

Overview

One of the wealthiest and most beautiful states in America, the Commonwealth of Virginia offers exceptional human capital, geographic, and infrastructure assets. Virginia is also home to a diverse array of leading private-sector firms, important military installations, and nationally recognized universities, as well as one of the most educated populations in the country. Virginia's integrated transportation system of highways, railroads, airports, and seaports provides logistical advantages for companies in every industry, including notable access to the deepest and widest port on the East Coast and Dulles International Airport.

For nearly three decades, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) has served as Virginia's state economic development authority. Like the special Commonwealth that it serves, VEDP is regarded as among the best in the country. As a quasi-independent state authority governed by a board of directors that spans gubernatorial administrations, VEDP is a nonpartisan organization with stable leadership and nimble, creative, mission-focused operations.

VEDP collaborates with local, regional, and state partners to encourage the expansion and diversification of Virginia's economy. VEDP works to accomplish these objectives through a variety of activities, including marketing and lead generation; business retention, expansion, and attraction; trade development; business intelligence; competitive benchmarking; site development; performance-based incentives; and talent solutions. VEDP has offices in Virginia, Germany, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.

By statute, VEDP creates economic opportunity for the Commonwealth through eight core categories of responsibility:

- Ensure that effective marketing programs are delivered
- Engage in business development activities
- Engage in product development activities
- Encourage coordination of economic development organizations
- Encourage exports of Virginia's products and services
- Assist in formulating Virginia's economic development strategies
- Administer economic development incentive programs
- Fulfill administrative and reporting responsibilities

With dedicated and knowledgeable professionals committed to Virginia's economic success, VEDP helps businesses find the resources they need to succeed in relocation and expansion.

VEDP has approximately 200 staff members and an annual operating budget of over \$50 million.



The current Strategic Plan for Economic Development of the Commonwealth of Virginia is a five-year plan, updated every two years, and was developed and adopted in 2024. During the planning process, VEDP collaborated with hundreds of local, regional, and state partners to establish five Transformational Goals for Virginia and VEDP. These goals, updated for the first time since 2018, now include the aim of positioning Virginia as America's Top State for Talent.

1. **Robust State Growth:** Position Virginia to achieve a growth rate in employment and median earned income among the top 5-10 states in the U.S.
2. **Every Region Wins:** Ensure that every region participates in the growth of the Commonwealth (i.e., all with positive growth in employment and median earned income)
3. **Best State Business Climate:** Cultivate a leading business climate and sector-specific ecosystems
4. **Top State for Talent:** Position Virginia as a top state for talent retention, attraction, development, and alignment
5. **Most Innovative, Collaborative, and Effective State EDO:** Solidify VEDP's position as one of America's top state EDOs through an innovative strategy, collaborative approach, and effective outcomes

Powered by the vision and initiatives of the Strategic Plan, the following are a few notable examples of VEDP's recent progress:

- **Implementation of the Innovative Framework for Economic Growth** – a model for accelerating economic growth in Virginia by focusing on three key areas: 1) Cultivating deep industry expertise for a small set of fast-growing sectors; 2) Strengthening the ecosystem of talent, infrastructure, innovation, taxes, and other essential industry assets; and 3) Employing a collaborative approach across state agencies and with communities
- **Launch of the country's best custom workforce program, the Virginia Talent Accelerator Program (at VEDP)** – ranked #1 in the U.S. by Business Facilities.
- **Creation of the \$1.1 billion, performance-based Tech Talent Investment Program** to double the number of bachelor's and master's degrees conferred each year in computer science and computer engineering, as well as establish the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus
- **Nationally praised Amazon HQ2 victory**, with a novel bid focused on education and infrastructure
- **Development of the most sophisticated site intelligence of any state in the U.S.**, enabling the strategic deployment of more than \$200 million in site development funding in recent years
- **Substantial improvement in job growth and growth outlook for Virginia, as well as most of its regions**

Today, VEDP is poised to build on this strong foundation and accelerate progress toward realizing the Transformational Goals of the Strategic Plan. With significant new funding for economic development in the state budget and state leaders embracing economic development as a top priority, VEDP has an opportunity to fully achieve all five transformational goals over the next several years.



Martinsville Speedway



Dynamic Aviation,
Rockingham County



CMA CGM Marco Polo,
Virginia International Gateway, Portsmouth

Position Overview

VEDP seeks to hire a Chief of Talent and Workforce Strategy who will play a central role in positioning Virginia as a Top State for Talent by developing a strategy and coordinating across VEDP divisions, regional partners, and state government to implement the strategy.

While Virginia has long focused on meeting employers' talent needs, efforts to truly differentiate Virginia as a Top State for Talent are in the early stages. VEDP has developed three strategic focus areas for this effort and is working to align our efforts with workforce development organizations, higher education, and other statewide talent stakeholders. VEDP's primary strategic focus areas for talent are:

- **Retain and Attract Talent:** Strengthening and highlighting the Commonwealth's assets and economic opportunities is necessary to retain and attract the talent that will meet the demands of employers
- **Develop Talent that is Aligned to Employers' Needs:** Understanding industry needs and production of in-demand talent aligned with those needs is critical for creating pathways to opportunity and building a thriving workforce
- **Unlock Individual Potential by Reducing Barriers:** To ensure Virginians engage in the labor force, the Commonwealth needs to reduce barriers to participation and advancement (e.g., childcare, transportation, housing)

VEDP believes that excellence in these three strategic focus areas leads to both individual and economic benefits. Prioritizing talent-related initiatives will provide economic mobility opportunities for Virginians, enable employers to meet their talent needs, and grow revenue and jobs for the Commonwealth.

The position reports to VEDP's President and CEO and requires strong leadership and management experience working to meet employers' talent needs with a proven track record of collaborating with diverse partners and constituents to achieve mutually beneficial goals and objectives.

Core Responsibilities

The Chief of Talent and Workforce Strategy has direct responsibility for three core functional areas of VEDP:

1. **Virginia Talent Accelerator Program:** Supports the human capital needs of new and expanding businesses by delivering world-class, customized recruitment and training solutions in partnership with the Virginia Community College System (35 staff positions).
2. **Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE):** Provides a unified, consistent source of analysis for policy development and implementation related to talent development; offers resources and expertise related to education and labor market alignment (3 staff positions).
3. **Regional Talent Solutions and Business Outreach (RTSBO):** Supports growth and retention of Virginia companies through business outreach to foster relationships and understand challenges; collaborates with partners and promotes programs, services, and incentives to support companies' growth; engages in statewide and regional initiatives to support talent development ecosystems (11 staff positions).

In addition to these three teams, seven other teams at VEDP regularly engage in talent-related initiatives. Those teams are VEDP's three Sector Teams (Knowledge Work, Manufacturing, and Logistics); Business Investment; Strategic Projects and Lead Generation; Economic Competitiveness; and Marketing and Communications.

Specific responsibilities of Chief of Talent and Workforce Strategy include:

- Coordinate and communicate all of VEDP's talent-related efforts (single VEDP voice – internally and externally), including the Talent Accelerator, RTSBO, VOEE, and VEDP's Sector Teams.
- Develop and implement a statewide talent strategy, in coordination with workforce and education partners.
- Work closely with Sector Teams to develop and implement talent initiatives for core sectors.
- Supervise the development and oversee the implementation of custom talent solutions for major economic development projects in coordination with other VEDP staff and education and training providers.
- Educate and translate VEDP's work and insights to stakeholders, including education and workforce partners, economic developers, and members of the General Assembly.
- Represent the needs of the traded-sector business community to education and workforce providers.
- Leverage data-driven insights from VOEE and other sources to drive strategic priorities.
- Build awareness of Virginia's talent pool and talent pipeline with companies and site selectors in coordination with VEDP's Marketing and Communications (M&C) division.
- Support efforts to attract and retain talent in Virginia in coordination with the M&C division.

Experience Required

- Minimum of 10 years total professional and five years progressive experience leading talent and workforce development efforts, ideally in the context of meeting employers' needs and supporting economic growth.
- Deep knowledge and understanding of workforce development and education systems (K-12 and post-secondary).
- Demonstrated experience in leading strategic planning processes to achieve stakeholder alignment around a clear vision with specific objectives and metrics to measure progress.
- Highly professional management approach to planning, organizing, coordinating, and directing programs.
- Ability to identify key factors and differentiators for business decision makers, and to craft marketing messages and customized proposals accordingly.
- Experience leading teams of workforce and education stakeholders to meet the talent needs of employers.
- Strong understanding of relevant data sources, analyses, and tools that can be leveraged to inform both the production of talent and skills, and employer demand for skills.



Danville Community College



GEICO, Stafford County



Smith Mountain Lake,
Franklin County

- Effectiveness in implementing an organizational structure with clear roles and accountability and fostering a culture that generates productivity, innovation, and success.
- Providing strategic vision while also ensuring tactical progress is made.
- Managing stakeholders across government, education, and private sector.

Preferred Experience

- Direct experience with talent / HR issues of businesses (i.e., deep understanding of how businesses think about and deal with these issues)

Personal Attributes

- Strategic thinker
- Results-oriented implementer
- Excellent communicator with the ability to adjust communication style to be effective with the audience/situation
- Strong attention to detail
- Creative and entrepreneurial
- Strong work ethic
- Highly responsive
- Leads by example
- Able to delegate (trust and verify) and prioritize the level of personal involvement
- Good instincts, flexible, and adaptive to change
- Promoter of talent development in direct reports and staff
- Strong relationship-building skills (natural, instinctive)
- Likable and comfortable in social settings
- Understands and is able to earn credibility in the dynamics of a multiple stakeholder position
- Apolitical yet politically savvy

Education

- Graduation from an accredited university with a bachelor's degree in a related field (e.g., business, economics, marketing) is required. Graduate degree preferred.

Compensation

- Salary will be competitive and commensurate with experience and qualifications.
- VEDP provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or genetics.

References and Background Information

It is VEDP's policy to complete an extensive background and reference check of candidates. Once strong mutual interest has been established, candidates are asked to provide a list of references that should include, but not be limited to, a supervisor, a peer, a development client and a subordinate, as applicable. Candidates will be asked to sign an authorization to release Information for the purpose of background investigation, which may include verification of education, credit check, criminal, and driving records. Should an offer be extended prior to the completion of these checks, the offer will be made contingent on the successful completion of the reference and background checks.

Application Process

Being authorized to work in the U.S. is a precondition of employment. VEDP uses the E-Verify system and does not provide sponsorship.

All candidates must apply through our website www.vedp.org/careers. Applicants must submit a resume and cover letter. A valid Virginia driver's license and ability to obtain a passport is required. Application deadline: Open Until Filled

VEDP is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All applicants are considered for employment without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, veteran status, political affiliation, genetics, or against otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities. It is VEDP's intent that its employment and personnel policies and practices conform to all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action. Applicants requiring more information or requiring assistance may contact VEDP Human Resources at 1.804.545.5634 or vedphr@VEDP.org. TDD 1.800.828.1120.