

Makerspace Initiative Pilot Program
Statement of Support by Robert W. Deutsch Foundation
Bill # SB0453

House Ways and Means Committee Hearing date: March 30th, 2022, 1 PM

The Robert W. Deutsch Foundation is a private foundation that supports innovations programs that enhance economic development and neighborhood revitalization in Baltimore City. We fulfill that mission by providing financial grants to nonprofit organizations provide workforce training, entrepreneurship and incubation of small manufacturing start-ups in Baltimore.

The Deutsch Foundation has invested in Open Works since its launch in September, 2016. Over these years we have been impressed with its growth and impact in Baltimore and throughout the state of Maryland. Open Works has incubated a significant number of small manufacturing businesses, and trained hundreds of adults to use advanced manufacturing tools and technologies which increases their productivity and that of the companies where they work.

The Deutsch Foundation strongly believes other communities in Maryland can derive similar benefits by building makerspaces, especially as communities struggle to dig out of the interlocking economic, educational, and health crises triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic. Creating a network of public makerspaces will scale additional operational efficiencies and funding opportunities.

The proposed legislation creates a non-lapsing fund to be administered by TEDCO that would support the expansion and establishment of further makerspaces in the State of Maryland, significantly scaling the current impacts of Open Works' current location. Creating a network of five locations would have the following impacts:

Economic Impact

- In 2019, state and local tax revenues generated by Open Works and associated businesses topped \$450,000.
- Five locations will produce \$45M in annual economic impact, \$2.25M in annual tax revenues, and 600 jobs through direct employment and startup creation.

Educational Impact

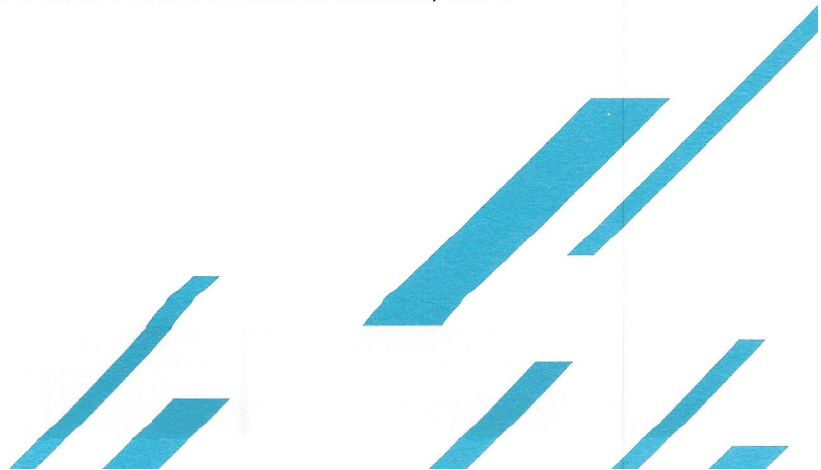
- In 2019, Open Works enrolled 1,339 adults and 171 youth in technical education classes.
- 5 locations could educate 6,700 adults and 850 youth annually.

Emergency Resilience

- Based on Open Works' experience with Makers Unite, we could organize a civil manufacturing reserve to provide supply chain resilience in case of natural disaster, terror attack, or pandemic.

ROBERT W.
DEUTSCH
FOUNDATION

2519 N Charles St
Baltimore, MD 21218
443-275-1144
rwdfoundation.org



Workforce Development

- In late 2021, Open Works was awarded \$223,000 from the City of Baltimore to run a two-year apprenticeship program for industrial sewing machine operators.
- 5 locations will provide the scale to address the diverse workforce needs of manufacturers and tech companies across the state and better compete with Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., and Virginia.

Constructing a makerspace network would immediately catapult Maryland into a national leadership role in cultivating an innovation economy, and have profound implications on the next 25 years of economic growth, workforce development, STEM educational excellence, disaster preparedness, and startup activity.

For these reasons, the Deutsch Foundation encourages a favorable vote on SB0453.

Sincerely,


Jane Brown
President