



# LIBRARIES BUILD BUSINESS

## Sustainable and Green Job Initiatives in U.S. libraries

**Sustainability, energy-efficient construction, industry transitions to renewable energy, and other “green” initiatives in the United States are gaining momentum** as national and local stakeholders address climate and energy impacts on infrastructure and daily life. This has fueled a rise in demand for career and technical training programs to develop and bolster the skills of workers for emerging green jobs.

In response to this need, libraries in the United States are increasingly offering programming and resources for workers and job seekers who wish to develop skillsets for green jobs and industries, such as energy efficient construction, waste management, and renewable energy. This includes access to green jobs training courses and career guidance and partnering with community organizations to showcase local training resources or to host classes.

As the transition to green jobs and sustainable management continues, libraries are equipped to support individual workers, environmentally focused training groups, and employers.



The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that wind turbine service technicians and solar panel installers will experience 68% and 52% increases, respectively, in the number of new jobs between 2020 and 2030.<sup>1</sup>



Among workers in 48 countries, only one in eight workers has one or more green skills, while the number of job postings requiring green skills has grown by 15.8% between 2022 and 2023.<sup>3</sup>



56% of North American public libraries surveyed in 2023 have specific programs for career building and entrepreneurship.<sup>2</sup> Libraries tailor these workforce and career offerings to local industries and emerging trends.



Job seekers with green skills are 29% more likely to be hired when compared to the average workforce.<sup>4</sup>



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[ala.org/advocacy/economic-opportunity](https://ala.org/advocacy/economic-opportunity)

1. “Green growth,” *Career Outlook*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Apr. 2022. 2. [tinyurl.com/ebsco-survey2023](https://tinyurl.com/ebsco-survey2023) 3. [tinyurl.com/econ-graph](https://tinyurl.com/econ-graph) 4. [tinyurl.com/weforum-jobs](https://tinyurl.com/weforum-jobs)

## CASE STUDIES

# Green Workforce Development Initiatives at Libraries



The **Boston (MA) Public Library** provides patrons with access to a variety of green workforce resources, including a guide to green workforce development in the greater Boston area. One such resource is access to Skill-Mill, **on-demand skilled trades training** courses on topics such as energy-efficient HVAC maintenance and sustainable design and construction certification prep materials (the LEED exam).



The **Austin (TX) Public Library** hosted a Green Workforce Accelerator Community Showcase to provide information on **local organizations** that employ, train, and/or place residents in green jobs including energy efficiency, waste management, transportation, and urban agriculture. The library also provides access to skilled trade courses relevant to the environmental sector such as solar panel installation training modules.



**Kansas City (MO) Public Library** partners with environmental nonprofit KC Can Compost to offer the Green Core Training Program.

This program provides environmental literacy and work readiness training to individuals with barriers to employment including unhoused people and formerly incarcerated individuals. Students earn an **Environmental Literacy Certificate** which prepares trainees for more than 125 environmental jobs and career pathways.

**Contra Costa County (CA) Public Library** co-hosts a quarterly virtual **Climate Career Chat**. The chats feature a diverse array of speakers including AmeriCorps fellows, Environmental Sustainability and Resource Department employees, and water conservation professionals. The Career Chats are designed to educate anyone interested in working in the environmental sector or sustainability-related careers.



**Oakland (CA) Public Library** partners with the Rising Sun Center for Opportunity, a nonprofit specializing in green jobs training and **energy and water efficiency consultations for renters and homeowners**. The library also maintains a relationship with Civicorps as a means of connecting young adults to job training and careers in the conservation field.



**Readfield Community (ME) Library** developed a speaker series on environment and sustainability topics. One program event **connected**

**local farmers with residents**—and one another—providing an opportunity to network and showcase their products. The library also partnered with the Maine Climate Council and Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed to produce a climate action workshop and an environmental careers event.

