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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CORD Announces Applications Open for BILT Academy Cohort 6

Empowering Educators to Build Stronger Employer Partnerships Through NSF-Funded Program

WACO, TX — March 27, 2025— The **Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD)** is pleased to announce that applications are now open for **Cohort 6 of the BILT Academy**, part of the **Pathways to Innovation (PTI) program**, a project funded by the **National Science Foundation (NSF DUE 2039395)**. This initiative is designed to help educators and workforce professionals across the country strengthen employer engagement through the nationally recognized **Business & Industry Leadership Team (BILT) model**.

The BILT Academy is a **free, 11-month professional development experience** that equips participants with the tools and strategies to move from traditional advisory boards to **co-led, high-impact employer partnerships**. Through cohort-based learning and one-on-one coaching, participants gain practical guidance on aligning their programs with workforce demands and building meaningful, sustainable relationships with industry leaders.

“The BILT Academy empowers colleges to make employer engagement a shared, ongoing process—not a one-time event,” said Ann Beheler, Director of Innovation, CORD; and PI, Pathways to Innovation project. “Participants walk away with strategies that lead to more relevant curriculum, stronger programs, and students who are better prepared for the careers of today and tomorrow.”

Cohort 6 of the BILT Academy will run from **May 2025 to April 2026** and will include:

- Hands-on support from experienced **BILT coaches**
- Collaborative sessions with a national cohort of peers
- Technical assistance based on NSF’s ATE capacity-building resources
- Practical tools to engage employers in co-leadership for curriculum development

Applications are now open, and space is limited.

To learn more or apply, visit: <https://www.pathwaystoinnovation.org/bilt-academy/>



About CORD

The Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD) is a national nonprofit dedicated to advancing career and technical education (CTE) and workforce development through innovative curriculum, professional development, and strategic partnerships. For more information, visit cord.org.

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