



Invited Letter: NIIT Broadens the Talent Pipeline for the Semiconductor Industry & Other Advanced Manufacturers

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As the president and CEO of the National Institute for Innovation and Technology (NIIT), I am responsible for executing NIIT's mission to identify and eliminate risks to innovation in strategic industry sectors. My 40-year career in manufacturing policy includes a focus on related education, training, and workforce development, more than a decade of which was within the semiconductor industry.

NIIT is a Maryland-based nonprofit charged with developing and executing a national strategy to build the talent pipeline for strategic industry sectors with a primary focus on the semiconductor industry. NIIT is the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship contractor responsible for establishing and expanding Registered Apprenticeship Programs for the semiconductor and nanotechnology-related supply chains. As part of this strategy, NIIT uses a scalable, programmatic approach in deploying the infrastructure required to sustain and grow the nation's highly skilled semiconductor industry workforce.

As part of NIIT's "National Talent Pipeline Development Initiative," we establish regional workforce hubs to ensure alignment between local employers and education systems and develop effective training programs to support target industries. In addition, NIIT has developed the National Talent Hub to connect job seekers from all walks of life with careers, training to fill skills gaps, and paid Registered Apprenticeship Programs. We also have dedicated programming for veterans looking to leverage existing skills supporting strategic industries.

As part of NIIT's mission to broaden the talent pipeline, we provide a gateway for technicians interested in transitioning to careers in advanced manufacturing. The apprenticeships our partners offer serve as a path to engineering-related careers by providing on-the-job training and employer-sponsored degree programs. In general, more than 50% of the positions at companies in the industries NIIT targets begin at the technician level. Offering training opportunities to technicians in related fields fills talent gaps in industries most crucial to our country's long-term economic health and national security while also providing alternative paths to successful careers for job seekers.

Community colleges play a crucial role in developing the nation's talent pipeline, and in particular, the training and education of the technician workforce. Community colleges are flexible and can readily design programs to meet industry requirements. At NIIT, we collaborate with community colleges throughout the nation to offer Required Technical Instruction to support students and employers utilizing Registered Apprenticeship Programs. In fact, the MNT-EC network of community colleges has access to our unique, state-of-the-art platform, the National Talent Hub. All students in applicable programs can utilize the skills assessment and career mapping tools to match their skills to specific job requirements and connect with employers.

I am proud of NIIT's work with community colleges, which will continue to play an important role in providing job seekers with education pathways into tech-related industries and supporting career development for an ever-broadening workforce.

Mike Russo

President and CEO

National Institute for Innovation and Technology

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