We are Washington’s innovation community: creating economic opportunity and enhancing quality of life for citizens across our state.

We are job creators.

→ Our innovative companies and institutions directly employ 396,818 people and provide an additional 37,525 jobs for the self-employed, for a total of 434,343 jobs in our state.

→ Major sectors include software and computer services (110,000 jobs); aerospace (85,000 jobs); and life sciences (34,000 jobs).

→ Innovation is a significant contributor to Washington’s export base: 76 percent of innovative products and services are sold outside the state, compared to 27 percent of sales by other industries.

→ Innovative industries support a total of 1.4 million jobs in all sectors, equivalent to 45 percent of total Washington employment.

Our Vision

Washington State will be home to the best educated, most innovative workforce in the nation and the most attractive location in which to start, grow, and sustain innovative companies that create new jobs.

We are high growth.

→ Since 1988, innovation employment has doubled in our state.

→ Washington’s software and computer services employment increased 815 percent in the same period.

→ Life sciences employment grew nearly 12 percent between 2007 and 2011, while total state employment declined two percent.

We are high impact.

→ Innovative industries directly generated $231 billion in sales and $41 billion in employee wages in 2011, and supported a total of $370 billion in sales and $86 billion in wages across all sectors of our economy.

→ Innovative industries paid $770 million in state business and occupation taxes in 2011; aggregate state and local tax revenues from associated economic activity were $6.1 billion.

→ Innovation employment benefits our entire state: 14 counties have at least 1,000 innovation jobs, while Benton, Clark, King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Spokane counties each boast more than 10,000 innovation jobs.
Washington State Talent & Innovation Platform

Ensure all students arrive in kindergarten ready to learn.

**Action:** Expand capacity in quality early learning programs to serve the population of eligible low-income children who currently do not have access to ECEAP or Head Start.

Strengthen science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) preparation for our K-12 students.

**Action:** Fully implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in Mathematics and English Language Arts and adopt the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

**Action:** Provide elementary school teachers with the training and tools necessary to align curriculum and instruction with the content and practices of the NGSS and the science components of the CCSS.

**Action:** Provide more middle and high school students with access to rigorous engineering and computer science learning opportunities.

**Action:** Maintain math and science assessment requirements for high school graduation.

Embrace best practices and innovations proven to elevate student achievement.

**Action:** Incent school districts to establish STEM schools or academies within schools.

**Action:** Fully implement Initiative 1240 authorizing the establishment of high-quality charter schools as approved by the citizens of Washington.

**Action:** Implement evidence-based use of technology in our schools to enhance student learning and assist at-risk students to meet standards and achieve graduation.

Cultivate high-quality teachers and school leaders.

**Action:** Fully implement the four-tier teacher and principal evaluation system.

**Action:** Provide efficient, alternative pathways to STEM teaching and administrative leadership for non-traditional candidates.

Ensure all high school graduates are prepared for college-level work or on-the-job training, and have the foundation to be lifelong learners.

**Action:** Set targets for reducing remediation rates among our high school graduates and identify best practices based on districts’ effectiveness at achieving them.

**Action:** Require students to take the college entrance exam in mathematics in the 11th grade to gauge their level of preparation and identify those needing extra help in preparing for college-level work.
2. Washington will have a higher education system that prepares more students for high-impact career opportunities and meets the growing workforce needs of our innovative employers.

Expand capacity in high-demand, high-impact degree programs at Washington’s public colleges and universities.

**Action:** Direct all capacity increases at Washington’s public colleges and universities in state budgets over the next decade to high demand, high impact fields.

**Action:** Ramp up high-quality engineering and computer science degree production at our public four-year institutions by 10 percent per year over 10 years, prioritizing funding for expanded capacity in high-demand, high-impact programs, providing targeted financial aid to students, and pursuing strategies to improve articulation, student retention, and time to graduation.

Augment baccalaureate and graduate program capacity in high-impact fields.

**Action:** Engage Washington’s independent, non-profit institutions of higher education in the effort to meet future capacity needs in STEM fields alongside our public institutions.

Increase student access to post-secondary learning opportunities.

**Action:** Follow through on the state commitment to the Opportunity Scholarship Program, a public-private partnership that will enable more Washington students to obtain degrees in high-demand, high-impact fields.

**Action:** Streamline the regulatory pathway for implementing innovative higher education delivery models, such as blended and distance learning opportunities, and for enabling high-quality institutions from outside of Washington to establish satellite campuses within the state.
3. Washington will be the most competitive location for attracting and retaining educated workers, for growing young companies, and for sustaining mature companies.

Make Washington the preferred destination for highly-educated, entrepreneurial talent.

**Action:** Pursue an aggressive recruiting strategy targeting out-of-state STEM graduates and entrepreneurs.

**Action:** Develop a pilot initiative with other technology-intensive states targeting H1B visa reform, enabling foreign students who earn high-demand, high-impact degrees at our colleges and universities to remain in the country conditional upon working in their degree field.

Enable more companies to successfully commercialize new technologies in Washington.

**Action:** Restore and sustain the state funding commitment to the Life Sciences Discovery Fund through 2018 to support commercialization of promising life sciences research.

**Action:** Provide technical assistance to Washington companies seeking federal innovation grants to increase our “win rate” for Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) funding.

Build scale in life sciences and clean energy, and cultivate an environment that will promote the continued growth of our aerospace and information technology industries.

**Action:** Implement the higher education capacity-building and talent attraction initiatives above.

**Action:** Make permanent the state business and occupation tax credit for qualifying research and development activities and the state sales and use tax deferral/waiver for high tech R&D and biotechnology manufacturing.

**Action:** Craft a strategy to leverage Washington’s talent and innovation assets to nurture local life sciences companies and to recruit multinational life sciences firms to establish research centers in our state, and create the position of life sciences advisor within the Governor’s Office to oversee this effort.

**Action:** Maintain support for the Clean Energy Partnership to improve coordination and increase Washington’s competitiveness as a center of clean energy innovation.

**Action:** Make available matching funds for highly leveraged federal R&D initiatives that will make Washington more competitive in attracting federal dollars to the state.