

APPRENTICESHIP EXPANSION ACCELERATION STRATEGIES

A resource to help apprenticeship teams accelerate growth in Registered Apprenticeship to achieve expansion goals

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

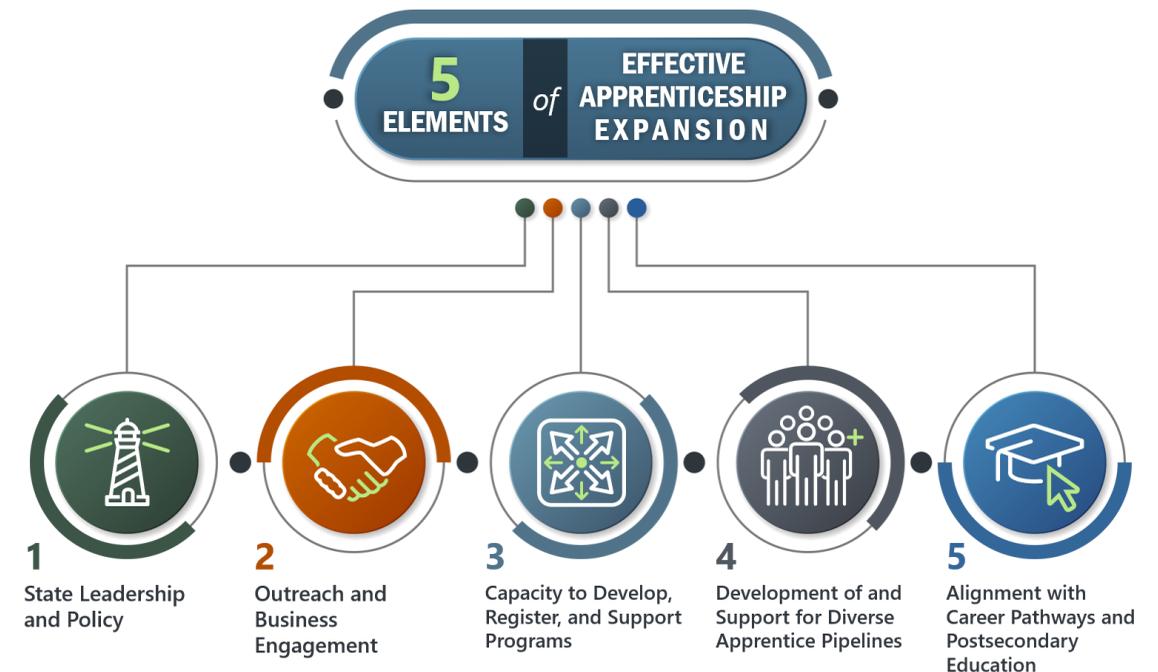
To expand Registered Apprenticeship (RA) opportunities, the U.S. Department of Labor has partnered with states and territories through a series of state apprenticeship expansion grants and other resources aimed at growing the number of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs), the types of industries and occupations using apprenticeship models, and the diversity of Americans benefiting from apprenticeship opportunities. While states have made tremendous strides in all these areas, the COVID-19 pandemic and related economic turbulence had a significant impact on expansion efforts. Many grantees and state apprenticeship teams were short staffed as team members were reassigned to help process an unprecedented number of Unemployment Insurance claims and all had to navigate a sudden shift in employer hiring needs and adjust to virtual work, outreach, and learning.

As the country emerges from the pandemic and volatile economic environment, states are adjusting once again to meet demand and grow apprenticeship. State apprenticeship teams are looking for strategies to accelerate RAP development and recruitment and support of apprentices—and make strong progress toward apprenticeship expansion grant performance goals.

Over the life of these expansion grants, we have developed many tools and resources that identify proven long-term apprenticeship expansion strategies. These include the following:

- [The Five Elements of Effective Apprenticeship Expansion framework](#)
- [The Apprenticeship Expansion Self-Assessment](#)
- [Apprenticeship Expansion Resiliency Planning Resources](#)
- [State Apprenticeship Expansion Promising Practices briefs \(2020\)](#)

This resource complements those above by highlighting two types of strategies that can help to speed up progress toward grant performance goals or overall state and regional apprenticeship expansion goals.



- **Quick-Win Strategies.** These strategies focus on short-term approaches that may result in quick progress toward meeting your grant goals related to new RAPs and new apprentices. Some are tailored to the nuances of state expansion grant policies, while others are more general and applicable to anyone looking for “quick wins.” (That said, we recognize that each strategy’s potential for impact and swift implementation depends on a state’s unique apprenticeship expansion goals and current tactics, team and partnership structures, policy and budget constraints, grant statements of work, and a variety of other factors. A quick win for some may be a longer-term strategy for others.)
- **Acceleration Strategies.** Many of the expansion strategies described in resources above—like the Five Elements and Promising Practices briefs—require the right mix of partners, resources, leaders, policy, persistence, and, of course, time. While state grantee staff may not have direct control over all these elements, you can take steps that support accelerated expansion. So, in addition to the quick-win strategies, we also include “acceleration strategies,” which may not have an immediate impact on expansion goals and performance but should accelerate progress toward and shorten timelines for longer-term expansion.

We organize the strategies according to the [5 Elements of Effective Apprenticeship Expansion](#)¹ and provide examples of some of the states using the strategies to give a better picture of the strategy in practice and help you make peer connections where you want to learn more. We also include an “Apprenticeship Expansion Acceleration: Action Planning Tool” on the WorkforceGPS State Apprenticeship Expansion Acceleration Strategies page to help you pull from these quick win and acceleration strategies to identify ideas for quickly accelerating apprenticeship growth and to plan and document next steps.

As always, we encourage state apprenticeship expansion grantees to work with your technical assistance team—Maher coach, federal project officer (FPO), and Office of Apprenticeship (OA) expert—to further explore the strategies presented here, ensure alignment with grant goals and allowable activities, make peer connections where you want to dig deeper into examples provided, and translate the ideas into a set of actionable strategies that will work for you.

¹ For those who wish to go deeper into the [Five Elements of Effective Apprenticeship Expansion](#) for longer-term strategic planning, the resource pages for each element explore these elements in more detail, and the [Apprenticeship Expansion Self-Assessment](#) can help you evaluate your current status and potential gaps.



1 ○ State Leadership and Policy

State leaders play a critical role in successful apprenticeship expansion by establishing, communicating, and managing to 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. The following leadership and policy-focused strategies may speed up progress toward grant goals.

Quick-Win Strategies	Details and Examples
<p>1a. Tap into economic and pandemic recovery funds that align with talent development and apprenticeship</p>	<p>Align RA expansion efforts with economic and pandemic recovery funds that have quick ramp-up times and short expenditure windows. This can accelerate progress and maximize available funding resources. Funds may include 2021 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding; 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act resources; national disaster grants; and infrastructure funding. Some states have leveraged these funds to pay employer incentives while focusing expansion grant funds to support employer outreach and supportive services for apprentices. These funding streams are timely, relatively widespread, and often a good “fit” for apprenticeship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arkansas, California, and Washington are intentionally including apprenticeship in their planning conversations around possible federal infrastructure funding. Arkansas, for example, is planning to utilize a portion of ARPA funding for RA expansion efforts, aligning apprenticeship expansion goals with strategies to enhance statewide broadband infrastructure and connectivity in rural areas. And Washington is working across state agencies and boards to align ARPA, CARES, and other federal and state funds to expand RA, framing RA as an important equitable economic recovery tool that leads to high wage careers. • Iowa set aside CARES Act funds to help those launching new RAPs by paying for upfront costs of related equipment or off-the-shelf tuition (ranging from \$15,000 to \$250,000 per company). They used Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE)-funded staff to get word out and work with the employers to quickly develop the standards, so the programs and apprentices could be tracked and counted toward their ASE grant goals. As a result, Iowa launched 23 new programs in the two-month period of November and December 2020.
<p>1b. Tie grant expenditures to federal workforce funding streams with a short timeframe for expenditure</p>	<p>Accelerate the use of grant funds and progress toward goals by braiding with other federal workforce programs and funding sources that have tighter timelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas encourages workforce boards to use Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding to offer a 50-50 split between WIOA and apprenticeship expansion grant funding for classroom training for those who are WIOA eligible. This approach can double the grant’s impact and accelerate outcomes. Grant funding has also been used in combination with other statewide funds to support development of non-traditional occupations such as Information Technology (IT). With combined funding, these IT grants offer a larger cost per apprentice to incentivize new employers to explore Registered Apprenticeship. • In Missouri, the workforce system earmarks WIOA governor discretionary dollars to support apprenticeships for incumbent workers. The State made a strategic decision to use the expansion grant funds to complement the WIOA discretionary funds available.
<p>1c. Create incentives that encourage quick program registration and apprentice onboarding</p>	<p>Explore ways to spend grant funding that motivate employers to quickly build or expand programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maryland set aside \$3 million from its State Apprenticeship Expansion 2020 (SAE 2020) grant for an employer incentive plan—a rolling on-the-job learning (OJL) reimbursement program for employers who hire new apprentices. The program is “first come, first served,” encouraging employers to expand quickly to take advantage of the funding. • South Dakota also budgeted a portion of expansion grant funds to set up a competitive application process for employers to obtain up to \$30,000 to offset the costs of initial startup of new RAPs. The first round yielded 17 employers who created new RAPs; the second yielded 19 more—all of whom helped promote RA and propel more growth.

Acceleration Strategies	Details and Examples
1d. Look for and recruit influential, highly visible leaders (or those who can influence them)	<p>Leverage the connections of your team, leadership, and employer champions to reach those with widespread influence and the ability to promote RAPs for accelerated interest and growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Iowa, for example, the apprenticeship team presented the Governor's office with data, information, and timely talking points that allowed the Governor to champion the State's expansion efforts with a wide range of business, education, and government stakeholders.
1e. Spotlight successes and leverage peer leaders' voices	<p>Capture and promote apprenticeship success stories and elevate the voices of peer leaders who can articulate the value of apprenticeship to employers and workers, to build understanding and buy-in from workforce partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Texas has lifted the voices of workforce boards and leaders that have prioritized and supported apprenticeship work with various funding streams, including and beyond the expansion grants. These leaders have been featured in state workshops, where they share best practices with their peers regarding addressing employer needs through townhalls and stakeholder roundtables.
1f. Partner and/or braid funding with another funding source that has infrastructure in place to move quickly	<p>Braid apprenticeship expansion grant funds with other allowable sources that already have strong structures and staff in place. This practice will accelerate program launch, expenditures, and grant outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ohio recently provided expansion grant funds to a rural local board that is managing an opioid grant as well. Thanks to the opioid grant partnerships the local board already had in place, they were able to quickly target people coming out of recovery programs and enter them into pre-apprenticeship programs. States like Iowa, Kentucky, and Kansas are collaborating with workforce development system partners to explore WIOA co-enrollment before apprentices begin their apprenticeship. This may help accelerate workforce system alignment and development of the apprentice pipeline. Kentucky's RA team is housed within the same office as WIOA Business Services and Rapid Response, the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program, Federal Bonding Program, and Wagner-Peyser, which allows them to coordinate braiding of complementary federal funding sources to support and accelerate apprenticeship work.
1g. Reevaluate and adjust budgets based on performance	<p>Shift subgrantee funding to those that have achieved faster growth, whether due to their own efforts and efficacy, or because industry skill shifts and economic conditions are positively or negatively impacting subgrantees beyond their control. Alternatively, consider a budget modification to shift funds from low-impact areas to higher-impact areas; such a modification should be discussed with and approved by your FPO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wyoming sought approval to move travel funds that went unspent due to the pandemic into OJLs so that they can offer more attractive employer incentives and entice more employers to give apprenticeship a shot. South Carolina recaptures and reallocates funds that subrecipients do not expend within timelines built into their contracts.
1h. Create tools that promote alignment with and braiding of other existing funding sources	<p>As you identify funding sources to supplement and extend the impact of apprenticeship grants, create resources that help your apprenticeship network understand when and how funds can be braided for comprehensive support of sponsors and apprentices—and when and how they cannot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michigan and Colorado have developed co-enrollment matrices that show staff which federal and state funds can be braided or leveraged to support apprentices and employers. Similarly, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island created apprenticeship desk aids for staff in American Job Centers to help them understand how grant funds can align with WIOA funds. Pennsylvania's guide offers information on strategies to connect jobseekers and employers to RAPs, funding streams that can support RA, ways RA can help the local area meet their WIOA outcome goals, and how to document RA in the State's case management system.



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. Below are some outreach and business engagement strategies that grantees are using to make quick gains or accelerate progress toward long-term expansion.

Quick-Win Strategies	Details and Examples
<p>2a. Conduct outreach to inactive sponsors and active sponsors with no apprentices</p>	<p>Target active sponsors without current apprentices and inactive sponsors. These employers may be great targets for expanding into additional occupations, re-adopting the model, or growing the number of positions they apprentice. Time might be saved in promoting apprenticeship and explaining the model to those that have already engaged with it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maryland and New Jersey had good success with efforts to contact every sponsor in the State with an inactive apprenticeship to reengage them in apprenticeship activity. Since Maryland began in 2017, they have been able to successfully reactivate 30 programs.
<p>2b. Target active sponsors for additional programs and occupations</p>	<p>Reach out to existing sponsors that already understand and buy into the apprenticeship concept. This may accelerate program development timelines and generate interest in registering additional occupations and/or building pre-apprenticeship pathways to both meet demand and expand opportunity and diversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was a key strategy in New Hampshire, where their work to create pre-apprenticeship pathways from high school Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs began with healthcare occupations because many healthcare centers were already using RAPs to train entry level medical staff.
<p>2c. Increase cohort sizes by targeting large employers and employer consortia</p>	<p>Establish relationships with large employers and employer consortia that may hire sizable cohorts for apprenticeable occupations and/or have high numbers of open positions. These employers may provide an opportunity for quick gains that get states closer to their goals for new registered apprentices in nontraditional fields.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ohio and Indiana each work with Trilogy Health Services, which has a presence in both states, to achieve rapid growth through fast-track RAPs. As a trusted partner to Trilogy, the states were able to leverage apprenticeship to fill nurse aide, culinary, hospitality, and life enrichment roles. • Local workforce board West Michigan Works! partnered with Mercy Health and Spectrum Health to address a shortage of medical assistants with a medical assistant RAP that would meet their needs. The first medical assistant RAP in the country, this program is on its sixth cohort. While the program has existed for several years, the partnership has resulted in apprenticeship completion by 118 medical assistants as of publication. • New York released a request for applications with a goal to attract new apprentices to non-construction trades via group programs, which include at least two employers engaging with a single program sponsor to maximize efficiencies for the enrollment and training of apprentices.

Acceleration Strategies	Details and Examples
<p>2d. Leverage labor market information expertise to understand shifting skill needs</p>	<p>Look at current trends in real-time labor market data to understand open job postings, shifts in critical occupations and skill sets as a result of economic changes, and employers currently hiring apprenticeable occupations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iowa uses LMI whenever possible to refine RA strategies and to inform program development and apprentice pipeline growth. In Iowa, LMI data are critical to identifying industry and occupational shifts and allow the RA team to make more strategic and informed decisions related to planning and outreach efforts. Data about shifting needs also helps the team identify occupations impacted—positively or negatively—by the pandemic and to better serve impacted industries and communities across the state.
<p>2e. Pursue employers who already use work-based learning models</p>	<p>Work with local workforce boards, training and education providers, and other partners to identify companies already using work-based learning (WBL) models—like on-the-job training (OJT) or internships—that may be interested in a transition to RAPs. For those already using WBL, the apprenticeship “sell” might be easier.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorado conducted outreach to companies that had OJT or work experience contracts with their local workforce board and has been able to convert some to RAPs.
<p>2f. Utilize employer champions to address myths and business misperceptions</p>	<p>Leverage employer champions—often the most effective advocates for apprenticeship—and establish peer connections with employers considering the model. This is likely to accelerate interest and progress faster than promoting RAPs on your own.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maryland and Wisconsin have set up formal business champion programs to attract, highlight, and reward these peer leaders. • Rhode Island has an effective labor presence on the state workforce board. Unions have been a major voice in advocating for apprenticeship and have worked with the state apprenticeship team to reassure employers that the model works for both unionized and non-unionized workforces and occupations. • Grantees routinely put employer voices at the center of employer outreach events, and many, including Colorado, New Hampshire, and South Carolina, have developed online success stories and videos of employers telling their story of “why apprenticeship.”
<p>2g. Reconsider how you frame Registered Apprenticeship as a talent pipeline strategy</p>	<p>Consider new terminology and phrases to generate interest. Some states have recognized that different language and approaches improve communication with, understanding of, and interest in RAPs from both sponsors and apprentices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorado rebranded related technical instruction (RTI) and OJL as “Apprenticeship Scholarships” as opposed to employer incentives. This increased interest in the career pathway and model. The State also had every workforce center designate one point of contact to manage those “scholarships” and interactions with employers. • Illinois started with “Talent Pipeline Management Grants” funded with Rapid Response and Incumbent Worker funding. They found that after they began to approach conversations around RAPs as part of an overall work-based continuum and communicate the funding available to help employers in the context of the business return on investment, employers showed greater trust in the approach and started to incorporate RAPs into their development models more frequently.
<p>2h. Expand your employer reach through traditional, online, and social media marketing</p>	<p>Align outreach methods with the various ways employers look for talent and interact with information about your programs and services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Carolina hired a new Communications Director who has helped them become more active on social media (Instagram and LinkedIn). As a result, they are seeing a rise in engagement and numbers. In just the first three months of the campaign, staff began conversations with more than 100 potential sponsors. • Iowa worked with a marketing company to develop and roll out digital marketing strategies that, in the first six months, drove 16,300 businesses and job seekers to its website, garnered several hundred video views, and spurred 15 businesses to contact Iowa Workforce Development to set up new apprenticeship programs. • Utah launched an apprenticeship outreach campaign in August 2021 (rebranding, billboards, commercials, a new website with “A Day in the Life” videos exploring apprenticeships in a range of occupations). Grant staff saw an immediate jump in calls from employers. Within 2 months, 11 employers reached out to start the process of setting up an apprenticeship program—5 in nontraditional occupations. • Maine, Minnesota, Virginia, and many other states hold monthly or quarterly employer open houses, information sessions, “brown bags,” or webinars. • Kentucky and North Dakota “go where the employers are” to promote RA as a talent development solution, with Kentucky setting up a booth at a Society for Human Resource Management conference and North Dakota making presentations at information technology (IT) and healthcare industry conferences around the State.



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 OA staff and state staff, partnering with intermediaries, and using technology to provide access to information. Below are some strategies for developing and launching programs that grantees are using to see quick gains or accelerate progress toward long-term expansion.

Quick-Win Strategies	Details and Examples
<p>3a. Make sure to capture all “reportable individuals”</p>	<p>Be sure that you are reporting all apprentices who are working in RAPs developed with grant funds, not just the initial cohort.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ohio worked with OA to examine Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Management Data System (RAPIDS) data to identify the number of apprentices in programs that had been developed with grant funds and discovered that companies hired many more apprentices beyond those hired in the initial cohort, all of whom counted as reportable individuals under the ASE grant.
<p>3b. Leverage National Industry Intermediaries funded by USDOL</p>	<p>Leverage National Industry Intermediaries that have received grants from the Office of Apprenticeship to support apprenticeship expansion in a given sector. National Industry Intermediaries usually bring expertise and trust within an industry, approved national guideline standards, a network of employer champions, and (often) incentive funds. Partnering with them can speed up program development time and accelerate progress toward grant goals (with the apprentices counting as “participants” or “reportable individuals,” depending on whether the state expansion grant also funds a portion of the supportive service, OJL, or RTI costs).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Louisiana Workforce Commission, for example, partnered with Nexus Louisiana (a subsidiary of a Louisiana IT business incubator and affiliate of IT National Industry Intermediary Apprenti) to launch the state’s first cybersecurity RAP. Nexus Louisiana served as the sponsor, recruited 5 employers, and kicked off with a cohort of 10 apprentices (with State Apprenticeship Expansion [SAE] grant funds supporting training costs). This industry-driven partnership now includes a second RAP—IT support professional. • Both Nevada and Missouri are partnering with CompTIA Apprenticeships for Tech to have a state agency register as a group sponsor, offering an easy solution for employers throughout their states to employ apprentices as part of their statewide program. The Nevada System of Higher Education and the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development are each serving as a statewide Apprenticeships for Tech intermediary program sponsor. • Mississippi, Tennessee, Wyoming, and several other grantees partnered with the Healthcare Career Advancement Program (H-CAP) to offer healthcare accelerators designed to show potential sponsors the benefits of RAPs in healthcare. H-CAP also assisted ApprenticeshipTN with planning and participating in their National Apprenticeship Week (NAW) 2021 conference and will help to create a Patient Care Tech RAP.

Acceleration Strategies	Details and Examples
<p>3c. Increase cohort sizes by working with other industry intermediaries</p>	<p>Target industry intermediaries beyond the OA-funded National Industry Intermediaries discussed above. Industry intermediaries can help you connect to multiple employers at once and take a cohort approach to program development in response to industry needs. Intermediaries might include state, regional, or national industry associations; sector or career pathways workgroups; regional employer consortiums; chambers of commerce; business incubators; and more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Hampshire aims for a consortium approach where possible—to enhance grant impact, create sufficient demand for RTI, and keep training costs down for individual (often small) companies. SAE 2020 grant staff partnered with several state associations, including the New Hampshire Automobile Dealers Association and the New Hampshire Association of Insurance Agents, to launch apprenticeships in new sectors and occupations and create new RTI through the community college system—capacity that will extend beyond the life the grant. The New Hampshire Association of Insurance Agents is acting as sponsor for a new claims associate RAP, promoting the program to its members statewide, and screening and matching potential hires. • California is developing regional consortia for high-demand industries as a growth strategy, including a cybersecurity/IT consortium of employers and stakeholders in both the Inland Empire and Los Angeles regions with the goal of expanding throughout the State. Likewise, Massachusetts is using an “industry hub” model to scale employer outreach at a regional level as well as set up “communities of practice” for sponsors in the same industry (e.g., childcare, technology) so they have space to share industry-specific apprenticeship challenges and solutions. • Arkansas partnered with the Arkansas Hospital Association, Arkansas Health Care Association, H-CAP, and other stakeholders to conduct a “Health Care Growing Talent Through Apprenticeship – Employer Forum” during NAW 2021. With the support of these trusted intermediaries, this event is expected to generate additional employer interest that can accelerate growth in the healthcare industry.
<p>3d. Speed up standards development and approval times</p>	<p>Adopt a variety of strategies to speed up approval times and/or simplify the registration process. An Apprenticeship Program Registration Process Assessment tool has been created to help apprenticeship teams map and assess their current process for registering programs and gather feedback to determine and prioritize areas where the process can be streamlined while ensuring development of quality program standards. It also includes process mapping and strategy templates, all of which can be found on the WorkforceGPS State Apprenticeship Expansion Acceleration Strategies page.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iowa brought together local business specialists and state OA staff to map out a coordinated process for program development and handoff and craft a standardized referral form. It greatly improved the proportion of leads that were actionable: OA went from registering about 20 percent of referrals from business marketing specialists to more than 90 percent. It also reduced the program development and approval time (sometimes to as low as 24 hours). • Idaho created sponsor and apprentice “journey maps” to clarify and streamline processes for efficient program development and registration, clarify roles and points of contact, and simplify complex processes. • Michigan offers one-day accelerated program development workshops to talk potential sponsors through the standards development process. They recently embedded the strategy into a “Race to Talent with Registered Apprenticeship” campaign launched during NAW 2021. The “Race” begins with “Rapid Start,” a starting line event where the employer supplies information to enable a determination of next steps including draft standards creation or connection to an intermediary; followed by a virtual or in-person site visit to determine if RA is a fit for the employer/sponsor. A “Completion” event (one-day accelerated program development workshops) will help employers launch quickly, and then “Race Day,” RA Celebration Events scheduled every other month, will encourage completion.
<p>3e. Lay the groundwork to enhance your partnerships</p>	<p>Take steps to speed up the partnership-development process to achieve expansion success through increased knowledge and capacity across their systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nevada mapped the available resources in their State so they could design a comprehensive partner outreach strategy. • Virginia used surveys to identify how workforce partners and the State’s Department of Human Resource Management perceive, use, and talk about apprenticeship to better understand challenges, opportunities, knowledge gaps, and any misperceptions. • Illinois recently completed mapping of all agencies connected to apprenticeship so that they could collectively align agendas and resources.



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 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 underrepresented populations, and engaging with business representatives in outreach and candidate recruiting. Below are some strategies for pipeline development and diversification that grantees are using to achieve quick wins or accelerate progress toward long-term expansion.

Quick-Win Strategies	Details and Examples
<p>4a. Target outreach to employers who have expressed a desire to expand diversity and/or target a particular population</p>	<p>Search for employers with a need for training and work-based learning solutions, and a commitment to diversifying their workforce or heart for a specific target population, like veterans or people with disabilities. For employers that want to expand diversity within their workforce, RA can be a compelling solution because it can widen the pool of potential employees, which often means a more diverse candidate pool. As a result, it can be easier to make the apprenticeship “sell” with these employers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As New Hampshire works to create more high school youth pre-apprenticeships, grant staff are finding that many employers are eager to provide opportunities for young people and are leveraging that interest to create pipelines from high school to RAPs. • Recognizing an existing strength of diversity in entry-level positions, grantees are working with the employers that want to improve both diversity and retention to create apprenticeship pathways for incumbent workers that take them from entry-level to mid-level occupations. This improves employee/apprentice retention, provides family-sustaining opportunities for diverse talent beyond entry-level jobs, and encourages diversity in the apprentice pipeline. Ohio, for example, has <u>employed this strategy in the healthcare sector to create pathways</u> from State Tested Nursing Assistant to Licensed Practical Nurse to Registered Nurse (RN); and is working on additional healthcare apprenticeship pathways including Emergency Medical Services to Paramedic to RN. Massachusetts has worked with industry associations in Financial Services and Life Sciences to develop and launch apprenticeship programs specifically designed to enhance diversity within promising, upwardly mobile career pathways in commercial lending, biomanufacturing, and clinical trial testing. • Apprenticeship Minnesota leveraged the expertise of their state demographer to deliver information about the changing demographics of the state to prospective sponsors during Apprenticeship 101 meetings. This data illustrated a compelling reason for broadening and diversifying apprentice candidate pools and increased employer interest. Minnesota also connected interested sponsors with community-based organizations—through networking events—that could enhance their diverse pre-apprenticeship and RA recruitment efforts. • Under its ASE grant, Massachusetts is identifying and incentivizing inclusive recruitment, hiring, and retention strategies within the construction and building trades, where employers often want help to meet hiring requirements in federal contracts.
<p>4b. Review public-facing materials and make them more inclusive and accessible</p>	<p>Commit to making outreach materials—including language, images, and delivery mechanisms—accessible, inviting, and reflective of the diversity of the area’s demographics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minnesota, for example, <u>translated all outreach materials</u> geared toward prospective apprentices into Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Karen, and Chinese. Additionally, all Apprenticeship Minnesota outreach materials include images that reflect Minnesota’s diversity. • Washington, D.C. launched a new <u>apprenticeship website</u> that can be read in Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish, or Vietnamese.
<p>4c. Look for ways to partner with those already working with diverse populations of apprentices</p>	<p>Partner with organizations already creating RAPs for diverse populations and use grant funds to enhance services and/or expand capacity to accelerate progress toward diversity goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas has partnered workforce development boards, community and technical colleges, and intermediaries to further expand capacity to develop RAPs. One intermediary, in particular, has focused its efforts on recruiting and serving youth who are aging out of foster care. <u>Adaptive Construction Solutions</u>, a Houston-based, veteran-owned and operated company, has developed RAPs in 18 occupations, primarily in the skilled trades. This program <u>served more than 500 apprentices</u> in the last three years, including female veterans, veterans with disabilities, and veterans who have been incarcerated.

Acceleration Strategies	Details and Examples
<p>4d. Identify and build on programs that serve specific target or diverse populations</p>	<p>Collaborate with organizations that help specific diverse and underrepresented populations—including individuals with disabilities, veterans, returning citizens, and others—to prepare for and obtain employment. This approach builds on the experience, expertise, and commitment of these organizations; creates inclusive pathways to RAPs; improves apprentice success; and helps employers meet their goals to expand and diversify the apprentice pipeline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ohio and Maine are working with organizations that offer job readiness programs that prepare women and minorities to work in the construction sector and help contractors meet federal transportation contract diversity requirements. Grantees are working to transition these programs into pre-apprenticeships that feed into apprenticeship positions within the companies. • Some states are partnering with postsecondary education providers who specifically serve underrepresented populations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Montana worked closely with tribal colleges to expand healthcare RAPs. ▪ Arkansas is forging partnerships with its four designated historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), community colleges that serve a high proportion of underrepresented populations, industry intermediaries, and a variety of individual companies interested in hiring a diverse apprentice workforce. These relationships have accelerated pipeline diversity for existing RAPs and resulted in a newly established IT Generalist program—with a high percentage of apprentices from underrepresented populations—supported by the Arkansas Center for Data Sciences, HBCU Southeast Arkansas College, and employer People Shores. • South Carolina signed a memorandum of understanding with the state Commission for Minority Affairs to expand RAPs to minority-owned businesses. They also hired their first bilingual Registered Apprenticeship Specialist, who will focus on outreach to the Spanish-speaking population.
<p>4e. Create policies to define, support, and recognize quality pre-apprenticeship programs and build pathways to Registered Apprenticeship</p>	<p>Create or leverage existing policies and resources that encourage quality pre-apprenticeship programs and build strong pathways to RAPs. Seek out those programs that are likely to increase both apprentice counts and diversity of the apprenticeship pipeline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many states have developed policies that define quality pre-apprenticeship and a certification process, including Massachusetts, Ohio, and Wisconsin. In Ohio, pre-apprenticeship pathways that have a RA Sponsor agreement for the work experience elements create a solid foundation and an allowable direct-entry method for their sponsors—a highly attractive approach for all partners involved. In Massachusetts, pre-apprenticeships must directly articulate to an RA program and include an agreement to be registered, so all have a direct pathway to apprenticeship and often recognized RTI. • South Carolina’s Registered Apprenticeship Specialists work closely with school districts and local employers to establish high school pre-apprenticeships that provide career exposure and some necessary industry certifications, then lead to RAPs after graduation.
<p>4f. Map out roles and referral and/or co-enrollment processes with critical workforce partners who work with diverse populations</p>	<p>Identify partnerships that will increase access to resources aimed at attracting diverse candidates and supporting and retaining apprentices. Map out clear roles, outreach and referral processes, and opportunities for co-enrollment. This can improve grant/program alignment, increase efficiency, reduce confusion and frustration, and enhance outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iowa partnered with the Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC), offering expansion grant funds to cover costs of curriculum development, and grew RAP opportunities from one program to 27 RAPs serving more than 300 apprentices (one-third of whom are from minority populations). The grantee and IDOC also mapped out the process ensure a smooth handoff for returning citizens, with local job centers staff helping them get jobs or continue their RA with new employer sponsors after release. • Colorado is collaborating with its Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to identify and address systemic barriers to accessing RAPs for individuals with disabilities. They are supporting in-school youth with disabilities under the ASE grant so they can participate in the local school district’s Future Educator Registered Apprenticeship. And, pending approval of bicycle mechanic as an apprenticeable occupation, Project reCycle will be the first RAP in the State to be specifically generated through a collaboration between DVR and the grantee’s Apprenticeship Hub, which will accelerate growth of apprenticeship opportunities for this prioritized population. Colorado’s “hub” model is a regional approach to aligning apprenticeship activity across partners through industry-based apprenticeship consultant roles.
<p>4g. Incorporate strategies for supporting a diverse workforce in your support to sponsors</p>	<p>As you support sponsors and mentors, think about how to support their efforts to create a more diverse and inclusive workplace. Consider building important concepts such as diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and cultural competency into your mentor training. This can improve workplace culture and apprentice completion and retention rates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maine is developing diversity, equity, and inclusion training for sponsors that will award badges through the community college system. Because much of Maine’s diversity comes from immigrant and refugee populations, the training includes cultural competency skills to help create workspaces that are welcoming and supportive for all.



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 (CTE), and pursuing policy changes that allow apprenticeships to connect seamlessly with postsecondary educational pathways. Below are some strategies in this area that grantees are using to make some quick gains or accelerate progress toward long-term expansion.

Quick-Win Strategies	Details and Examples
<p>5a. Identify and start with the easiest paths to enhancing alignment between existing CTE programs and Registered Apprenticeship</p>	<p>Align pre-apprenticeships and RAPs with CTE programs, which tend to serve diverse student bodies and present opportunities for conversion to and preparation for Registered Apprenticeship. (For detail and strategies that achieve long-term alignment of CTE and Registered Apprenticeship, see the “Expanding Registered Apprenticeship through Alignment with Secondary Career and Technical Education” resource page on WorkforceGPS.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oregon grant staff compared their quality pre-apprenticeship standards with existing CTE programs, and identified those that could be immediately certified, as a way to start the process of aligning quality pre-apprenticeship and CTE programs, which serve a diverse student body. • As part of its SAE 2020 grant work to grow pre-apprenticeship pathways from high schools to RAPs, New Hampshire began with a review of high school CTE offerings, looking for existing CTE classes related to in-demand occupations, then further prioritizing outreach to employers already using RA. This strategic mapping can help busy teams identify and prioritize work in areas with higher success potential.
Acceleration Strategies	Details and Examples
<p>5b. Create tools to simplify apprenticeship expansion for education partners</p>	<p>Create tools that can demystify and provide a roadmap to RA alignment can help speed up understanding and accelerate the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iowa’s grant team and education partners developed a high school playbook to help high schools set up youth apprenticeship more quickly. • Oregon brought together apprenticeship and CTE partners to look at how to better align RAPs with CTE offerings. The group started by developing a crosswalk of the State’s pre-apprenticeship approval requirements and the State’s CTE program of study approval process. This revealed that differing terminologies impeded communication and led to a refined pre-apprenticeship approval process, including a pre-apprenticeship application toolkit and framework to promote a shared understanding of terms and expectations.
<p>5c. Look for education partners with strong relationships in the community, trust from school districts, and established work-based learning models</p>	<p>Identify CTE, high school, and community college instructors that have strong connections with businesses industry or field of instruction. These trusted influencers can open doors and accelerate outreach and buy in from the business community. In addition, businesses that already have relationships with CTE programs and work-based learning models may be prime targets for conversion to or pipelines for Registered Apprenticeship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ohio has prioritized creating RA pathways across the state, with several education partners stepping up to play the role of sponsor. This approach allows education partners to tap into their many established employer relationships to create new programs and provide RA opportunities in their communities. • In New Hampshire, a very dynamic and respected faculty member at Manchester Community College provided multiple business contacts to assist with the development of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) apprenticeships. He was a key player in bringing those businesses to the table to talk with CTE centers and high school Work-Based Learning Coordinators to develop the area’s first HVAC pre-apprenticeship. He also was critical to making the RTI work; he revised his schedule to accommodate apprentice work schedules and to offer a Saturday HVAC 101 course as part of the high school pre-apprenticeship.

<p>5d. Leverage the capacity and expertise of community and technical college partners to serve as a connection point with both industry and apprentices</p>	<p>Seek educational institutions that have the capacity and willingness to address alignment of postsecondary education efforts with apprenticeship models, up to and including playing an intermediary sponsor role for businesses interested in apprenticeship models. Often, businesses are hesitant to commit to sponsor responsibilities and processes. Added capacity and expertise from education institutions can relieve employer barriers to registering and managing programs. In addition, community and technical colleges can play a unique role in reaching potential apprentices through their student body and their outreach and recruitment activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States like North Carolina, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Utah are utilizing the capacity of higher education institutions to serve as intermediary sponsors, accelerating the process of registration and simplifying paperwork and requirements for sponsors, while playing a role in apprentice pipeline development. • While establishing these relationships and intermediary roles can take some time, this step can be just what is needed to overcome administrative concerns of employers, particularly smaller ones inexperienced with RA. A community college in New Hampshire is currently exploring becoming a sponsor, to move the apprenticeship program registration process along with employers in the IT industry that have critical, apprenticeable job opportunities but also concerns about administrative responsibilities. • New York forged a close partnership with the State University of New York (SUNY) system, which has come to play a critical role in supporting the growth and expansion of RAPs outside of the building and construction trades. SUNY partners conduct outreach to businesses; participate in industry roundtable events; and provide RA funding for tuition costs and fees, pre-apprenticeship, assessment for hybrid and competency programs, and partial wage reimbursement for advanced manufacturing programs.
<p>5e. Align with the Expanding Community College Apprenticeships (ECCA) initiative and other USDOL-funded investments in community and technical colleges</p>	<p>Explore various funding streams available through college systems to support apprenticeship. The American Association of Community Colleges has received funding from USDOL to increase the number of apprentice programs and services offered through the community colleges and their partners. Additional investments have been made directly to community and technical colleges to expand RAP and WBL programming. Aligning with and braiding these funding streams, as well as leveraging college partners and their connections with industry and apprentices, can lead to expansion acceleration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Idaho Department of Labor (IDOL) expansion grant-funded ApprenticeshipIdaho team has partnered with five colleges that are part of a consortium that was awarded federal Closing the Skills Gap (CSG) grant funds. To increase the state’s capacity for rapid expansion, the IDOL team has delivered training to the consortium on the benefits and mechanics of apprenticeship and communicating with interested employers, as well as consulted with the colleges to identify and coordinate outreach and development strategies. IDOL co-hosts with the Idaho Division of Career Technical Education a monthly cohort meeting titled “Best Practices and Innovations for College Sponsors,” to elevate practices that can be replicated to support rapid expansion and alignment of partner goals. Finally, the CSG grant lead—from the Idaho Division of Career Technical Education—holds a seat on the Apprenticeship Idaho Coalition, which was established to align funding and strategies across Idaho’s multiple grantees.