RESILIENT REBUILDING WORKFORCE White Paper

Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator • Q1 2026

LACI

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Executive Summary

After the January 2025 fires in Los Angeles County, including the Eaton Fire in Altadena and the Palisades fire, communities face a long, complex rebuilding period alongside significant job disruption. More than 13,000 homes were lost. At the same time, more than 11,000 workers filed for unemployment assistance linked to the fires. A core recovery need is a workforce that can rebuild homes safely and efficiently, with greater resilience and without reproducing pre-fire risks.

To meet this need, the Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator (LACI) developed a Resilient Rebuilding Training Course, launched in January 2026. The program will train an initial cohort of up to 30 participants (24 enrolled in the inaugural cohort), prioritizing fire-affected residents and displaced workers, through an eight-week, no-cost course that includes technical instruction, certifications, career coaching, case management, and paid internships with LACI startups and partners.

Discovery Approach

From August to November of 2025, LACI conducted 39 stakeholder interviews, two employer focus groups, and two participant focus groups in Altadena and the Palisades to identify high-demand roles, feasible training content, and participant support needed for completion and placement.

Based on the outreach, employer demand is expected to persist for multiple years due to the scale of loss and ongoing permitting and insurance timelines.

Altadena (left) and Pacific Palisades (right) participant focus groups.

Key Findings

Priority needs include:

Construction coordination and project management of permit documentation, trades scheduling, inspections, and identifying qualified subcontractors

Energy efficiency and electrification skills and experience, including Home Energy Rating System (HERS)-aligned building performance skills and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) and heat pump-related work

Wildfire resilience and home hardening expertise and knowledge of third-party standards including Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) fire-prepared, ember-resistant and "Zone Zero" concepts

Design/drafting support (e.g., computer-aided design [CAD] tools such as Revit and SketchUp) for permit-ready plans and compliance documentation

The participant interest aligns strongly with practical recovery jobs, especially the project coordination and fire safety-forward roles. Still, successful completion of the workforce training program requires addressing personal and economic barriers such as disrupted income, caregiving needs, transportation access, schedule constraints, administrative burdens, immigration and legal concerns, and trauma-related instability. These factors make stipends and wraparound support systems essential to program success.

Priority Training Pathways

LACI identified four primary roles and related training pathways that have the greatest overlap between demand and participant interest:

1. **Construction & Rebuild Project Managers**
2. **Fire Safety & Home Hardening Specialist**
3. **HERS Rater / Energy Efficiency Technician**
4. **Resident-Facing Community Rebuilding Navigator**

Recommendations

Design the workforce training around the above pathways and co-deliver with trusted community partners

Pair instruction with stipends and wraparound support systems including transportation, childcare, multilingual access, and trauma-informed case management

For the broader recovery efforts, fund workforce development as a core part of the recovery and rebuilding infrastructure and align rebuilding incentives with standards-based resilience and electrification to sustain hiring demand

Pacific Palisades participant focus group.

Introduction & Background

Context: The January 2025 Fires and the Recovery Landscape

The January 2025 fires in Los Angeles County caused severe destruction across multiple communities. The economic impacts have been significant, with reports estimating that more than 11,000 workers filed for unemployment assistance linked to the fires, demonstrating that the disaster recovery is also a jobs recovery.[1]

The recovery effort is unusually complex, with multiple Long-Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs) and recovery coalitions, alongside county agencies, philanthropic networks, and survivor-led platforms.

Statewide partners have emphasized that the long-term recovery efforts must integrate climate resilience, insurance, and fiscal stability, not just building back as before. Some key points from their guidance include:

- Making IBHS-level home hardening the norm, not the exception
- Accelerating electrification and resilient infrastructure in tandem with recovery
- Designing programs around survivor-centered language and fast, low-friction pathways (e.g., using the term “fire survivors”, explicitly including renters, and minimizing the bureaucratic burden)

1. https://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/LA-wildfires-unemployment-impact-los-angeles

LACI's Role & the Launch of the Resilient Rebuilding Training Course

The Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator (LACI), a nonprofit with a strong track record in community-facing workforce development, has delivered its Green Jobs Workforce Development Programs to over 600 individuals since 2019. Training themes have focused on technical roles within transportation electrification, clean energy, and sustainable cities, while also providing support around administrative roles in the broader green economy.

In response to the fires, LACI has mobilized around four interconnected efforts:

Ecosystem Convening and Policy Alignment
This includes work tied to the Los Angeles County Blue Ribbon Commission on Wildfire and Climate Resilience, as well as partnerships with county departments, funders, and rebuild platforms

Resilient Rebuilding Training Course
The focus of this white paper, an eight-week special cohort starting in January 2026 for 30 fire-affected individuals

Resilient Rebuilding Cup
A pitch competition for startups working on wildfire pre-detection, prevention, and resilient construction technologies, with pilot funding provided

LACI's Resilient Rebuilding Incubation Cohort
The selected startups offer solutions that support communities across the entire resilience spectrum, from disaster response and near-term rebuilding to long-term risk reduction and preparedness

From the outset, LACI committed to co-designing the cohort with affected communities and employers, recognizing that the fire recovery effort is unique, nuanced, and delicate and that it cannot simply import an existing curriculum.

Methodology

Discovery Conversations

LACI conducted conversations (generally 30–60 minutes via Zoom) with 39 organizations across a range of categories including community and survivor organizations, state and county agencies, philanthropists and ecosystem conveners, and employers and technical experts.[2]

Pacific Palisades participant focus group.

2. See the Appendix for the full list.

Employer Focus Groups

LACI hosted two virtual employer focus groups in September 2025, bringing together general contractors, rebuild specialists, architects, design professionals, energy efficiency and HERS stakeholders, wildfire and home-hardening experts, public agencies, and intermediaries. The focus groups explored priority roles and hiring needs for the next two to five years; core skills and certifications needed; typical entry points and progression for new workers; and challenges with recruitment, retention, and training.

Participant Focus Groups

In October 2025, LACI facilitated two in-person participant focus groups. The Altadena Community focus group was held at the Pasadena Community Job Center, in partnership with the National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON) and community groups. The Palisades Community focus group was held at the Palisades Recovery Coalition.

LACI prioritized recruiting people who had lost their homes or were experiencing housing instability; workers whose jobs or incomes were disrupted by the fires (including service workers, day laborers, and local small business employees); and residents with an interest in contributing to the rebuilding efforts. The focus groups included food, participant stipends, and interpretation services.

Participants discussed their pre-fire employment, current situations, interest in various training pathways, and perceived barriers. Surveys before and after captured preference rankings for the four proposed career pathways: construction project management, fire safety and home hardening, HERS rating and energy efficiency, and HVAC or heat pump technician.

Altadena (top) and Pacific Palisades (bottom) participant focus groups.

Limitations

The sample sizes are modest and skewed toward individuals who are already engaged with community organizations. Input from employers reflects those who opted in, and may underrepresent smaller, less formal contractors and landscapers. The situation is dynamic and rebuilding timelines, insurance decisions, and policy changes may reshape demand throughout.

Key Findings

Employer Perspective

Demand Context

Employers and ecosystem partners anticipate a sustained demand over the next several years, given the large number of properties damaged or destroyed, lengthy permit and insurance timelines, and the desire to upgrade to more resilient and efficient homes.

The experience shared by a community partner illustrates the arc from emergency response to long-term rebuilding. Its early deployments focused on watershed protection and erosion control, followed by months of trail and park restoration, with plans now for hillside stabilization and landscaping. However, it noted that the greatest need is currently in residential construction in both fire zones, and the environmental work is often funded and scheduled differently.

Home burnt down in the Pacific Palisades Fire (left). New home construction in the Pacific Palisades (right).

Priority Roles

Common themes from employers and technical partners include:

Construction & Rebuild Project Managers

Builders and architects are juggling multiple concurrent rebuild projects, often with complex insurance and permitting requirements, so there is a strong need for mid-level staff who can coordinate scheduling, documents, inspections, and subcontractors, and communicate effectively with clients

Design & Drafting Support (Architecture & Engineering)

Architecture firms identified a demand for staff fluent in Revit, CAD, and SketchUp, who are able to produce permit-ready drawings and Title 24 energy compliance documents, with roles accessible to people with technical and digital aptitude, including those looking for a new career

Fire Safety & Home Hardening Specialists

Employers and funders both highlighted the need to build to IBHS wildfire-prepared home standards, including ember-resistant vents, non-combustible materials, and properly designed "Zone Zero" landscaping

Energy Efficiency & Electrification Roles

Multiple partners pointed to HERS raters, building performance technicians, and heat pump and HVAC installers as critical to delivering efficient, sustainable rebuilds in line with state goals

Environmental Restoration & Risk Reduction

One partner pointed to valuable entry-level opportunities including trail and hillside stabilization, erosion control, soil remediation, and replanting as potential avenues for workforce trainees to get a foot in the door

Skills, Certifications, & Soft Skills

Employers collectively emphasized the following:

- **Foundational safety and work-readiness:** OSHA-10/30, basic construction site etiquette, PPE use, fall protection, and reliable attendance
- **Digital and coordination tools:** comfort with email, spreadsheets, documenting change orders, and platforms like Asana or Procore
- **Customer-facing skills:** empathy, communication, and cultural competence when working with traumatized survivors or elders
- **For union-aligned pathways,** alignment with pre-apprenticeship curricula like MC3 was seen as a strong advantage

Systemic Barriers Identified by Employers

- **Labor market churn and poaching:** Midsize contractors losing trained staff to larger firms offering higher wages and/or more stable hours
- **Union entry windows and requirements:** Often opaque for newcomers, especially those without prior exposure to trades
- **Fragmented recovery ecosystem:** Multiple initiatives risk duplication if not coordinated, and employers worry about being pulled into conversations without clear pipelines of trained candidates
- **Permit and inspection bottlenecks:** Slow project timelines and increased carrying costs, making workforce planning more challenging

Ideal Certifications Cited by Employers

OSHA · NFPA 70E · BPI BSP BA-T BA-P · CCM · AUTODESK Revit · RESNET HERS Rater · PMP Professional Certification

Key Findings

Participant Perspective

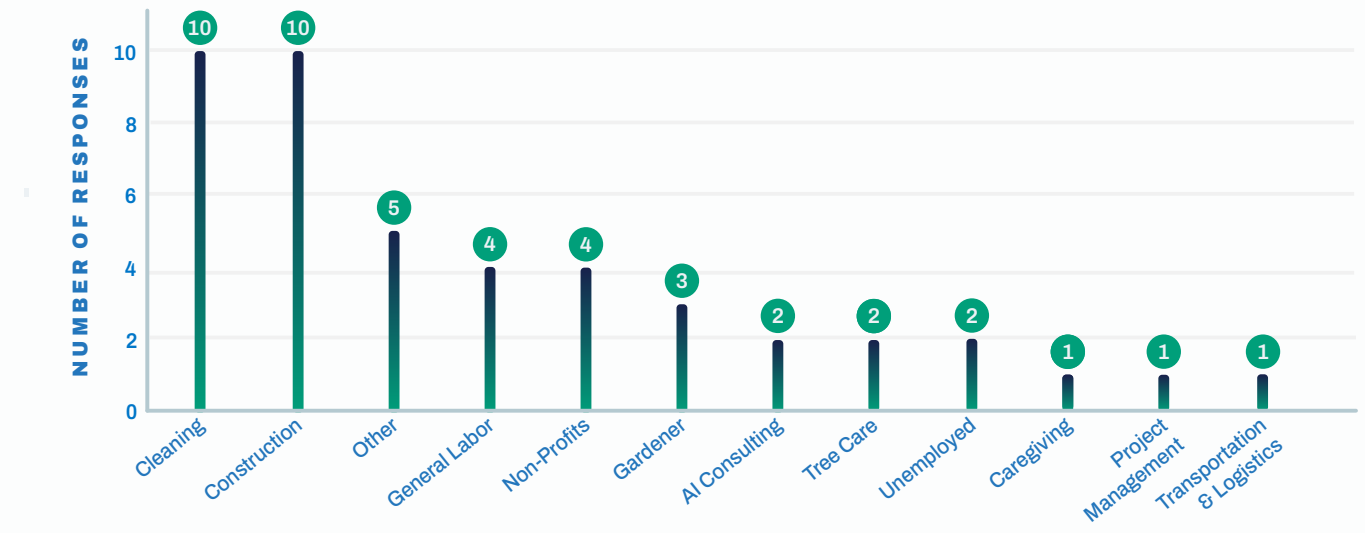
Participant Profiles & Pre-Fire Employment

Homeowners, renters, and unhoused survivors from Altadena and the Palisades

Workers who were employed in the fire-affected areas, including hospitality, retail, day labor, entertainment, and small businesses, and who lost income due to closures or displacement

Individuals with previous construction and technical experience, often gained abroad (e.g., electricians, carpenters, plumbers, or mechanics) who are now often working below their skill level

What Types of Work Are/Were You Doing?



Community partners underscored that pre-fire, local economies were diverse, including film and television workers, musicians, mechanics, landscapers, and service-sector staff. These are precisely the communities now juggling displacement, job loss, and the recovery bureaucracy.

Altadena focus group participants (left). Local economies were diverse and employed communities across various industries (right).

Aspirations & Role Preferences

When presented with four potential pathways, participants showed:

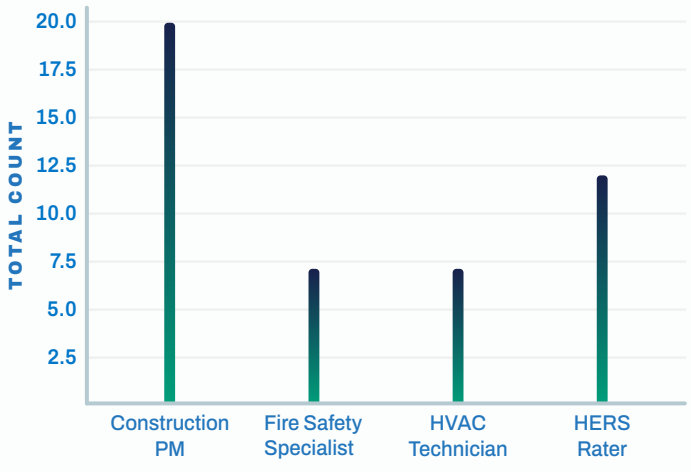
- A strong interest in **Construction & Rebuild Project Management**, with participants attracted to the idea of being in the middle of the action, coordinating rebuilding, and having a clear leadership role. Some saw it as a way to leverage previous informal project experience (e.g., organizing crews, managing household repairs) into a recognized career

- A moderate to high interest in **HERS & Energy Efficiency roles**, especially for those with more technical or engineering leanings, including those who had studied in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields abroad but never had their qualifications recognized locally

- A moderate interest in **Fire Safety & Home Hardening**, particularly among those with landscaping, general labor, or facilities backgrounds. Participants expressed a sense of pride in the idea of making their communities safer and preventing future disasters

- A moderate interest in **HVAC & Heat Pump roles**, which are seen as a solid, transferable trade, though some participants expressed concerns about the physical demands

Level of Interest in Priority Pathways



Specifically, in the Palisades focus group, participants additionally expressed a desire for roles that could support older neighbors and those struggling with insurance, reflecting an appetite for community navigator-type roles alongside more technical positions

Strengths & Assets

Participants bring considerable assets, including:

Hands-on technical skills, including construction, electrical work, painting, plumbing, landscaping, and basic carpentry

Language abilities in Spanish and other languages key to engaging with day laborers, elders, and monolingual community members

Experience in community organizing and mutual aid, especially through survivor networks, faith communities, and LTRGs

Barriers & Constraints

Participants and community organizations pointed out several major barriers to participation in training and subsequent employment, including:

Navigating insurance processes and bureaucracy is a significant time burden, with many survivors spending significant time dealing with insurance, builders, and permitting, leaving limited bandwidth for training or new jobs

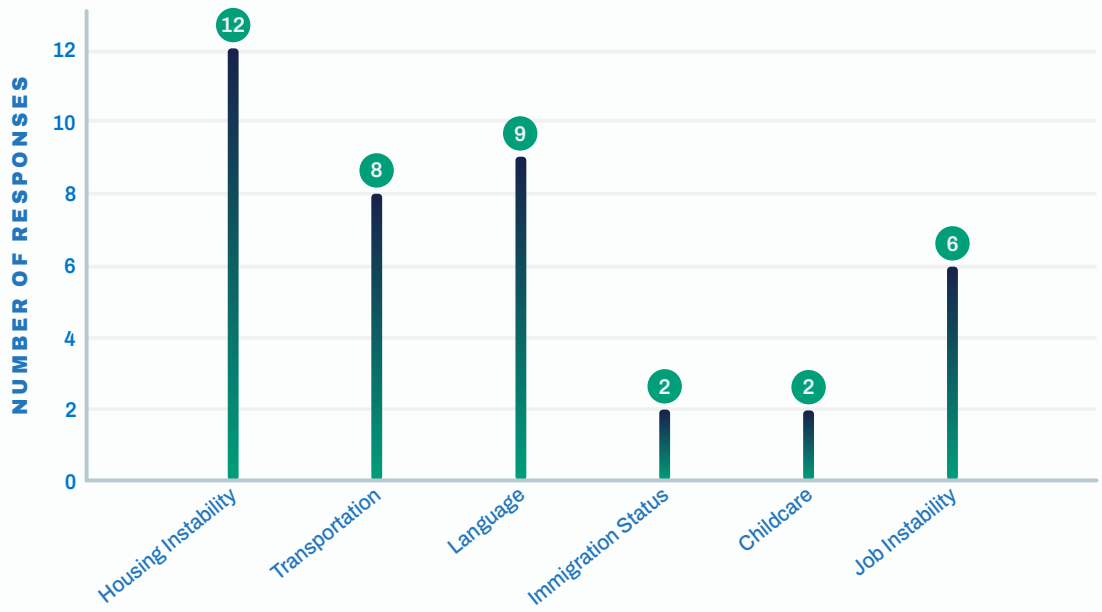
Scheduling and income loss, with many participants unable to afford to forgo earnings for full-time training, thus making evening or weekend options and stipends essential

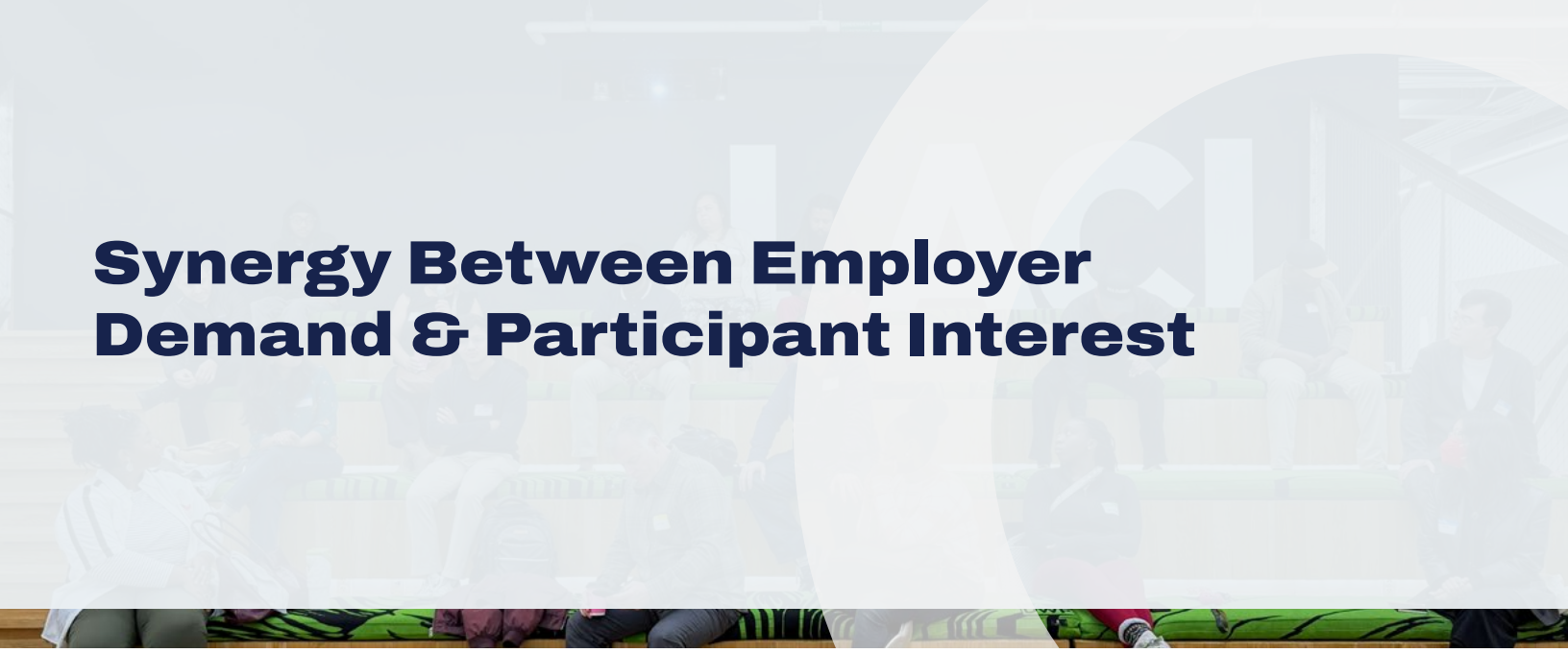
Childcare and care responsibilities were repeatedly raised as a prerequisite for equitable access to both focus groups and any future training

Limited awareness and access to union pathways, with pre-apprenticeships working quite well, but not widely understood and often perceived as inaccessible

Immigration status and documentation affected some workers, making them hesitant to engage with official programs, due to immigration enforcement fears and mistrust

Participant Challenges in Securing Long-Term Employment





Synergy Between Employer Demand & Participant Interest

In synthesizing all of the above, there is a strong alignment across four priority pathways.

1. **Construction & Resilient Rebuilding Project Management**
2. **Fire Safety & Home Hardening Specialist**
3. **HERS Rater & Energy Efficiency Technician**
4. **Community Rebuild Navigator**

1 Construction & Resilient Rebuilding Project Management

- Employers consistently asked for project managers and site coordinators to relieve pressure on principals and to keep complex rebuilds on track
- Participants see project management roles as aspirational and impactful, especially those with organizing or administrative experience who do not want to work in heavy labor roles
- The workforce training cohort can prepare people for assistant project manager or coordinator roles initially, focusing on documentation, scheduling, communication, and basic construction literacy, with a clear progression into higher responsibility

2 Fire Safety & Home Hardening Specialist

- Employer and funder guidance all point towards home hardening, defensible space, and fire-resilient landscaping as core elements of a resilient rebuild
- Participants with landscaping and general labor backgrounds are well-positioned to upskill into these roles, turning existing experience into specialist expertise
- This pathway intersects with restoration work (e.g. hillside stabilization, vegetation management) and offers quick wins for community-visible resilience

3 HERS Rater & Energy Efficiency Technician

- Employers highlight HERS certification and building performance expertise as a clear bottleneck, particularly with pushes for electrification
- Participants interested in technical, semi-professional roles, including those with prior study in STEM fields, found this attractive
- This pathway can connect to stable, region-wide work beyond the immediate fire zones, supporting long-term career progression

4 Community Rebuild Navigator

While not always recognized as a workforce role in traditional terms, multiple community partners and survivors indicated a pressing need for trusted navigators or case managers who understand:

- Insurance basics
- Permit and rebuild timelines
- Available grants or loans
- Trauma-informed communication
- Mental health services
- Immigration and legal services

Participants with administrative, social services, or lived experience of navigating recovery expressed a strong interest in these types of roles. These positions can sit within community organizations, LTRGs, local governments, or even contracting firms (as client-facing coordinators).

Connection to Internships and Jobs to Build Startup Capacity

As with all of LACI's workforce program cohorts, LACI's Resilient Rebuilding Training Course is designed to be directly connected to strong placement outcomes, through both skills training as well as active placement work that continues throughout the course and after completion.

LACI's Workforce Development team includes a full-time staff member dedicated to job and internship placement, as well as contracted case managers, who work individually with participants to identify suitable roles, review résumés and applications, conduct practice interviews, and match graduates to employers aligned with the training themes. Key job connection elements also include:

Presentation on Green Jobs at the Resilient Rebuilding Cohort Career Exploration Day.

1. Career readiness and retention supports including résumé review, interview preparation, and expectation management, paired with active case management
2. Employer speaker series where participants hear directly from businesses about hiring opportunities
3. Paid internship placement support with both LACI startups and partner organizations, giving participants hands-on experience and references
4. Employer-informed role matching based on cultivated, active relationships with hiring managers and knowledge of open roles, timelines, qualifications, and expectations
5. Ongoing post-training placement services, for up to one year following completion, in recognition that hiring cycles do not always align with cohort dates

For this specific cohort, LACI conducted additional discovery work and employer engagement to strengthen the cohort's alignment with real hiring needs and to ensure that participants are trained toward roles that exist in the market.

While the workforce training cohort is designed primarily to prepare participants for gainful employment, it is also intentionally aligned with LACI's broader innovation ecosystem, in particular with LACI's flagship Incubation program, which includes a dedicated Resilient Rebuilding cohort of cleantech startups developing solutions related to wildfire resilience, home hardening, electrification and home efficiency, and climate-resilient rebuilding.

By linking workforce development training to specific startup cohorts, LACI strengthens both sides of the ecosystem, providing participants with additional employment pathways, and giving startups access to trained talent, in this case supporting faster, safer, and more resilient rebuilding outcomes.

Contractors providing work training to the cohort

14 Startups join the first Resilient Rebuilding Incubation Cohort

Economic Impact

The Resilient Rebuilding cohort is designed to convert training and technical skills into near-term employment outcomes in the rebuilding ecosystem, with clear connections to job placements and wage increases. There are currently 24 participants enrolled in the inaugural cohort. Using conservative planning assumptions, LACI anticipates between 21 and 22 completers (90% completion rate), and 16-17 job and internship placements (75% of completers) into roles paying between $25 and $35 per hour.

At the projected placement wage range, each participant placed is expected to earn between $50,000 and $72,800 in the first year (assuming full-time employment between 2,000 and 2,080 hours annually). Across 16 to 17 placed participants, this works out to approximately $0.8-$1.24 million in first-year direct wages generated by the cohort, depending on exact wage level and hours worked.

Internal pre-cohort survey results on wage levels provide a baseline for participant earnings prior to the training. Among the participants who reported an hourly wage, pre-cohort earnings cluster in the high teens to low $20s per hour, with survey respondents typically seeking at least part-time, if not full-time, employment. Compared to the pre-cohort baseline, the projected placement wage range of $25 to $35 per hour is a meaningful wage step up for many of the placed participants (varying by role, hour, job match, and exact wage).

Using the program investment level and budget, projected first-year direct wages correspond to a gross return of approximately $3.41 to $5.28 for every dollar invested. After accounting for program costs, the net gain ranges from roughly $565,000 to $1,005,000, representing a net ROI of 241% to 428% in the first year. These figures reflect only direct participant wages and do not include broader economic multipliers, productivity benefits, reduced reliance on public benefits, or long-term wage progression.[3]

3. Calculation methodology is available in the Appendix.

Regional Context

The Who Will Build Fund & LACI's Role

The scale and duration of post-fire rebuilding in Los Angeles County will depend not only on financing, insurance, and permitting, but also on a sustained supply of skilled workers and accessible career pathways into good construction jobs.

Economic impact studies estimate that the total rebuilding activity will generate between 141,000 and 209,000 job-years over multiple years, with 85% of those tied to direct construction employment, and two-thirds of the labor demand in the Palisades fire area.[4] Depending on the duration of the rebuilding process, this equates to between 14,100 and 20,900 jobs per year (on a ten-year timeline), or 28,000 to 41,800 jobs per year (on a five-year timeline), generating a huge demand for skilled workers.

Recognizing that existing workforce development programs and pipelines are few and far between, and often difficult to access, regional philanthropy organizations have launched a coordinated effort to understand workforce needs and catalyze solutions at pace and scale, as needed to sustain the recovery and rebuild efforts.

The Who Will Build Fund (WWB), established by the California Community Foundation (CCF) and supported by numerous Los Angeles-area foundations, was created to develop a research-to-action framework to strengthen a "vibrant, skilled trades ecosystem" grounded in local construction and workforce realities.

To develop this framework, WWB engaged Estolano Advisors and the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) as a research consultant team. Over a twelve-month period, the research team is tasked with producing actionable intelligence and recommendations to close workforce rebuilding gaps.

The workplan includes five core elements:

1. A data-based demand study to estimate what will be built (e.g., single-family homes, multi-family, retail, infrastructure) and in what order
2. A countywide inventory of skilled trades training programs, including program quality and yields
3. An assessment of the gaps between labor demand and labor supply
4. Recommendations to funders on where to scale existing programs and/or adopt best practices from elsewhere
5. Ongoing community-grounded engagement and regular updates to public agencies and stakeholders

4. One job year is equivalent to one job created or sustained over one year, not necessarily unique workers. https://lacounty.gov/2026/01/22/la-county-and-laedc-release-second-public-update-on-wildfire-economic-impact-study/

How LACI's Work Fits

LACI's Resilient Rebuilding workforce efforts are well positioned as an implementation and learning partner within WWB's broader research-to-action framework. While WWB is building a regional shared understanding of job demand, training supply, and gaps, LACI is piloting a job-connected model that helps translate those findings into near-term workforce outcomes, especially in the parts of the overall rebuilding effort that intersect with resilience, sustainability, and electrification.

Specifically, LACI's cohort complements the objectives of WWB in four ways:

1. **Providing an on-the-ground signal of supply and demand:** through employer engagement, focus groups, and active placements, LACI can contribute practical insights into evolving role needs, hiring constraints, and the real-world barriers to converting training into employment

2. **Serving as a scalable program candidate:** WWB's scope includes identifying existing programs that could scale and/or be best practice models to adopt. LACI's cohort can serve as one such model, especially when resilient rebuilding skillsets are underdeveloped in traditional trades pipelines

3. **Strengthening job-connected outcomes:** because LACI's workforce development team includes a full-time staff member dedicated to internship and job placement, LACI is able to easily maintain ongoing relationships with employers in the resilient rebuilding and adjacent construction space, and is better able to match program participants with suitable open roles. This capacity directly supports WWB's emphasis on actionable pathways into good jobs, as opposed to simply training in isolation

4. **Expanding the employer landscape:** in parallel with the training cohort, LACI's flagship Incubation program includes a Resilient Rebuilding-related startup cohort. This creates a practical ecosystem linkage, where the workforce cohort serves as a talent pipeline, while the incubation cohort serves as a source of emerging employers who are developing and deploying solutions related to resilient rebuilding

Ongoing community engagement is also emphasized, in order to keep the work grounded and actionable, as well as to provide regular updates to regional public agencies and partners. LACI intends to continue to actively engage with this effort by sharing lessons learned, participating in any convenings, and aligning future cohort pathway design with emerging demand signals and best-practice recommendations as WWB's research develops. Stakeholders interested in engaging with WWB directly should reach out via email at: whowillbuildfund@estolanoadvisors.com.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Workforce Development Program Design Recommendations

A. Formalize Training Focus Areas

Each participant could either specialize or sample several "streams" before choosing a primary pathway

- Construction & Rebuild Project Management
- Fire Safety & Home Hardening Specialist
- HERS Rater & Energy Efficiency Technician
- Community Rebuild Navigator

B. Offer Trauma-Informed, Survivor-Centered Design

- Integrate case management for every participant to help translate prior experience and manage life barriers
- Offer mental health and peer support referrals via community partners

C. Provide Robust Wraparound Support

- Provide stipends, meals, transportation assistance, and on-site or partner-provided childcare during sessions, aligning with survivor feedback
- Consider evening or weekend scheduling, and flexible hybrid components for those still juggling work and rebuild obligations

D. Focus on a Deep Community Partnership Model

- Co-host sessions at community-run sites to reduce travel and increase trust
- Engage with community partners as recruitment partners and potential co-instructors

E. Align Curriculum with Existing Standards and Pipelines

- Embed OSHA-10/30 and core safety training early
- Where possible, stack training toward recognized credentials (e.g., HERS or modules that make participants attractive to union pre-apprenticeships)
- Ensure that content reflects IBHS home standards, electrification, home hardening, and county planning requirements

F. Secure Employer Commitments Upfront

- Formalize relationships with anchor employers across the four key pathways before the cohort begins
- Co-define any internship roles, wage expectations, and basic progression routes

Recommendations for Partner Organizations

A. Integrate Workforce Cohorts into Wider Recovery Plans

- Cohort graduates can be treated as a local rebuild resource, building them into long-term recovery strategies and communications

B. Coordinate on Recruitment & Case Management

- Community organizations can collaborate on shared case management, avoiding having participants repeat their stories for every program

C. Champion Inclusive, Survivor-Centered Messaging

- Adopt language and outreach approaches recommended by partners (e.g., using the term “fire survivors”, explicit inclusion of renters and displaced workers, emphasis on quick, low-burden applications)

D. Support Wraparound Services & Advocacy

- Funders and community organizations can help resource childcare, transportation, and legal support, recognizing these as structural barriers, not individual failings

Recommendations for Funders, Government Agencies, & the Wider Public

A. Invest in Workforce as Core Recovery Infrastructure

- Treat workforce development, especially survivor-led, resilience-aligned programs, as a central pillar of recovery, alongside housing and infrastructure grants, rather than an add-on

B. Support Multi-Year, Flexible Funding

- Long-term grants that span beyond the first wave of media attention, as some funders note, are crucial to sustain resilient rebuild projects and the workers who carry them out

C. Encourage Standards-Based Rebuilding

- Align funding criteria with IBHS standards, electrification goals, and community-led resilience, creating a demand pull for graduates with the skills highlighted in this report

Appendix

The full list of organizations that LACI met with is below:

Community & Survivor Organizations

- Altagether
- Day One
- Eaton Fire Survivors Network
- Flintridge Center
- Palisades Recovery Coalition
- Pasadena Community Job Center
- Post Fire
- Resilient Palisades

Public Agencies

- California Office of Data & Innovation
- City of Los Angeles, Economic & Workforce Development Department
- Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity
- Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger
- Los Angeles County Supervisor Lindsay Horvath

Philanthropy & Ecosystem Conveners

- After the Fire USA
- California Forward
- Department of Angels
- Foundation for the Los Angeles Community Colleges
- LA Voice
- Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation
- SidePorch
- SoCal Grantmakers

Employers & Technical Experts

- Altadena Collective
- Altadena Recovery and Rebuild Corporation
- Aris Hydronics
- BASEstud.io
- Eames Foundation
- Foothill Catalog Foundation
- GER3
- HireLAX
- Los Angeles Conservation Corps
- MCTIGUE Architects
- Merge Now
- Musolino Architecture
- Raimi + Associates
- Rebuild Altadena
- Thermoshade
- University of California, Los Angeles
- Wildfire Defense Mesh
- Wuii

Economic Impact and ROI Calculation Methodology

This section of the appendix documents the assumptions, formulas, and scenario calculations used to estimate first year direct wage impact and ROI for the Resilient Rebuilding cohort.

Cohort Assumptions:

- Enrolled participants (n): 24
- Completion rate (c): 90%
- Placement rate among completers (p): 75%

Step One: Completers

Completers = n x c; 24 x 0.90 = 21.6, rounded to 22

Step Two: Placements (rounded headcount)

Placements = Completers x p = 22 x 0.75 = 16.5, thus 16–17

Wage & Hours Assumptions:

- Hourly wage (w): $25–$35/hour
- Annual hours (h): 2,000–2,080 hours/year (full-time employment)

First-Year Direct Wage Impact:

Per-participant annual earnings: annual earnings = w x h

- Low per-person case: 25 x 2,000 = 50,000
- High per-person case: 35 x 2,080 = 72,800

Total first-year direct wages: total wages = placements x w x h

- Low scenario: 16 placements at $25/hour and 2,000 hours = 16 x 25 x 2,000 = 800,000
- High scenario: 17 placements at $35/hour and 2,080 hours = 17 x 35 x 2,080 = 1,237,600

This yields a range of estimated wages from $0.8–$1.24 million (rounded) in direct first-year wages.

ROI Formulas:

Let b = total program budget

Let r = first-year direct wages

Gross wage return multiple: gross multiple = r / b

Net ROI: Net ROI = (r – b) / b = (r / b – 1)

Net ROI % = (r / b – 1) x 100

ROI Results:

Applying b = $234,810 to the wage-return scenarios above:

Gross wage return per $1 invested: approximately 3.4x to 5.3x (first-year, direct wages only)

- Low case: $800,000 / $234,810 = 3.41x
- High case: $1,240,000 / $234,810 = 5.28x

Net gain (first-year, direct wages only): approximately $565,000 to $1,005,000

- Low case: $800,000 – $234,810 = $565,190
- High case: $1,240,000 – $234,810 = $1,005,190

NET ROI (first-year): approximately 241% to 428% (direct wages only)

Net ROI (%) = (gross multiple – 1) × 100

- 3.41x gross = (3.41 – 1) × 100 = 241% net ROI
- 5.28x gross = (5.28 – 1) × 100 = 428% net ROI

Every dollar the program spent generated between $3.41 and $5.28 in first-year wages. After accounting for the cost of the program itself, the net return was between **241% and 428%.**