

Grant Writer's Toolkit

for Workforce
& Economic
Developers

Pursue reliable grant
funding with the
right labor market
data to tell your story
and demonstrate
your organization's
workforce impact.



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Lightcast and the National Association of Workforce Boards are Vision Partners committed to empowering workforce development. This Grant Writer's Toolkit is a valuable new resource for advancing that shared goal.

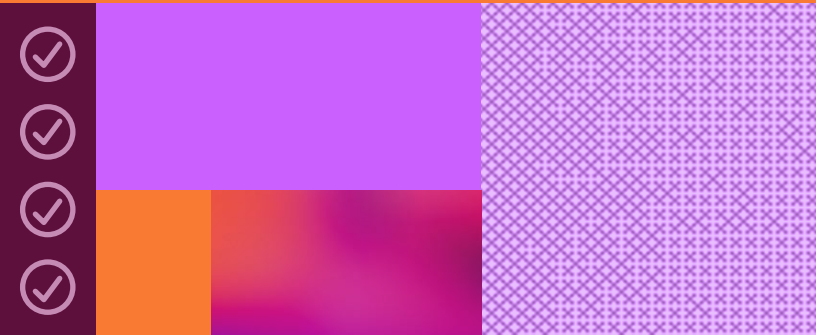
The Purpose of this Toolkit

Designed to help workforce development professionals use data to pursue grant funding, this toolkit offers step-by-step guidance to help you find and share the most relevant labor market data and visualizations within Lightcast's Developer tool so you can:

- Highlight workforce demands, including fast-growing skills, in your region
- Demonstrate how your organization is putting data to work for your community
- Pursue the funds that keep your workforce initiatives thriving.



All data shown here is from *Lightcast's Developer Software*. These are the most common data reports that a workforce development grant writer will need in order to respond to a typical Request for Proposal (RFP).



Don't Forget:

- Follow all the submission guidelines, making sure to **address the exact questions** listed in the RFP.
- Keep your presentation **clear, concise, and visually compelling**. Don't let your most important information get lost in excess text or graphics.
- If you need additional help finding or accessing data in our tools, **contact your Lightcast rep**, or use the live chat within the tool, for expert guidance.
- Ready to hit "send"? Before you do, **check and double check** the RFP requirements before submitting your grant proposal.





Economy Overview Report

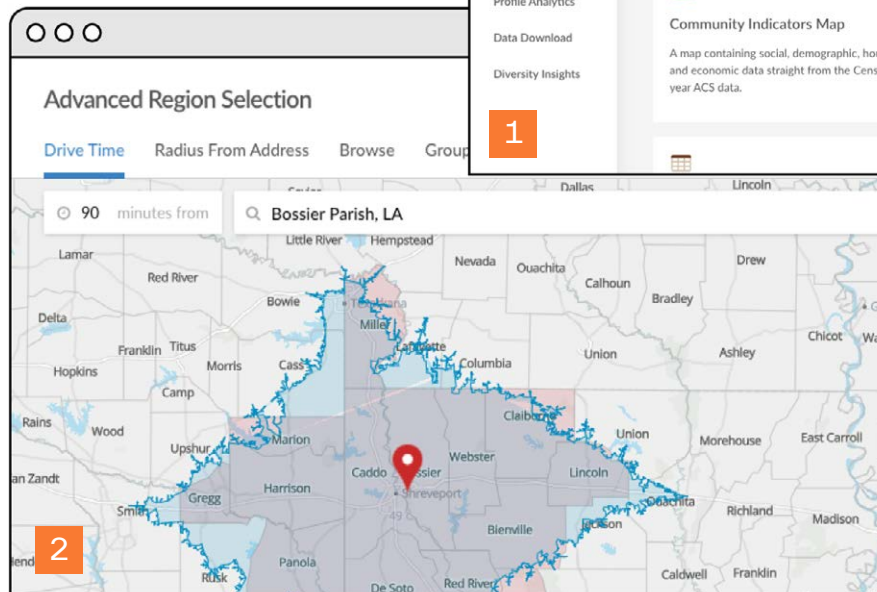
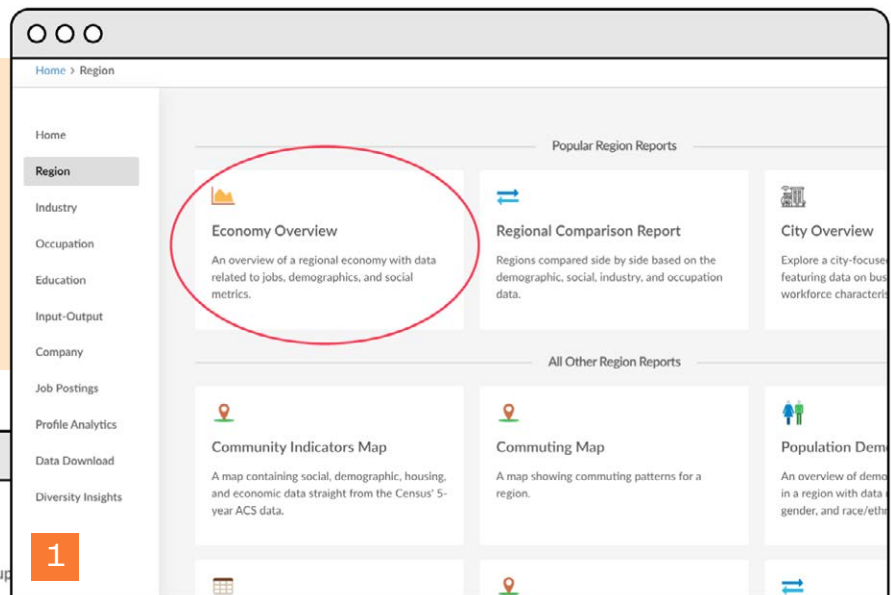
This report provides valuable, high-level perspective on your region's economic data and contains downloadable tables and graphics that will help you illustrate your story for greater impact.

Follow the instructions below to see how to find valuable regional data including:

- Overall economic factors
- Labor force breakdown of the population
- Population characteristics such as age, veteran status, diversity, and crime data
- In-demand skills for your selected region, allowing you to highlight the importance of local workforce programs that align with what employers need.

1. From the "Region" menu on the left, choose the "Economy Overview"

This report covers a wide variety of data points for your selected region.



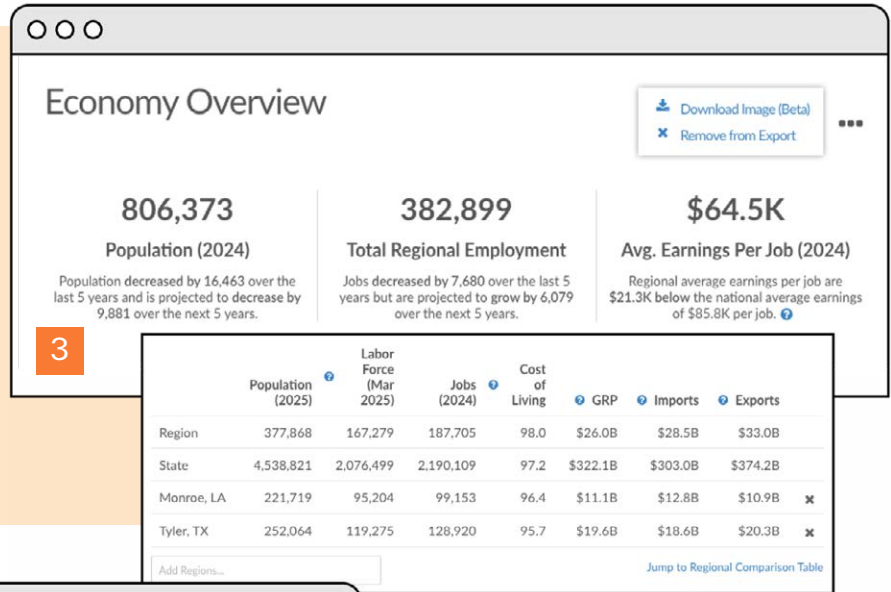
2. Select your region

You can base your selection on pre-set region names or region groups, or based on factors like drive time and radius from a specific address.

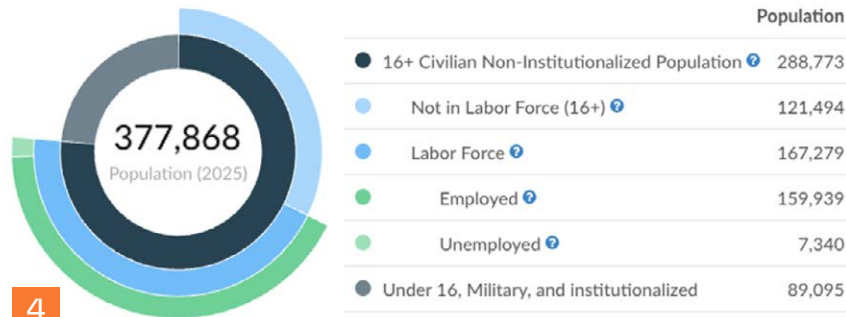


3. Start exploring the data

The Economy Overview report will show you a simple summary of the region's Population, Total Regional Employment, and Median Household Income. Depending on your level of access, you can also choose to compare the basic data points of your region to additional regions such as counties, zip codes, cities, MSAs, and states.



Mar 2025 Labor Force Breakdown



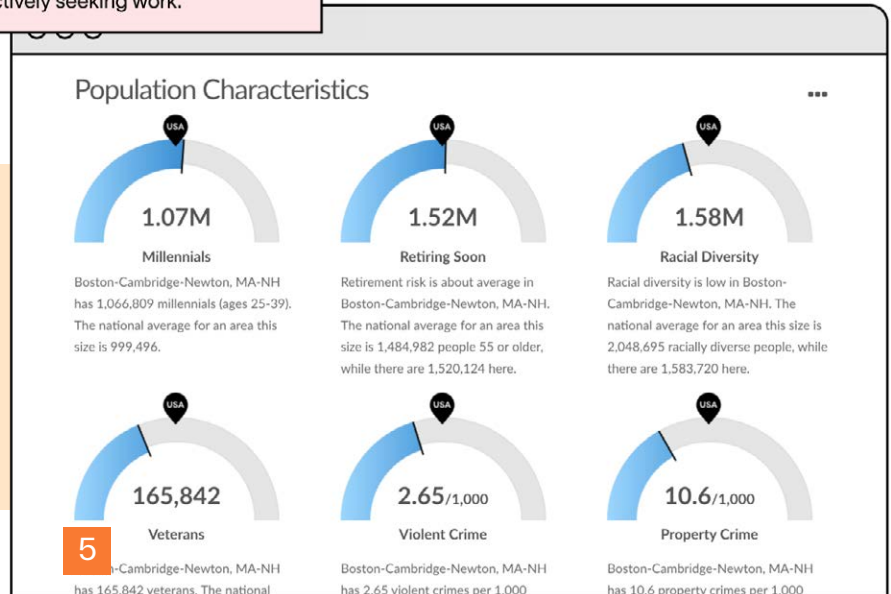
Note: "Not in Labor Force (16+)" is the population of individuals who are not employed or actively seeking employment. "Unemployed" are those who are not employed but are actively seeking work.

4. Review the Labor Force Breakdown

The Labor Force Breakdown provides unique data on who is participating in your region's labor force and what their employment status is.

5. Understand population characteristics

This data provides a closer look at some of the demographics, veteran status, and crime data for your region, and compares your region to the US as a whole.





6. Identify in-demand skills

Drawn from our Job Posting Analytics data, skill demand is crucial for understanding and demonstrating what your local employers need. Demand for specific skills highlights the importance of local workforce programs that align with job openings that need to be filled. (Note: For an even more granular approach to this data, our other Job Posting Reports show not only what skills are currently in-demand, but also which new skills are emerging in job postings within the region that a workforce board may want to prepare for.)

CASE STUDY: Employ Prince George's

Learn how Lightcast's Developer tool empowered Employ Prince George's with the right data to:

- Secure \$6M annually in local workforce funding
- Double the number of residents served
- Quadruple business engagement across the region



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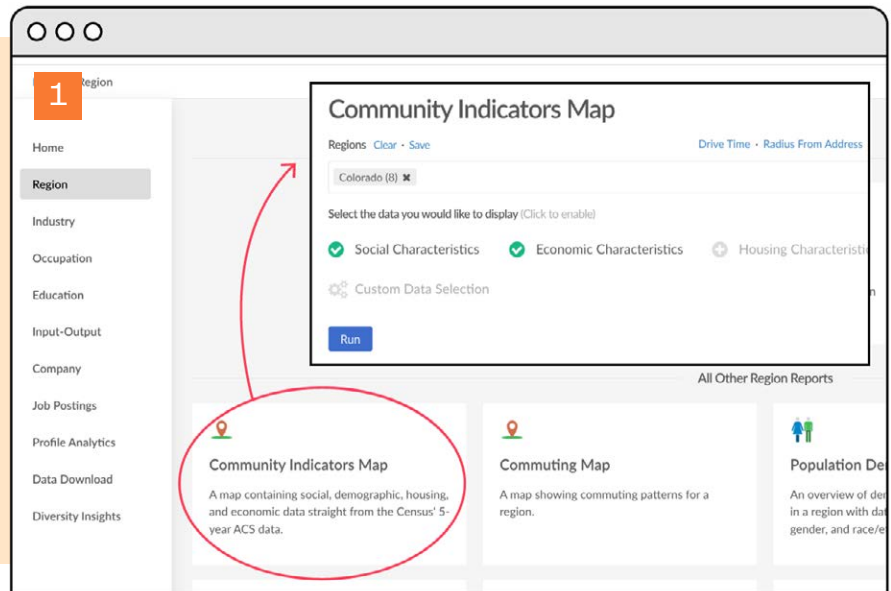


Community Indicators Map

This report presents the American Community Survey (ACS) data in an easy-to-understand format. The map graphic allows you to tell the story of your county, MSA, or state with greater visual impact.

1. From the home screen, select "Region" on the left side, then "Community Indicator Map" from the menu.

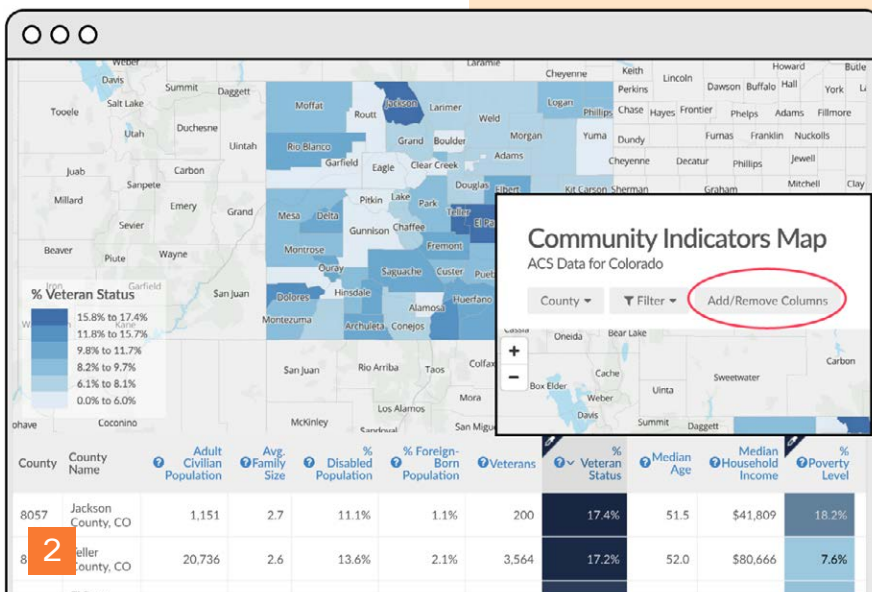
Once you have selected the map, select the region you are interested in. You can also select Economic, Social, or Housing characteristics to look from. If you are unsure, select "Custom Data Selection" and run the report.



2. Choose your data points to map

The data points on the region you've selected include Disabled Population, Household Size, Age, Veteran Population, and more. To add or further customize the data points, select "Add/Remove Columns."

You can adjust the region to State, County, or MSA. On the table below the map, click each column header to show that data point. This creates a custom map for you to include in your grant application.





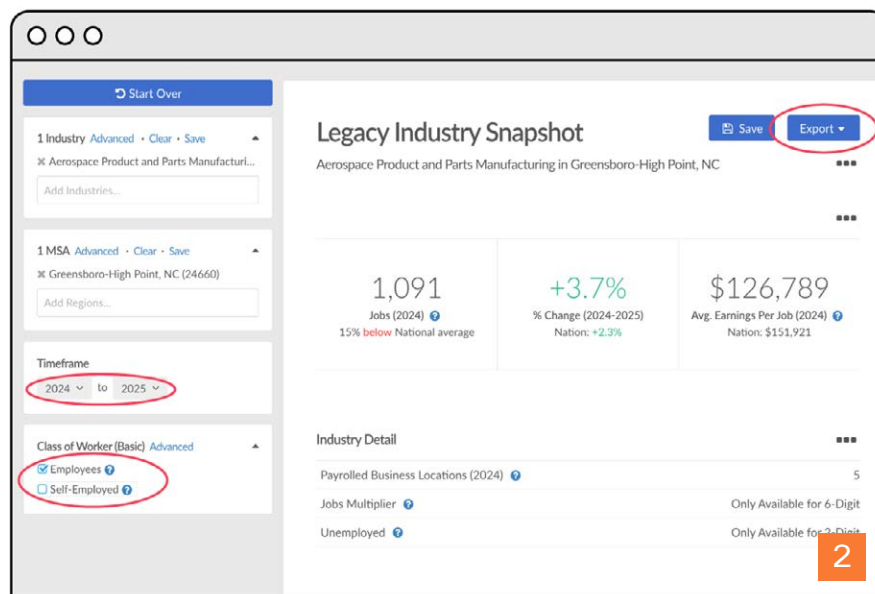
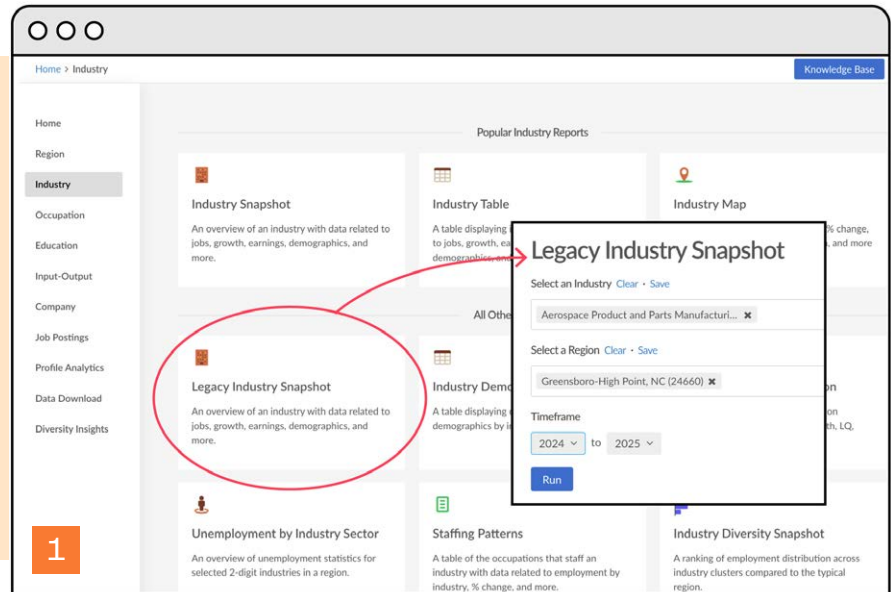
Legacy Industry Snapshot

When external factors—like policy changes, health crises, natural disasters, and more—cause major disruptions, this report helps you assess impacted industries in your region, as well as the staffing patterns, supply chains, and other factors affecting these industries.

Note: "Industry Snapshot" is a separate report with slightly different visuals and links from those below.)

1. Click the "Industry" tab in the menu on the left, and select "Legacy Industry Snapshot."

Add industry and location selections to your search. In this example, we are looking at "Aerospace Product and Parts Manufacturing" in Greensboro, NC. Once you have added your search metrics, hit "Run."



2. Refine your search and export the data.

From here, you can change your time frame, update your class of worker, and export the entire report or just clips of it.



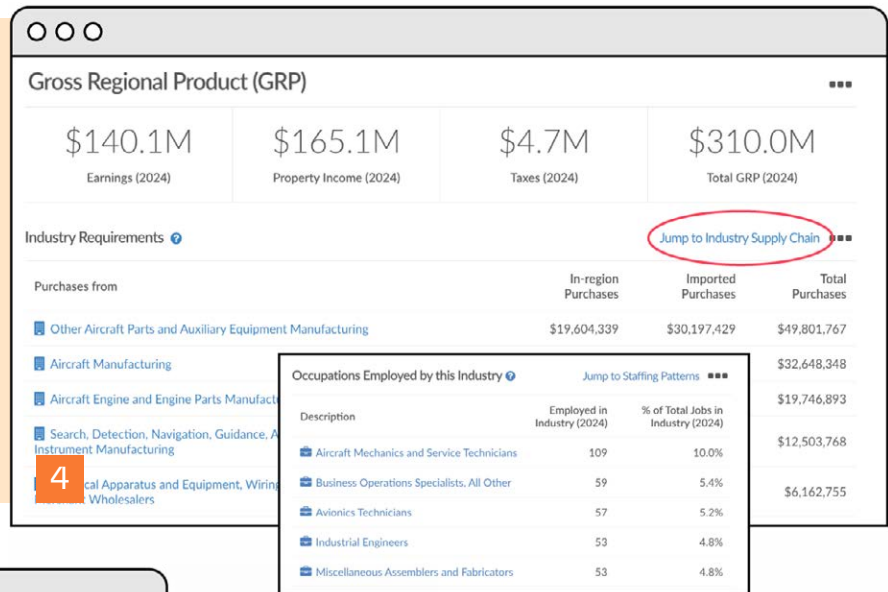


3. Select data visuals to maximize impact.

Using the downloadable charts in the report can help strengthen and streamline a grant application. All images come with a Lightcast citation. The ability to add other regions to compare to yours within the report can also make an impact when showing how your region is growing or impacted by job loss.

4. Dig deeper into the data with the "jump to" feature.

The Legacy Industry Snapshot includes a Gross Regional Product breakdown, with a "jump to" link to the top 5 of the supply chain for the selected industry. You'll also find a list of the top five occupations employed by the industry in your region, which provides a "jump to" link to staffing patterns.



Top Regional Businesses [Jump to Businesses Table](#)

Business Name	Industry Name	Business Size
Unmanned Aircraft Global Aerial Data Solutions	Aircraft Manufacturing (336411)	130
Bridgestone Aircraft Tire U S A Lnc	Aircraft Manufacturing (336411)	115
Sensory Analytics	Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing (336413)	51
Aero Accessories	Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing (336413)	25

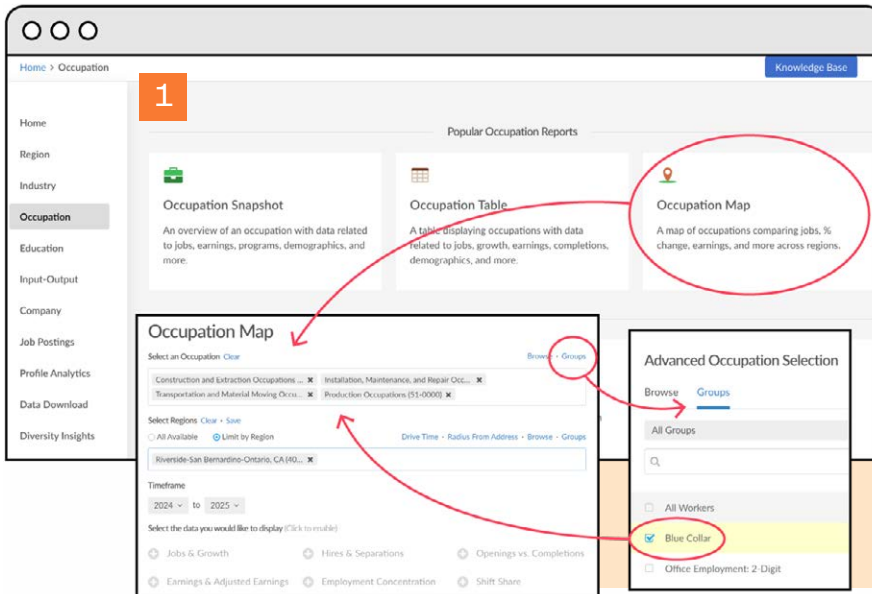
5. Top businesses and industry demographics

Those interested in industry demographics can find out which groups of people are working in the selected industry and region. And users who subscribe to Business Listings (powered by Database USA) can identify the five largest businesses in the industry.



Occupation Map

The Occupation Map gives detailed, sortable data points in a table format but also allows you to visualize each data point on a regional map that you can easily customize. For grant writing, the map visual can be beneficial for showing important factors like job numbers, job growth, commuter data, and jobs location.

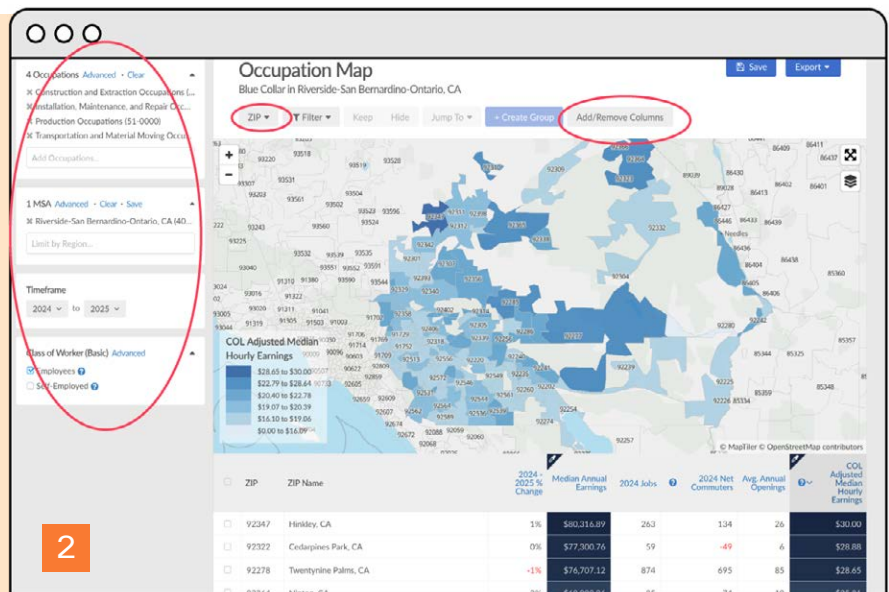


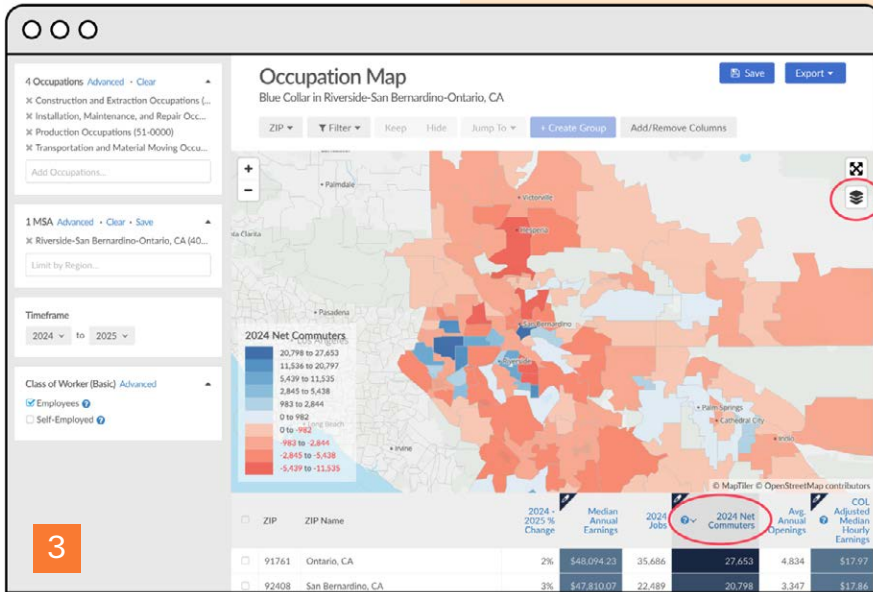
1. Select "Occupation" from the menu, then choose the Occupation Map.

From there, you can select your metrics. The "Browse" function will allow you to look at data for multiple occupations in the same category, such as the "Blue Collar" group shown in this example. You can also enter your region manually, browse regions, or select one based on Drive Time, Radius from Address, or another preset group.

2. Refine your map and update the data parameters.

Once the map has loaded, use the drop-down menu to select the region by MSA, county, census tract, or zip code to tell your story. On the left side, you can also adjust the occupations you want to look at, the region you want to explore, your time frames, and your worker class. Like most Lightcast reports, you can use the Add/Remove Columns button to change the selected metrics.





3. Update the map to visualize the data you choose.

When you click on the column header, the map will visualize the data from that column. The eye dropper icon will also colorize the column as a heat map. The map can be customized to make it easier to see and read by selecting the layer mark on the top right corner of the map. In the example shown here, the column titled "2024 Net Commuters" is selected. This data shows where workers live and work. The blue areas indicate more jobs than residents while the red indicates more residents than jobs.

USE CASE: Second-Chance Occupations

The Second Chance Act authorizes federal grants to programs that aid in taking steps toward reentry into the labor force from the justice system. Developer can help you identify and research occupations with high second-chance opportunities.

Use the Occupation Group called "Second Chance (SOC 2021)" to quickly identify occupations that tend to be re-entry friendly. Using this occupation group in reports like the Occupation Table can help identify high-demand jobs that are more likely to offer jobseekers a fresh start in the workforce.

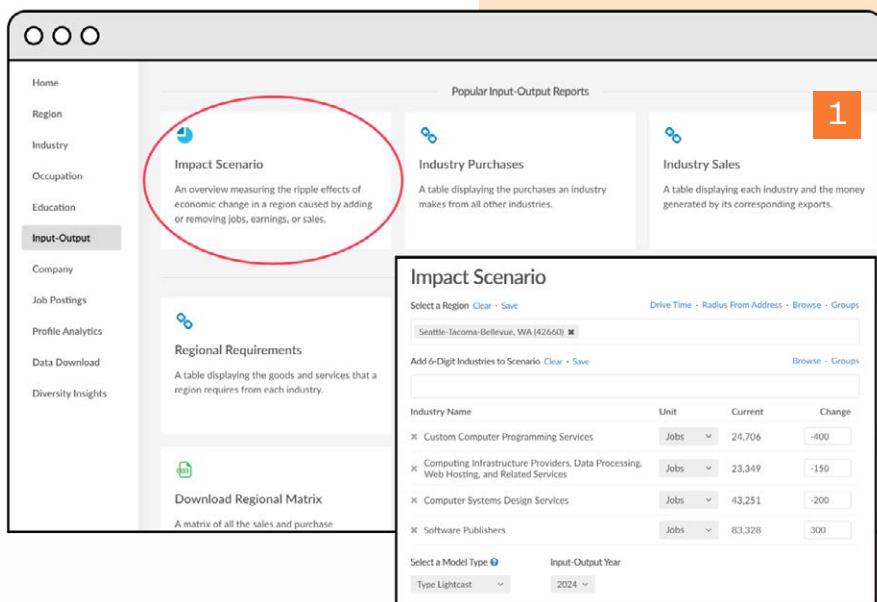


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The Impact Scenario Report

This report reveals deep insights into the regional economic impact of job creation, as well as the cost of an unfilled job—not only in a selected industry but also on the supply chain and the greater community. With this report, you can explore the direct, indirect, and multiplied impact on jobs, earnings, and taxes in the region, as well as the occupations that are most likely to be affected.

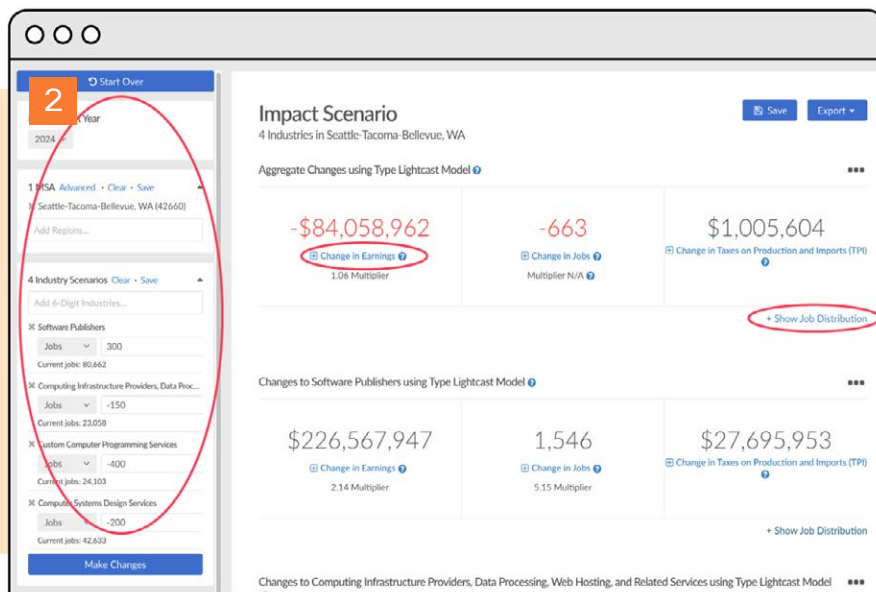


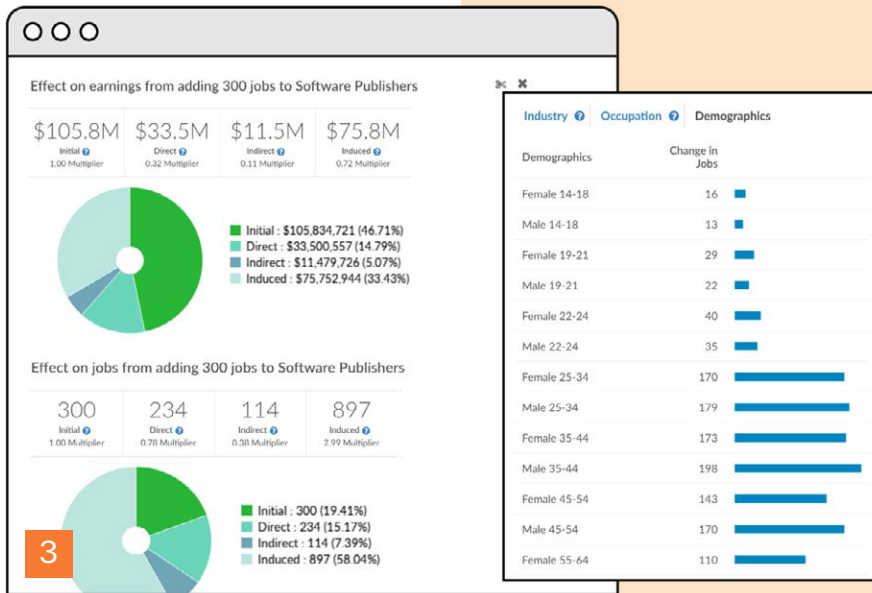
1. Select the Input-Output tab from the menu on the left.

Choose "Impact Scenario" from the list of reports. Then add your region and a 6-digit industry (or group of industries). You can then model the impact to jobs, earnings, or sales using the drop down by the industry name. Then, input the change to the "Change" box by either adding or subtracting the unit you wish to model. Then hit run. In this example we are using the Seattle-Tacoma, WA, MSA and job change in four tech-related industries.

2. See an overview of projected impacts

Once you are in the report you will be able to assess the change in earnings, sales, and taxes for each selected industry. You can also make adjustments to your selected date, region, or industries or choose any of the "+" icons for a more detailed breakdown of the impacts shown.





3. View a detailed breakdown of each impact by category

From the previous screen, you can click on any of the categories to see the breakdown of how those impacts are expected to occur based on the changes you selected. By clicking “Show Job Distribution” on the bottom right corner of the report, you can also see what industries, occupations, and demographics will be affected by the change.



Lightcast’s Impact Scenario is the best tool for demonstrating and projecting workforce impact I’ve ever seen. Nobody else has anything close. I’ve used it for 21 years, and I can’t do without it.

I have literally saved companies and won grants and investments in community infrastructure with just this tool. It alone is worth the price of the software. It’s Lightcast’s most valuable workforce secret.

—**CONNIE SHARP**
 Director of Membership
 National Association of
 Workforce Boards





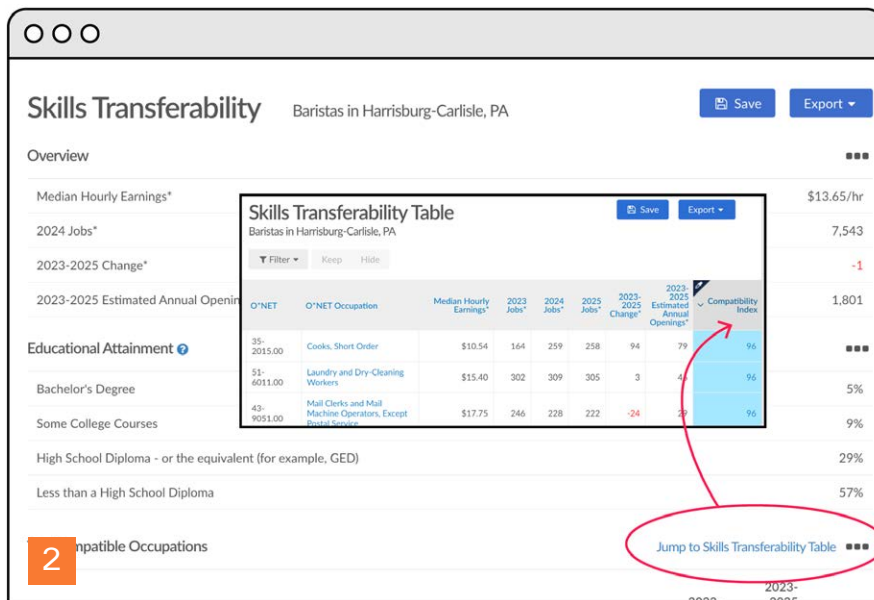
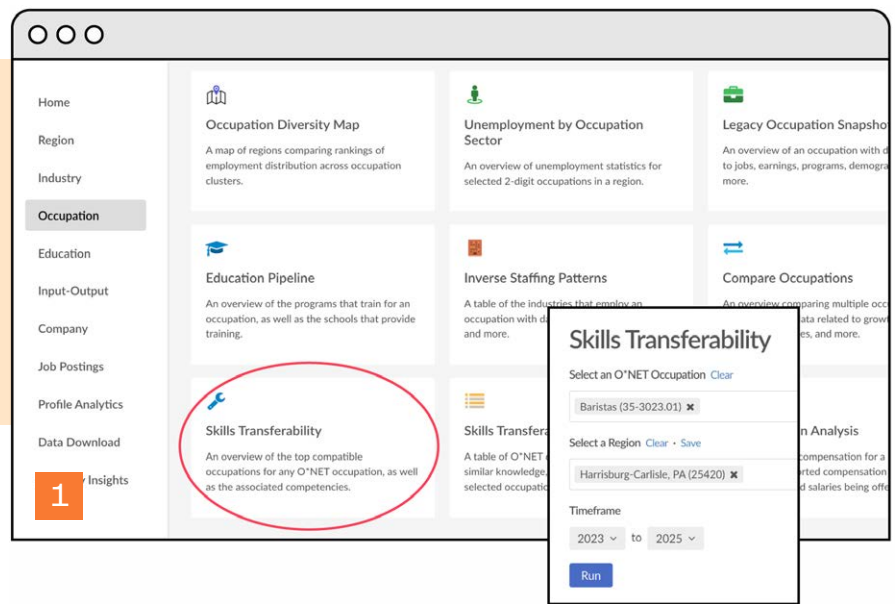
The Skills Transferability Report

The Skills Transferability report is fully compatible with the Department of Labor's guidelines and provides:

- High-level occupational data, such as wages and job growth in your region
- Data on the skills, occupations, and abilities associated with a selected occupation
- Additional occupations that align with the skills in the selected occupation, so you can help your workforce move into high-demand jobs that use—or build on—the skills they already have.

1. Select "Occupation" from the menu on the left, then choose the "Skills Transferability."

From there, you can select your region and the occupation you wish to explore.







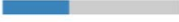

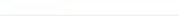

2. Explore occupation insights and skills-adjacent roles

First, gain an understanding of your selected occupation's wages, job growth, education requirements, etc. And then click through to the skills transferability table to discover which other jobs align most closely to the skills in your selected occupation. You can click on each of these to see a similar occupation overview.



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Competencies Knowledge Skills Abilities 3

	Skill	Importance	Level
41	 Service Orientation	60	41
39	 Critical Thinking	47	39
39	 Reading Comprehension	50	39
39	 Coordination	50	39
37	 Active Listening	63	37
37	 Speaking	60	37
37	 Active Learning	41	37
27	 Social Responsibility	50	27

3. See the top competencies associated with your selected occupation

Within the main Skills Transferability report, scroll down to see which knowledge, skills, and abilities are most associated with the occupation.



Grant writing starts with Lightcast.



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To view this resource online
and learn more about using
Lightcast data for grant
writing, visit:

[lightcast.io/grant-writers-
toolkit-workforce](https://lightcast.io/grant-writers-toolkit-workforce)

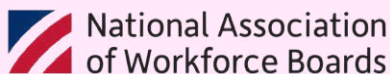
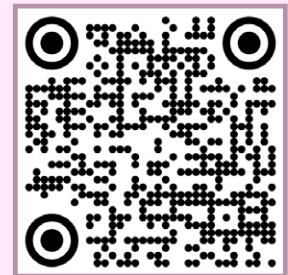


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To find additional Lightcast
data resources for all your
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lightcast.io/solutions/government



For more information on how the
National Association of Workforce
Boards can empower you to
transform your community, visit:

nawb.org



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