

Is your Institution Prepared for Apprenticeship? Introduction to Apprenticeship and Evaluating Opportunities

Organizations pursuing funding opportunities related to apprenticeships need to assess their capacity to apply, accept, and deliver on the goals of these funding. Further, institutions pursuing funding to develop or scale apprenticeships, regardless of the source, should understand the core components of Registered Apprenticeship (RA) given that all funding opportunities to develop new apprenticeship programs are based on the RA model. RA has a formal meaning in policy and is not synonymous with other forms of work-based learning like internships.

Registered Apprenticeship (RA)

RA is a formal, structured training framework with paid-on-the-job training, mentorship and education that leads to a nationally recognized credential. A RA program has clear selection procedures, wage scales, and policies intended to protect an apprentice. In the U.S., RA is defined, guided, and validated by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), and in some cases by a State Apprenticeship Agency in partnership with USDOL. The policies that guide RA in the U.S. are outlined in federal regulations 29 CFR Part 29 and Part 30. RA was born out of the 1937 [National Fitzgerald Act](#).

Recent Competitive Funding Announcements to Scale Apprenticeships

Industry Recognized Apprenticeships (IRAP) (\$100 million)

On June 2017, the Trump administration published an [Executive Order](#) titled, “Expanding Apprenticeships in America.” The Executive Order called for the creation of an apprenticeship Task Force and new Industry Recognized Apprenticeships (IRAP) by third parties such as industry groups, companies, non-profit organizations, unions, and joint labor-management organizations. IRAPs are proposed to operate separately from the current federal Registered Apprenticeship system and state systems of apprenticeship. However, Standard Recognition Entities (SREs) will apply to USDOL for recognition, but approve apprentices based on the SRE’s proposed guidelines and industry standards.

Expanding Community College Apprenticeships (\$20 million)

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) signed a cooperative [agreement](#) with the USDOL in 2018 to expand RA in the U.S with the goal of producing 16,000 new apprentices in three years. Consequently, AACC received \$20 million from the USDOL and released a request for application geared towards U.S. community colleges. Over 80 colleges, which included individual colleges and community college systems, were competitively [selected](#) to participate in this initiative.

Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA) (~1.5 million)

While RA has established rules and policies outlined by USDOL and state agencies, youth (16-24 years old) or pre-apprenticeship does not have a formal, national policy ecosystem. However, in 2012 USDOL published a Training and Employment Notice (TEN 13-12) on [defining quality pre-apprenticeship](#). New America released a [report](#) on national and international research on youth apprenticeship, an analysis of initiatives across the country, and insights for organizations interested in scaling high-quality youth apprenticeship. Additionally, New America partnered with philanthropic partners and [awarded nine grants](#) of up to \$200,000 to nine regions developing partnerships and an ecosystem for youth apprenticeships that lead to economic mobility for young people. While future funding opportunities may be possible, it is not immediately clear if there will be future funding cycles for this grant initiative.

California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI) - \$10 million

As part of the [California Apprenticeship Initiative](#), the California Community Colleges Board of Governors approved [\\$10 million in Proposition 98 funds](#) to support the development of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs in the priority sectors of advanced manufacturing, advanced transportation, agriculture, water & environmental technologies, energy, construction & utilities, global trade & logistics, health, information & communication technologies/digital media, and retail, hospitality and tourism. This grant program prioritized new and innovative apprenticeship programs in emerging industry sectors and encouraged a multi-employer approach in a region and industry. Application details and instructions for Fiscal Year 2018-2019 were published on the [CAI hub](#) and applications were due on September 13, 2019.

Moreover, the California Apprenticeship Council releases [training funds](#) for apprenticeship programs in the building and construction trades to train apprentices. These funds are determined by the budget process and must be distributed in accordance with [California Code section 1777.5](#), subdivision (m).

Evaluating Apprenticeship Opportunities

Institutions that want to be competitive for apprenticeship funding need to be prepared to make upfront investments in their institution's long-term capacity to design new apprenticeship programs with local and regional employers, monitor programs, and navigate tension with partners in the existing RA and State Apprenticeship ecosystems. Institutions will also need to understand their local and regional labor market needs since funding typically targets high-demand industries and have established partners to account for supportive services. Additionally, it is not clear whether or not IRAP will continue beyond the Trump administration.

Common Responsibilities of Apprenticeship Programs

The following is a list of responsibilities of a typical sponsor of a US DOL Registered Apprenticeship program. A sponsor can be an employer, or an intermediary acting on behalf of an employer or group of employers such as a labor management organization or an institution of higher education.

1. Development of process to identify employer(s) interested in apprenticeship
2. Development of Apprenticeship Program with employer(s)
 - a. Determine or develop occupation(s), program type, registration, on-the-job learning, related technical instruction, & standards (wage scale, agreements, affirmative action plan, acceptance procedures)
3. Registration of Program with Federal, State, or alternative such as IRAP and pros and cons associated with each registration type
4. Registration of Participating Employer's Apprentices and connection to supportive services, when applicable
5. Monitoring of Participating Employer Programs
 - a. Monitor and review selection and hiring process, wage scale increase, RTI provider, OJL delivery, and performance review process
6. Monitoring of Participating Employer Apprentice(s)
7. Reporting on apprenticeship programs
 - a. Reporting on new and existing programs; completed and terminated apprentices; retention rate; demographic of apprentices; etc.