



Project Management Apprenticeship: DOL Workshop Summary

January 18, 2024 | ELECTRI Council Meeting | Amelia Island, FL

SUMMARY

Wendy Slee, Program Analyst, and Michael Nelson, Apprenticeship Training Program Specialist, from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)—Office of Apprenticeship led a discussion on the registered office apprenticeships program, emphasizing the benefits and advantages of the program.

The presentation highlighted the role the DOL plays in promoting and facilitating registered apprenticeships (RA), including:

- An overview of registered apprenticeships
- Benefits of registered apprenticeships
- How to get started
- Resources
- Apprenticeship funding

HIGHLIGHTS

Registered Apprenticeships: Benefits and Role of Department of Labor

The DOL's role in promoting and facilitating registered apprenticeships was highlighted, particularly in relation to their support of talent pipeline management and industry engagement. The discussion also included an emphasis on the benefits of registered apprenticeships for various industries, with a focus on infrastructure, business, finance, education, and cybersecurity.

Apprenticeship Benefits and Industry Adoption

The DOL discussed the benefits and advantages of registered apprenticeship, emphasizing its industry-driven nature, ability to cultivate talent, and nationally recognized credentials. They highlighted the positive return on investment for employers, with 90% of apprentices retaining employment with their sponsors after completing the program. The DOL also shared that the number of apprentices nationwide has increased significantly in recent years, with various industries, including skilled trades, accounting, and cybersecurity, adopting this model. They pointed out that registered apprenticeship can be flexible and can be adapted to different businesses and industries.

Program Registration Benefits and Next Steps

The DOL discussed the benefits of registering a program, emphasizing the valuable network of experts and access to funding that comes with it. They highlighted the potential for industry recognition for graduates and stressed the importance of having a team with expertise. They also outlined the next steps, which include:

- Visiting the state apprenticeship agency
- Customizing the national guidelines standards for the specific region or state
- Getting set up in the state apprenticeship database

The DOL will provide support through this process at no extra charge.

Sponsorship Guidelines and Employer Forms

The DOL discussed the importance of employers filling out an employer acceptance form to agree to sponsorship guidelines and provide on-the-job training. The DOL also addressed the role of the employers, who will provide wages, training, and mentorship to the apprentice, as well as communicate with the apprenticeship program sponsor*. They stressed the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workforce, and the responsibility of sponsors and employers to maintain a discrimination- and harassment-free environment.

**The apprenticeship program sponsor is the organization that registers the apprenticeship standards with the state DOL or apprenticeship agency.*

Apprenticeship.gov Resource Discussion

The DOL discussed the resources available on [apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov), emphasizing three key tools:

- **Apprenticeship Job Finder:** A job finder tool for career seekers to search for apprenticeship opportunities. Career seekers can search for open apprenticeship job opportunities from employers across the country and directly apply with the employer of the apprenticeship program.
- **Partner Finder:** A tool that provides information on other organizations working in a registered apprenticeship in a particular industry or geographic area. Partner Finder can connect organizations with the right partners to help design, develop, or enhance the program. Partners include apprenticeship offices, educators, intermediaries, sponsors, workforce development boards, American job centers, employers, and VETS offices.
- **Registered Apprenticeship Academy:** A catalog of interactive resources and courses for a variety of different audiences involved in apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship Funding Discussion

The DOL discussed the various funding options for apprenticeship programs, emphasizing the importance of checking state and local resources and collaborating with local workforce boards. They highlighted the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and its funding opportunities for eligible job seekers. They also mentioned federal grants dedicated to expanding apprenticeship, including the [State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula Grants](#), and advised attendees to stay updated on open funding opportunities. The DOL encouraged contacting awarded grantees to explore potential sub-grants or partnerships.

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM SPONSOR?

Any employer, association, committee, or organization that operates a Registered Apprenticeship Program. This entity assumes full responsibility for administration and operation of the apprenticeship program. Sponsors can be a single business or a consortium of businesses. Alternatively, the sponsor can be a workforce intermediary, such as an industry association or a labor-management organization. Community colleges and community-based organizations can also serve as sponsors of apprenticeship programs.

Sponsors design and execute apprenticeship programs, provide jobs to apprentices, oversee training development, and provide hands-on learning and technical instruction for apprentices. The programs operate on a voluntary basis, and they often receive support by collaborating with community-based organizations, educational institutions, the workforce system, and other stakeholders.

ELECTRI recommends that the local NECA chapter acts as the program sponsor. To get started with the registration process, follow our [Steps to Register the Apprenticeship in Your State](#) guide.

HOWS DOES A NECA CONTRACTOR BECOME A HOSTING EMPLOYER?

The specific process for becoming a hosting contractor for apprenticeships may vary by location.

The general process is:

- Reach out to your local NECA chapter to express interest in the program and familiarize yourself with the registered apprenticeship standards.
- Ensure that your organization meets the standards and requirements set by the apprenticeship program. This may involve demonstrating your capacity to provide quality training, a safe working environment, and compliance with relevant industry standards.
- Work with your local NECA chapter and state DOL to complete the [Employer Acceptance Agreement](#) agreeing to the standards of the registered apprenticeship program.
- After your organization receives approval, you will be responsible for working with the local NECA chapter to track the apprentice's progress in the program.

ARE SPONSORS MANDATED TO ACCEPT ALL EMPLOYERS INTO THE PROGRAM?

The U.S. DOL states that sponsors may use their discretion when accepting employers into the program. However, State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAA) may have unique requirements.

In all cases, sponsors should work with their local apprenticeship representatives to learn about specific situations and details related to refusing employers into the program.

WHAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM CREATION OR EXPANSION?

Each year the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announces funding opportunities, some of which are focused on apprenticeship expansion activities. To view current funding opportunities please visit the [federal grants](#) webpage as well as our [apprenticeship investments](#) webpage.

[LEARN MORE AT APPRENTICESHIP.GOV/HELP](https://www.electri.org/apprenticeship-help)