

## Industry Sector Selection: The Readiness Test Worksheet

In choosing an industry sector for partnership-building, it is critical to first examine your region's industry sector labor market information. This process will reveal several candidate sectors for mobilization. However, the next step is just as important: the readiness test. Your team will need to assess the relative advantages and disadvantages of choosing among several candidate industry sectors. While this test is more subjective than the analysis of industry sector employment data, it is still a valid and essential part of the decision-making process. This worksheet identifies the four key parts of this test, and provides room for you to write down your readiness assessment.

- 1. Leadership:** *Are there industry champions that are visible and likely to be interested in co-chairing an industry sector partnership? Do they fit the definition of a civic entrepreneur—passionate about their company, industry, and community? Write down names of potential champions and why they would be good candidates to lead an industry sector partnership.*
- 2. History:** *Have leaders in this industry been brought together before—and, if so, with what result? Was there a positive experience on which to build or a legacy of failed efforts to overcome? Are industry leaders energized or fatigued? Have they stepped forward in the past as pro-active leaders or taken the role of passive customers or reluctant bystanders?*
- 3. Local Conditions:** *Is there evidence of local advantages (i.e., location, recent dynamic industry growth, recent business or infrastructure investments) that could motivate industry leaders to work together? Alternatively, are their recent developments that could complicate collaboration among businesses (e.g., major layoffs or closures, a crisis that is consuming everyone's time, excessive competition among businesses)?*
- 4. External Forces:** *Are there forces from outside the community that are creating an incentive for industry leaders to work together (e.g., federal policies like the Affordable Care Act, changing conditions in other places like rising labor costs in China that is accelerating re-shoring of manufacturing), or forces that complicate collaboration among businesses (e.g., outside corporate ownership that is disinvesting in the region, federal or state government policies that are disruptive or at least a strong distraction for the industry)?*

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The Next Gen Sector Partnership staff, a team of four independent consultants—Lindsey Woolsey, John Melville, Francie Genz and Emily Lesh— collaborate to make the Next Gen sector partnership community of practice possible.

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