US Water Alliance

Building a Strong and Equitable Water Workforce

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Why One Water?

Water is a pathway to essential needs

Hallmarks of One Water

- Value water at every stage and in every form
- Focus on achieving multiple benefits
- Approach decisions with a systems mindset
- Use watershed-scale thinking and action
- Intervene with right-sized solutions
- Center inclusion and partnerships
- Account for climate action urgency and opportunities
The US Water Alliance is a cross-sector membership organization that advances a One Water future for all.
The majority of water utilities’ 300,000 positions will need to be filled during the next decade.

Many of these jobs pay more on average compared to all occupations, including more pay for utility workers at the lower end of the income scale.

These jobs also require less formal education than jobs in other sectors and tend to involve more extensive work experience and on-the-job training.
“Toward a Strong and Equitable Water Workforce”

What’s Inside the Report?
- Research Results
- Insights: Challenges and Opportunities
- 3 Key Strategies and 9 Needed Initiatives

Meeting sector-wide needs requires:
- Equity
- Partnerships
New Strategy Report: “Toward a Strong and Equitable Water Workforce”

Research and Strategy Guideposts:

• **Centering equity** to increase diversity and the talent pool of qualified candidates

• Making **replication** of best practices **accessible**

• **Standardizing** efforts that could solve the challenges at **scale**
### 10 Common Challenges to Addressing this Problem

1. Providing sector-wide coordination
2. Recruiting job candidates from underrepresented groups
3. Addressing capacity differences among utilities
4. Targeting mission-critical utility occupations
5. Funding workforce efforts
6. Growing awareness and changing negative perceptions of water utility jobs
7. Eliminating barriers and red tape
8. Providing career clarity
9. Navigating competition
10. Preparing for the future of water management
3 Key Strategies Are Needed

Grow Water’s Talent Pipeline
Act collectively to significantly increase the number of applicants while reducing barriers to entry for diverse candidates.

Standardize Practices
Connect utilities and their partners with nationally accepted, standardized resources to expedite and strengthen place-based impact.

Inspire and Prepare Water Leaders
Curate curricula and cultivate networks to spread and scale the skills and capacities leaders need to tackle water challenges.
3 Key Strategies

Grow Water’s Talent Pipeline

Standardize Practices

Inspire & Prepare Water Leaders

9 Impactful Initiatives

- Engage Young People
- Create Common Water Career Pathways
- Cultivate and Support One Water Leaders

- Create “Earn & Learn” WaterCorps
- Build a National Water Workforce Database
- Support and Deepen Equitable HR Management

- Collaborate Regionally
- Think Outside the Civil Service Box
- Develop a National Water Workforce Communications Campaign

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THANK YOU!

Help us continue to identify and surface water workforce projects and programs that demonstrate the value of building equity.

We invite you to think about opportunities to partner/collaborate with the Alliance.

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