

Johnnie-Lynn Crosby, Regional Director of Business Solutions with SC Works Greater Upstate and Ryan Skinner, Regional Business Development Specialist with SC Vocational Rehabilitation co-presented on next generation sector partnerships at the Southern Textile Manufacturing Spring meeting of 2019, held at the Madren Conference Center in Clemson, SC. On May 15, 2019



Manufacturers have come together throughout the Link Upstate region to tackle challenges within the industry using the Next Generation Sector Partnership Model, a model that has been extremely successful in more than 35 states in the US. You may be wondering, “why a new group or initiative for manufacturing, and why now?”- when there are numerous workforce boards, economic development agencies, and other organizations and partnerships in the region already focusing on manufacturing. Next Gen is not an initiative, but a movement, a shift in the direction of doing business through collaboration and partnership. It’s a way for manufacturing leaders in the region to come together and work on common priorities. These priorities aren’t necessarily always workforce-related. Often times the pain points are about supply chain, infrastructure, regulatory, and other issues that are frequent concerns in manufacturing. Agendas are based on industry determined priorities, not geared to specific programs available or already in motion. Manufacturing leaders champion the priorities they identify and respond. So partners, such as workforce development, economic development, education, service organizations, and other groups, work together to provide current resources and program solutions to get the work done, or develop new ones, if needed. Since Next Gen Sector Partnerships are organized around the topic that interests business leaders most—’what it takes to ensure that their company thrives’—the work is more sustainable over time. The group of manufacturers launched the initial partnership meeting in Greenville, in March 2019. Following the initial meeting, the group determined 3 priority areas:

1. Build a talent pipeline through improved career awareness
2. Address middle skill and technical skill gaps
3. State level policy and regulatory change

If you are a manufacturer and are interested in learning more about the partnership, please contact Ben Waldrop with Century Printing at [benw@cpandp.com](mailto:benw@cpandp.com) or 864-848-0100

Link Upstate Region - (Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Edgefield, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry, Oconee, Pickens, Saluda, Spartanburg, and Union)