



**Building a Future That
Works for Everyone**

Our Mission

Jobs for the Future (JFF) is building a future that works – for everyone. We transform U.S. education and workforce systems to drive economic success for people, businesses, and communities.





The problem we're aiming to solve

Quality jobs are key to economic success for people, businesses, communities, and our country. But more than half of the 170 million people in the U.S. labor force do not have a quality job and can't thrive – on the job or at home. Additionally:

138 million

people working today face barriers to economic advancement

63%

of those workers do not have a quality job

Source: American Job Quality Study, 2025





**That's why
we focus on
eliminating
barriers and
expanding
opportunities
for all,
including:**



People without a 4-year degree



People of color (even with a 4-year degree)



Women (even with a 4-year degree)



People with criminal records

Our North Star Goal

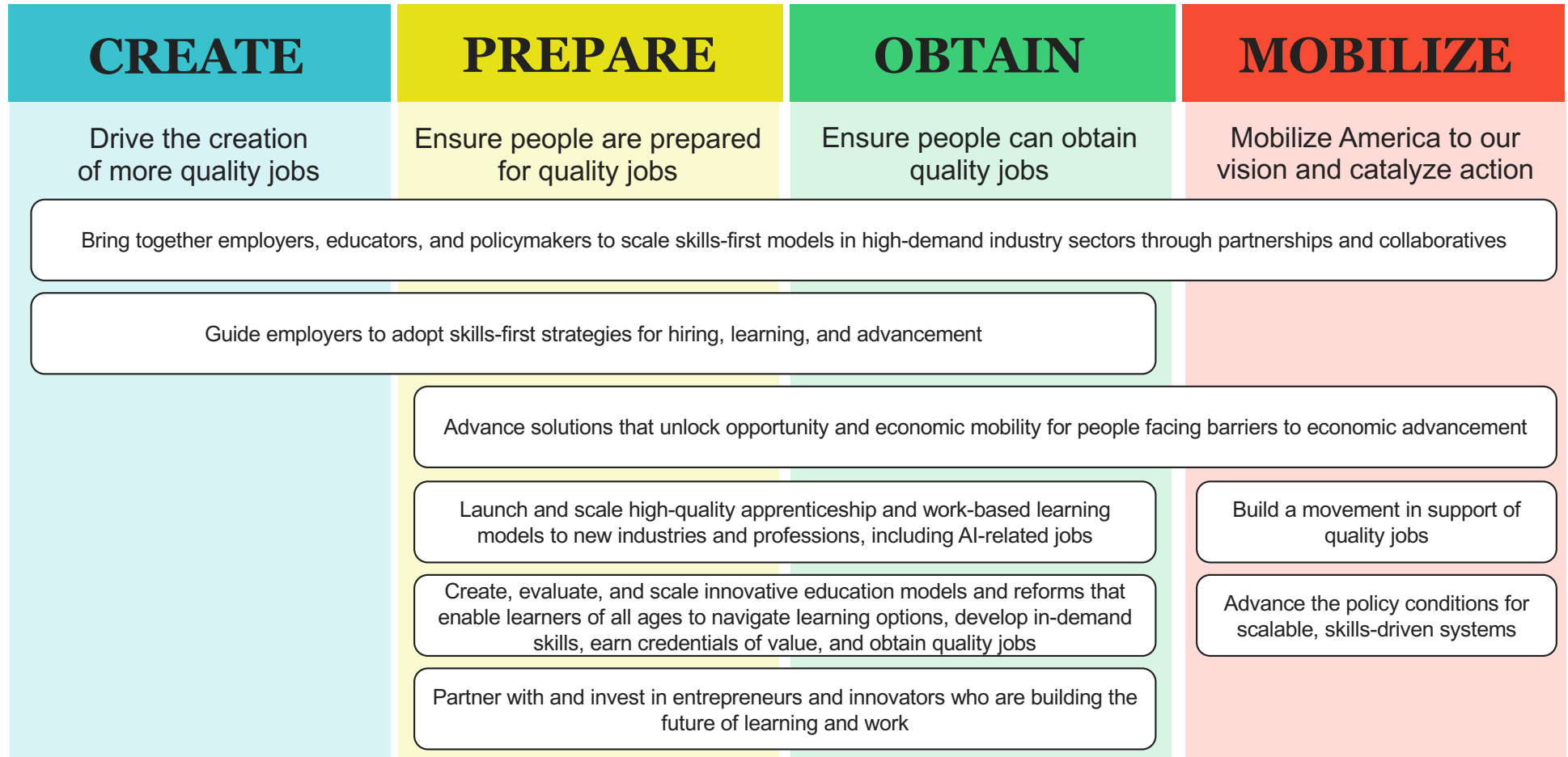
By 2033,
75 million people facing
barriers to
economic advancement
will work in **quality jobs.**



2025: A Time of Challenge and Opportunity

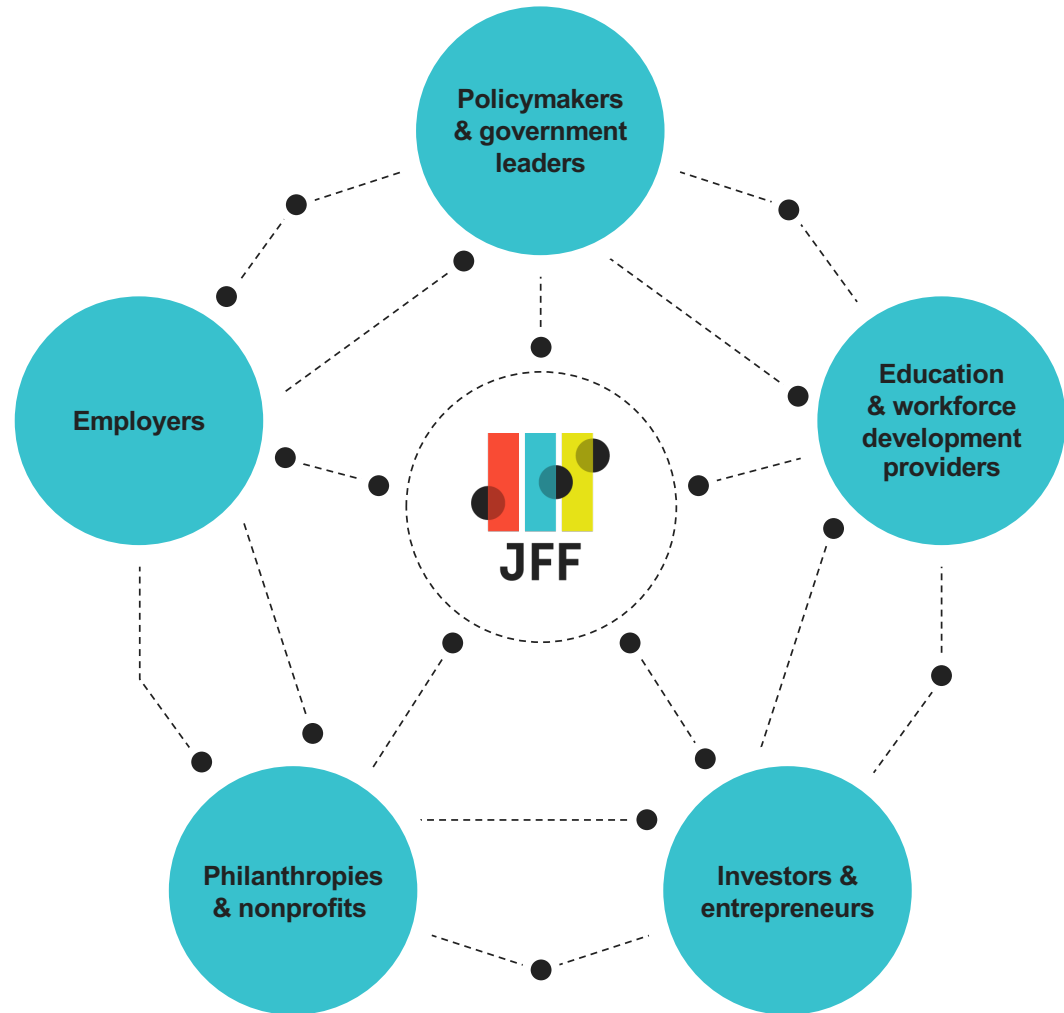
Artificial Intelligence	AI is transforming every sector of our economy. It has the potential to promote sustainable livelihoods, quality jobs, and economic mobility for all – but without strategic intervention, it can deepen existing divides.
Postsecondary Education	Our systems of postsecondary education have failed to deliver on the promise of economic opportunity for millions of learners and face a moment of existential reckoning
States Out Front	A major retrenchment in the role of the federal government is putting states in the lead for education and workforce change and investment.
Uncertain economic outlook	We are at an economic inflection point with looming potential for a major recession and the likelihood of continued global disruption
Zero-sum thinking	Zero-sum thinking pits groups against each other, threatening progress toward economic advancement for all, especially populations that have faced barriers
Talent Shortages	Companies are struggling to fill millions of open jobs with skilled workers, threatening their economic competitiveness and our country's productivity and economic growth
Siloed Systems	Siloed systems and players lead to breakdowns and inefficiencies in individual pathways to economic mobility

JFF transforms how the U.S. develops, recognizes, and mobilizes talent for a skills-first future that connects learners and workers to quality jobs in the age of AI.



OUR PARTNERS

**We do
this in
partnership
with:**





Quality Jobs: *The* Lever for Economic Mobility

The American Job Quality Study:

Key Findings & Opportunities



About the American Job Quality Study

Fielded in 2025



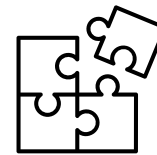
A timely, data-driven snapshot of the U.S. workforce

18,000+ Responses



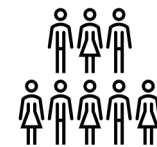
Forming a robust, nationally representative dataset

A Measurable Definition of Quality



Draws on five research-backed dimensions, going beyond individual elements like wages

Representing all U.S. Workers



Sample includes part-time employees, multiple-job holders, and non-W2 workers

The Five Dimensions of a Quality Job



Financial Well-Being



Fair pay, stable employment, and benefits that meet basic needs and reduce financial stress.



Workplace Culture & Safety



A safe, respectful environment free from discrimination or harassment.



Growth & Development Opportunities



A clear path to build skills, gain experience, and advance in one's career.



Agency & Voice



Influence over decisions that shape one's job, such as pay, working conditions, and implementation of technology.



Work Structure & Autonomy



A stable, predictable schedule, a manageable workload, and meaningful control over when and how work gets done.

Outcome Measures

- Job satisfaction
- Worker well-being
- Financial distress
- And more...

**Quality Jobs
remain the
exception, not
the norm, in
the U.S.**

60%

of U.S.
workers *lack*
Quality Jobs.

Quality jobs are unevenly distributed across the U.S. workforce.

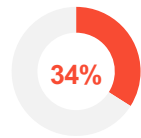
Gender



Men (45%) are more likely than



Women (34%) to be in quality jobs



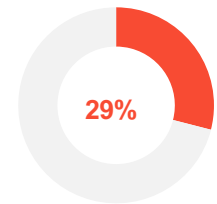
Race and ethnicity

Asian (46%) and **White** employees (42%) are most likely to hold quality jobs

Thirty-three percent (33%) or fewer **Black, multiracial, Hispanic or Middle Eastern/North African** employees hold quality jobs

Age

The **youngest employees**, those 18 to 24, are the least likely age group to have quality jobs (29% are in quality jobs, which is about 10 points lower than most other age groups)



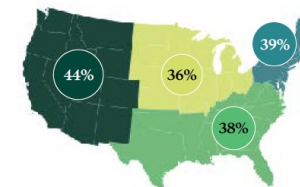
Education

Employees with a **bachelor's** (47%) or **graduate** (54%) degree are significantly more likely to have quality jobs than those with an **associate degree** (35%), **some college** (33%) or a **high school education or less** (28%)



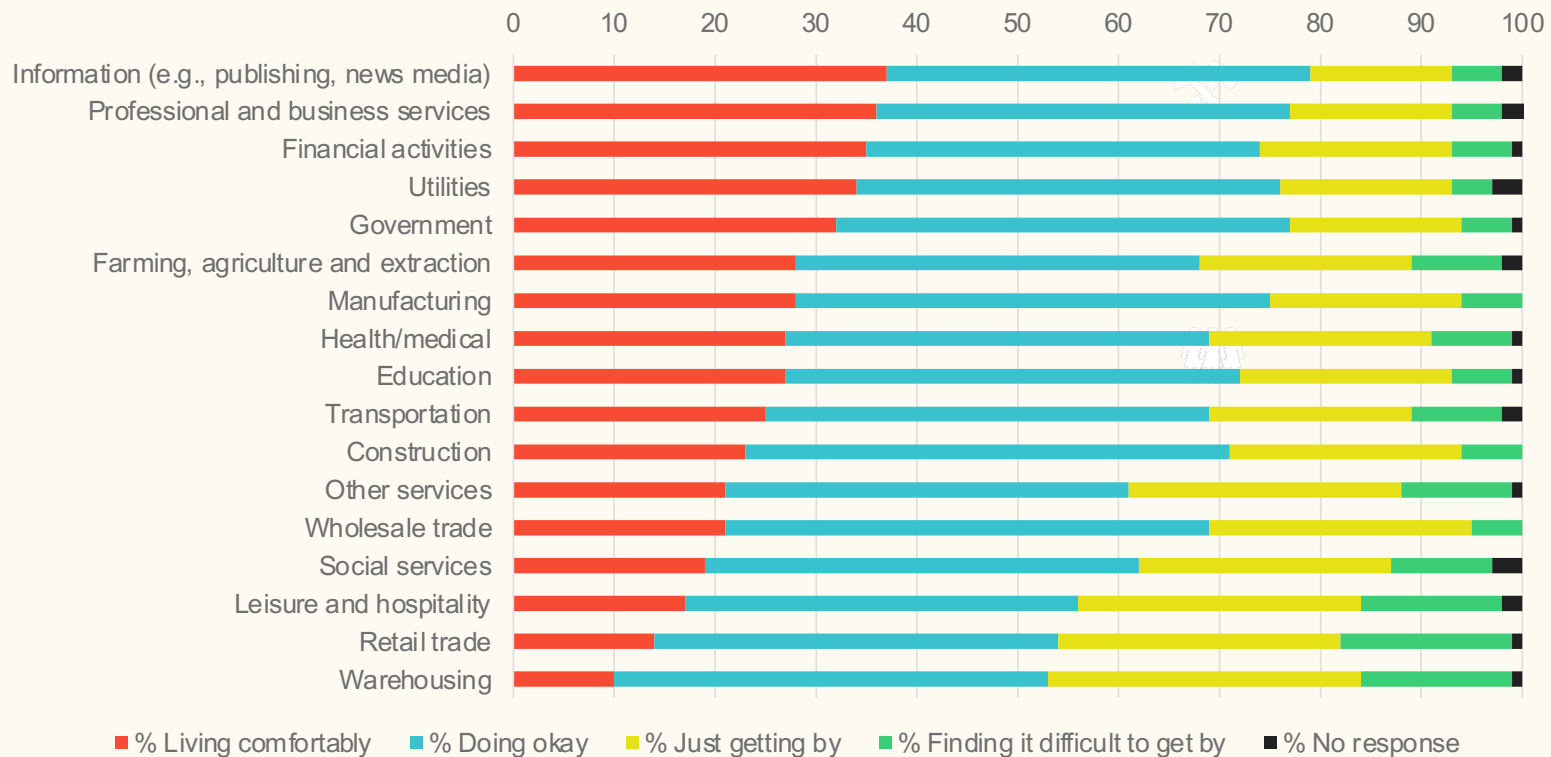
Region

Quality jobs exist throughout the U.S. but are more common in the **West** (44%) than the **Northeast** (39%), **South** (38%) and **Midwest** (36%) Census regions



Only 27% of employees report living comfortably.

Overall, which one of the following best describes how well you are managing financially these days?



Nearly a quarter of U.S. employees (24%) report being treated unfairly at work because of their identity – and the rates are even higher for some groups.

1 LGBTQ+: **36%**

2 Middle Eastern: **41%**

3 Neurodivergent: **47%**

4 Nonbinary: **52%**

A quarter (25%) of employees do not see opportunities for advancement in their current role.

1 One in four employees lack opportunities for promotion or advancement.

Employees with a bachelor's degree or higher and younger employees are more likely to report opportunities for advancement.

2 Access to mentorship and training is also uneven.

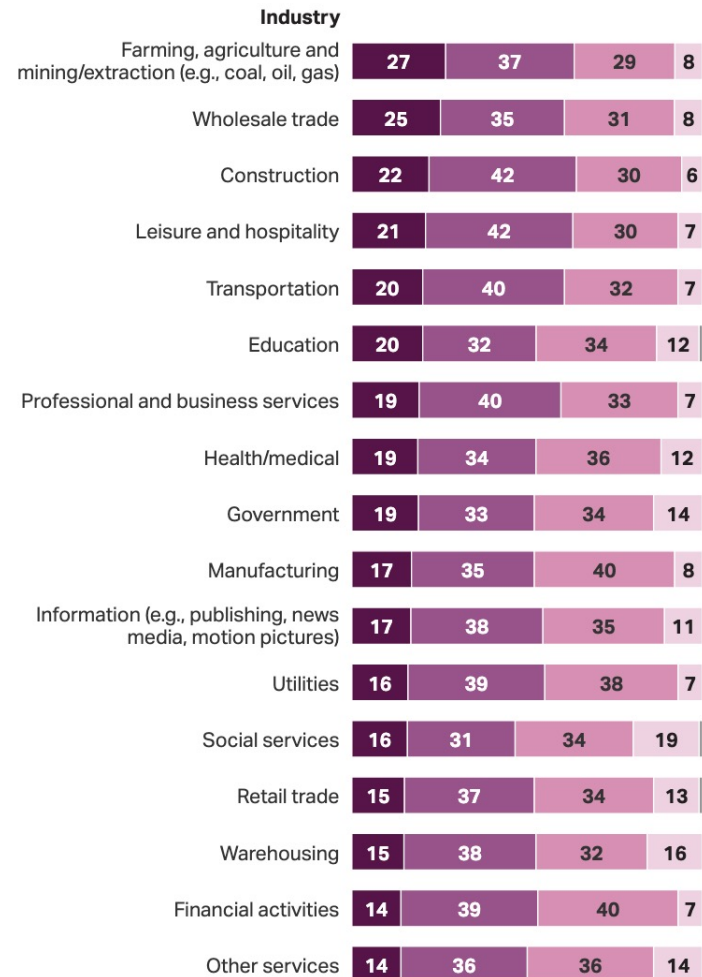
Employees with a bachelor's degree were more likely to receive training—**72%** compared with **53%** of those with a high school education.

Participation in on-the-job training and education is **strongly linked** to higher job satisfaction, but **only about half of employees have participated** in such programs in the past year.

How often do you work longer than originally scheduled or planned?



■ % Often ■ % Sometimes ■ % Rarely ■ % Never ■ % No response



“

Being able to participate in after-school activities with the kids or if they need a volunteer for school or something like that and not to have such a demanding job where I can't do something like that. It's something I've always wanted. It's cool that I have it now. I think that's what is impacting the decision whether I stay or whether I go.”

— **Rob, Maintenance Worker**

Employees with a say at work are more satisfied — yet most employees don't have one.

1 Overall, about half of employees feel left out of important workplace decisions.

- **69%** of employees say they have less say than they should over their pay and benefits.
- **55%** say they the same about workplace technology adoption and **48%** about their working conditions.

2 Employees with more say at work are more satisfied with their jobs.

Employees who have their desired level of input are nearly twice as likely to report high job satisfaction compared with those who do not (47% vs. 25%).



AI & the Future of Work and Learning

Staying Ahead of the Curve:

JFF's 2026 Survey of Workers' & Learners' Experiences of AI

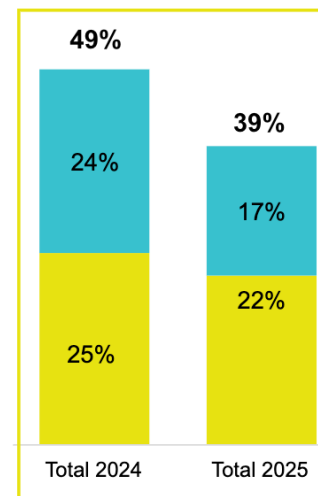
People are feeling the impacts of AI – and negative sentiment is on the rise

- **66%** of respondents claimed AI tools were having **at least "some impact" on their jobs** (vs. 57% in 2024)
- **45%** of respondents selected **“job displacement or changes to work and wages”** as one of their top 3 concerns about AI
- While many believe AI could create new opportunities and improve productivity, **these benefits were widely seen as conditional on access to skills**, responsible use, and effective regulation.

- **10-point drop in optimism** in the past year
- More respondents felt that AI is doing more harm than good across society as a whole - **a reversal from 2024**

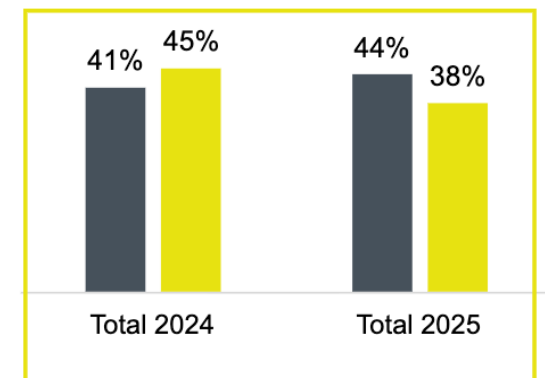
“I think there will be fewer entry level jobs that are entry points to organizations.”

NET OPTIMISM



■ Somewhat optimistic
■ Very optimistic

SOCIETY AS A WHOLE

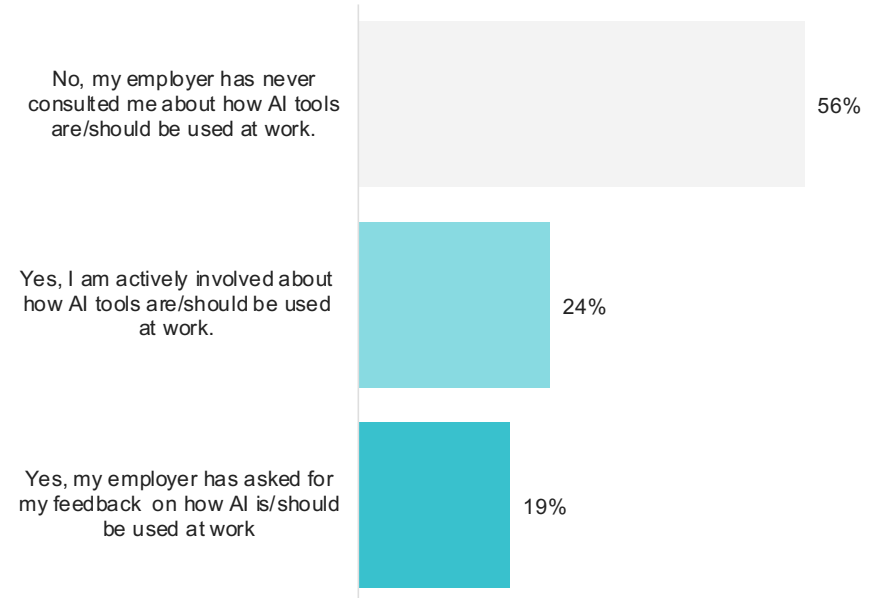


■ More harm than good ■ More good than harm

Workers still aren't getting enough support from their employers around use of AI

- Only **36%** of workers report having the **training and resources they need to use AI in their jobs** - down from **45%** in 2024
- Only **37%** of workers' employers currently offered training on AI skills (31% in 2024)
- Workers looking to increase their familiarity and use of AI tools most commonly plan to experiment on their own (61%) or watch YouTube or informal courses (54%) **versus through free courses through a local organization (25%) or paid course at a college or university (16%)**

WORKPLACE CONSULTATION ABOUT AI

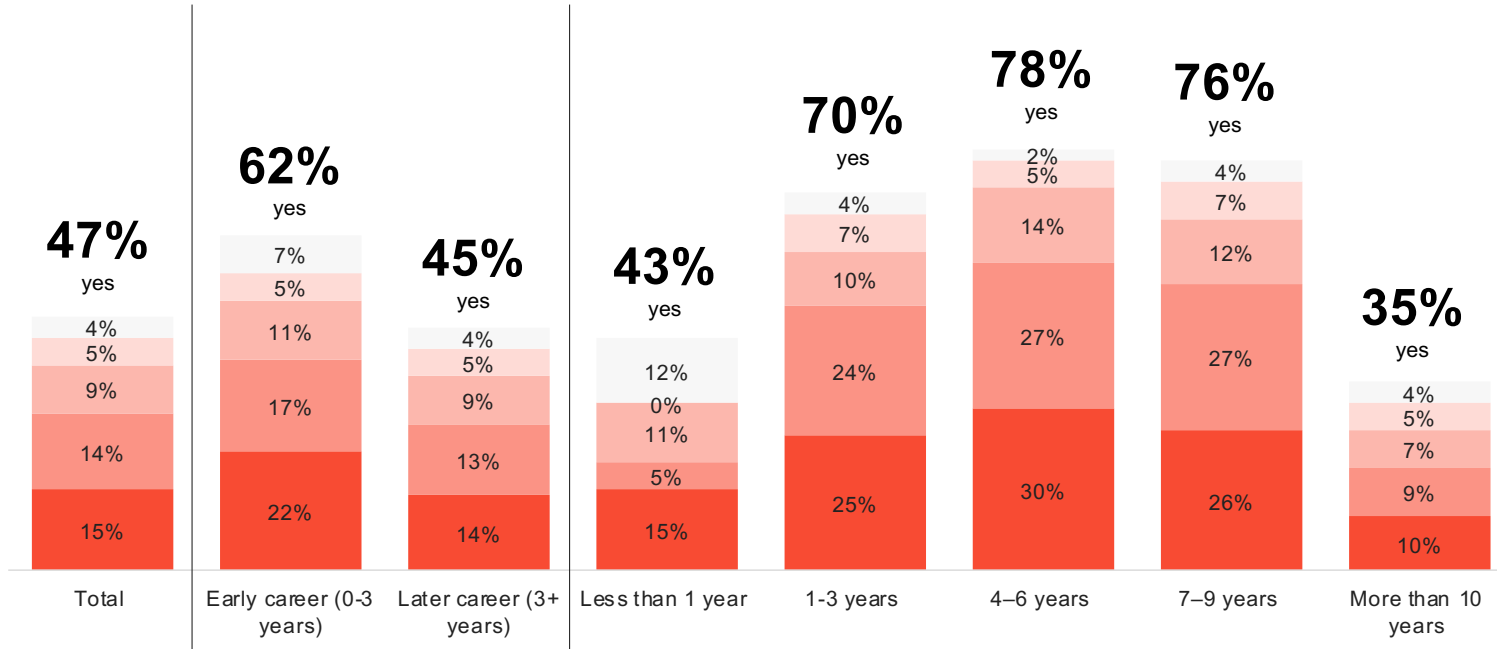


Q.: Has your employer consulted you in some way about how AI tools are used in your work?

The perceived need to upskill as a result of AI emerges early and peaks mid-career

TIMEFRAME FOR GAINING SKILLS

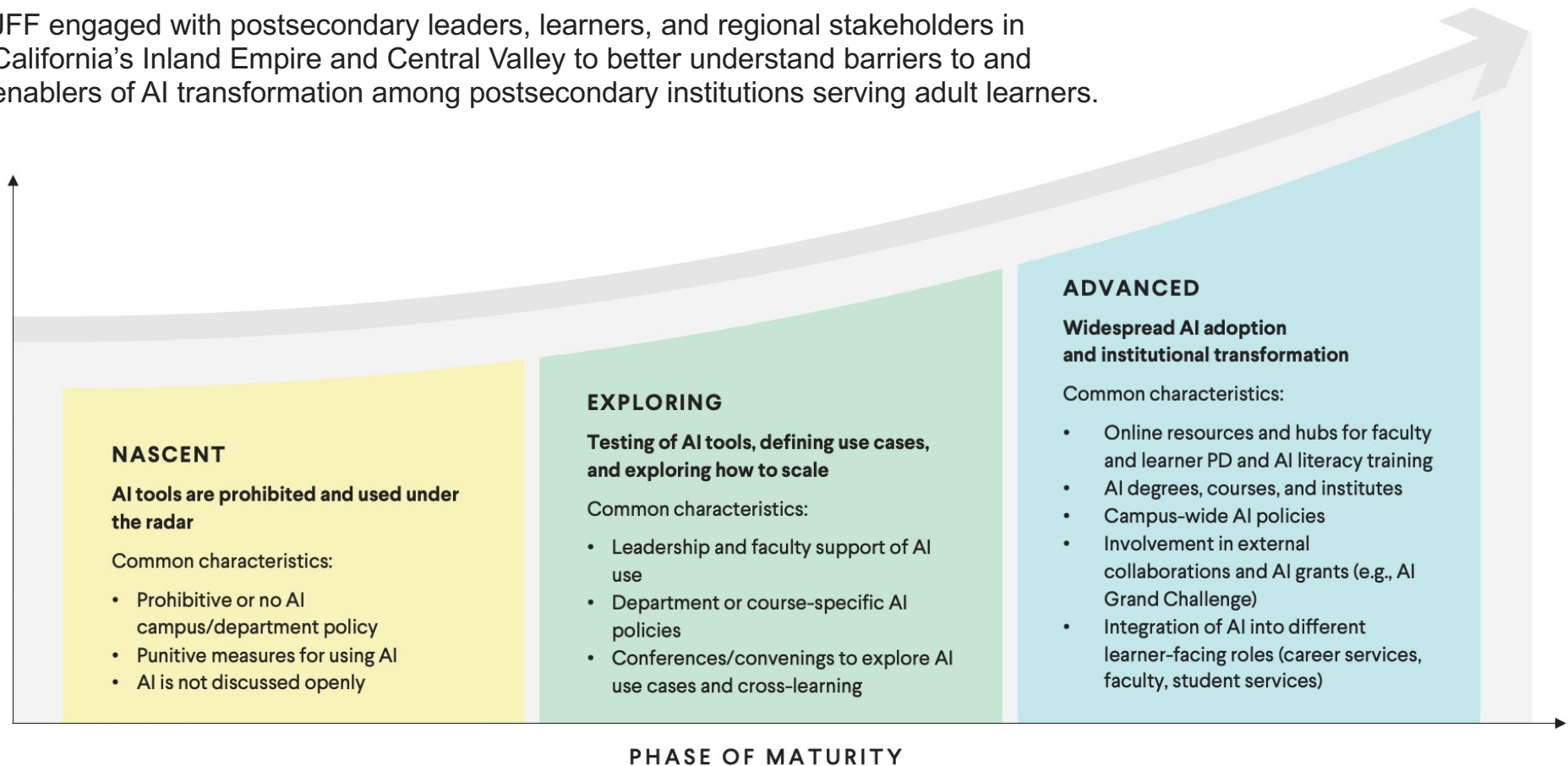
- Yes, immediately
- Yes, in the next 6-12 months
- Yes, in the next two years
- Yes, in 3-5 years plus
- 5 years plus



Q.: Do you feel the need to gain new skills as a result of the impact of AI tools on your work or education and, if so, in what timeframe? Base: All respondents.

AI integration maturity at the postsecondary level: Observations from JFF’s work in California

JFF engaged with postsecondary leaders, learners, and regional stakeholders in California’s Inland Empire and Central Valley to better understand barriers to and enablers of AI transformation among postsecondary institutions serving adult learners.





Oregon's Talent Moment

Aligning Oregon's Talent System for Quality Jobs & Mobility

The Core Challenge: The Oregon labor market is stable but strained underneath. Oregon doesn't have a talent shortage, it has a talent alignment problem.



Gap between unemployment and underemployment

Key sectors: healthcare, education, climate/energy

Leverage strong community college system to scale as workforce hubs

Strong foundation in trades, expand into new sectors

Robust workforce programs that can benefit from a cohesive system

Focus on: adult learners, incumbent worker upskilling, re-engaging disconnected workers

Key Takeaways

Oregon has all the ingredients. The opportunity now is integration. This is where JFF can partner, with system design, not just programs.



Alignment



Job Quality



Earn & Learn

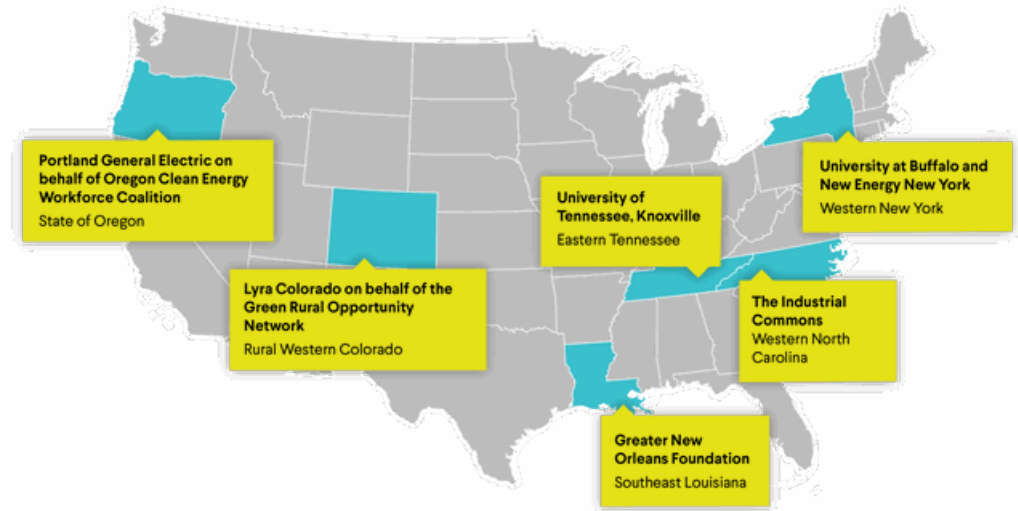


Employers

JFF in Oregon – CREST Initiative



Statewide campaign to center needs of EJC to help ensure they build and facilitate awareness, opportunity and access to new jobs in the clean energy sector.





**Together,
we are building a
future that works—
for everyone.**

Join us!

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JFF.ORG



About JFF's survey

Context of the Study:

- This study reveals how AI can serve as a critical lever for economic advancement, provided that access and equity are prioritized for disadvantaged groups.

Sample Overview:

- Sample Size: 3,020 respondents across diverse demographic groups.
- Booster samples employed to over-represent JFF's North Star populations to ensure robust insights into disadvantaged groups.
- Boosted representation of Black African American (647), Hispanic (514), and people with records of arrest, conviction, or incarceration (*people with records*) (330).
- Booster representation of residents of Ohio (514) and Illinois (473).
- Gender representation: 1,271 males, 1,737 females.
- Final data weighted back to statistically reflect the U.S. population, aged 16 and above, in accordance with latest U.S. census data.

Methodology

- Mixed methods approach: quantitative survey complemented by qualitative questions.
- Key topics: AI awareness, skill development, career impact, and barriers to adoption.

Analysis

- Comparisons have been drawn in the data for JFF's North Star populations:
 - all people without a four-year college degree
 - people of color whose highest level of education is a four-year degree
 - women whose highest level of education is a four-year degree
 - people with records