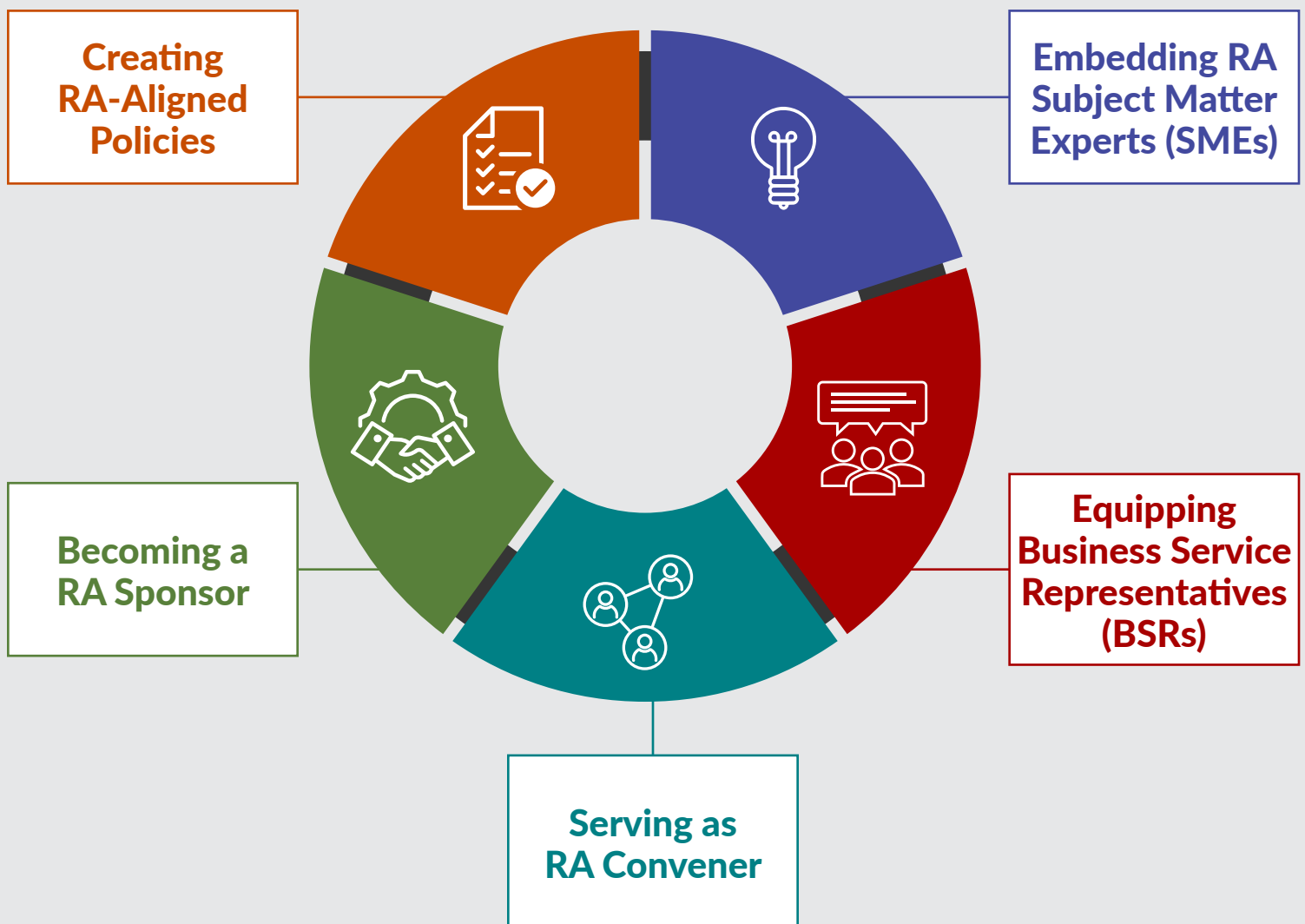


Key Components of Workforce System Alignment with Registered Apprenticeship (RA)



INTRODUCTION

Aligning the workforce system and its partner programs, such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, offers numerous benefits. RA programs enable job seekers to earn while they learn in high-demand occupations, paving the way for meaningful career pathways. This alignment equips businesses with the skilled talent necessary for growth and competitiveness and provides access to an array of funding supports and resources. RA programs not only yield impressive outcomes for job seekers, but also positively influence the performance measures of WIOA.

This tool is designed for key stakeholders – including RA sponsors, businesses, local workforce development boards, community colleges, and other workforce partners – to unlock the benefits of aligning the workforce system and RA programs. It provides a comprehensive framework outlining five essential elements for achieving this alignment, along with actionable steps for effective implementation. These elements can be approached non-linearly, allowing you to focus on those most relevant to your initiative(s).

Explore this tool and take proactive steps to align workforce and RA for greater impact and success.



CREATING RA-ALIGNED POLICIES

Description: The workforce system, including but not limited to state and local workforce development boards (WDBs) and partner program service providers, have a policy and procedure framework that aligns and supports the development and implementation of RA programs.

INDICATORS | What it looks like

- Criteria and policies for board membership ensure the appropriate representation for RA.
- Policies and procedures prioritize the use of RA as a service strategy for WIOA Title I participants and may provide funding to support RA programs.
- Partnering program service provider(s) have policies and procedures on clear WIOA/RA co-enrollment processes and training targeted towards frontline case managers.
- Funding-related policies ensure the use of available funds (Apprenticeship grant funds, WIOA Title I funds, Governor's set-aside funds, Wagner-Peyser (WP) funds, etc.) supports the expansion of RA.
- ETPL policy and procedures are established for automatic inclusion of RA programs on ETPL, and a process has been created to outreach to RA programs throughout the state for potential inclusion.
- Business services policies and processes have been developed to include implementation of RA programs, such as using On-the-Job Training (OJT)/Incumbent Worker Training, maintaining an inventory of Related Instruction (RI) curriculum so businesses do not need to create from scratch.

OUTCOMES | What it can produce

- RA program representatives have a voice at state and local WDB meetings.
- Active RA programs are included on the state's ETPL allowing for increased customer choice for training options.
- Increased diversity of apprentices.
- Increased [WIOA performance measures](#) with co-enrollment.

ACTIONABLE ITEMS | Next steps to consider

- Seek out RA representatives for WDB membership from labor and non-labor sources.
- Review and revise policies to ensure inclusiveness of RA/WIOA alignment and activities internally.
- Establish state/local RA steering committees or connect to committees already established through the State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) and/or the Office of Apprenticeship (OA). Committees can help to ensure the necessary policy and procedure framework is developed and executed.
- Meet with local RA Apprenticeship Training Representative (ATR) and OA SAA state director to understand the RA program approval process and establish a streamlined process to include RA programs on state/local ETPLs.
- Advocate for dedicated funding allocations for RA activities, including dedicated staff in the American Job Centers (AJC) and institutionalize this practice in policy.
- Create Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with non-traditional partners for targeted population engagement.



EMBEDDING RA SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS (SMEs)

Description: State and local WDBs embed RA expertise in the AJC frontline staff to actively help BSRs engage local employers in adopting RA and help case managers create a pipeline of job seekers as RA candidates for local sponsors.

INDICATORS | What it looks like

- Hire, designate, and train staff as RA navigators/SMEs and embed within AJCs or serve entire regions.
- Case managers understand RA benefits and purposefully screen and refer job seekers to RA programs.
- Co-enrollment procedures are fully understood and used consistently by case managers across all mandatory partners.
- Apprentices are supported throughout the RA program.
- [WIOA mandatory partners](#) work within AJCs to engage co-enrollment of job seekers into RA Programs.
- Outreach to job seekers targets underserved populations and communicates benefits of apprenticeships.
- Case managers receive regular RA training to effectively engage job seekers and communicate benefits.
- Wagner-Peyser staff shares RA information with job seekers and employers with a warm handoff to AJC/BSR staff as warranted.

OUTCOMES | What it can produce

- Increase in RA sponsors and employers in joining group sponsored programs.
- Increased use of WIOA Title I funds via Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to help offset RA program RI costs.
- Increased use of WIOA Title I funds to provide supportive services.
- Increased referrals of apprentices to partner programs for support.
- Increase in WIOA and RA co-enrollment numbers.
- Improved WIOA and other core partner program performance outcomes, including entered employment, retention, skills gains, median earnings, and credential attainment.
- Increase in completion rates for registered apprentices who are co-enrolled in WIOA and/or other partner programs.

ACTIONABLE ITEMS | Next steps to consider

- Ask regional [ATR](#) to provide ongoing RA training to AJC staff, particularly those who are customer-facing or to hold regular meetings with AJC staff on RA.
- Explore federal and state funding opportunities to support staffing AJCs with RA expertise.
- Provide staff with a [listing of all RA programs](#) in the region.
- Ensure that state and/or local case management systems capture WIOA Title I co-enrollment with RA so that the data reported in Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) Element 931 is an accurate reflection of the level of co-enrollment.
- Embed a RA SME with offsite mandatory partners to focus on work with job seekers and employers.



EQUIPPING BUSINESS SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES (BSRs)

Description: BSRs have the knowledge and expertise to assist businesses with adopting RA programs and accessing funding supports through the workforce system.

INDICATORS | What it looks like

- BSRs:
 - Regularly work with local apprenticeship system counterparts/ATRs to promote and develop RA programs.
 - Guide employers through the RA process, from developing standards for program registration to assisting with hiring an apprentice.
 - Create strategic outreach plans based on Labor Market Information (LMI) and with RA system counterparts to raise local businesses' awareness about the benefits of RA. Outreach should include education on potential funding sources such as WIOA to fund OJT, Related Instruction and supportive services.
 - Interact with intermediaries to assist businesses with RA program development.
 - Provide collateral and education to partners for their business engagement efforts.
 - Communicate regularly with case managers about apprenticeship openings and help businesses understand how the partners in the AJCs can support candidate recruitment.
 - Assist business and industry on how to leverage WIOA and/or other funding resources.
- State/local rapid response and layoff aversion efforts includes RA.

OUTCOMES | What it can produce

- Heightened awareness of, and engagement in, RA programs in the business community.
- Partner organization business outreach efforts include RA information, which increases engagement.
- ATRs' involvement with BSRs' work results in faster RA program sponsorship approval.
- Increased knowledge for case managers about open apprenticeship opportunities.
- Providing RA as a tool for rapid response activities decreases unemployment time.

ACTIONABLE ITEMS | Next steps to consider

- Train BSRs on RA, including using intermediaries and working with local ATRs.
- Host roundtables and [apprenticeship accelerators](#) for businesses to learn about RA collectively.
- Create/share [Apprenticeship.gov](#) materials with businesses on the benefits of RA.
- Host apprenticeship job fairs to fill open positions.
- Present RA information at employer events (e.g., chambers of commerce, economic development).
- Use WIOA Title I funds, per the WIOA OJT requirements, to support the on-the-job learning portion of an RA program.
- Set up regular communication with ATRs and partner organizations regarding RA programs.
- State should encourage and provide guidance on using rapid response/layoff aversion funds for RA.



SERVING AS A RA CONVENER

Description: A RA Convenor engages stakeholders (business, education, workforce, economic development, etc.) to expand RA effectively, build future-ready talent pipelines, address workforce shortages, and increase employment and wages for workers.

INDICATORS | What it looks like

- Serve as a RA Convenor, engaging with a variety of stakeholders to develop and implement RA programs that have ready access to the funding and resources available through the workforce system.
- Sector strategy initiatives include RA as a strategy for building the talent pipeline.
- Create and maintain a network hub of RA programs to accelerate employer participation and provide technical assistance (TA).
- Collaborate on high-demand, industry-specific RA programs including braiding funding and leveraging resources from partner programs.
- Collaborative RA efforts include mandatory partners as part of convening activities.
- Create concise, easy to understand communication and outreach for RA programs which is also easily accessible.

OUTCOMES | What it can produce

- Increase local business awareness of and use of RA programs.
- Increase the use of sector-based and group-sponsored RA strategies.
- Have significant impact across key areas such as policy development, job seeker referrals to RA programs, funding supports and increased WIOA performance outcomes.
- Creation of new and repeat engagement of businesses and public sector entities by participating in RA.

ACTIONABLE ITEMS | Next steps to consider

- Create RA programs that are in high-demand industries per the local LMI.
- Engage with ATRs to establish Apprenticeship Accelerator events that bring together apprenticeship stakeholders (employers, industry, labor, equity, and other workforce partners) and resources to accelerate the further use and adoption of Registered Apprenticeship.
- Collaborate with ATRs to establish processes to develop RA standards for businesses at the local level.
- Explore federal and state grant opportunities, philanthropic funding, potential direct state funding to support industry-specific RA initiatives.



BECOMING A RA SPONSOR

Description: When a local WDB becomes a group RA sponsor, individual employers can participate in their program. This provides increased opportunity for most-in-need job seekers to access careers in high-demand industries and for businesses to access funding supports for apprentices.

INDICATORS | What it looks like

- Local WDB is an approved group RA program sponsor for in-demand occupation(s).
- Occupations are regularly added to RA programs based upon LMI and BSR feedback.
- As the RA sponsor, the local WDB engages with the educational system to provide RI as warranted for occupations.
- RA sponsorship is sustainable through braided funding (e.g., WIOA, grants, partner resources).
- Local WDB creates clear pathways to build a pipeline of WIOA-eligible, underserved populations for participating employers.
- Local WDB provides administrative support, mentor training, and TA to employers joining the RA program.
- Local WDB ensures the ability to support participating employers/apprentices longer term with WIOA and non- WIOA funding.

OUTCOMES | What it can produce

- Local WDB is able to create and support RA programs into which its job seeker customers can be enrolled.
- As a RA sponsor, the local WDB can easily co-enroll its WIOA Title I customers into the local WDB-sponsored RA programs, creating a win-win scenario for the job seeker and business and improving WIOA performance outcomes across the board.
- Increased number of employers participating in RA programs because of the local WDB assuming RA sponsorship responsibilities.
- Increased apprentice registrations from underserved and/or targeted populations.
- Increased number of occupations covered by RA sponsorship to provide stackable credentials.
- Longer-term RA support for apprentices and businesses.
- Increased ability to meet WIOA “Effectiveness in Serving Employers” metric.

ACTIONABLE ITEMS | Next steps to consider

- Connect with other local WDBs who are current RA sponsors to understand the process.
- Using LMI data, determine high-demand occupations/industries which will align with RA sponsorship opportunities.
- Engage with local RA ATR to develop program standards.
- Invite local businesses/employers to discuss potential interest in and become involved in RA program design to secure participation agreement.
- Identify potential high-quality post-secondary educational partners to provide RI for RA program occupations in design phase.



CREATING RA-ALIGNED POLICIES

- [Demonstrated State Apprenticeship Leadership in 2020 Unified/Combined Plans Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3](#) is a webinar series showcasing four leadership indicators for RA integration into state plans.
- [Apprenticeship and the ETPL](#) includes a short blog post on the flexibilities WIOA provides to RA program sponsors for inclusion on state ETPLs and links to other valuable resources.
- [TEGL 08-19, Change 1](#) addresses several misconceptions regarding inclusion of RA programs on ETPLs.
- [A New Resource to Strengthen RA and Workforce Alignment](#) offers dimensions of and strategies to strengthen alignment for apprenticeship expansion teams and workforce system partners.
- [Apprenticeship and WIOA Performance Outcomes](#) offers tools and resources on how RA programs can positively impact WIOA performance outcomes.



EMBEDDING RA SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS (SMEs)

- [Apprenticeship Expertise in AJCs](#) is a webinar highlighting various states' efforts to integrate RA expertise into their local workforce practices.
- [Strategies for Building Partnerships](#) explores the benefits of collaboration between WDBs, the apprenticeship system, and community colleges for job seekers and employers.
- [Expanding Apprenticeship for Formerly Incarcerated Persons](#) identifies resources for helping justice-involved individuals participate and succeed in RA programs.
- [Example of a Registered Apprenticeship Exit Policy](#) from the MESA County Workforce Development Board which provides locally established guidelines for development of a local exit policy for RA programs.
- [RA Program – WIOA Reporting Guide](#) is an easy-to-read desk reference intended to ensure that WIOA participants engaged in RA programs are receiving the appropriate credit towards achievement of WIOA performance goals.
- [Grantee Staff Onboarding Resources for RA](#) offers a comprehensive list of resources to help state apprenticeship expansion grantees train new apprenticeship staff on apprenticeship basics, state apprenticeship grant management, apprenticeship expansion strategy, and industry- and occupation-specific information.



EQUIPPING BUSINESS SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES (BSRs)

- [Workforce Resources for Employers Fact Sheet](#) speaks to the services and supports that the public workforce system has to offer employers as they strive to remain competitive in a global workforce.
- [Apprenticeship Business Engagement Tools](#) provides three resources to assist in speaking the language of business, refining business engagement techniques to get better results, and creating and maintaining a successful collaboration with employers.
- [Outreach to Business on Apprenticeship](#) is designed to help develop effective outreach strategies and materials, as well as provide examples of business outreach materials developed by federal and state apprenticeship partners.
- [A Targeted Approach to Apprenticeship: Business Engagement](#) presents a three-pronged approach to business outreach to increase partnerships and expand the use of apprenticeship as a work-based learning strategy.



SERVING AS A RA CONVENER

- [RA Partner Profile Questionnaire](#) is a customizable tool for WDBs/AJCs to use to gather information from RA partners to help WDBs build a network of RA stakeholders to expand RA program opportunities. It is designed to be used with the Workforce Board Guide to Identify RA Partners resource below.
- [Workforce Board Guide to Identify RA Partners](#) provides a starting point to help state and local workforce professionals understand the key players in the apprenticeship space, what role(s) those partners typically play, and how to take the lead in creating these partnerships.
- [Developing or Expanding RA Questionnaire](#) poses questions to RA stakeholders with the goal of preparing them to work with the OA or SAAs to develop or expand RA programs.
- [Customizing Competency Models Through Convening Guide](#) provides resources, tools, and examples of successful regional partnerships to help with convening partners to customize a competency model.
- [Updated Convening Guide and Videos for Working with Industry to Implement Competency Models](#) is an updated version of the Guide above, providing resources, ready-to-use tools, and examples of successful regional partnerships to help with convening partners to customize a competency model.
- [Leveraging RA to Build a Thriving and Inclusive Economy](#) discusses strategies to scale registered and youth apprenticeship programs that are informed by recommendations from interviews with state apprenticeship leaders.



BECOMING A RA SPONSOR

- [Becoming a Workforce Development Board or Educational Entity RA Sponsor](#) is a webinar providing TA and promising practices for becoming a sponsor.
- [How LWDBs Can Become RA Sponsors](#) is a video resource with technical tips for becoming an RA Sponsor.
- [EmployIndy](#) is the local board's webpage for all things related to RA efforts in the City of Indianapolis.
- [Florida RA Programs](#) navigates to the Office of Apprenticeship's apprenticeship finder website which provides access to search for RA programs across the State of FL.
- [Michigan RA Programs](#) navigates to the Office of Apprenticeship's apprenticeship finder website which provides access to search for RA programs across the State of MI.