

Forward Together Blueprint 2026-2030



In 2025, the Don Wood Foundation embarked on a strategic planning process to refresh our mission statement, values, and strategic priorities.

Mission

We refined our organization's mission to best reflect what we do.

The Don Wood Foundation will radically lead the development and growth of the Next-Gen Manufacturing Workforce in Northeast Indiana.

Values

We established core values to guide our work with each other and our community partners. We are:

- Servant Leaders
- Accountable
- Collaborative
- Practical
- Results-Driven
- Future-Focused

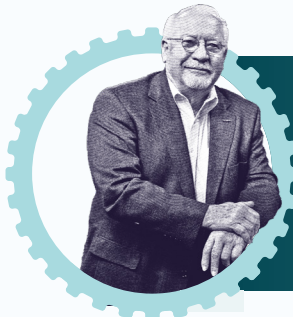
Lever for Change

We advance our mission through three levers that, when pulled together, shift outcomes across northeast Indiana's manufacturing workforce.

- Engaging Youth
- Developing Talent
- Empowering Manufacturing

A Regional Imperative

The Next-Gen Manufacturing Workforce is a future-ready talent pipeline that blends advanced technical skills, adaptive leadership, and an entrepreneurial mindset to drive innovation and resilience, **positioning northeast Indiana to lead in today's global economy.**



Building on a Legacy

In everything we do, we are inspired by our founder, **Don Wood** (1932-2019), a passionate salesman, entrepreneur, and manufacturer who believed in the power of **lifelong learning**.

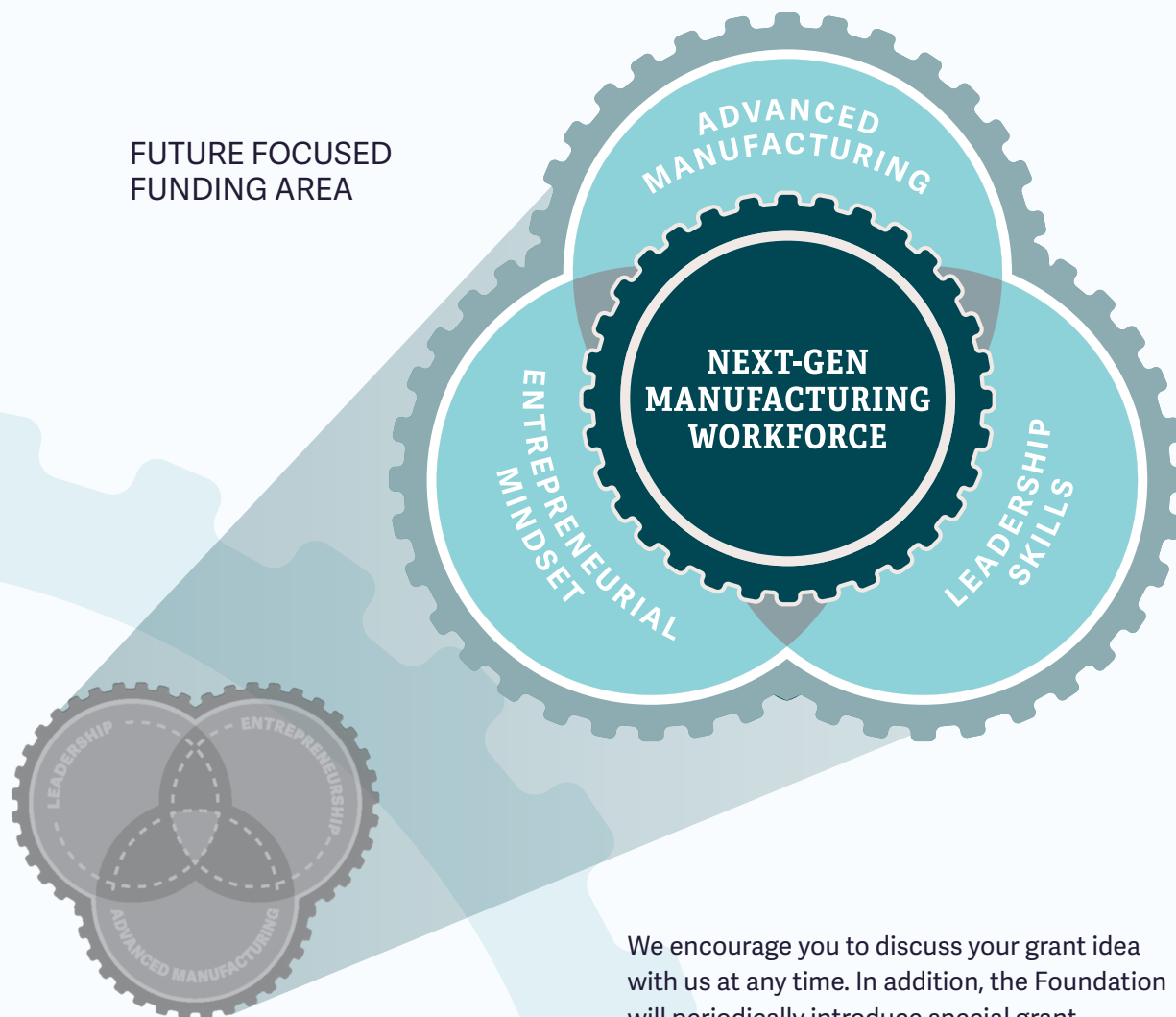
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How Our Work Is Evolving

While we continue to support education and training initiatives, we are categorizing our support differently and aligning our grants, scholarships, communication, research, and strategic convenings to develop and grow a **Next-Gen Manufacturing Workforce in Northeast Indiana.**

FUTURE FOCUSED
FUNDING AREA



We encourage you to discuss your grant idea with us at any time. In addition, the Foundation will periodically introduce special grant initiatives to address emerging needs and strategic opportunities in our region.

Previous Funding Areas

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Entrepreneurship
- Leadership

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Levers for Change

Guiding grants, scholarships, communication, research, and strategic convening in northeast Indiana.

ENGAGING YOUTH

Expand access to hands-on *STEAM experiences and career exploration opportunities for every child in the v region – sparking curiosity and opening pathways to the careers of tomorrow.

Talk to us about: STEAM (targeting technology and engineering), robotics, career exploration and navigation, foundational leadership skills, entrepreneurial mindset

preschool, elementary, middle, high school

**STEAM is a cohesive learning experience that emphasizes Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics.*

DEVELOPING TALENT

Align and advance northeast Indiana's education-to-career ecosystem – equipping learners with the technical skills, adaptive mindsets, and real-world experiences needed to thrive and continue to grow in **Next-Gen Manufacturing** careers.

Talk to us about: CTE (career and technical education), work-based learning, project-based learning, higher education, credentials, degrees, engineering, industrial technology high school, college, and credentials

EMPOWERING MANUFACTURING

Partner with regional leaders and intermediaries to help manufacturers accelerate technology adoption, support workplace learners, and build partnerships with educators – strengthening the region's manufacturing competitiveness in a rapidly-changing economy.

Talk to us about: technology adoption, innovation, skilling up, lifelong learning, Industry 4.0, Industry 5.0 workforce development, training for incumbent workers

FILLING THE FUNNEL for lifelong learning

PRESCHOOL



What do I like?

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



What truly interests me?

MIDDLE SCHOOL



What do I think I might want to do in the future?

HIGH SCHOOL



How do I become who I want to be?

POST-HIGH SCHOOL



How do I get the skills I want to be successful?

WORKPLACE LEARNERS



How can I advance my career because I want to achieve more?

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