ATTACHMENT C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM STAFF

Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio

Apprenticeship Program Staff Interview Topic Guide

INTRODUCTION

I am/we are researchers with The Urban Institute/Mathematica/Capital Research Corporation, private research organizations based in Washington, DC/Arlington VA which conduct policy-related research on a variety of social welfare and economic issues.

This project is being conducted under contract to the U.S. Department of Labor. Our visit here today is part of the Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio project, a national study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. The study will learn how apprenticeship programs can help improve the skills and employment outcomes of American workers. A major aim of the study is to learn more about the different models of apprenticeship being implemented. In each program we visit, we will be speaking with program staff, program partners, and apprentices.

Privacy Statement: I/we want to thank you for agreeing to participate in the study. I/we know that you are busy and we will be as focused as possible and will only ask questions that are relevant to your experience. We have many questions and will be talking to many different people, so please do not feel as though we expect you to be able to answer every question. Your participation in this discussion is voluntary and you may choose not to answer some or any of our questions.

We believe the risks of participating in this study are minimal.

We believe there are no direct benefits to you, but we hope that the findings from this study will benefit the Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio project by providing research insights on how apprenticeship programs can benefit workers.

My colleague and I will be taking notes in order to document what we hear during our discussion, and we may record this discussion. We do not share these notes with anyone outside of our research team, including Department of Labor, and we will destroy these notes after the end of our project. When we compile our reports, the names of individual respondents will not be included. If we choose to quote you, you will only be identified by your title. You will not be quoted directly by name in any of our reports. While it is possible that you might be identified by your title, we will do our best to minimize the chance of that occurring.

Finally, to help us accurately capture the information you share, we would like to record this interview. The recording is just a back-up for our notes and will be kept within our small research team. The interview recording will be deleted once we have developed a full set of notes from the interview.

OMB Burden Statement: According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX-XXXX. The time required to complete this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes,

including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed and complete and review the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden Chiefevaluationoffice@DOL.gov and reference the OMB Control Number XXXX-0NEW.

Do you have any questions before we begin?
[If we decide to record the interview] Are you okay with us recording the interview to improve the accuracy of our notes?

Do I have your permission to begin the interview? [BEGIN INTERVIEW IF CONSENT GRANTED]

INTERVIEW TOPIC AREAS

A. Interviewee background
   o   Name, title and organization/affiliation
   o   Role in the grant program and other organization roles
   o   Length of involvement with the organization and with the program
   o   Educational background and prior work experience (briefly)

B. Grant background
   o   Why organization applied for grant
   o   Focus industry sector(s) and occupations
   o   Grant amount; matching/leverage funds
   o   Grant period of performance
   o   Any contract modifications (e.g., scope of work, budget, or period of performance)
   o   Grant goals and key outcomes to be achieved under grant
      ▪   # of apprentices and pre-apprentices to be enrolled
      ▪   # and % of apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship completions
      ▪   Other participant outcome goals (e.g., placement wage, earnings, credential attainments)
      ▪   Employer engagement goals (e.g., # of new employers forming apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship programs; # of employers expanding existing programs)

C. Environmental context
   o   Geographic area served by the grant (including by grantee and by various partners, if different)
   o   Demographic characteristics of area served and any distinguishing features (e.g., large numbers of unemployed/incumbent workers in need of training, etc.)
   o   Economic environment and context (e.g., growth industries, extent to which industries rely on apprenticeship; industries that are most likely to feature apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeships; economic conditions in sectors/occupations that are focus of grant)
   o   Apprenticeship infrastructure prior to grant and extent of linkages of grantee/partners to apprenticeships, including established relationships with apprenticeship intermediaries, industry associations, unions, schools, AJC and employers
   o   Extent to which registered and unregistered apprenticeship opportunities are available and in which industry sectors/occupations in area served
   o   Circumstances related to COVID-19 pandemic that have affected the implementation of the grant activities and participant outcomes

D.   Key features of apprenticeship programs formed/expanded with the grant (examples of several registered and unregistered programs implemented)
   o   Industry sector and occupation
   o   Registered/unregistered/pre-apprenticeship
   o   Sponsor of the apprenticeship (e.g., employers, unions, grantee, group sponsor)
   o   Program features (e.g. apprenticeship – employer contract, role of journey worker mentors)

- o   Type of program (time-based, competency-based, or hybrid)
  - ▪   If time-based, what is duration
  - ▪   If competency based, how is competency assessed and what is the typical duration?
- o   Typical recruitment source and how recruited
- o   Additional target groups and how recruited
- o   Eligibility criteria, assessment and intake process
- o   Overview of on-the-job training component (e.g., basic structure, hours to be completed, etc.)
- o   Overview of RTI (e.g., who provides instruction, # of hours, typical schedule, methods of instruction, etc.)
- o   Credential(s) received (e.g., credit/not-for-credit, industry or nationally recognized credential, degree, etc.)
- o   Outcomes to date – (e.g., number enrolled, number completed, attrition, credentials attained, entry wage, exit wage)

E.   Key Features of Pre-Apprenticeships (Examples of Several Programs Implemented)
- o   Industry sector and occupation
- o   Target group and how recruited
- o   Eligibility criteria, assessment and intake process
- o   Is there an on-the-job training component? If so, overview of on-the-job training/work-based training component (e.g., basic structure, hours to be completed, etc.)
- o   Overview of classroom training (e.g., who provides instruction, # of hours, typical schedule, methods of instruction, dual enrollment, etc.)
- o   Credential(s) received (e.g., credit/not-for-credit, industry recognized credential, degree, license, etc.)
- o   Connection to apprentice programs and other higher education opportunities
- o   Do pre-apprentices receive RTI credit in their apprenticeship program?
- o   Outcomes to date – (e.g., number enrolled, number completed, attrition, credentials attained, entry into apprenticeship programs)

F.   Grant organizational structure and staffing
- o   Basic organizational structure, including partners and their roles
- o   Key grantee staff and roles
  - ▪   Number and type of staff operating the programs and share of staff funded under grant (including percent of effort)
  - ▪   How recruited and qualifications
  - ▪   Role and caseload [as appropriate]

G.   Key partners, including anticipated role and actual role; whether partners are meeting expectations
- o   Role of educational organizations/RTI provider – e.g., community colleges, 4-year institutions, on-line RTI providers, other instructional providers
- o   Role of workforce development organizations (e.g., AJCs, WDB)
- o   Role of state apprenticeship office
- o   Role of employers
- o   Role of unions
- o   Role of industry associations

  o Any other partners [e.g., schools, CBOs, associations]

H. Overlap/linkage between Scaling Apprenticeships grantees and other initiatives

  o Apprenticeship initiatives including AACC, AAI, VETS-TAPS demonstration and RACCC

  o Other initiatives (e.g., America's Promise, Ready to Work, Strengthening Working Families Initiative, Tech Hire, TAACCCT grants)

  o Dept of Education, Dept. of Energy, DHHS initiatives

I. Start-up and early implementation challenges of the program (e.g., difficulties hiring staff, engaging with existing training programs [e.g., at the community college, at the AJC]

J. Budget and expenditures to date

  o How the funds are allocated under the budget

  o Whether expenditures to date have aligned with the original budget [grant funds, other funds]

K. Target populations and participant characteristics

  o Key target populations (e.g., Incumbent workers, new entrants to the labor force, long-term unemployed, low income, TSPs/particular TSPs, veterans, youth, women, non-traditional populations, etc.)

  o Why target populations were selected

  o Whether there has been change in targeting and why

  o Progress to date in meeting target population goals

  o Challenges encountered

  o Strategies that are effective in recruitment of specific groups

L. Participation

  o # of apprentices enrolled to date v. goal [overall and for grant-funded program if there is more than grant funding]

  o # of pre-apprentices enrolled to date v. goal

  o Whether grantee expects to achieve goal

  o Characteristics of participants enrolled to date (e.g., gender, age, race/ethnicity, etc.,)

M. Apprentice/Pre-Apprentice Recruitment

  o Approaches used to inform and market apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeships (e.g., via partners, flyers, outreach presentations, PSAs, advertisements, social media, etc.)

  o Key organizations providing referrals

  o Response of targeted population to recruitment effort

    ■ Is pool of applicants adequate

    ■ Is there an excess of applicants

    ■ Recruitment challenges encountered and how addressed

N. Apprentice/Pre-Apprentice Eligibility, Assessment and Intake

  o Eligibility requirements (e.g., complete pre-apprenticeship program, residency requirements, age, educational level, basic skills test

  o Overview of intake and eligibility determination process

- o Assessments
- o Whether employers, unions, or industry groups get involved (e.g., incumbent workers) and if so, requirements and process

O. Apprentice/Pre-Apprentice supports
- o Support services made available/provided during apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship (e.g., case management, career coaches/navigators counseling, tutoring and mentoring)
- o Financial supports (e.g., transportation assistance, work clothes/equipment, childcare or childcare assistance, and needs-based payments)

P. Employer engagement
- o How prospective employers are identified (e.g., industry/business associations, unions, word-of mouth)
- o Methods used to market apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeships to employers
  - Direct contact through telephone or emails
  - Distribution of flyers
  - Program staff outreach presentations or orientations with employers or business organizations
  - Referrals from other organizations and employers (e.g., the Chamber of Commerce, other business organizations, industry associations, employers and or other entities sponsoring apprenticeships, workforce development programs, etc.)
  - Outreach campaigns using media (e.g., PSAs, TV, radio, newspaper, etc.)
  - Websites/social media (e.g., LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.)
  - Word-of-mouth
- o Message used to engage employers
- o Employer engagement goal and progress to date (e.g., # employers outreached to, # interested, # moving along pathway to establishing apprentice/pre-apprenticeships, and # of registrations)
- o Types of assistance provided to employers
  - Help specifying an occupation that fits the employer's requirements
  - Help identifying a related technical instruction provider and/or curriculum
  - Help developing standards of apprenticeship
  - Help developing wage structure and schedule
  - Help completing relevant forms and register the apprenticeship program
  - Help communicating with the DOL Office of Apprenticeship or State Apprenticeship Agency and/or handling the paperwork for the employer
  - Help reporting to RAPIDS or equivalent state reporting
- o Grant-funded incentive used to encourage employer engagement (e.g., payment of RTI, on-the-job training, etc.)
- o Employer engagement response, challenges and approaches to addressing such challenges
  - Key motivating factors for employers (e.g., shortages of qualified workers)
  - Key barriers/challenges, including:
    - Lack of knowledge about apprenticeship
    - Administrative hassle and paperwork involved in registering the program
    - Fear of involvement with the government
    - Costs of the program
    - Difficulty in finding related technical instruction provider that is a good fit

- Lack of trainers
- Concern about unionization

Q. Sustainability of grant activities
- o Planning activities conducted
- o Assessment of likelihood of continuation of apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship programs implemented under grant
- o Assessment of likelihood of sustaining partnerships

R. Key lessons learned