

Request for Applications: Pre-apprenticeship Program



Published: February XX, 2023

The Salt Lake County Office of Regional Economic Development (“the County”) wants to invest in solutions that connect lower-income communities with better careers. Through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, we have \$2.5 million available through 2025 to make this investment. The County wants to invest those funds in a proof-of-concept, learning lessons between now and 2026 that can inform long-term spending decisions. This Request for Applications (“RFA”) seeks partner organizations to connect lower-income communities with careers in the high-growth construction and building trades. Although this RFA primarily focuses on construction and building trades, program proposals that target other high-growth industries within the County may be allowed at the County’s discretion.

Letters of Intent due by [Month] XX, 2023 at 5pm.

Applications due by [Month] XX, 2023 at 5pm.

Applicants will be notified of decisions by [Month] XX, 2023.

Program will start [Month] XX, 2023.

All funds encumbered by December 31, 2024.

Program will run for a minimum of 24, maximum of 36 months from program start date.

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Problem and Opportunity

The County has a relatively low unemployment rate of 2.1%, but 22.5%¹ of people are currently at or below 200% Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG). Careers in construction and building trades provide workers economic security while meeting industry needs for workforce. However, many individuals need additional support to be successful in CBT apprenticeships. Most Registered Apprenticeship Programs require some knowledge of geometry, math, reading, and writing skills. Additionally, apprentices often must know how to use virtual reality or other web-based technologies to execute job duties. A pre-apprenticeship program helps prepare individuals by providing remedial course instruction as well as soft skills development including digital literacy, finance planning, and professional skills. With additional support like emergency financial assistance and social service navigation, pre-apprenticeship programs provide the support to help individuals thrive in a Registered Apprenticeship Program and long, productive career.

As stated previously, applicants **must** target careers in the construction and building trades, but the scope of this program is not limited to only construction and building trades. Applicants **may** offer programming to support participants entering into Registered Apprenticeship Programs outside of the construction and building trades. Programs that choose to do so should provide evidence that these careers are 1) in high-demand by industry and 2) support economic security for participants, in Section 3A of their Application.

Program Design & Goals

Section 1 – High-level program requirements: Serving CBT employer needs

Upon completion of the program, participants must meet the criteria and be guaranteed an interview for a Registered Apprenticeship Program in the construction and building trades field.

Salt Lake County met with union and non-union construction and building trades associations, construction and building trades employers, Apprenticeship Utah at the Department of Workforce Services, current apprentices, and apprenticeship program providers to understand the needs of each and how this pre-apprenticeship program can meet those needs. The County also met with providers of high-quality pre-apprenticeship programs in multiple states to learn from their lessons and understand how to implement a successful program. The following program design and goals reflect the views and best practices collected from these interviews and consultations. The County will be using Job For the Future's [Framework for a High-quality Pre-apprenticeship Program](#) as the pre-apprenticeship program's guiding structure. All six of the components listed in the Framework must be present in the pre-apprenticeship program structure and outcomes (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Job for the Future's Framework for a High-quality Pre-apprenticeship Program

1. Transparent entry and success requirement.
2. Alignment with skills sought by local employers and high-quality apprenticeship programs.
3. Culmination in one or more industry-recognized credentials.
4. Development of skills through hands-on activities and work-based learning.

¹ Census Bureau 2021 ACS 1-year estimates, S1701.

5. Offering of academic, career exploration, and wraparound supports.
6. Transition into a registered apprenticeship program or other high-quality apprenticeship program.

Section 2 – Program Structure

The awarded program should be at least 6 weeks. If the applicant is proposing a shorter or longer program, please provide sufficient justification in Section 2A of the application. The County anticipates longer programs will include remedial coursework required for entry into apprenticeship programs in subjects such as math, geometry, reading, or writing. Please outline the specific remedial coursework, curriculum, and length of program in Section 3D of the application.

Hours of programming per week should not exceed 12 hours of in-class time. Preference will be given to the pre-apprenticeship program(s) that create flexibility for participants including evening classes and central locations.

Section 3 – Developing a Coalition

The County encourages one application on behalf of more than one organization, comprising a Coalition of program providers. One of the organizations in the coalition should be the primary applicant and point of contact for information regarding the application. If one organization can provide all three Program Components as outlined in Section 4 below, then it is possible to apply as a sole entity. However, the County encourages building a Coalition in order to increase efficiency and prevent duplication of services in the community. Additionally, we expect programs to launch three months after the award date. Because of this short timeline, we encourage partnering with organizations for existing services instead of a sole applicant designing services from scratch. This is the case for all program components: wraparound services, academic and employability skill development curriculum, and career training and exposure.

For example, Career Trainer A is the primary applicant, and will host and provide academic and employability skill development, and some career training and exposure. Community Based Organization B is going to provide the wraparound services to all participants. Industry Partner C will also provide career training and exposure. All three of these entities will make up the program provider coalition. All three entities should be involved in drafting and represented in a singular application submitted by Career Trainer A.

An organization is considered part of the Coalition if they receive funds awarded through this RFA, either directly from the County or as passed through the primary applicant (in this case, also awardee). You may have more partners involved in the program, but unless they will be receiving award funds, they should not be listed as Coalition members. There will be space to list out additional partners that will not be considered Coalition members in the application.

Section 4 – Target population and eligibility requirements

Transparent entry requirements

All participants (also referred to as “pre-apprentices”) **must be Salt Lake County residents** at the start and throughout the duration of the program. There will be no preference given to programs that serve all or a portion of the County.

To meet industry workforce needs, support Salt Lake County residents’ economic mobility, and meet the federally-mandated requirements that accompany ARPA funds, participants must have a **household income that is at or below 200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) for the three months before program start date (Table 1).**

The program must be **open only to individuals 18 and over**, with a target age range of 24-30 years old. Participants must also be eligible to work in the state of Utah. The Department of Labor includes their own specific [work requirements for employees on Department of Labor \(DOL\) worksites](#).

The County will prioritize applicants that aim to serve, or partner with community-based organizations to serve, traditionally underrepresented and disadvantaged communities in the CBT. This includes but is not limited to:

- Women;
- Disabled;
- LGBTQIA+;
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color;
- Formerly or presently unsheltered individuals;
- Individuals living in transitional housing;
- Formerly incarcerated population; and
- Immigrant and Refugee Communities.

Table 1. 200 Percent Federal Poverty Guideline for 2023

Household size	200% FPG limit
1	\$29,160
2	\$39,440
3	\$49,720
4	\$60,000
5	\$70,280
6	\$80,560
7	\$90,840
8	\$101,120

For each additional family member, add \$10,280

Source:

<https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines>

Section 5 – Program components

The pre-apprenticeship program must contain three major components: wraparound services, academic and employability skill development curricula, and career training and exposure. The program may contain elements in addition to these components as well.

Wraparound Services

Wraparound services are processes, resources, and support for participants that remove barriers to entry and completion of the pre-apprenticeship program and placement into a Registered Apprenticeship Program. These services include but are not limited to transportation support, childcare, food assistance, rental assistance, mental health services, and medical support.

Applicants should help participants access these services and/or partner with an organization that provides these services. The County recommends partnering with a community-based organization (CBO) that provides these support services to participants for two reasons. A partnership with a CBO will allow an applicant to increase program participation of historically disadvantaged communities in Salt Lake County. Additionally, the County recognizes that once individuals enter an apprenticeship program and begin making higher wages, they will likely no longer be eligible for social service benefits. For this reason, we encourage focusing on recruiting participants that are already receiving services through a community-based organization.

Emergency Fund and Stipend

Due to the County targeting participants at or below 200% FPG and entry wages in apprenticeship programs being low, we are requiring the use of stipends and emergency funds to help support the economic stability of participants during a career transition. This will allow underemployed or unemployed participants who have been historically excluded from starting an apprenticeship program due to financial constraints to succeed in the program.

The County requires a fund be created for participants to be used for program-related supplies, test and certification fees, and one-time emergencies that prohibit a participant from completing the pre-apprenticeship program and transitioning into a Registered Apprenticeship Program. The use of these funds will be at the discretion of the awarded organization, with qualified emergencies detailed in the application. The County encourages keeping this fund accessible to participants while they are participating in a registered apprenticeship program for one year after a participant completes the pre-apprenticeship program.

The County will also require some form of weekly stipend only or weekly stipend combined with a program completion award. Stipends and completion awards must meet the following requirements:

- Aid in participants' ability to complete the pre-apprenticeship program, as in covering wages lost due to attendance in the pre-apprenticeship program;
- Incentivize 100% attendance during, engagement during, and completion of the program; and
- Support a successful transition into a Registered Apprenticeship Program.

Academic and Employability Skill Development Curricula

The academic and employability skill development curricula must align with existing Registered Apprenticeship Programs to meet industry workforce needs. This can include any remedial courses that are required for registered apprenticeship programs in addition to soft skills and employability skill development.

Academic remediation will allow pre-apprentices to meet the entry and testing requirements of registered apprenticeship programs. Academic remediation should include trade-specific math, reading, and writing coursework, and any other subject as required by the targeted construction and building trades for which the pre-apprenticeship program prepares participants to enter. The County strongly encourages utilizing existing curricula and/or partnering with programs to integrate this component into the pre-apprenticeship program.

[Apprenticeship Utah](#) outlines the following skills for a successful apprentice in the Construction and Building Trades:

- Critical thinking,
- Attention to safety precautions,
- Promptness,
- Desire to learn,
- Ability to follow instructions,
- Internal drive,
- Willingness to engage in required tasks,
- Problem Solving, and
- Mathematics.

A successful proposal will include coursework and instruction that supports participants in refining and developing these skills. The curriculum utilized should also include some soft skills and employability skill development including but not limited to teamwork, resume writing, interview practice, and financial literacy.

Career Training and Exposure

The pre-apprenticeship program must expose participants to a variety of construction and building trades careers connected to registered or high-quality apprenticeship programs. Career exploration in the Construction and Building Trades is vital for individuals to fully understand the target occupations. Participants should experience a minimum of six CBT occupations through activities such as in-program presentations, field experiences, and mentorship opportunities with current and recently graduated apprentices. There should be clear guidelines for mastery of skills and application of those skills in CBT occupations.

Section 6 – Programmatic outcomes

Skill Alignment and Transition into Registered Apprenticeship Programs

To support a successful transition from pre-apprenticeship to a high-quality or registered apprenticeship, program structure and curricula must align with industry needs and apprenticeship program requirements. It will be the responsibility of the applicants to detail this alignment. Best practices include working with industry partners while developing this program to ensure this alignment and partnerships with employers to guarantee all program participants receive interviews for employment and apprenticeship programs. The County also encourages mentorship beyond the pre-apprenticeship program to support pre-apprentices as they transition into and complete their first year of their Registered Apprenticeship Program. Letters of intent agreement, or MOU should be provided by participating employers and must be submitted with application.

Industry Credentials

Upon completing the program, participants should have at least one industry credential, such as the [OSHA 30 certification](#). The County understands certifications vary between registered apprenticeships, and whether those certifications need to be attained before participating in a registered apprenticeship. The certification (minimum of one) is at the discretion of the pre-apprenticeship program provider. The

pre-apprenticeship program must cover the costs of any testing or certification requirements needed for pre-apprentices to make a successful transition into a Registered Apprenticeship Program.

Meeting Employer Need

Construction and building trades are facing a labor shortage that is expected to worsen over the next 5-10 years. The program must prepare individuals to be successful in specific career paths within the construction and building trades. In addition, programs that choose to prepare participants to enter Registered Apprenticeship Programs in addition to and outside of construction and building trades must show the industry need for workforce in their application.

Program Evaluation

In addition to these outcomes, the program also needs to be able to demonstrate a return on investment. For more information, please see the Funding Strategy on page 10.

Section 7 – Advisory Council

The pre-apprenticeship program should include an advisory council to guide program components and strategy to ensure program aligns with industry needs. The Advisory Council will serve to provide real-time program adjustment to meet changing workforce demands or industry standards. Advisory council members must include:

- At least **two** partnering apprenticeship employer sponsors; and
- At least **two** industry partners (union representative, non-union representative, associations, professional organizations, etc.).

Please provide details about who will serve on your advisory council in Application Section 3A.

Key Definitions

For the purposes of this RFA and pre-apprenticeship program, the following are the County’s working definition for key terms in this document.

- **Pre-apprenticeship:** Pre-apprenticeship programs are designed to prepare individuals to enter high-quality and/or Registered Apprenticeship Programs. This dedicated time is set aside to help individuals gain remedial skills, explore career paths, and receive the support needed to enter a high-quality apprenticeship program. Pre-apprenticeship should not be confused with youth apprenticeships, which often work with 16-24 year olds only.
- **Registered Apprenticeship Program:** High-quality apprenticeship program that is industry-vetted and registered through the U.S. Department of Labor. Registered apprenticeship programs are paid and provide structured on-the-job learning and mentorship. Please view the details of a registered apprenticeship program [here](#).
- **Construction and Building Trades:** Construction and building trades use a variety of resources to build and repair various structures including but not limited to homes, roads, and other structures. Please view examples of Construction and Building Trades occupations [here](#).
- **Wraparound services:** Support services to help individuals succeed in a pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship program. This includes basic needs support such as food, housing assistance, and

accessing medical care. This also includes vital services to individual success such as transportation support, childcare, mental health support, and legal services.

- **Academic remediation:** This includes any academic preparation for entering an apprenticeship program including but not limited to: algebra, geometry, reading, writing, English skills, and GED completion.
- **Employability skill development:** Skills that help individuals thrive in the interview process and throughout their career. This includes interview preparation, resume writing, and professional development. This can also include skills that support success in the workplace such as teamwork, timeliness, and professionalism.
- **Curriculum:** A standardized sequence of instruction and experiences that guide participants to the desired programmatic outcomes.
- **Career training:** Includes trade and industry specific technical and hard skill development.
- **Career exposure:** Meant to provide individuals with exposure to careers in the Construction and Building Trades. This can be through field experiences and/or mentorship opportunities.
- **Financial literacy:** Personal and family budgeting; and short-, medium-, and long-term financial planning, such as investing, saving, and debt repayment.
- **Unemployed:** Individuals without a job but are able to work and are seeking employment.
- **Underemployed:** Individuals who do not have enough paid work or are not working in a field that maximizes their skills or potential. This includes working in industries that do not provide potential for career growth.
- **Community-based organization:** A mission-based, not-for-profit organization that addresses community needs. This could involve working with a specific community, advocating for that community, and providing critical services that are not met by the market.
- **Key Performance Indicator (KPI):** A metric that must be tracked before, during, and after the program to determine program outputs, outcomes, and success. The required KPIs (see Section 8) will help us understand if participants are able to increase their economic opportunity through completing the pre-apprenticeship program and entering a Registered Apprenticeship Program.
- **Apprenticeship enrollment:** When an individual successfully completes the interview process and is given placement in a high-quality apprenticeship program. For our purposes, apprenticeship enrollment is tracked 6-months after acceptance into the apprenticeship program.
- **Completions:** When an individual successfully completes all outlined requirements in a pre-apprenticeship program and has at least an 80% attendance rate and other passing grade(s) as determined by the program provider(s), if applicable.
- **Outreach:** An activity to connect with potential program participants, and share the pre-apprenticeship program and ensuing career opportunities. Outreach should be targeted as underserved and underrepresented communities. This is the time to discuss individual needs and goals to determine if the pre-apprenticeship program is the right fit for an individual.
- **Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG):** A measure of income issued annually by the Department of Health and Human Services, adjusted for household size. The program calculates household size by the number of dependents, which includes financial responsibility for children, parents, siblings, spouses, or non-relatives. See FPG details [here](#).

Funding Strategy

The funds for this program come from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and are one-time funds from the County. ARPA funds come with a specific set of requirements, including but not limited to: serving lower-income people who experienced negative economic impact due to the pandemic.

The County expects this program to show a positive return on investment, meaning the financial outcomes of this program exceed the program maintenance costs. Programs that lack the ability to collect and analyze necessary data for program evaluation will not be considered for award. Please see the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Metrics section for more details on data to be collected before, during, and after completion of the program.

Section 8 – Impact Measurement and Evaluation

Please find the theory of change and [logic model](#) for this pre-apprenticeship program here.

Number to be served

Program length and frequency can be set by the applicant, but programs should aim to enroll a minimum of 200 pre-apprentices over the lifetime of the program provision. Preference is given to applicants who can serve up to 300 pre-apprentices. Applicants will set their own program duration and frequency within the bounds listed in this RFA and the accompanying application (Section 3A).

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The data you collect, including individual-level and personally identifiable information, will need to be shared with the County for all program participants. The County will assist as needed in drafting the necessary data consent form(s) for each participant to sign for data to be collected and shared with the appropriate agencies.

Individual participant data to be collected at time of enrollment

- First and last name
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Age / Date of birth
- Home address
- Income (three months prior to enrollment, annualized)
- Household size
- Number of financial dependents
- Formerly unsheltered
- Formerly incarcerated
- Work status

Program & participant outcomes

- Number of pre-apprentices enrolled in the program

- Number of pre-apprentices who complete the program
- Number of pre-apprentices who interview for a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)
- Number accepted into RAPs and which RAPs
- Number still successfully participating in the same RAP **6 months** after beginning RAP
- Number who moved to a different RAP
- Income from RAP and future pay scale, if known

Timeline

Programs will be funded through June 30, 2025.

- **Letters of Intent due by [Month] XX, 2023 at 5pm.**
- **Applications due by [Month] XX, 2023 at 5pm.**
- **Applicants will be notified of decisions by [Month] XX, 2023.**
- **Program will start [Month] XX, 2023.**
- **All funds encumbered by December 31, 2024.**
- **Program will run for a minimum of 24 months, maximum of 36 months from the start date.**

Performance Criteria and Budget (Applicant Submit)

The County will base its award decisions on the following components:

- Fidelity to best practices
- All program components are highly encouraged, but applications that have all of the components listed - including with multiple partners providing services - will be stronger.
- Proven and innovative outreach strategies
- Funding adjustments based on performance and cost drivers
- Submit a completed staffing and budget template

Application Submission Criteria and Evaluation Weight

All applications submitted will be evaluated using the following criteria based upon responses in the online form. All questions under each category will be applied to both Trainer and CBO applicants.

- 50% Program Design & Goals – “Does this align with program components and pre-apprenticeship best practices outlined in the Program Design & Goals section?”**
- Program Components: Does the program meet all three program components (academic and employability skill development, wraparound services, career training and exposure)?
 - Pre-apprenticeship best practices: Does this program incorporate all six of the [Jobs for the Future’s Framework for a High-quality Pre-apprenticeship Program](#)?
- 15% Target Population & Coalition – “Does this program utilize existing community services and expertise to reach the populations of highest need?”**
- Coalition: Does the application use a Coalition model to provide services?
 - Target population: Does the program reach an underserved or underrepresented community?

15% Meeting industry need – “Does this meet the workforce needs of the construction and building trades industry?”

- Advisory Council: Does the application have an advisory council that includes industry partners?

10% Compliance – “Will this help us demonstrate and evaluate return-on-investment?”

- Does this program design have a high likelihood of achieving the outputs and outcomes outlined in the Logic Model?

10% Budget – “Are program outputs and outcomes reasonable given the requested budget?”

- Are the proposed costs presented in the Budget both reasonable and competitive?
- Will the proposed program demonstrate a positive return on investment?

How to Apply

The County will host a **webinar** for the Pre-apprenticeship RFA on **[Day], [Month] XX, 2023, at Xpm**. The webinar will walk-through the RFA, provide recommendations for a successful application, and answer any questions from attendees. A second **webinar** will be held on **[Day], [Month] XX, 2023, at Xpm**. The County will post the recordings of these webinars to the same webpage where the RFA is posted – <https://slco.org/economic-development/PreApprenticeshipProgram/>

1. Organizations interested in applying to the Pre-apprenticeship RFA must submit a **Letter of Intent (LOI) by 5pm [Day], [Month] XX, 2023, at Xpm**. Use **this form** to submit the LOI.
2. Download and fill out the main application.
3. Download and fill out a **Staffing and Budget Plan**.
4. If Applicants want to provide more responses to questions, justify requests, or ask for exceptions, they should create a separate document. Word, PDF, or Excel formats recommended.
5. Submit the full application package by **5pm [Day], [Month] XX, 2023, at Xpm**, which includes:
 - a. Application form
 - b. Staffing and Budget Plan
 - c. Letters of commitment from program partners
 - d. Any additional documents related to #4 above
6. You will receive an emailed receipt verifying the application was received.

Questions?

If Applicants have questions about the application, they should contact Meredith Muller at mmuller@slco.org. We know this application is thorough, and some organizations may need explanations to submit the best application possible. Please submit all questions by email to mmuller@slco.org no later than **5pm [Day], [Month] XX, 2023**. Answers will be posted to <https://slco.org/economic-development/PreApprenticeshipProgram/>.

Reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals may be provided with 5 working days' notice of receiving a request. Please contact Contracts and Procurement at 801-468-0300. TTY users must call 711.

Appendix A

Program Design Resources

- Apprenticeship Utah
 - [Registered Apprenticeship Programs](#)
 - [Construction Pathways](#)
- San Diego Workforce Partnership
 - [ARC Program](#)
 - [ETI Pre-apprenticeship Program](#)
- [Columbus Building Futures Pre-apprenticeship Program](#)
- [JFF High-Quality Pre-apprenticeship Framework](#)
- [Women of the World Immigrant and Refugee Work Authorization Presentation](#)

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