



BCW Launches Major New Initiative Focused on Innovation

In a bold move to elevate Westchester County's profile as a knowledge center for innovation and economic development, the Business Council of Westchester has launched a major new initiative for 2022 called Westchester Innovation Network (WIN): Shaping the County of the Future. The initiative will focus on convening thought leaders, planning futurists, innovators, government officials and local organizations to strengthen the long-term innovation ecosystem in Westchester County.

"Creating a stronger innovation ecosystem is critical for the future of Westchester County. We are focused on showcasing Westchester County as an attractive location to build, grow, and explore innovation," said BCW President & CEO Dr. Marsha Gordon. "We will also support partnerships between innovative new companies and local businesses to test innovation in real-world settings. Our goals are retaining talented innovators for the long-term and creating more embedded knowledge and expertise here."

The WIN initiative aligns with the BCW's advocacy, including universal access to broadband internet, energy reliability, and the creative overhaul of obsolete land uses. "The overarching goal for all our initiatives and advocacy is to provide leadership in public policy and create sustainable economic growth," said John Ravitz, the BCW's executive vice president. "The WIN initiative will help our county create a roadmap to new business success and prosperity for all our residents."

As a part of the 2022 initiative, the BCW WIN program will:

Strengthen the Innovator's Ecosystem: The first phase of the initiative includes the pairing of Westchester-based and outside innovators with local organizations to create short-term innovation teams. This partnership allows the innovator to test commercially viable innovations in real-world settings and allows Westchester organizations to see first-hand the types of innovation emerging in their industries. WIN will also work with local schools, colleges, universities, incubators, and accelerators to amplify their work and continue to showcase entrepreneurship as an important path supported by Westchester County.

Practical Innovation: This phase identifies a model municipality and pairs it with a group

of innovation experts to outline a 10-part practical innovation implementation plan. The goal is to help the municipality pinpoint day-to-day changes that are needed and provide an easily implemented action plan that will deliver economic activity, cost savings, and improvement to the lives of its residents.



Planning Futurist and Implementation Guide: This phase is focused on developing a plan for what is needed to attract and retain innovators over the next five, 15 and 25 years. This will include practical, hit-the-ground-running actions needed in zoning, financing, planning, and infrastructure.

"We have a highly skilled and educated workforce, a higher than national average household income, and a population of more than one million," said Dr. Heidi Davidson, CEO of Galvanize Worldwide and chairman of the BCW's Board of Directors. "With our proximity to New York City's knowledge centers, Westchester County has the building blocks for establishing a vibrant innovation ecosystem that can seamlessly interconnect with research hubs throughout the metro region. The time to act in Shaping the County of the Future is now, and by creating WIN, the Business Council of Westchester is doing exactly that."

The **Business Council of Westchester** is the county's only business membership organization focusing on economic development and advocacy. It is the county's largest and most prestigious business membership organization representing more than 1,000 members, including multinational corporations, hospitals, universities, biotech pioneers, not-for-profits, entrepreneurs and companies of all sizes. As the most influential economic development and advocacy organization in Westchester, The Business Council of Westchester's members enjoy unparalleled access to today's top thought leaders, diverse business development opportunities and lawmakers at all levels of government. The BCW Data Exchange provides the latest demographic research to help guide smart business decisions. The LEAP program, a one-of-a-kind initiative, gives members direct access to lobbying efforts at the county, state and national levels on issues that directly affect their businesses. Build, Connect and Win with The Business Council of Westchester. [Visit thebcw.org](http://thebcw.org) to connect today.