

Arts, Entertainment, & Design

Inspiring Creativity, Innovation, and Artistry

The modernized National Career Clusters Framework comprises 14 industry-oriented, sector-specific Career Clusters and 72 Sub-Clusters. Industry sector profiles serve as a resource for each Career Cluster. Each profile provides a Cluster overview, details the Sub-Clusters, and contains labor market data, occupational data, and relative skills.

Each industry sector profile was developed through an analysis of quantitative and economic data organized by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) codes, as well as national labor market data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and other federal sources. The Career Cluster title and caption, full definition, and Sub-Clusters

with definitions are part of the official Framework and informed by input from sector-focused Industry Advisory Groups convened.

The Industry Sector Profiles can be used in a variety of ways, including to:

- understand the breadth and depth of each Cluster;
- identify skills, competencies, and careers that can be incorporated into curriculum and program design;
- create connections and opportunities for work-based learning;
- assist learners in career exploration and advising;

...and many other possible uses!

Overview: Arts, Entertainment & Design Career Cluster

The Arts, Entertainment, & Design Career Cluster focuses on a variety of career opportunities that center on the use of creative processes to inspire and create visual appeal leveraging innovation and artistry. Skills developed from programs in this Cluster lead learners to work in studios, theaters, production labs, and companies that regularly utilize design. This Cluster falls within the “Creating & Experiencing” Cluster grouping, recognizing learners’ passion for elevating how humans interact with and understand the world around us. This Cluster is largely similar to the 2002 “Arts, A/V Technology & Communications” Career Cluster, with expansions to include the modern technologies needed for digital design and creation. Based on national labor market data, this Career Cluster is most closely connected to **Advanced Manufacturing; Construction; Hospitality, Events, & Tourism**. Read the [Interdisciplinary Elements explainer resource](#) for more information.

The Arts, Entertainment, & Design Career Cluster combines creative roles in visual and performing arts, film, journalism, fashion, interior design, and creative technologies. This Cluster focuses on creating, producing, and sharing artistic and design work across multiple platforms, aiming to entertain, inform, beautify, and inspire.

Design & Digital Arts

Fashion & Interiors

Fine Arts

Lighting &
Sound Technology

Media Production
& Broadcasting

Performing Arts

**Arts,
Entertainment,
& Design**

Sub-Clusters, Definitions, & Example Programs of Study

Design & Digital Arts

Careers encompassing the creation and production of visually engaging digital content such as animation, visual marketing, graphic design, print media, augmented and virtual reality, web design, game design, and user interfaces/user experiences. This Sub-Cluster combines artistic talent and technology to produce interactive content, entertainment, commercial products and packaging design, and promotional materials.

Example Programs of Study

Digital Animation
Graphic Arts

Fashion & Interiors

Careers bridging the creative and commercial aspects of fashion design, production, marketing, and sales with the art and science of interior design and decoration. Professionals in this field are dedicated to creating, promoting, and selling apparel, accessories, footwear, costuming, and textiles. Interior design careers focus on designing, improving, and decorating interior spaces through space layout and materiality with the goal of enhancing functionality and esthetic appeal.

Example Programs of Study

Apparel & Textiles
Fashion Design
Interior Design

Fine Arts

Careers focused on the technical and artistic skill needed for the creation, promotion, and sale of visual art forms including painting, sculpture, and pottery. Professionals in this field focus on producing works that not only possess esthetic value but also serve as mediums for expression, and they are involved in every stage from conceptualization to exhibition, ensuring that art is accessible and resonates deeply with audiences.

Example Programs of Study

Fine Arts
Museum Studies

Lighting & Sound Technology

Careers specializing in sound engineering and lighting design, which are vital for both functional and artistic applications, including immersive experiences in film, music, performing arts, fine arts, and interiors. Professionals in this field adeptly manipulate sound and light to set moods, highlight themes, and enhance audience engagement, contributing significantly to the success and impact of artistic and design endeavors.

Example Programs of Study

Audio & Visual Technology
Lighting Design
Sound Engineering

Media Production & Broadcasting

Careers encompassing film, television, radio, journalism, communications, writing, and broadcasting, focusing on content creation, production, and distribution. This field includes direction, production, cinematography, and publishing, emphasizing storytelling and technical expertise. This Sub-Cluster also highlights the impact and ethical use of emerging technologies in enhancing visual effects and streamlining production. Broadcasting includes digital technologies such as streaming and podcasting, transforming audience engagement and content consumption.

Example Programs of Study

Broadcasting Technology
Filmmaking: Production &
Managerial Arts
Journalism
Video Production

Performing Arts

Careers focused on the technical and management elements of the performing arts and entertainment industry to produce and stage live artistic and athletic performances, including theater, music, dance, and sports. This Sub-Cluster encompasses the core creative and artistic talents coming from actors, musicians, dancers, and other performers intended to entertain, inform, and provoke thought in audiences. It also covers a wide range of genres and styles and plays a vital role in cultural preservation, expression, and entertainment.

Example Programs of Study

Performing Arts
Stage Design & Management

Occupations, Employment Contexts, Credentials, & Skills

Designing intentional and labor market-aligned pathways requires understanding the occupations and skills that are in demand and commanding family-sustaining wages in your context. Building a deeper understanding of employment trends, including wage potential, a clear picture of the types of employment contexts or businesses this sector offers, and the knowledge and skills needed for success are all important aspects of a learner's journey through their pathway and into the world of work. Leaders can use the data below to inform pathway design at the state or local levels or by advisors and learners as they plot paths to the future. The skills and occupations below were validated using real-time labor market information from 2023 and 2024 from online job postings, which provided the frequency with which skills were mentioned in digital job postings.

Top Occupations

The following table (Figure 1) displays the top occupations within this Cluster. Occupations are listed in order of typical entry-level education required for the position, beginning with a bachelor's degree and then moving through an associate degree, a Postsecondary nondegree award, and a High School Diploma to demonstrate the potential occupational pathways available in this Cluster. Data points for each occupation include five-year job projections, 2023 hires, average annual job openings, 10th percentile hourly earnings (as a proxy for entry-level wages), median hourly earnings, and required entry-level education. The table is reflective of national data and was pulled in 2024. Users should be mindful that the data in this table will not be updated, so the percentages and numbers are subject to change in real-time. For updated state-level occupation projection data, please visit O*NET's [Projection Central](#).

FIGURE 1

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, QCEW; Lightcast Database; U.S. Census Bureau.

*To contextualize this data, educators are encouraged to identify and share their hourly living wage by family size for their state, county, or region at the [MIT Living Wage Calculator](#) or other source of living wage data.

Occupation Title	2024 Jobs	2029 Jobs	% Change	2023 Hires	Avg. Annual Openings	10th Percentile Hourly	Median Hourly	Typical Entry Level Education
Software Developers	1,791,385	2,082,344	16%	626,133	160,067	\$36.50	\$63.39	Bachelor's degree
Managers, All Other	1,144,713	1,215,015	6%	272,566	99,123	\$11.35	\$49.47	Bachelor's degree
Coaches and Scouts	301,604	323,874	7%	217,961	43,752	\$12.67	\$21.93	Bachelor's degree
Graphic Designers	275,225	285,613	4%	103,013	25,211	\$16.01	\$27.42	Bachelor's degree
Architectural and Engineering Managers	216,533	229,627	6%	62,369	16,558	\$51.34	\$79.42	Bachelor's degree
Producers and Directors	186,312	198,640	7%	123,569	18,494	\$18.78	\$37.67	Bachelor's degree
Writers and Authors	154,663	170,225	10%	37,153	18,853	\$3.95	\$26.92	Bachelor's degree
Web and Digital Interface Designers	132,157	148,146	12%	54,984	12,984	\$20.73	\$44.66	Bachelor's degree
Editors	118,544	119,837	1%	60,465	13,271	\$17.27	\$34.05	Bachelor's degree
Web Developers	102,048	113,887	12%	37,783	8,980	\$19.84	\$38.87	Bachelor's degree
Interior Designers	100,351	104,239	4%	35,464	10,106	\$16.07	\$29.41	Bachelor's degree
Art Directors	96,013	103,438	8%	33,808	10,763	\$5.62	\$38.23	Bachelor's degree
Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators	94,357	108,974	15%	9,458	12,313	\$1.27	\$10.85	Bachelor's degree
Audio and Video Technicians	87,173	92,245	6%	56,710	9,018	\$15.76	\$24.54	Postsecondary nondegree award
Actors	87,668	94,094	7%	83,294	11,729	\$12.28	\$21.07	Some college, no degree
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	178,953	187,640	5%	120,892	23,088	\$14.08	\$17.42	High school diploma or equivalent
Data Entry Keyers	162,122	150,614	-7%	137,019	18,614	\$13.39	\$18.12	High school diploma or equivalent
Printing Press Operators	153,270	151,332	-1%	77,378	17,343	\$14.12	\$20.08	High school diploma or equivalent
Photographers	148,366	148,191	0%	32,844	13,813	\$6.04	\$20.66	High school diploma or equivalent
First-Line Supervisors of Entertainment and Recreation Workers, Except Gambling Services	95,251	101,898	7%	68,355	11,929	\$15.06	\$22.12	High school diploma or equivalent

Top Industry-Recognized Credentials

- Project Management Professional Certification
- Salesforce Certification
- Certified Information Systems Security Professional
- Microsoft Professional and Technical Credentials
- IAT Level II Certification
- Commercial Driver's License (CDL)
- Certified Power Quality Professional
- AVIXA Certified Technology Specialist
- AWS Certified Solutions Architect
- CompTIA Security+

These credentials are commonly requested by employers for the occupations listed on page 6, and were identified using national real-time labor market information from 2024. Credentials are most commonly requested for occupations in this Cluster that work directly with technology, such as graphic designers and web developers. In addition to the credentials shown here, employers also requested credentials that commonly require a degree, including a Teaching License.

HIGH-DEMAND SKILLS

- Auditing
- Cash Register, Cash Handling
- Conversion Specialist

- Customer Relationship Management
- Merchandising, Visual Merchandising
- Marketing
- Selling Techniques

- Ability to work in a team environment
- Project Management
- Research

- Interactive Design, UX/UI, Wireframing, Visual Design
- Storytelling
- Writing

HIGH-DEMAND SOFTWARE SKILLS

Blender, Fusion360

CAD: Vectorworks, AutoCAD, Rhino, etc.

Creative Software Operations

Figma for collaboration and UX Design

Maya - 3D animation and visual effects software

Real-time games engines

VMIX or other streaming and switching platforms

ZBrush for digital sculpting, modeling, texturing, and painting for movies, games, animation

Solidworks - 3D CAD Design software used by designers and engineers

Unreal Engine, Unity, Unity 3D (real-time physics engines), and EPIC

Adobe, Collaboration & Project Management Software, Miro, Gen AI, AI platforms (Chat GPT, Midjourney, etc), B2B & Professional Networking, LinkedIn, Social Networking Platforms

Sample Occupations & Emerging Occupations

These tables list sample occupations, emerging occupations, and sample places of work based on quantitative industry data validated by Industry Advisory Groups.



Sample Occupations

- Athletic Scout
- Audio & Video Technician
- Camera Operator
- Choreographer
- Coach
- Dancer
- Director
- Fashion Designer
- Film & Video Editor
- Fine Artist
- Graphic Designer
- Interior Designer
- Journalist
- Lighting Technician
- Music Composer
- Musician
- News Analyst
- Performing Artist
- Producer
- Professional Athlete
- Publisher/Editor
- Reporter
- Set Designer
- Special Effects Artist/Animator
- Stunt Coordinator



Emerging Occupations

- AR/VR Designer
- Data Visualization Artist
- Digital Fashion Designer
- Digital Twin Creator (for film)
- Eco-conscious Materials Designer
- Exhibition & Event Design
- Gameplay Animator
- Immersive Experience Designer
- Lighting Designer
- Motion Capture Technician
- NFT Art Curator
- Podcast Producer
- Sound Design & Mixing
- Streaming Media Analyst



Sample Places of Work

- Media Outlets
- Museums & Art Galleries
- Music/Entertainment Venues & Festivals
- Non-Profits, Government Orgs, Schools
- Post-Production Houses
- Publishing Companies
- Record Labels
- Retail Clothing Brands
- Runway Model Agencies
- Self-Employed, Entrepreneur
- Small Businesses
- Talent Casting Agencies
- Theaters
- Video Game Companies

Acknowledgements

This Advance CTE resource was authored by Janeva Wilson, policy associate, with contributions from Advance CTE staff members Dan Hinderliter, associate director of state policy, and Emily Passias, deputy executive director. Research for this resource was conducted by Alexandria M. Wright Ph.D., senior research associate for economic, labor market & educational data, WestEd Center on Economic Mobility; Sheri Smith, chief executive officer, Indigo Education Company; Jessi Maddox, senior policy associate, Advance CTE; and Marie Falcone, policy associate. Additional support was provided by Kimberly Marques, project manager, Indigo Education Company; and Susann Skjoldhorne M.S., research associate, WestEd. Communications support was provided by Stacy Whitehouse, associate director of communications, Layla Alagic, digital associate, and Jodi Langelotti, senior associate. This resource was created with the generous support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

About Advance CTE

Advance CTE is the longest-standing national non-profit that represents State Directors and state leaders responsible for secondary, postsecondary, and adult Career Technical Education (CTE) across all 50 states and U.S. territories. Established in 1920, Advance CTE supports state CTE leadership to advance high-quality CTE policies, programs, and pathways that ensure career and college success for each learner. Advance CTE is the steward of the National Career Clusters Framework.



Visit the [Career Clusters resources](#) to access the full Framework and to explore the complete methodology that informed its modernization.