



Rapidly Deploy and Scale Apprenticeship:

A Resource to Help Employers Work with an Apprenticeship Intermediary

Apprenticeship is a talent development solution designed to develop skilled workers through rigorous coursework and on-the-job training. Apprenticeship intermediaries make it possible for employers to rapidly deploy and scale apprenticeship programs by offering capacity, expertise, and key relationships with education and workforce providers. This resource explains apprenticeship intermediaries, outlines the benefits of partnering with them, and provides a method for employers to select an intermediary with whom to launch and operate apprenticeships.

Understanding Apprenticeship Intermediaries

What is apprenticeship?

A Registered Apprenticeship is an industry-driven, high-quality training method where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce and individuals can obtain paid work experience, related classroom instruction, and a nationally recognized credential. Apprentices are paid employees who work while they learn skills needed by their employers. Employers provide a mentor to apprentices to train them on the job, and apprentices participate in instructional courses related to the skills they learn on the job. Visit [apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov) to learn more.

AIR Support for Apprenticeship

AIR's experts support organizations interested in using apprenticeship programs to address talent development needs. Our consultants help organizations determine if working with an intermediary that is a group sponsor or developing a proprietary apprenticeship program is the right fit for them.

[Click here](#) to contact us.

What is an apprenticeship intermediary?

An apprenticeship intermediary is an organization with an apprenticeship program designed to serve as a hub for multiple employers and typically multiple job roles in a labor market. The intermediary is an organization that has registered an apprenticeship program with the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency to serve as a “group sponsor.” As the sponsor, the intermediary is responsible for the quality and administration of the program. Nearly 4,400 intermediaries have registered as group sponsors in the U.S. to date.

An intermediary may be an educational or training provider (such as a university or community college), a workforce development board or center, a community-based organization, a nonprofit, a joint labor management organization, a consortium of employers, or an industry association.

What are the roles of apprenticeship intermediaries versus employers?

Apprenticeship intermediaries act as the interface between multiple employers and the government by serving as the “sponsor” for an apprenticeship program registered with a recognized Registration Agency. Intermediaries can fulfill additional roles like delivering the related instruction for apprentices and/or providing supportive services, such as transportation, books, supplies, and childcare to help the apprentice successfully complete the apprenticeship.

Employers handle hiring apprentices (either directly or as a contractor) and for paying wages to their apprentices. Employers select individuals to serve as mentors to apprentices and provide on-the-job training and work supervision.

What are the benefits of working with an intermediary?

Employers can benefit from working with apprenticeship intermediaries in the following ways:

- Time saved by not having to design and register a program from scratch, since the intermediary’s apprenticeship program is already registered with the U. S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency.
- Established relationships with educational providers.
- Established relationships with organizations who can provide supportive services to apprentices.
- Simplified processes for setting up internal systems to manage and mentor apprentices.
- Mentor preparation and training.
- Apprentice recruitment support, often with specialized focus on underrepresented populations.
- Apprentice tracking and reporting support.
- Information or direct access to funding to help offset the start-up or other costs of the apprenticeship.

What products and services can an employer expect from an apprenticeship intermediary?

The products and services offered by an apprenticeship intermediary can vary due to the nature of the organization serving as the intermediary and the scope of the program it offers employers. Nevertheless, core elements include the following:



An onboarding process

- The intermediary will help the employer set up the apprenticeship internally, including preparing staff and mentors and setting up needed processes to ensure a smooth launch of the program.



A comprehensive training plan

- The intermediary will provide an apprentice training plan and schedule for coordinating related instructional coursework and on-the-job training.



Recruiting support

- When the employer is ready to hire its first apprentice, it will post the job opening and the intermediary will help recruit candidates. Many intermediaries also help assess and screen candidates and coordinate interviews with the employer.



Apprentice support

- Once an apprentice is hired, the intermediary will provide support to the employer and apprentice throughout the training process as the apprentice acquires the skills necessary to progress in the occupation.

Will the apprenticeship intermediary charge a fee?

The apprenticeship intermediary may or may not charge a fee and/or tuition if the organization provides the related coursework, depending on the intermediary's program and funding model. Some intermediaries have philanthropic, government, or other funding to help offset the costs to employers, which can vary widely by location, timing, industry, or recipient.

Selecting an Apprenticeship Intermediary

To identify an apprenticeship intermediary, employers will want to spend some time researching and considering whether the intermediary is in the right location, offers the right job role(s), and has the desired products and services.

How to Find Intermediaries

Employers can use the [Partner Finder](#) to search for intermediaries:

1. Go to the Partner Finder and select “Search by Need.”
2. Specify a location and/or an occupation or industry.
3. Select “I want to join an existing program.”
4. Use “Search by Name” for situations where the name is known.

When speaking with potential intermediaries, employers can use this resource as a reference.

Once employers select an intermediary, they will be asked to sign an “employer agreement” with the intermediary—as required by the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency—in order to become a registered apprenticeship program. Additionally, intermediaries may ask employers to sign other documents related to joining their apprenticeship program.

Conclusion

Apprenticeship intermediaries can help employers more quickly deploy and scale apprenticeship programs that meet their workforce needs. Intermediaries bring expertise and relationships with workforce and education partners that can augment what employers can accomplish on their own.

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.



AIR® Headquarters
1400 Crystal Drive, 10th Floor
Arlington, VA 22202-3289
+1. 202. 403. 5000 | [AIR.ORG](https://www.air.org)

Notice of Trademark: “American Institutes for Research” and “AIR” are registered trademarks. All other brand, product, or company names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

This project has been funded, either wholly or in part, with Federal funds from the Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration under Contract number, 1605C2-20-C-009, the contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement of same by the U.S. Government.