

Too few learners know about high-tech jobs that will dominate the future job market. Even fewer **see pathways for themselves** into those jobs.

**SparkNC** is a revolutionary effort to help our learners engage with high-tech fields like artificial intelligence and machine learning, software development, computer systems engineering, cybersecurity, Esports and game development . Through **SparkLabs** across our **interdistrict network**, learners will have opportunities to explore these fields and collaboratively prepare for modern work. SparkNC is a completely new way to do school: **learner-centered, industry-relevant, and competency-based.**

Our work is funded by an appropriation from the North Carolina General Assembly to create a high-tech learning accelerator for North Carolina. SparkNC is launching as an initiative of The Innovation Project (TIP). After incubating in partnership with TIP's innovative district members, SparkNC will eventually expand to **serve all North Carolina students.**

## SPARKNC LEARNING CONTINUUM

SparkNC will **accelerate** learners' progress along this continuum and prepare them for future opportunities in high-tech fields.



### Discovery

Help learners new to high-tech fields see pathways as possible and accessible, with a focus on increasing engagement among women and students of color; extend exploration of pathways through activities like interacting with professionals in high-tech jobs, engaging in survey courses, and participating in tech-focused design challenges



### Experience

Provide opportunities for deeper learning through direct work on high-tech issues, with peers and experts in the field, addressing real world challenges; develop modular experiences for learners to engage with relevant content and progress toward mastery



### Career Navigation

Support learners in choosing among opportunities leading to diplomas, college credit, badges, micro-credentials, certificates, or other industry-relevant credentials; build relationships with high-tech employers to strengthen learners' preparation and accelerate their progress into successful high-tech careers

# THE DESIGN-BUILD PROCESS

SparkNC will constantly improve the learner experience through data-driven analysis and feedback from learners and partners. We will continually build, expand, and refine our approach through iterative design.

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### LEARNER AGENCY

### EQUITY

### RELEVANCE

### CONNECTION

### TRANSFORMATION

#### Learner Agency

Learners will experience a choice of pathways and maintain a strong voice in program design.

#### Equity

All learners will have access to pathways, including those disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and those historically underrepresented in technology.

#### Relevance

Learners will grapple with complex, industry-relevant, real-world challenges, through problem-based learning.

#### Connection

Learners will receive guidance and support from knowledgeable, caring adults, and comprehensive, up-to-date tools to navigate pathways.

#### Transformation

Learners will inform state and district leaders on how to redesign systems and create policies that respond to industry needs, support interdistrict collaboration, and enable competency-based learning.

