

Introduction



TSTM Toolkit

The **Teaching Skills That Matter (TSTM) in Adult Education** project is a professional development initiative of the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). The project focuses on improving instruction to build the skills that adult learners need to meet the demands of critical domains of their lives. Conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR), the project will identify, develop, and deploy high-quality, evidence-based materials and training to integrate transferable skills development in the areas of civics education, digital literacy, health literacy, financial literacy, and workforce preparation into adult education and literacy instruction. A critical component of the TSTM project is the **TSTM Toolkit**. The TSTM Toolkit is designed to assist you with your use and integration of the knowledge learned from the training, coaching, and technical assistance provided by the TSTM project. The tools in the toolkit will support your instructional practice as you focus on teaching the skills that matter to your students.

The toolkit is presented in eight sections:

- Sections 1–5** Teaching the skills that matter across the five content focus areas: civics education, digital literacy, health literacy, financial literacy, and workforce preparation
- Section 6** A look at effective instructional approaches to teaching the skills that matter: project-based learning, problem-based learning, and integrated and contextualized instruction
- Section 7** Templates and tools to support applying the knowledge learned in the classroom
- Section 8** An annotated instructional resource list and annotated reference list for the five content focus areas and other important support resources

In partnership with OCTAE, we are working to enhance our education and workforce systems and drive access to economic advancement for all. In that spirit, this toolkit and all related TSTM project materials are grounded in a research- and evidence-based learner-centered design framework aligned with the overall goal of the TSTM project—to improve adult education and literacy instruction as a means of helping adult learners acquire the skills they need to meet the demands of the contexts relevant to their lives, including civics, digital literacy, financial well-being, health, and the workforce. This toolkit will build capacity among teachers participating in the TSTM project and also serve as a resource to lay the groundwork for scaling the effective integration of the *skills that matter* into adult education and literacy practice across the adult education field. All of this is intended to have a positive impact on students' lives and to change the field for the better.