerships (H RTP)	\$2M	CFCI	ARPA
	General Job Training and Employment (Non-Justice Involved Populations)		\$2.599M	CFCI	
	Ethical AI and Art for Community College Youth Program to Creative Jobs		\$1.328M	CFCI	
	County Pipeline Programs	Preparing Los Angeles for County Employment (PLACE)	\$498,000	CFCI	County general funds
	Careers for a Cause Training Programs	Careers for a Cause	\$2.6M	ARPA	\$2.6M additional ARPA funds (total \$5.2)

Portfolio Snapshot – Small Business Programs

	PROGRAM NAME AS APPROVED	PUBLIC NAME	AMOUNT	SOURCE	LEVERAGED FUNDS
	Support for Small and/or Cooperatively Owned Businesses	Employee and Worker Ownership Initiative (EWOI)	\$4.983M	CFCI	N/A
	General Access to Funding for Small, Minority-Owned Businesses	3 subprograms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA Region Small Business Relief Fund (2025 wildfire relief) • Launch and Growth Grants • Cannabis Social Equity Program 	\$5.78M	CFCI	Fire relief, philanthropic funds
	LA County Safe-to-Work Business Interruption Fund	Small Business Resiliency Fund	\$3.3M	CFCI	Philanthropic and County funds
	Economic Mobility Initiative	Economic Mobility Initiative (EMI)	\$15M	ARPA	
	Keep LA Dining	Economic Opportunity Grant (EOG) Program	\$10M	ARPA	
	LA Regional COVID Fund: Small and Microbusiness Grants		\$20M	ARPA	
	Legal Aid for Small Business Owners	Small Business Legal Aid Program	\$1.5M	ARPA	
	Shop Local Campaign	Shop Local LA County	\$1M	ARPA	

CFCI as a Catalyst for Innovation

CFCI investments are advancing implementation while seeding systems change and laying the foundation for new, innovative approaches to economic and workforce development.

- **Piloting new approaches to workforce and economic mobility**
- **Building the foundation for longer-term systems change**
- **Creating new partnerships and strengthening partnerships**
- **Informing future strategy, investment, and program design**

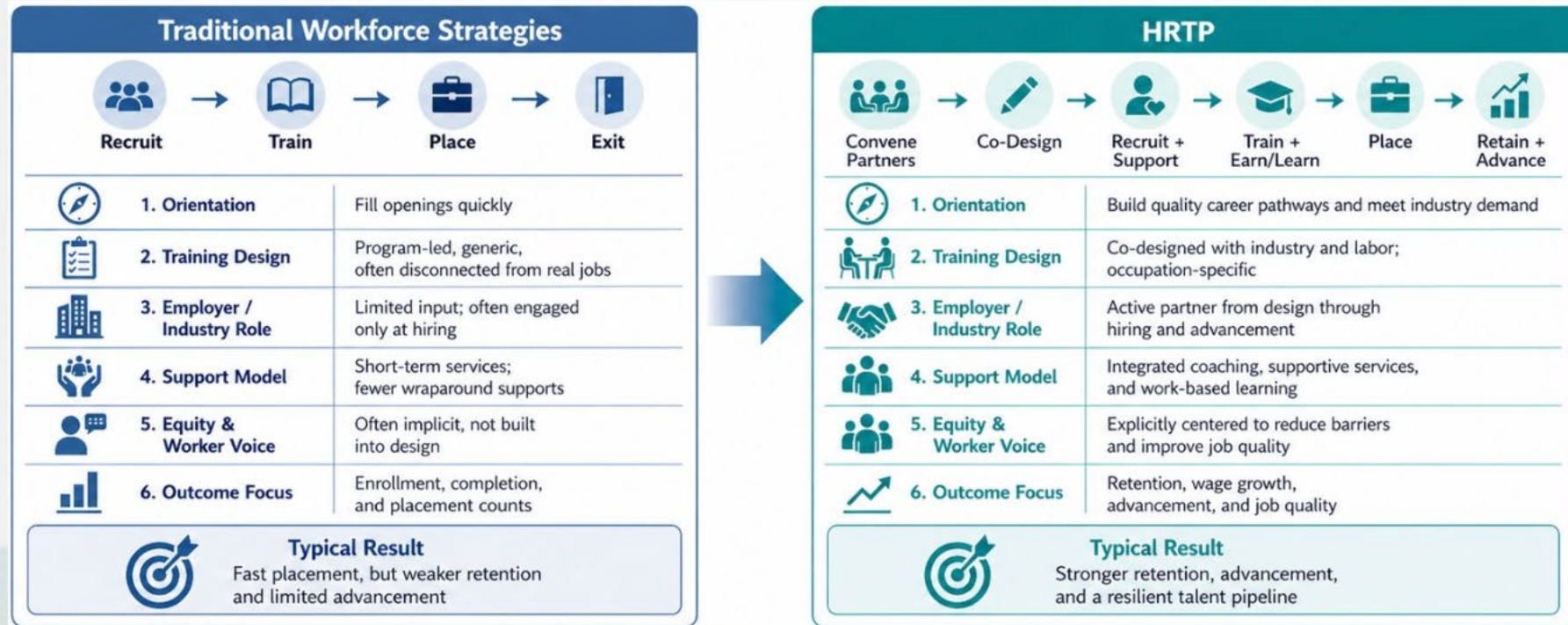


Deep Dive

Workforce & Economic Mobility

Traditional Workforce Strategies vs. High Road Training Partnerships (H RTP)

A shift from short-term placement to industry-driven, equity centered career pathways



Key Difference:



Traditional approaches are often transactional and short term



H RTPs are collaborative, industry-driven, and centered on quality jobs

H RTP Phases

One

- 8 training partners with ARPA funds in health care, construction & trades, early care and education, film and digital media, among others.

Two

- H RTP Fund Launched in April 2025
- More than \$17 million available (ARPA and CFCI) awarded to 20 H RTP programs
- Opened funding to a broad range of partners
- Communities most impacted by COVID-19 and racial and economic inequities
- Received more than 100 highly competitive applications
- Anticipated enrollment of more than 1,800 workers

Three

- H RTP Fund Extension for existing grantees RFA released on April 27, 2026
- \$2.75M for 3 grantees
- Trainings expected to launch in August and September 2026

Four

- Target RFA release no later than October 2026
- H RTP Fund Expansion with additional non-CFCI braided funds



Website:
<https://opportunity.lacounty.gov/hrtp/>



H RTP Fund Grantees and Sectors

Aerospace	Healthcare	Creative	Construction	Technology	Hospitality	Public
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rio Hondo Community College District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propel America Pilipino Workers Center of Southern California Prestige Career College Loyola Marymount University (LMU) REDF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Earth Worldwide Starship Foundation White Hall Community Arts Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRID Alternatives Greater Los Angeles Los Angeles Urban League Center for Employment Opportunities LA/OC Building Trades Apprenticeship Readiness Fund Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI) Western States Council of SMART Get Focused...Stay Focused! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per Scholas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality Industry Training and Education Fund Homeboy Industries The SoLa Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Los Angeles Community College District



H RTP Outcomes to Date



Status

Launched and Services in Progress



Leverage

ARPA



County Priority

Multiple Board-adopted motions
including [this](#)

- On track to enrolling 1,800+ people.
- Outcomes to date:
 - 121 employers as committed partners
 - 292 participants in Registered Apprenticeships
 - 239 participants gained employment
 - 1,231 participants enrolled
 - Median wage at point of job entry: \$22.00*
 - Long-term measures: Retention, wage growth, career advancement, job quality, and stronger talent pipelines

**[Living Wage Calculator - Living Wage Calculation for Los Angeles County, California](#)*

H RTP Outcomes to Date



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- Impact story: [Green Futures LA, Get Focus and Stay Focused Graduation](#)


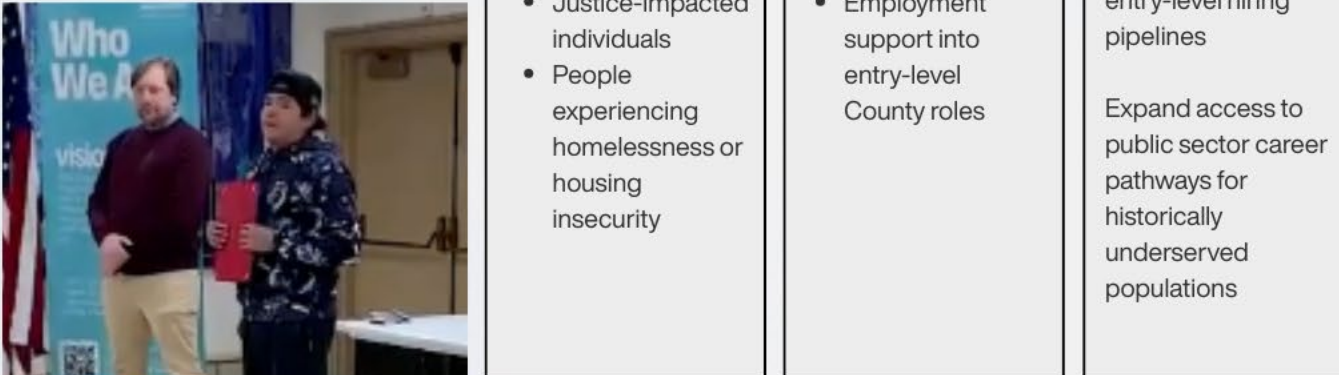
PLACE - Public Sector Career Pathways



Public sector jobs often combine job quality, stability, benefits, and advancement pathways—making them especially valuable for workers who face barriers to employment.



PLACE - Public Sector Career Pathways

Purpose	Program Model	Workforce Need	Career Pathways	Populations	Core Services	Program Goals
<p>Connect LA County residents facing barriers to employment to high-quality, entry-level County careers through a worker- and employer-informed training model</p>	<p>Uses a H RTP approach that brings together worker voice, training providers, County employers, and DEO as convener to co-design workforce solutions.</p>	<p>Helps County departments address entry-level vacancies while building a more representative public sector workforce that reflects LA County communities.</p>	<p>Creates access to permanent County employment and connects residents to a broader pipeline of more than 100,000 quality public sector jobs with family-sustaining wages.</p>	<p>High barriers to employment, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economically disadvantaged communities • General Relief and CalWORKs participants • Transition-aged youth • Justice-impacted individuals • People experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to eight weeks of work readiness training • Civil Service Exam and County hiring process preparation • Stipends and wraparound supports • Employment support into entry-level County roles 	<p>Serve nearly 250 participants</p> <p>Support more than 180 residents in securing permanent County employment</p> <p>Reduce departmental vacancies through entry-level hiring pipelines</p> <p>Expand access to public sector career pathways for historically underserved populations</p>
						

PLACE - Public Sector Career Pathways



Status

Pre-Launch:
Procurement Stage

Procurement release May 2026,
Encumbered June/July 2026



Leverage

General County
Funds



County Priority

Board adopted motion: PLACE
hiring goals are part of official
department head evaluation goals



Deep Dive

Small Business Programs

Employee & Worker Ownership Initiative (EWOI): Expanding the Small Business Ecosystem

THE TRADITIONAL SMALL BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM



Government small business programs often support core business services, but worker ownership is frequently overlooked.



GROWING MOMENTUM

Over the past decade, interest has grown in alternative business models that promote collective progress and wealth building.

WHY IT MATTERS



1. Shared Prosperity

Builds wealth collectively rather than concentrating ownership in one person.



2. More Sustainable Businesses

Creates stronger long-term models rooted in worker commitment and community stability.



3. Inclusive Entrepreneurship

Expands pathways for people who may lack access to traditional business ownership opportunities.



4. Community Wealth Building

Keeps decision-making and economic benefits closer to workers and local communities.



Worker ownership helps broaden the small business ecosystem by pairing entrepreneurship with equity, stability, and shared wealth building.

Data Points: Effectiveness of Employee Ownership Models

- Young employee-owners ages 28 to 34 had 33% higher wages and 92% higher household wealth than comparable non-employee-owners (Rutgers University)
- There are approximately 6,660 ESOPs in the U.S., covering 14.2 million participants and holding nearly \$1.4 trillion in assets (NCEO)
- During COVID-19, ESOP companies were 3 to 4 times more likely to retain staff and were less likely to cut pay compared with non-employee-owned companies (NCEO)

EWOL: Expanding the Small Business Ecosystem

Purpose	Design Process	Core Components	Populations	Program Goals
<p>Expand the County's small business development ecosystem by supporting small and cooperatively owned businesses, with a focus on equitable and alternative ownership</p>	<p>Multi-component program model developed through a year-long process with 12+ leaders advancing worker ownership, cooperative business models, and other equity-centered ownership strategies.</p> <p>Advisory group engagement was required by a Board-approved motion and helped shape the CFCI-funded program design.</p>	<p>Technical assistance and business support, from start to growth, including legal structure and governance and financial counseling</p> <p>Marketing</p> <p>Capital access</p>	<p>Small business owners, entrepreneurs, and workers interested in cooperative or shared ownership models.</p> <p>Communities and individuals historically excluded from traditional business ownership opportunities, capital, and technical assistance.</p>	<p>Build stronger County infrastructure for employee and worker ownership models.</p> <p>Expand access to equitable entrepreneurship and collective wealth-building opportunities.</p> <p>Establish a foundation for longer-term investment in worker-owned, cooperative, and community-centered business development.</p>

EWOI: Expanding the Small Business Ecosystem



Status
Pre-Launch:
Procurement Stage

Encumbrance and a staggered launch plan are targeted for May 2026



Leverage
ARPA



**County
Priority**

Board approved motion

Board motion: [Launching a “Worker Ownership Initiative” to Build Wealth, Retain Quality Jobs, and Stabilize Businesses](#)

Crisis Response: Recovery and Resiliency



Status

Launched and closed



Leverage

Philanthropic Funds

● LA Region Small Business & Worker Relief Fund

- Total \$27.5M including \$1 M in CFCI
- Fire-impacted businesses & workers

● Outcomes

- 2,181 businesses awarded
- 2,892 workers awarded

● Partners

- SoCal Grantmakers
- Aidkit

Impact Stories: Fire Recovery

● Worker Grants

Ms. Jones of Altadena was impacted by the Eaton Fire and received a grant of \$2K help her get back on her feet



● Business Grants

Bevel Coffee opened its first permanent storefront in Altadena, becoming one of the first new businesses since the Eaton fire destroyed thousands of homes. After the fires, the pop-up served as a refuge for displaced residents, offering a sense of normalcy and community as they rebuilt their lives.




Read LA Times story about Bevel Coffee [here](#)

Watch Ms. Jones's story [here](#)

Crisis Response: Recovery and Resiliency

Status



Launched and Closed

Leverage



County General Funds

- **Small Business Resiliency Fund**
 - Total \$6M including \$5.1M in CFCI
 - Businesses impacted by immigration enforcement action
- **Outcomes**
 - 1,327 small businesses awarded
- **Partners**
 - SoCal Grantmakers
 - Aidkit

Capital Access for Small Businesses



Status

Launched and
Services in Progress

● 2 Grant Programs

- Entrepreneurship Academy: \$2K startup grants for graduates of DEO Economic Mobility Initiative Entrepreneurship Academy.
- Launch: \$5K or \$10K grants for new commercial or warehouse space or retail storefronts in the unincorporated areas to support business growth, launch, rebuild.

● Outcomes to date

- 70 Entrepreneurship Academy Grants disbursed
- 12 Launch Grants disbursed

● Partners

- ICON CDC

Education for Small Businesses



Status

Encumbered, Launch
Planned for May 2026

● Cannabis Social Equity Entrepreneurship Program

- Program Goal: Support existing and prospective entrepreneurs and communities most harmed by past cannabis prohibition with education and assistance to successfully enter the cannabis sale and delivery sectors.

● Partners

- Department of Consumer and Business Affairs
- ICON CDC

What's Next on the Horizon?

- Launch pending programs and move active solicitations through awards, contracting and implementation
- Promote active programs to ensure eligible residents, businesses, workers, and community partners are aware of available services.
- Communicate progress regularly with the public, the CFCI Advisory Committee, and stakeholders.
- Track outcomes for active programs to measure progress, identify early results, and surface lessons learned.
- Leverage additional funds for programs demonstrating positive results and strong alignment with the CFCI ethos.

Thank You!
Questions and Discussions