

Attachment I

Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio

**Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grant Semi-Structured Interview Protocol for
Follow-Up with Program Staff**

Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grants (YARG)

Program Staff Follow-Up Discussion 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 grantee we visit, we will be speaking with grant administrators and staff, program partners (including employers), and apprentices. For this discussion, we are focused on activities conducted under the Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grants (YARG).

Privacy Statement: 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 interview is voluntary and you may choose not to answer some or any of our questions. We will do everything we can to secure the privacy of the information you provide, but the technical limitations with Zoom and other internet platforms mean that we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of what is said. Also, we ask that you consider using headphones or finding a private space to talk so that other people cannot hear or see this conversation.

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, to Chiefevaluationoffice@DOL.gov and reference the OMB Control Number XXXX-ONEW.

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]

Note: Document the following information for each respondent:

- Name, title and organization/affiliation
- Role in the grant program and other organization roles
- Length of involvement with the organization and with the program

BASIC GRANT INFORMATION AND ENVIRONMENT

1. Have there been any modifications under your grant (e.g., scope of work, budget, performance period, etc.)? If yes, please briefly describe.
2. How has the geographic area served by your grant changed over time?
3. What is the economic environment and context for the area served under the grant, particularly as it relates to in- and out-of-school youth that may face barriers to employment? Is this economic context different from circumstances at the beginning of the grant?
4. To what extent is there overlap/linkage between this grant-funded project and other apprenticeship initiatives in the geographic areas served? How has this overlap changed over the course of the grant?
5. Are there any other factors since the start of your grant that have affected the programs' ability to recruit apprentices or employers, as well as ability of apprentices to complete training and find employment?

GRANT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND KEY PARTNERS

1. How has the organizational structure of the grant and your relationship with partners changed over time?
2. As the lead applicant under this grant, how have the roles that your organization plays under the grant changed over time?
3. Partners under the grant include employer partners, industry or trade association partners, education or training providers, state apprenticeship agencies, and entities that carry out WIOA activities. Which of these partners have been the most critical for the success of grant activities? How have the roles of these partners changed over time?

POLICY CHANGES, PROGRAM INFRASTRUCTURE AND DATA COLLECTION/USE

1. Have you influenced, developed, and/or implemented any policy or procedural changes to support apprenticeship expansion as a part of or as a result the grant? What are they intended to do? Have they worked as intended? How so or not?
2. What systems and processes were implemented or enhanced to help simplify program development and reduce program start-up times and costs for registered youth apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship programs? Have these systems or processes made it easier for partners to deploy the program(s) at scale? Have they been able to promote program quality? If yes, how so?
3. Have you developed new or enhanced apprenticeship standards for the registered youth apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship programs implemented under your grant? If yes, for which programs/industries? Please describe how they were developed and deployed.
4. Have you adopted new or enhanced industry-approved/recognized credentials for the youth apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship programs implemented under your grant? If yes, which ones? Please describe how they were developed and deployed.
5. Have you developed new or enhanced existing curriculum for the youth apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship programs implemented under your grant? If yes, which ones? Please describe how they were developed and deployed.
6. Have you implemented strategies to facilitate industry-wide acceptance of the youth apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship model(s) being deployed? How has your organization and partners been promoting youth apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship? If so, please describe these activities. What have the successes and challenges been?

TARGET POPULATIONS AND APPRENTICE RECRUITMENT

1. As the initiative has progressed, have there been any changes in special populations targeted? If so, what are they? Why?
2. What strategies have you and your partners used to recruit individuals from groups who are underserved by apprenticeship programs, such as women, Black/African American and Latinx/Hispanic youth, out-of-school youth, veterans, people with disabilities, etc.? Which groups have you been successful with and with which groups have you been unsuccessful? Which strategies seem successful or not?
3. Have there been recruitment challenges? If so, what challenges have been encountered and how have they been addressed?
4. Overall, what recruitment or referral strategies being used under the grant have been most successful? Do you feel any of these strategies are new, unique, and/or innovative?

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM EXPERIENCES AND SUCCESSES

1. Has the occupational focus of your apprenticeships changed over time? If so, how?
2. What aspects, if any, of the apprenticeship RI or services do you think are most innovative? Effective?

3. To date, how many apprentices have completed their apprenticeships? Has the program experienced attrition – and if yes, why? If available, about what percentage of those enrolled in the program terminate before completion of the apprenticeship?

EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT, ENGAGEMENT, AND ROLES

1. Has any grant funding been used for financial supports to encourage employer engagement? How successful have these incentives been in encouraging employer engagement? What have the challenges been?
2. What are the key barriers in persuading employers to start or expand apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship programs?
3. What are the key obstacles or reservations that employers cite to grantee staff when they are not interested in moving forward to establishing an apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship program?
4. If data are available, for how many employers has the grantee assisted in developing apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship work processes (i.e., apprenticeship standards) and in applying for registration under the grant?

SUPPORTS FOR COMPLETION AND EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS

1. How is the grant supporting persistence and completion of apprenticeship programs? What features of the apprenticeship programs make it easier for apprentices to complete the program? [Probe for responses from the site visit and grantee survey]
2. Which personal supports are the most valued by apprentices? Which personal supports are the most helpful for ensuring apprentices' successful completion of the program?
3. Will you be able to sustain provision of these supportive services after the completion of the grant? If not, what supportive services will you discontinue?

SUSTAINABILITY AND LESSONS LEARNED

1. Have you developed sustainability plans for the apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeships implemented under the grant? If so, please describe these plans. What sources of funding will be used to sustain the apprenticeship activities implemented under the grant? Do you feel that your sustainability plan and leveraged resources are sufficient to sustain the activities of the grant after the completion of the grant?
2. To what extent do you think your program could and should be replicated in other localities? What features of your program are most amenable to replication? What features of project are least amenable to replication? How does location, the target population served, or other distinctive features of your program make it either non-transferable or limit transferability?
3. What partnerships have been most successful? To what extent will partnerships be sustained? With which partners and how?

4. To date, what do you consider to be your most successful strategies implemented under the grant?
5. Which apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship programs or models have appeared most successful? Why so?
6. To date, what do you believe to be the main lessons learned from your grant for apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship program design and operations?
7. What innovations and strategies under the grant can contribute to efforts to encourage more employers to adopt apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeships?