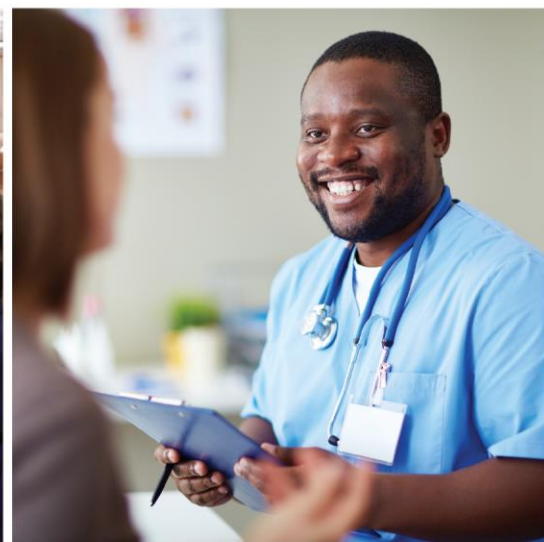
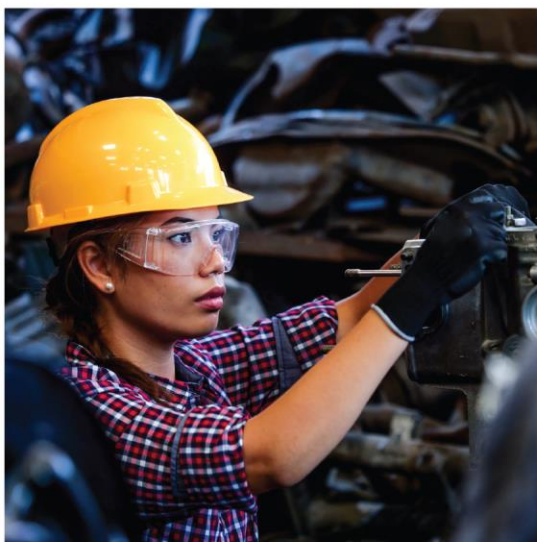


States as Drivers of Registered Apprenticeship Expansion

Elements of Effective Expansion Strategies



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Overview

Since the fall of 2016, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) has invested over \$350 million in state-driven apprenticeship expansion efforts. States are using these funds, as well as those appropriated by state legislatures and leveraged from other workforce development programs like Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Career and Technical Education (CTE), to build state capacity for apprenticeship activities, expand Registered Apprenticeship programs into non-traditional industry sectors, and increase participation by diverse populations in apprenticeship.

Five years into this federal investment, we can see the impact of state strategies and tactics on the growth of apprenticeship in the United States, and key elements for successful state apprenticeship expansion are clear. This document identifies and describes these strategies and activities that appear to lead most directly to apprenticeship expansion in states. It is provided to recipients of the ASE, SAE 2020, and SAEEL grants as a resource to inform strategic planning and grant implementation activities.

State apprenticeship expansion grantees can use this document to reflect on these elements and consider what role these elements play in their own state and how they might help to establish a robust apprenticeship system that is integrated into broader workforce, education, and economic development systems and has the capacity to deliver on apprenticeship expansion goals.

Five Elements of Effective Apprenticeship Expansion



The Five Elements



Element 1: State Leadership and Policy

State leaders play a critical role in successful apprenticeship expansion by establishing, communicating, and managing a strong vision for expansion. State leaders focus attention on apprenticeship and develop policies that support growth. They provide organizational and resource support and align state organizational structures to promote apprenticeship expansion.

Key sub-elements:

Development and communication of state-level vision	A clear vision for apprenticeship expansion and consistent communication of that vision builds stakeholder engagement and helps coordinate strategies and tactics across the state.
Governor's office support	Governors have significant influence over workforce, education, and economic development activities in their state. Governors can support apprenticeship expansion by communicating a strong vision for apprenticeship and work-based learning, convening key partners, and serving as public champions for apprenticeship.
State-level stakeholder engagement	Leaders from state agencies can use their roles to bring together key apprenticeship expansion stakeholders, including apprenticeship, education, and workforce agencies. These engagement activities help define roles and build relationships, resulting in widespread support for apprenticeship expansion efforts.
Alignment of government functions	A state's choice of where to house apprenticeship functions can impact staffing, resources, grant management capacity, and the strategic approach to expansion. States can make changes to agency structures, functions, and partnerships with the goal of aligning apprenticeship with broader economic development, workforce development, and education systems while harnessing the resources of those systems to accelerate expansion.
Supportive state policy	States can adopt policies that support apprenticeship expansion and the development of integrated and aligned work-based learning systems. State agency leaders are able to remove barriers that may exist and explore a variety of policy frameworks for expansion. Legislatures can put significant resources and structures in place and direct state funds to establish new and grow existing programs.
Aligning and leveraging of funding to support apprenticeship	States can use a range of resources available to support apprenticeship, including federal programs (WIOA, GI Bill for Veterans, CTE, and others), state-level programs, and private sector investments. States also can work to integrate and leverage federal and state funding streams to expand apprenticeship to meet the needs of business and citizens.



Element 2: Outreach and Business Engagement

Because the apprenticeship model is employer-driven, successful and sustained apprenticeship expansion demands effective business engagement strategies. States are increasing awareness-building activities, putting in place policies and practices that increase business demand for apprenticeship, and better coordinating business engagement activities across the state.

Key sub-elements:

Business awareness

Education is key to helping businesses understand the apprenticeship model and how the model can provide solutions to their human resource challenges. States can enhance businesses' understanding and awareness of apprenticeship by launching statewide public awareness campaigns, increasing business outreach capacity, and creating processes for continued engagement.

Coordinated and skilled business engagement teams

There are many potential actors in the apprenticeship business outreach space, including staff from state agencies, college systems, workforce development organizations, and other partners. States can make use of their partners' existing employer relationships and coordinate targeted outreach to the business community to avoid duplicative effort.

Return on investment (ROI) for businesses

In response to business interest in "investment value" of apprenticeship, states can create unique ROI tools to communicate the financial impact of integrating apprenticeship into business processes. States can find innovative ways to offset employer startup and sustainability costs through policies that include tax credits and grants for businesses who adopt the apprenticeship model.



Element 3: Capacity to Develop, Register and Support Programs

In order to develop, register, and support apprenticeship expansion programs, states are building staff and organizational capacity by distributing staff across the state, strengthening collaboration between federal Office of Apprenticeship (OA) staff and State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) staff, partnering with intermediaries, and using technology to provide access to information.

Key sub-elements

Staff capacity across the state	Through collaboration across federal apprenticeship offices and SAA, states can build and train a statewide network of skilled individuals who can work with businesses, sponsors, education providers, and other key partners.
Program registration process	SAA's can improve their program registration process by simplifying procedures for program approval, ensuring sponsors understand the steps involved and have consistent experiences in the process, and ensuring businesses can register programs in a timely manner to meet their workforce needs. States with federal registration of programs can strengthen collaboration between OA staff (state directors and ATRs) and state workforce staff to increase overall capacity for business outreach and program development.
Apprenticeship Intermediaries	States can increase capacity for program development and expansion by working with apprenticeship intermediary organizations to conduct outreach to employers, manage relationships with labor partners, coordinate regional stakeholders, provide technical assistance to support program design, and assume the administrative tasks of being an apprenticeship sponsor. Intermediaries can be industry associations, community colleges, workforce investment boards, state programs, nonprofits, or other organizations that play the role of apprenticeship sponsor.
Technology	States can use technology to broaden access to information, improve support to stake holders, and connect data related to apprenticeship.



Element 4: Development of and Support for Diverse Apprentice Pipelines

As apprenticeship opportunities grow, states are taking steps to ensure that all workers and job seekers have access to and are supported in apprenticeship opportunities. Their approaches include improving access to information about available apprenticeships, increasing access to quality pre-apprenticeship programs, partnering with trusted organizations to reach and support underrepresented populations, and engaging with business representatives in outreach and candidate recruiting.

Key sub-elements:

Changing perceptions of apprenticeships	States can take steps to change perceptions of apprenticeships by offering youth, families, and workers the opportunity to learn about modern apprenticeship programs and their value.
Ease of finding and applying for apprenticeship opportunities	States can increase access to the apprenticeship program application process by providing an easy way for potential apprentices to learn about and apply for available apprentice positions.
Quality pre-apprenticeship programs	States can support the expansion of quality pre-apprenticeship programs that prepare individuals to enter and succeed in apprenticeship programs and provide on-ramps to apprenticeship for underrepresented, disadvantaged, or low-skilled individuals. Successful programs incorporate industry-approved training and curricula, access to appropriate support services, facilitated entry, and/or articulation to certifications and postsecondary opportunities.
Partnerships with organizations who serve underrepresented populations	States can broaden outreach to, and support for, underrepresented populations by leveraging the strengths of state agencies and nonprofits who engage with diverse populations, including the workforce system. These partnerships can create pathways for individuals to become self-sufficient members of society through apprenticeship opportunities that bolster the middle class and strengthen the economy.
Targeted business engagement with a focus on diversity	States can encourage businesses to implement hiring processes and business-wide policies that support diversity by sharing the value of having a diverse workforce and facilitating partnerships between employers and organizations that support underrepresented populations.



Element 5: Alignment with Career Pathways and Postsecondary Education

To support the long-term sustainability of apprenticeship expansion, states are creating clear linkages to secondary and postsecondary education programs. Strategies that are helping to embed apprenticeship as both an education and a training model in states include expanding youth apprenticeship offerings, integrating apprenticeship into career and technical education, and pursuing policy changes that allow apprenticeships to connect seamlessly with postsecondary educational pathways.

Key sub-elements:

Youth apprenticeship systems	States can align youth apprenticeship programs that begin in high school, either by directly enrolling students as apprentices in registered programs or through quality pre-apprenticeship opportunities.
Integration with career and technical education	By integrating classroom instruction and hands-on learning, apprenticeships and CTE programs equip students with the skills and certifications they need to jump-start their careers. States can make explicit connections between CTE and registered apprenticeship.
Roles of postsecondary institutions	To meet the workforce training needs of the individuals, companies, and communities they serve, colleges and universities are creating innovative programs and services that include apprenticeships in nontraditional occupations. States are working to make policy modifications within higher education systems that support related training instruction (RTI) and career pathway integration with apprenticeship.

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About AIR

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is a nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts behavioral and social science research and delivers technical assistance to solve some of the most urgent challenges in the U.S. and around the world.

For 15 years, AIR has partnered with organizations at the national, state, and regional levels to advance Registered Apprenticeship as a talent development strategy in the U.S. We work with businesses and industry associations to design, register, and operate apprenticeship programs. We coach and support states and territories on how to grow Registered Apprenticeship and better align the apprenticeship, workforce development, and education systems. We also focus on conducting research and identifying promising practices to increase the knowledge base about the apprenticeship model and expansion strategies; working with federal and state agencies to train stakeholders, develop policy, and design technical assistance initiatives; and advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion to ensure that women, people of color, individuals with disabilities, and other groups are accessing and succeeding in apprenticeship programs. AIR conducts this work through the organization's Workforce Program Area within the Human Services Division.



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