



CONNECTICUT
Manufacturing



ReadyCT
EDUCATION - THE ENGINE OF OPPORTUNITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONNECTICUT INVESTS \$4.8 MILLION IN ROBOTICS AND MANUFACTURING EDUCATION

Grants will fund hands-on programs in schools, preparing students for careers in advanced manufacturing and technology

HARTFORD, CT – February 17, 2026 - The [Connecticut Office of Manufacturing](#) (OOM), part of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), is announcing a two-year \$4.8 million investment from the Manufacturing Innovation Fund to expand robotics and advanced manufacturing education in schools across the state. These funds will support interactive STEM programs that give students real-world experience in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, helping prepare them for future careers in these growing industries. ReadyCT, a nonprofit partner, will assist schools in implementing the programs and connecting students to career pathways in manufacturing and technology.

“Robotics education is more than an engaging classroom tool — it is preparing students to excel in the next generation of engineering, manufacturing, and technology, and providing them with the skills needed to thrive and obtain careers in growing industries,” said **Governor Ned Lamont**.

“This \$4.8 million investment represents an investment in Connecticut’s students and our future workforce in advanced manufacturing and engineering,” said **Kirti Patel**,

Connecticut’s Chief Manufacturing Officer. “Robotics programs not only teach students critical technical skills in design and development, but also help develop essential problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership abilities that are foundational for careers in advanced manufacturing. By reaching students early, we help build the pipeline of skilled talent our industries need to thrive.”

Over the next two years, the funding will support multiple robotics platforms, including *FIRST*® Robotics and VEX Robotics® programs. Schools and students will have access to resources for both new and existing teams to participate in competitions, summer camps, and teacher professional development. Uniquely, the initiative also introduces new robotics curriculum pilots that integrate robotics-based STEM learning into classrooms, reaching students from kindergarten through high school.

“When students are introduced to robotics and manufacturing early, they gain confidence, creativity, and an understanding of how STEM can lead to exciting careers,” said **Shannon Marimón, Executive Director of ReadyCT**. “These programs create opportunities for students to explore, experiment, and make informed decisions about their future pathways in engineering, technology, and manufacturing.”

The investment will fund rookie team grants for schools starting new robotics teams and hardship grants for teams facing financial barriers. It will also provide an immersive experience using technologies such as Ozobots and Oculus VR headsets to simulate manufacturing environments. Students will participate in competitions such as Future City, where they design and build models that incorporate engineering and manufacturing concepts.

Funding is also designed for regional Manufacturing Careers Roadshows to complement the robotics programs, giving students the chance to visit local manufacturers, interact with employees, and see the real-world applications of the skills they are learning. These roadshows aim to inspire students, highlight career opportunities, and connect them with local employers.

Teachers and mentors play a key role as facilitators, ensuring that students statewide have access to quality STEM experiences. By equipping educators with training and resources, the initiative creates sustainable opportunities for hands-on learning in every school district.

Schools and educators interested in learning more about robotics and manufacturing education programs can visit:

- [Manufacturing Innovation Fund](#) to learn more about the state’s investment in advanced manufacturing initiatives;

- [Robotics Programs](#) to learn more about ReadyCT's programs that bring robotics experiences to more students; and
- [Manufacturing Careers Roadshow](#) for interactive regional experiences that connect students with manufacturers.

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About the Connecticut Office of Manufacturing

The Connecticut Office of Manufacturing (OOM), part of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), acts as a statewide resource to help manufacturers launch, grow, and succeed. Services include grant funding through the Manufacturing Innovation Fund, supply chain support, the CONNEX marketplace online platform, and outreach via the Ambassador Program. To learn more and access resources, visit manufacturing.ct.gov.

About ReadyCT

ReadyCT works to advance academic excellence and career-connected learning for all public school students in Connecticut through collaboration with business, civic, and educational leaders. The work is driven by the belief that schools must prepare all students to become thriving citizens and professionals. ReadyCT is a willing partner in this pursuit, striving to prepare students to pursue whatever college, career, or credentialing opportunity they choose in order to reach their fullest potential. ReadyCT is a 501c(3) nonprofit organization and is part of a strategic alliance with [CBIA](#) and [CONNSTEP](#). To learn more, visit ReadyCT.org.