

# Finger Lakes Partnership Implementation Plan - DRAFT

## Executive Summary:

The Finger Lakes Partnership was created to link the communities of education, workforce development and economic development, creating an entrepreneurial, industry-driven, integrated system. The nine-county Finger Lakes region is undergoing an historic restructuring — it came to depend on the successes of Eastman Kodak Company, Xerox Corp., and Bausch & Lomb, creating a big-company manufacturing culture that has floundered as technologies changed and global economic shifts left the region in a state of decline. The Finger Lakes Partnership is committed to creating systemic change in our region. The Finger Lakes Partnership has been designed and will be implemented by a strong team of business, investor, entrepreneurial, philanthropic, government and academic leaders who share a mission to increase the region's capacity to support talent development for sustained economic growth.

The Finger Lakes region was once among America's most innovative and entrepreneurial. The decline of its large manufacturers in the last two decades is evidenced by increasing poverty and unemployment, decreasing wages, low graduation rates and sluggish job creation. The area has responded by cultivating technology development organizations and funding services and facilities to support the creation of more start-up companies. Economic analysis, however, highlights an absence of integrated collaboration and sharing of best practices among regional stakeholders; this has created a barrier for transforming the Finger Lakes region into an innovative and entrepreneurial economy. A report prepared by the US Council on Competitiveness reinforced this conclusion: *"Greater Rochester has the assets necessary to develop a strong entrepreneurial economy. Indeed, the Rochester area surpasses most regions in the U.S. on many dimensions relevant to supporting innovation and entrepreneurship. However, to date, the region has not become an entrepreneurial success story...A fundamental challenge is cultural - the region lacks a strong entrepreneurial environment."*

The twenty-one members of the Partnership represent critical leadership throughout the Finger Lakes region; strategic leaders from all sectors have endorsed this proposal and are poised to be agents for change in the region. RochesterWorks Inc., the non-profit arm of the Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Investment Board (WIB), will lead the project, employing the project management team, facilitating partner projects and maintaining communication among regional, state, and federal stakeholders. In cooperation, the Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, and Wyoming WIB and the Finger Lakes WIB (comprised of Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, and Yates counties) will connect the initiatives to job seekers, employers and education systems. Government partners include the City of Rochester, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates Counties, Empire State Development and Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, which represents all nine counties and is the planning entity for the New York State-designated Economic Development District. Public / private entrepreneurial leaders for this project are Greater Rochester Enterprise, High Tech Rochester, Infotonics Technology Center, Rochester Business Alliance, and the Cornell Agriculture and Food Tech Park. The academic community is represented in the Rochester Area Colleges and specifically by the University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology, as well as Finger Lakes, Genesee and Monroe Community Colleges.

The organizations invested in the Partnership have joined together to increase the region's talent to drive real economic growth, placing an emphasis on the talents of its entrepreneurial community and the sharing of infrastructure, leveraging each other's strengths, all of which will amplify the region's capacity for innovation and build a stronger economy. In addition to the region's business leaders, the investment community is an important partner, represented by the Rochester Angel Network and Trillium Group, a regional venture capital firm. Philanthropic support for regional job creation and entrepreneurship is given by Rochester Area Community Foundation.

The Governing Board for the Partnership has adopted a mission to increase job growth and the region's capacity to support talent development for sustained economic growth. This mission supports the vision that the Finger Lakes region is a premier place in which to innovate. Reflected in a willingness to invest in

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entrepreneurial operations, provide trained workers, empowering both businesses and workers to be agile, adaptable and aligned with global opportunities, the Partnership is focused on driving economic and job growth through an integrated system of Regionally focused resources.

The Partnership is operating under the following guiding principles:

### Opportunity Driven

Support initiatives that leverage assets and other resources to best position the region for economic growth.

### Innovative Culture

Foster a partnership culture that supports risk taking as part of the innovation and entrepreneurial process.

### Collaboration

Demonstrate regional teamwork, communication, accountability, support, and commitment to achieving partnership vision.

### Sustainable

Identify and secure resources to continue transformative initiatives.

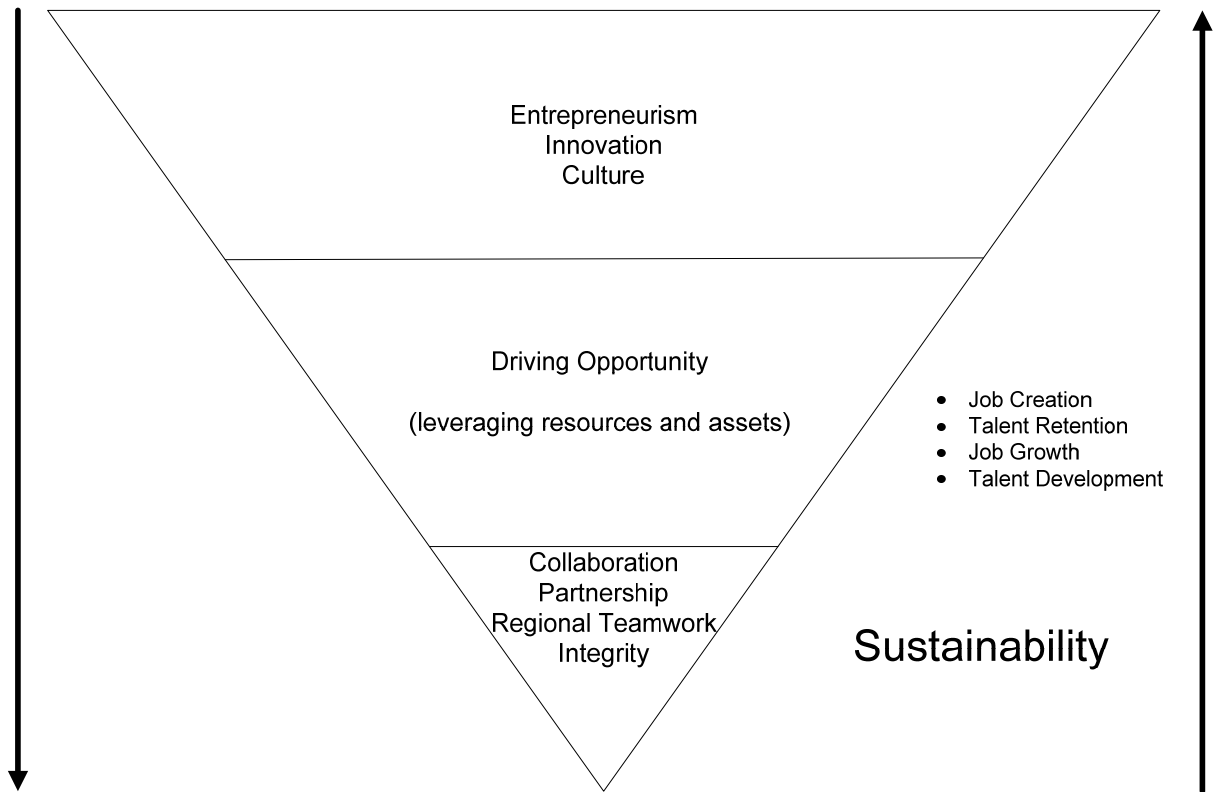
### Integrity

Build trusting, regional relationships that form the foundation of our work.

The Partnership has identified seventeen measurable outcomes of this project, including: increased employment and retention; improved earnings and reversed decline in wages (relative to the national average); increased job growth and the number of start-up companies, including from orphan technologies; improved employer satisfaction; involvement of high school students and teachers in entrepreneurial activities; increased participation in training by companies and individuals, including training of would-be entrepreneurs and innovators in high-growth sectors; doubled participation in business plan competition; creation of industry-led clusters that stimulate sector growth; and economic development intervention with companies identified as high-risk. The outcomes will directly involve and impact thousands of people and improve the business climate for the 1.2 million residents of the Finger Lakes region.

In order to be successful, the Leaders of the Partnership will adopt a regional identity and process of collaborative networking and communication to support regional economic strategies. This Regional identity will be evident by Partners investing resources and energies toward the attainment of regional strategies and initiatives that will result in economic and job growth. This will be measured by an improvement in the region's entrepreneurial culture as cited in the 2004 study by the Council on Competitiveness. The Partnership's work will be carried out through existing organizations and implementation teams designed around economic development, entrepreneurship, innovation and workforce development.

## Economic Development Growth



***Sustained economic growth and job creation on a Regional level is a function of a trust-based collaborative culture that fosters partnering and a willingness to work as a regional team for a bigger-picture perspective. It is this collaborative culture that leverages a broader range of resources and assets in support of innovation, in support of entrepreneurship, in job creation. To the extent this culture of Collaboration, Partnership and Regional perspective develops, the prospect of economic and job growth will be achievable.***

### **WIRED Goals:**

The Finger Lakes Partnership has four strategic goals to support job creation: 1) energize the region's entrepreneurial economy; 2) catalyze regional innovation and convert orphan or under-utilized technology into vibrant business ventures; 3) educate and empower workers to successfully compete in the changing global economy; and 4) build a collaborative regional education, workforce and economic development system.

Each of Partnership goal is supported by key strategies and actions. The key strategies address critical gaps in the region's educational, workforce or economic development system. Several partner organizations have done extensive analysis to provide a list of needs and gaps in the region's talent development network.

The needs and gaps in each area have been captured here:

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## Economic Development

1. Lack of regional economic analysis to predict and support current and emerging business needs.
2. Inconsistency in cluster definitions and limited cluster support.
3. Need for more regional strategic business attraction activities in highly competitive environment.

## Entrepreneurship

1. Weak entrepreneurial culture.
2. Shortage of experienced entrepreneurs for scaleable enterprises.
3. Lack of venture capital.

## Innovation

1. Lack of entrepreneurial talent to link technology to market for new and existing businesses.
2. Unable to access corporate orphan technologies.
3. Academic research not accessible to support business success.
4. Insufficient risk capital for pre-seed.

## Workforce Development

1. Critical skilled worker shortages in key industry clusters.
2. Lack of demand driven – regional workforce development system.

The Partnership is focused on the following strategies to address the needs in these areas; it's worth noting that not all strategies will be addressed directly with WIRED resources:

## Economic Development

1. Develop predictive analysis capability to support business attraction, growth and retention efforts throughout the region.
2. Identify and support the development of key industry clusters to gain competitive advantage for the region.
3. Support competitive advantage for entrepreneurs, small and medium sized businesses by establishing a knowledge clearinghouse of industry best practices and other resources.

## Entrepreneurial

1. Increase entrepreneurial talent throughout the region.
2. Strengthen the entrepreneurial culture and broaden participation in risk taking throughout the region.
3. Eliminate early stage capital gaps.

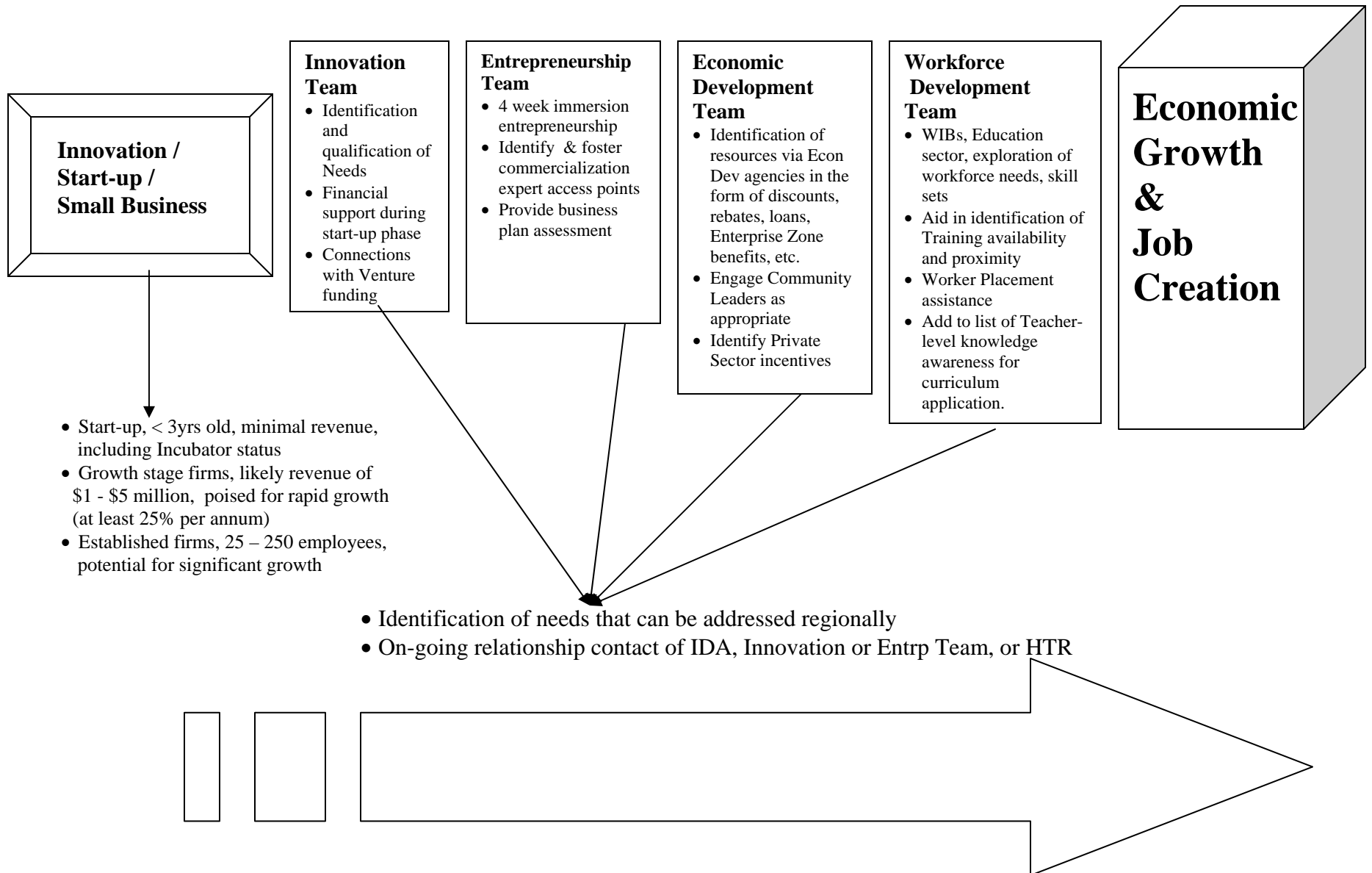
## Innovation

1. Improve the identification and development of research technologies in corporations or educational institutions.
2. Accelerate the commercialization of technologies that are identified in the region.
3. Establish innovation test beds to increase the success of technology commercialization.
4. Establish a New Initiatives Fund to support additional Entrepreneurial or Innovation concepts.

## Workforce Development

1. Increase worker training to meet critical skill needs in key industry clusters throughout the region.
2. Link school systems, colleges and the private sector to develop a demand driven regional workforce development system.
3. Inform the region of current and future career possibilities.
4. Establish a Workforce Innovations Fund to support additional skill development needs.

**WIRED PARTNERSHIP WORKING TOGETHER**



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Projects approved for WIRED funding by the Governing Board cross all four goals related to economic development, entrepreneurship, innovation and workforce development and address critical gaps in the region's educational, workforce or economic development system.

- 1. Masters of Science Degree in Science and Technology (MS-STC)**
  - Executive Program founded for the study of successful entrepreneurship
  - Addresses the shortage of people who can look at a technology and determine whether it can be commercialized
  - Existing curriculum from University of Texas at Austin will be utilized
  - Initiative led by UR
  
- 2. Entrepreneurship & Strategic Growth Immersion Sequence Program**
  - Immersion Sequence program targets high-growth potential small enterprises managers wishing to join or lead commercialization teams. Also targets potential and existing entrepreneurs
  - Connecting entrepreneurial acumen with economic growth
  - Focus Groups to identify barriers and gaps in year one – course will be developed from the information gained in those focus groups.
  - Initiative led by RIT
  
- 3. The Entrepreneurs Network (TEN)**
  - 6-month program including a boot camp, work shops, and panel events that are designed to optimize exposure to, and interaction with leading local and national entrepreneurial experts connecting entrepreneurial acumen with economic growth
  - Intended to introduce entrepreneurs to new ideas and avenues to attract capital.
  - Initiative led by COMIDA
  
- 4. Pre-Seed Workshops**
  - 2+ day sessions will provide an assessment of business potential for a specific invention, and will foster a collaboration of technologists/inventors knowledgeable about business creation realities and connect them with a business network for future assistance.
  - Addresses gap in the commercialization continuum at “pre-seed” stage and will improve the identification and qualify technologies for transfer.
  - Initiative led by HTR
  
- 5. SBIR Outreach and Access**
  - Intent is to move the region's SBIR/STTR participation to a much higher level through assistance of grant and connection with other available resources.
  - Will educate entrepreneurs and small business owners of grant funding opportunities, proposal reviews, proposal preparers, and solicitation finders.
  - Initiative led by HTR
  
- 6. Tech Commercialization Process**
  - Intent is to accelerates the commercialization of university and orphan technology from local companies
  - Program proposes to augment the traditional licensing programs of the local research institutions with entrepreneurs and product development specialists to identify and nurture high potential technologies and lead them into the marketplace either by new business formation or by infusion into existing regional companies
  - Initiative led by HTR
  
- 7. Scholarship Fund**
  - Addresses skilled worker shortages in the 4 Target Clusters (Alternative Energy, Bio/Life Science, Food & Ag, Optics/Imaging) plus Advanced Manufacturing.

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- Funding available for process improvement initiatives in Health Care and Business Services sectors (begin to bring these initiatives into non-manufacturing settings)
- Will provide scholarships to businesses to train their employees in skills that will lead to credentials/certifications or transferable skills.
- Initiative led by RochesterWorks

### **8. Regional Apprentices System**

- Develop industry-based apprentice system for the Finger Lakes Region
- System will begin with several new education/training programs for three of the four targeted industry clusters (optics, printing/packaging, bio-manufacturing and food processing industries)
- Initiative led by MCC

### **9. Educator Internships**

- Placing teacher-interns in industry and will engage employers from high tech and emerging industries of Optics/Imaging, Biotech/Life Sciences, Alternative Energy, and Food and Agriculture
- The project will engage educators and will impact students by creating linkages to high-tech and emerging industries that currently do not exist among school districts, educators, and employers in the region
- Initiative led by Finger Lakes Works and RACEC

### **10. Predictive Analysis – Business Attraction**

- This project will help develop robust knowledge of assets in targeted clusters, identify high-growth sub-sectors of those clusters (and leading companies within those sub-sectors), perform in-depth research on each identified company, and will set up mission trip of ED professionals, senior business leaders, government officials, etc. to proactively visit target companies.
- Project will augment current ED activities and be adopted by the Economic Development system (leading to systems transformation and sustainability)
- Initiative led by GRE.

### **11. Predictive Analysis – Retention and Expansion**

- Develop and utilize predictive analysis tools to identify companies with high likelihood of expansion or contraction, so that economic development resources can be focused wherever necessary
- Understanding and communication of individual companies' needs will make it easier to plug existing companies into new innovations occurring in the region, which may help them solidify and grow their businesses.
- Initiative led by GRE

### **12. Finger Lakes Resource Network**

- Develop a readily accessible web portal designed to more easily and effectively connect Finger Lakes region economic and workforce development stakeholders, companies and cluster organizations with economic and demographic data, regional asset inventories and company directories
- Planned marketing activities will make the KCH the “first stop” for companies and regional stakeholders looking to access the types of knowledge it provides.
- Initiative led by RIT

It is anticipated that these projects will begin in September 2006 as additional work is done to build a regional economic development strategy and sustain critical partnership efforts.

It is envisioned that the individual projects noted here will support regional strategies, providing information and a more systematic approach to improve the talent in the region, supporting economic

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growth across key industry segments. For example, the information gained through the predictive analysis initiative will provide valuable information to economic and workforce development administrators. In addition, the resource network can provide valuable information to small business owners, education, economic and workforce development officials throughout the region. The activities supported through the entrepreneurial goal area will provide a continuum of support and encouragement to achieve more success for innovators and entrepreneurs in the region.

The Finger Lakes Partnership Project matrix (Attachment A) provides more information regarding specific actions that are planned to begin in August 2006 to support the regional transformation. The matrix includes the strategy, project name, responsible parties, first year timeframes, WIRED resources, and outcomes.

There is an intense focus on job creation and talent development in the region with specific activities around increasing entrepreneurship, supporting innovators, increasing the skills of current workers and educating the workforce of future opportunities.

This work is transformative in nature by establishing the first regional collaboration of its kind to support this massive talent development effort. Regional stakeholders will need to change the culture of the region to adapt a collaborative, risk taking, entrepreneurial state of mind; replacing the fractured, bureaucratic, vertical thinking that complicates regional dynamics and economic growth.

This transformation faces the barriers of institutional hierarchy, competition and bureaucracy based on the vertical alignments of the past. These barriers can be overcome by the advocacy and commitment of individuals involved in the Governing Board and the Operations Team. It will be incumbent on Governing Board members to champion the transformation, and actually model these collaborative networking behaviors and their adoption of a more entrepreneurial culture. We expect to be able to draw upon our National Advisory Panel's experience to be a valuable resource in this specific area.

After this three year period, the Finger Lakes region will boast of an integrated talent development network that is based on collaboration between economic development, education and workforce development systems. This network will support the growth of entrepreneurs, technology based start-up companies as well as the small to medium sized companies that are already active in the region.

The region's workforce will be recognized for cutting edge skills that are in demand throughout the world and an educational system which enhances that reputation.

All of the partners and stakeholders benefit through this endeavor, not only in the resources presented in the WIRED Initiative and related activities, but through the interaction among organizations.

### **Communication:**

The Finger Lakes Partnership is a change initiative. It will call for diverse and sometimes disparate entities, to work at a level of collaboration that will require acceptance and support of a new way of doing business together. To be successful, short and long term communication will be the glue that holds the Finger Lakes Partnership together in its formative stages and sustains the Partnership in the future.

The first priority for the Partnership will be normalizing communications between internal partner members, sharing information on a regular basis.

To increase internal communications initiatives will be designed to:

- Facilitate collaboration by bringing parties to the table and sharing information, ideas, and best practices examples across implementation teams
- Ensure integration of WIRED activities with replicability across implementation teams
- Drive the vision for regional economic transformation with consistency across the nine counties and through out the Partnership, and

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- Celebrate wins internally, inside the implementation teams and across the Partnership, in order to provide tangible examples or models of success that will serve to reinvigorate others.

Successful communication among Partnership members will allow for more consistent messaging with external stakeholders and the general public.

Project Management staff will be utilized to manage consistent communication internally and externally during the project. This will also support communication by Partners to their respective customers.

The communication effort will also support the utilization of a regional data team. This team of experts will help leaders make informed decisions, using information and data analysis tools to build on efforts to improve regional economic growth.

### **Sustainability:**

The Finger Lakes Partnership is beginning a discussion about sustaining the early success of the initiative. A committee of Governing Board members will be created to discuss the issue of sustained collaboration as we work toward regional transformation.

The focus of the sustainability discussion will be to champion the effort to change the entrepreneurial culture of the region in addition to improving the network of collaboration across the region and throughout all sectors of the economy.

Leaders engaged in this effort will need to define what should be sustained in addition to any affect it may have on planned WIRED activities (grant funded and non grant funded).

It has been noted by the Board that each WIRED funded project does have a plan for sustainability. Members of the Board will be working on a more strategic effort to continue the regional transformation beyond the impact of the WIRED Initiative and its funded programs.

### **Governance:**

The Finger Lakes Partnership is supported by a collaborative structure that includes a Governing Board, Steering Committee, Managing Director, Operations Team, Implementation Teams and Lead Agency.

This structure is the place to prime the integration of various organizations and systems. A Partnership staff person will be dedicated to supporting the Managing Director in the integration of systems, bring teams together and in supporting the communication of Partnership activities.

The roles for each of the above captured entities are clearly defined here:

#### **Roles of the Governing Board**

- Strategic Direction
- Budget Oversight
- Driving the Vision for Regional Economic Transformation
- Leadership/Advocacy
- Promoting Regional Collaboration/Regional Identity
- Ensuring Integration of All Regional WIRED Activities – Both Grant & Non-Grant Related
- Identifying Opportunities for Leveraging Regional Activities/Resources
- Driving Change within Respective Organizations
- Approving Grant Activities/Expenditures
- Monitor WIRED Project Performance

#### **Chair of the Governing Board**

- Convener for the Governing Board

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Convener for the Steering Committee

Role of the Governing Board Steering Committee

Liaison between the Governing Board and the Managing Director and Operations Team – Providing Guidance and Support

Roles for the Managing Director

Supporting Governing Board Strategies – Both Grant & Non-Grant Related  
Managing Communication between region, state and federal partners  
Coordinating Outreach and Communication  
Ensure Project Compliance with US and NYS DOL requirements  
Direct Project Staff and Contract Administration

Roles for the Operations Team and Team Leaders

Ensuring Integration of All Regional WIRED Activities  
Identifying Opportunities for Leveraging Regional Activities/Resources  
Support Governing Board and Managing Director

Role of the Implementation Teams

Ensuring Performance of All Regional WIRED Activities – Both Grant & Non-Grant Related

Roles for RochesterWorks, Inc. (lead agency)

Regional Project Lead Agency and Fiscal Agent  
Contract Administrator for WIRED Funds  
Monitor and Report Grant Activity and Project Performance for Region to State DOL

Roles for New York State Department of Labor

New York State Project Lead and Fiscal Agent  
Monitor and Report Grant Activity for State to Federal DOL

An organizational chart provides a visual understanding of the structure of the Partnership (Attachment B).

The twenty one organizations collaborating on the Finger Lakes Partnership have established a Letter of Commitment to provide additional information on each partner's role and responsibility in this transformative effort. This letter was included in the project proposal with the partner's original commitment and role captured here:

“NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby agreed by and between the partners as follows:

The collaborating partners have formed the Finger Lakes Partnership, the application we are hereby submitting to the Department of Labor through RochesterWorks, Inc. The information and input provided by each partner has assisted our organization, in composing the application. The Partnership will be driven by four goals: 1) Energize the region's entrepreneurial economy 2) Catalyze regional innovation, 3) Empower workers to succeed in the global economy and 4) Build 21<sup>st</sup> Century infrastructure for innovation. The project will result in strategic outcomes: Increased training capacity, increased participation by the community in workforce development activities, increased job growth, increased average wage, reduced unemployment rate, reduced “brain drain”, increased number of start-up companies, increased number of company products under development from orphan technologies, increased early stage capital, and higher employer satisfaction.

Specific roles of the partners are as follows:

1. *RochesterWorks, Inc.*, will act as the lead organization for the Finger Lakes Partnership. As such, RochesterWorks, Inc. will employ the project management team, facilitate partner projects under the initiative and maintain communication between regional, state, and federal agencies.

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2. *The City of Rochester* Economic Development Department will provide technical, financial assistance among other services (tax incentives, real estate development and regulatory approval assistance) to companies looking to grow and develop within the city of Rochester, with the expected result of job creation and retention, increased investment in the city of Rochester, and Center City and neighborhood revitalization.
3. *Cornell Agriculture and Food Technology Park* will participate in the efforts of the Partnership by helping to generate regional responsiveness to the market conditions of the food science and bio-based industries and to cultivate innovation and small business creation in new areas of enterprise.
4. *Empire State Development* will provide technical and financial assistance, including loans, capital and training grants, and tax incentives, to qualified companies within the nine-county Finger Lakes region; share its extensive knowledge and insight regarding companies throughout the region with the Partnership; be a key facilitator of relationships between Partnership members and the business community; direct companies throughout the region to training opportunities available through the WIRED Initiative; and ensure that a regional focus is maintained by the Partnership as it pursues the goals outlined in this application.
5. *Finger Lakes Community College* will provide management assistance to current and prospective small business owners through its Small Business Development Center, which offers one-stop assistance to the region's individuals and small businesses by providing a wide variety of information and guidance in central and easily accessible branch locations. FLCC, a recognized center for the Northeast Biomanufacturing Collaborative, will train technicians to meet the skill and competency needs of the region's growing biomanufacturing industry; provide young people and adults with the education and training they need to enter skilled occupations and career paths in the biomanufacturing growing industry.
6. *Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board, Inc.* will serve as the convener of the partners in Ontario, Wayne, Seneca, and Yates counties; partner with RochesterWorks, Inc. for governance of the project; provide information to the local businesses and partners on the progress of the project; and align related WIB activities with the goals of this project to maximize resources.
7. *Genesee Community College* will provide support to all members of this regional team on our areas of expertise; innovation training and facilitation, microenterprise programming and certification and workforce development. We will collaborate on initiatives as needed and provide all necessary updates in a timely manner.
8. *The Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, and Wyoming WIB* will coordinate partners in Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties; partner with RochesterWorks, Inc. for their governance role of the grant, ensure the GLOW businesses and partners are informed and involved in initiatives related to this grant; and ensure resources will be utilized efficiently and goals achieved.
9. *Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council's* role as the planning entity for the Economic Development District will provide technical support and data needed for the implementation of the Partnership. Members of the G/FLRPC's Economic Development Advisory Committee will bring broad support to the project.
10. *Infotonics Technology Center* will take the lead in helping small entrepreneurs develop innovation and technology solutions that otherwise would never get off the ground for lack of a complex capital intensive infrastructure. To facilitate this, the ITC will expand regional access to its shared-use, high-tech facility and partner in the prototyping and commercialization of new technologies.
11. *Greater Rochester Enterprise* will coordinate activities related to regional economic development in an effort to streamline and maximize initiatives across multiple agencies. As a Partner in this initiative, GRE will also continue to promote growth in the Emerging Business sector by stimulating early stage capital efforts and working to create a culture of entrepreneurship through multiple initiatives.
12. *High Tech Rochester* will serve as the lead coordinating organization for entrepreneurship and innovation strategies through a significant time commitment from its president and staff. It is the Regional Technology Development Center and Manufacturing Extension Partnership center for the nine-county Finger Lakes region and is closely integrated with academic, government, investing, and economic development organizations. Its existing programs (\$2 million annually) in

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new venture assistance, business incubation, technology commercialization, and manufacturing assistance will be aligned with the WIRED Initiative to the fullest extent possible.

13. *Monroe Community College* will provide coordination of career continuums that link K-12 programs with MCC's apprentice and technical programs. MCC will develop, in partnership with local schools and RIT, shared-use labs that provide competency-based training in: optics, precision manufacturing, bio-technology and printing/packaging.
14. *Monroe County Economic Development Division* will work with RochesterWorks, Inc. to insure local businesses are aware of the training funds available to enhance and upgrade the skills of the labor force. The County will participate in joint marketing efforts with Rochester Works.
15. *Rochester Angel Network* will help guide the Partnership's Innovation and Entrepreneurship strategies to ensure they address the needs of investors who support regional efforts.
16. *Rochester Area Colleges, Inc. (RAC)*, as a consortium of the eighteen colleges and universities in the Finger Lakes region, represents an extremely broad range of institutions and breadth of programs. A representative from the RAC will participate as a member of the Governing Council of the Finger Lakes Partnership.
17. *Rochester Area Community Foundation* will help identify philanthropic support for regional job creation and entrepreneurship, as well as the educational programs that prepare and renew the region's workforce.
18. *The Rochester Business Alliance (RBA)* will support the Finger Lakes Partnership by designing and providing customized training solutions and regional survey data, facilities for training and project management, and on-going support to new business ventures via the Start-Up Resource Program, the Procurement Technical Assistance, Center, the International Business Council and the Small Business Council.
19. *Rochester Institute of Technology* will provide workforce training access to its significant on-line learning technologies and resources and offer certificate programs, such as in telecommunications and biotechnology training, for those engaged in Partnership training activities. RIT will help develop and deliver an immersion entrepreneurship course, assist in increasing local funding for new ventures at the pre-seed and seed stages, host start-ups in its incubator, develop the Finger Lakes Resource Network, and provide a roadmap for the new economy in the manufacturing, optics/imaging, and bio/life sciences.
20. *Trillium Group*, as a Rochester-based private equity firm, will help guide the Partnership's efforts to build an entrepreneurial culture, develop entrepreneurial management, and eliminate gaps in the region's capital resources.
21. *The University of Rochester* will commit to the initiation of a new Master's degree program in Science, Technology and Commercialization which will be jointly administered by the business and engineering schools and the university will also provide at least \$150,000 of in-kind services to support the initiatives of the Finger Lakes Partnership.

Our project's geographic area is the Finger Lakes Region, a nine-county area that encompasses Genesee, Livingston, Monroe (with the City of Rochester as its metropolitan center), Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates counties and a correspondent population of 1,203,918 residents, according to 2004 US Census Bureau estimates.

The signature of the lead agency, RochesterWorks, Inc. signifies the approval of a collaborative letter of commitment for all aforementioned partners..."

This commitment is still evolving as the Partnership begins the implementation process and continues to refine its work.

The Partnership decision making process is outlined as follows:

The Finger Lakes Partnership Governing Board will approve the scope of work, ensure partner commitments and oversee progress for the Finger Lakes Partnership. Governing Board efforts are supported by input from the Steering Committee and Operations Team.

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Detailed project budgets must be submitted and will require further review by the New York State Department of Labor once approved by the Governing Board. All projects must demonstrate leveraged resources, regional economic impact, system transformation and sustainability.

RochesterWorks, Inc. will secure the project lead through the appropriate procurement process. This process includes following USDOL guidance for integral grant partners, sole source and issuing requests for proposals.

After completion of the procurement process, RochesterWorks, Inc. would execute a contract with the lead organization for project implementation. Contract periods would be February 1 to January 31 with an option to renew if project milestones are being met.

All contracts must be executed in accordance with United States and New York State Department of Labor guidelines and regulations.

Projects not included in the grant document may only be considered by requesting a modification of the grant document. The modification must be approved by the Governing Board, New York State and the United States Departments of Labor.

Request for Proposals will be drafted by RochesterWorks, Inc. and those partner members that will not benefit from the procurement of services associated with the project. RochesterWorks, Inc. staff will support Request for Proposal development and implementation in compliance with procurement procedures approved by the Department of Labor.

RochesterWorks, Inc. will publicize the Request for Proposal, secure proposals for service providers and work with partner members to review proposals and submit a recommendation to the Governing Board for consideration and approval. Service providers may be asked to present their proposal to a review team as part of the review process.

### **Operations:**

The Governing Board, consisting of the Chief Executive Officer or Chair of the Board for collaborative partners will set strategy for the Partnership to ensure the project addresses continually its mission of regional transformation.

The Operations Team, consisting of managers from partner organizations, will ensure region-wide engagement and project execution during the funding period.

Implementation Teams will oversee the four initiative areas: entrepreneurship, innovation, workforce development and economic development. Each team, interdisciplinary by membership and regional in scope, will coordinate specific initiatives and manage the application process from within the region for two funds embedded in this proposal: the *New Initiatives Fund* and the *Workforce Innovations Fund*.

A National Advisory Panel of seven internationally recognized experts will assure the Partnership is utilizing best practices effectively and will help the Partnership accelerate the integration of economic development, education and workforce development systems which is central to this project.

The Partnership is managed through regular meetings of the Governing Board, Steering Committee, Operations and Implementation Teams. Support for such meetings and communication and connecting grant funded and non-grant funded activities will be provided through RochesterWorks, Inc. in addition to collaborative support from partners. RochesterWorks, Inc. is utilizing Microsoft Project to assist in the monitoring and alignment of activities. The operation of the Finger Lakes Partnership is supported by the Managing Director and RochesterWorks, Inc. as the lead agency.

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A request for proposal will be utilized to secure an expert to map regional assets and analysis data in support of Partnership strategies. The mapping of the region's key economic development, education, entrepreneurial, innovation and workforce development assets will help stakeholders identify and understand the possibilities for a more integrated and collaborative talent development network. The Partnership plans to complete the mapping process by Fall 2006.

The results of the data mapping exercise and data analysis would be communicated throughout the region as part of leveraging regional assets and building a collaborative network of information to support business growth.

The Managing Director or other staff will support the Partnership's internal and external communication efforts, utilizing a variety of tools, including a website [www.fingerlakespartnership.com](http://www.fingerlakespartnership.com) and the USDOL sponsored collaborative workspace. Partnership communication will be coordinated through a central point with Partnership staff to ensure integration and consistency of message. The Partnership will utilize a collaborative networking approach to increase the impact of the transformational effort without duplicating the public relation efforts of partners in the region. The goal of such a public relations effort may be the establishment of a regional identity rather than developing a unique brand. The communication strategy would be to support Partnership initiatives as well as the organization involved in the partnership to give appropriate credit for the activity and collaboration.

Any outreach campaign would provide career related information to the region, especially the educational system. The focus would be to improve the entrepreneurial and collaborative culture and inform the community about the skill demands of expanding clusters as well as the entrepreneurship and innovation that is evident throughout the region.

In addition to a public relations and communication plan, partners will utilize regional collaborative networking to expand the circle of stakeholders. This may be achieved through Partnership champions from across all parts of the region. A champion's network should cut across the counties and represent stakeholders from government, economic development, workforce development, education and business.

The champion's network would work to expand the circle of transformation participants and bring people to the table to get the message and form more collaborative working relationships. Partnership staff could be devoted to supporting this activity through the Managing Director.

The Governing Board would nurture and support the engagement, engage key leaders in the region and evaluate its impact on WIRED goals. The Operations and Implementation team members would also work as ambassadors of the Partnership and its activities. The Managing Director and other leaders would keep stakeholder groups informed and engaged through program updates or presentations.

The Partnership is focused on achieving sustainable system transformation to support the growth of a more entrepreneurial regional economy. The Operations team has determined that sustainability can be achieved by a continuation of the partnership and its vision or support from the market place.

The Operations Team will be working to develop a set of criteria as to what sustainability is for each project. This criteria would be included as part of the Governing Board's strategic plan. The criteria could be used to support projects seeking WIRED funds although not every project lends itself to numeric measurement. A numerical score could be used to evaluate various funding sources and where they are likely to come from all the way out to the tenth year. An example of sustainability for a project could be that funding for the project is 50% WIRED and 50% match in level for year one and 40% WIRED and 60% other sources in year two.

Sustainability could also be measured by a market score that provides evidence of the likelihood of commercialization. The market score could also identify the likelihood that a given project will add a champion five to ten years down the road. An example could be the fact that an organization would take on the project after the initial three year period or that there is probably funding for the project from another external source.

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Evidence of a sustainable effort could also be communicated by providing an integration score that provides criteria to establish the fact that a project works across organizations or is seamless in its transition of services from one project to another.

### **Budget Allocations and Fiscal Management:**

An updated budget is provided as an attachment (Attachment C). This budget shows WIRED funded activities which are planned to go forward in the month of August as well as those still under consideration and review by the Operations and Implementation Teams.

RochesterWorks, Inc. will manage the contract administration and reporting process, tracking the specific activities involved in project execution including leveraging resources throughout the region.

### **Anticipated Technical Assistance Requests:**

A prioritized list of technical assistance requests follows, listed with the highest priority first:

<u>WIRED Goal Area</u>	<u>Assistance or Resources Requested</u>
All	Regional asset mapping best practices
Economic and Workforce Development	Cluster identification and support
Workforce Development	Regional apprenticeship system best practices
All	Process for sharing and scaling curriculum in region
Entrepreneurship and Innovation	Identify best metrics to measure new business formation
All	Best practices for working with K-12 system
Workforce Development	Model to help dislocated workers become entrepreneurs
All	Collaborative networking best practices
All	Increasing staff capacity with partner organizations