



**Center for Business Analytics
and Community Research**
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA UPSTATE

Southern Business Administration Association

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The Idea – USC Upstate Talent Forum

The Upstate Talent Forum is a collaborative effort to align educational offerings with the evolving talent needs of the industry, creating a skilled and adaptable workforce to support the growth of local industries.



- The Talent Forum is focused on bridging the talent gap for regional prosperity in the Upstate region, bringing together leaders, industry experts and community stakeholders to drive innovation and forward workforce across various industries including manufacturing, healthcare, and technology.
- The Talent Forum was co-convened with OneSpartanburg, Inc. and the Greenville Chamber of Commerce – emphasizing cultivating and retaining talent to propel economic growth.
- The mission of the Forum aligns with USC Upstate’s commitment to transforming lives through education and advancing social and economic mobility in the region.

USC Upstate Impact

Human Capital Resource

- 68% of USC Upstate graduates remain in the Upstate
- 80% of USC Upstate graduates reside in South Carolina
- 1 in 5 Nurses at Spartanburg Regional Health System and Prisma Healthcare are USC Upstate graduates
- 1 in 5 Teachers in Spartanburg and Greenville Counties are USC Upstate graduates.
- Industry investments in USC Upstate

Responding to Workforce Needs

- BS in Advanced Manufacturing Technology
- BS in Engineering Technology Management
- BS in Cybersecurity
- BS in Computer Information Systems
- BS in Logistics and Supply Chain Management
- Masters in Business Analytics
- Masters in Informatics

New Programs

- BS in Industrial Engineering
- BS in Data Science
- BS in Sports Management
- BA in Math
- Ed.S. In Applied Teacher Leadership

Our Mission

“Education for all that inspires a thriving and just society.”



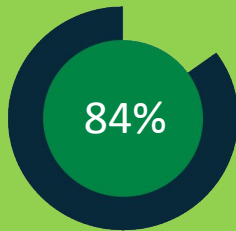
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USC Upstate makes a **\$500 MILLION** Annual economic impact on South Carolina

32,000+ USC Upstate alumni



in Upstate counties



in South Carolina

65+ Student organizations

Financial Aid

\$64 million awarded annually

\$3.1 million in Institutional Scholarships

2,005+ SC Scholars (Palmetto Fellows, Life, Hope)



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Early-Stage Process: Pre-Talent Forum Research

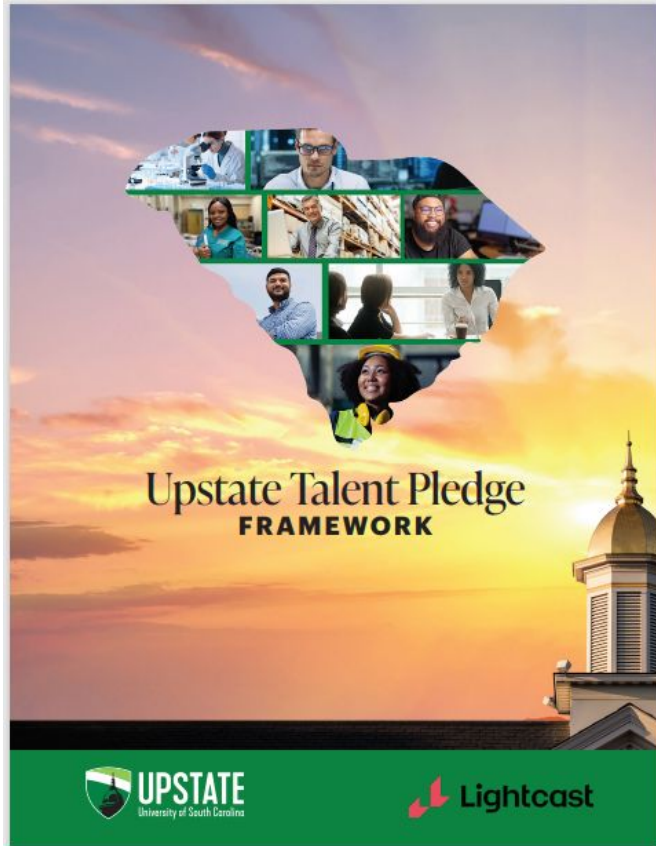
1. Basic regional economic and demographic profile (Open-source data from multiple sources including IRS, U.S. Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, etc.).
2. Survey directed to industry leaders to identify specific “talent pain points.”
 - a) Approximate number of people the business employs in region.
 - b) Is there an adequate supply of qualified talent in region to fill position types at business?
 - c) Educational programs/initiatives that need strengthening to address talent gaps?
 - d) In the next 3 years, which of the following workforce training resources does your business plan to use to develop and strengthen your existing workforce?
 - e) What is your company’s plan for providing education, learning, or training assistance to employees?
 - f) Which of the following types of educational institutions does your business/organization collaborate with in the Upstate region?
 - g) What specific support or resources would you like to see from higher education institutions in the region to help bridge the skill gaps in your industry?

*Items taken directly/or paraphrased from
Pre-Talent Forum industry survey
administered by Lightcast.*



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Findings from the Pre-Forum Research and the Talent Forum Roundtables Grouped into Categories



- 1** Bridging the Skills Gap
- 2** Business-Education Partnerships
- 3** Building Effective Mentorship Programs
- 4** Creating Inclusive Work Environments
- 5** The Future of Continuing Education
- 6** How to Make On-the-Job Training More Effective

Initial projects

Early Career Exploration

- Identify current early career actions in region's k-12 schools.
- Sponsor learning/networking events for middle and high school students to provide broad exposure to career opportunities.
- Must be a collaboration between business and education.

Re-degree

- 5,000 adults in Spartanburg County with some college education, but no earned credential.
- OneSpartanburg, SAM, and higher education are engaged.
- Need to consider the ramp-up and scalability of initiative.

Specialized and Lifelong Learning Programs

- Importance of certifications and microcredentials where skills are rapidly evolving.
- Identify at least one microcredential that addresses a significant skills gap.

Experiential

Learning/**Internships**/Work-based Learning

- Research suggests that experiential learning is very effective.
- Allows students to interact with a work environment in a realistic manner.
- Emphasis of this team is to help establish a mechanism to effectively match student with employers.

Mentorship

- Define clear roles and expectations in mentoring programs.
- Identify flexible and adaptable frameworks.
- Leverage technology.

Corporate Culture (not yet established)

- Foster inclusive cultures.
- Implement flexible work arrangements.
- Develop collaborative childcare solutions.



Project Team Recruitment and Implementation

- Started with volunteers from both internal and external Upstate Talent Forum advisory groups
- Committed to pillars of the Upstate Talent Pledge
 - Co-Creation of Talent, High Quality Jobs and Equitable Pathways, Prepare and Connect Talent, Prioritize Local Talent
- Targeted individuals who could move on a particular objective (not necessarily C-suite)
- Hybrid agile approach to team membership
- Asked teams to identify team leads within group



Learning Points-Successes

- Community and region aligned toward economic development
- Active engagement across sectors
 - Public/non-profit organizations critical
 - OneSpartanburg, Greenville Chamber of Commerce, Ten at the Top
- Team leadership from all sectors
- Tangible success stories in year 1

Learning Points-Challenges

- Talent Forum as a priority across constituencies
- Proprietary attitudes
- Inconsistent team leadership
- Lack of a common, easy reporting system
 - No central administrative support
- No implementation specific funding



2024 Upstate Talent Forum



Engage with Visionary Leaders: Gain insights from influential panelists on workforce development, artificial intelligence, and how it all impacts state-wide economic strategies.

Interactive sessions: Participate in collaborative discussions and workshops designed to provide actionable takeaways.

Enhanced Experience: Building on the success of our inaugural event, this year's forum promises even greater value and networking opportunities.



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Conclusion and Q&A



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