

Civic Sector Apprenticeship Expansion Project

[The Council of State Governments \(CSG\)](#) and the [Urban Institute](#) have received funding from [Ascendium Education Group](#) to expand civic sector apprenticeship programs focused on low-income rural learners in **Idaho** and **Maine**. CSG and Urban will provide resources, guidance, technical assistance and incentive funding to support state and local agencies in developing apprenticeships to meet their workforce needs, and in recruiting, enrolling and supporting low-income rural apprentices.

Overview of Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships combine paid on-the-job training with classroom instruction to prepare workers for highly-skilled careers in a variety of occupations, from health care to information technology to public safety. Federal, state and local government agencies can serve as apprenticeship sponsors (i.e. they administer and operate these programs). Administering a program includes developing on-the-job learning experiences, partnering with educational institutions to develop related instruction and recruiting and enrolling apprentices.

Civic sector apprenticeships are a key strategy for state and local government agencies to meet their workforce needs. Apprenticeships are a particularly effective strategy for states to attract and retain talent because they [lead to increased retention of employees, ensure workers have the right skills for their jobs and reduce liability costs through appropriate training of workers](#).

Apprenticeships can also be a useful tool for government agencies to hire historically underserved populations. This includes low-income individuals, since apprentices pay [little or nothing](#) for training and [earn wages throughout their apprenticeship](#). This project focuses on creating apprenticeship opportunities for low-income rural learners because they normally have limited access to [higher education](#) and fewer avenues to [economic mobility](#). In addition, state and local governments report high workforce needs in rural areas.

Project Goals and Activities/ Incentive Funding:

Despite the advantages of apprenticeship programs, state and local government agencies often lack the experience, time and resources to develop and operate them. This project is focused on helping state and local agencies expand their capacity to develop apprenticeships for low-income rural learners, including through hands-on assistance and incentive funding of \$1,000 per apprentice to offset training and administrative costs. The maximum amount of funding per sponsor/employer is \$5,000.

The project will span three years, from September 2022 to August 2025. Over the project period, CSG and Urban will work with apprenticeship stakeholders in Idaho and Maine to:

- **Assemble state teams** focused on developing new civic sector apprenticeships. Teams will consist of sponsor agencies and organizations providing related instruction and support to apprentices.
- **Train and guide state team members** in overcoming key challenges in developing and operating apprenticeships, including aligning registered apprenticeship and civil service requirements.
- **Identify localities and positions for apprenticeships**, including locations with high concentrations of low-income rural learners and positions that meet the definition of a [high-quality job](#).
- **Develop and register 3-4 new civic sector apprenticeship programs** in each state.

- **Enroll and support 20-25 low-income rural apprentices** in newly created programs in each state. Please contact [Mary Wurtz](#) for more information.

About Our Partners

Founded in 1933, The Council of State Governments (CSG) is the nation's largest nonpartisan organization serving state elected and appointed officials in all three branches. The mission of CSG is to champion excellence in state government and the organization executes that mission through four major platforms: the CSG National Office, CSG Regional Offices, the CSG Justice Center and affiliated organizations.

The Urban Institute is a nonprofit research organization that provides data and evidence to help advance upward mobility and equity. Urban is a trusted source for changemakers who seek to strengthen decision-making, create inclusive economic growth and improve the well-being of families and communities. For more than 50 years, Urban has delivered facts that inspire solutions.

Ascendium Education Group is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to helping people reach the education and career goals that matter to them. Ascendium invests in initiatives designed to increase the number of students from low-income backgrounds who complete postsecondary degrees, certificates and workforce training programs, with an emphasis on first-generation students, incarcerated adults, rural community members, students of color and veterans. Ascendium's work identifies, validates and expands best practices to promote large-scale change at the institutional, system and state levels, with the intention of elevating opportunity for all.