



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FOR ADVANCING INCLUSION OF BIPOC COMMUNITIES IN THE PHARMA MANUFACTURING REGIONAL GROWTH

The Alliance for Building Better Medicine (Alliance) is a U.S.-based cluster of advanced pharmaceutical manufacturing (APM) companies, researchers, and stakeholders in the Richmond-Petersburg, Virginia region (Region). In less than two years the Alliance has made tremendous progress in bringing together key elements to begin to develop an ecosystem that can drive the production of a reliable, secure, safe, high-quality and affordable supply of the world's most essential medicines. In addition to delivering accessible, affordable medicine, an equally important and urgent aspect of our mission is to center our efforts and their impact to ensure equitable economic development in distressed regions and under-represented communities in this growing industry.

We have specifically received funding as a winner of the Economic Development Administration (EDA)'s Build Back Better Regional Challenge (BBBRC) to support regional growth to build an advanced pharmaceutical manufacturing cluster and the development of the surrounding supply chain it needs to thrive, with an emphasis on our engagement of representative communities in and around the growing cluster. This is not a need to realize in compliance with a grant, but rather it is core to why we believe this work is critically important and necessary – to bring good jobs and wealth to our communities.

Need: *The excitement and importance of bringing capabilities to manufacture medicines back to the United States, particularly in the Petersburg and Richmond areas, is missing key audiences as very few, if any, BIPOC companies currently have knowledge of this initiative. It is imperative that the efforts of the Alliance are inclusive and sustainable.*

Call to Action:

To begin the process of developing an inclusive APM cluster and supporting supply chain that is sustainable, the Alliance intends to conduct diverse listening sessions and focus groups consisting of community leaders, small businesses, and nonprofits to understand strategies, build awareness, and increase participation in the growing APM industry in the Region.

Therefore, we invite minority business groups, nonprofits with BIPOC, SWaM, MBE, Minority Supplier Diversity designations, and representatives from the Alliance Leadership Board to join in a structured listening session to understand strategies that will intentionally include historically underrepresented communities and vendors for participation in several planned events in the Richmond – Petersburg area (see event dates below). We intend to follow this effort with the formation of a Committee to sustain dialogue and provide the structure to ensure we retain a strong, consistent focus on this critical work. Your participation in a listening session in no way obligates future Committee engagement, but we hope to excite you to join our effort in building better medicine.

Initiative Objectives:

- I. Increase diverse, representative participation for building talent pathways.
- II. Define referral strategies to increase the pool of students matriculating to area community colleges, four-year STEM programs, technical, and non-technical training for careers in pharmaceutical manufacturing and Biotechnology Innovation.



- III. Increase access to, and provide viability for, inclusive business development and entrepreneurial engagement in the pharmaceutical manufacturing sector in Virginia.

Why Participate:

Building a globally competitive APM cluster in the Region requires an end-to-end, integrated approach involving all facets of the supply chain and workforce development, with relentless focus on bringing in diverse perspectives and voices. Thus, it also requires, though not limited to, existing company growth and improved talent pathway initiatives. Now is an optimal time to learn about the Alliance and have an impact on how the work is shaped. Thus, we invite and encourage individuals from Historically Excluded Communities to become involved and help to shape the development of a DEIA Committee for the growing cluster, by engaging in the following:

- **Setting the Table** - Including historically excluded communities in decision-making, how Alliance coalition partners will ensure accountability for inclusion, and how to communicate the partners' equity-related roles and responsibilities.
- **Building Capacity** – making sure people have the information and ability to be part of decision-making including how to provide information and education and an equitable decision-making process (e.g., how policies are established, how decisions are made, who has a voice and who is held accountable).

Plan Objectives:

- ***Increase Community Awareness of Alliance Activities and APM Growth:*** Through structured, frequent and open meetings with community leaders, educators, and business leaders, we bring greater awareness regarding the growing APM industry and increase understanding of the workforce needs and help encourage and promote a vibrant talent stream. The availability of a trained, talented, representative workforce will strengthen existing APM businesses growth plans and support aligned new business attraction to the Region.
- ***Enhance Business Knowledge of Technical Workforce Availability:*** Through continuous conversations and communications with business leaders, government officials, and higher education professionals, we ensure that the Alliance's ongoing Workforce Committee's efforts connect and clarify technical capabilities across diverse, inclusive job opportunities for students to join the growing APM supply chain in the Region.
- ***Advance Supplier Diversity through Communication and Interaction:*** Through regular communications with business leaders and members of the BIPOC business community, as well as hosting diverse, inclusive business fairs, we bring together leading members of the APM business community and the local diverse supplier community that can provide goods and services to support the growing needs of the Region.