**Advancing the Economic Mobility of Rural Learners Application Template**

**Basic Information**

**Chamber of Commerce Project Lead**

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| Name  |  |
| Title  |  |
| Organization  |  |
| Location City/State |  |
| Phone Number  |  |
| Email Address  |  |
| Website |  |

**Application Contact (if different than Project Lead)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name  |  |
| Title  |  |
| Organization  |  |
| Phone Number  |  |
| Email Address  |  |

**Which rural area(s) does your chamber serve? What quantitative or qualitative data do you use to define these rural areas?**

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**Using** [**MIT’s Living Wage Calculator**](https://livingwage.mit.edu/)**, please provide the living wage for one adult with 0 children in your area of service. If you serve multiple counties or MSAs and there are significant differences in living wages between those areas, please provide information for all areas that your chamber serves.**

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**Application Questions**

*Question 1*

**Please outline the need in your community for placing more low-income, rural learners in well-paid jobs. Include any data that quantifies this need.**

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*Question 2*

**Please outline any work your chamber has done related to placing low-income, rural learners in well-paid jobs.**

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*Question 3*

**This work requires chambers to have strong relationships with other organizations in the community. Use the following table to share how you are working with different segments of the rural learning ecosystem. We have provided space below the table to speak to relationships with any partners not named in this table.**

| **Ecosystem Partners** | **Share examples of how you have collaborated with this partner and the timeframe of that collaboration. If you haven’t collaborated in the past, how would you approach collaboration moving forward?** | **Are you currently working with this partner on any projects? (Y/N)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| K-12 Education System |  |  |
| Post-Secondary Education System |  |  |
| Other Training Providers |  |  |
| Employers |  |  |
| Workforce Development Agencies |  |  |
| Local or State Government Entities |  |  |
| Community-Based Service Providers / Nonprofit Organizations |  |  |

**Other Collaborative Partners**

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*Question 4*

**Please provide a high-level analysis of the types of in-demand, well-paid jobs your community. Please use the table below to provide some additional information about the top ten in-demand jobs in your community.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **In-Demand Job** | **Credentials/Certifications/****Skills/Degrees Required** | **Number of Job Openings** | **Average Starting Salary** |
| **Current** | **Projected****(5 years)** |
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**What is the source(s) of the data in the table above?**

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**What are you hearing from employers, workers and training providers about barriers to securing the in-demand jobs listed above?**

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*Question 5*

**Please give an overview of your target population(s) for this work. What do you currently know about low-income, rural learners in your community? Are there specific segments of low-income, rural learners on which you would focus during this project? Do you have any previous experience working with low-income, rural learners in your community? How do you envision being able to address the barriers identified in Question 4 for these populations?**

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*Question 6*

**During the grant period, you would be in a group of two to three other chambers that are working towards implementing a similar project in their communities. Each set of chambers will be piloting a different strategy for placing low-income, rural learners in high-paid jobs. Please rank how interested you would be in testing the following strategies in your community:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Not Interested** | **A Little Interested** | **Interested** | **Very Interested** | **Extremely Interested** |
| Increasing remote work opportunities for low-income, rural learners |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increasing work-based learning opportunities (apprenticeships, internships, other on-the-job-training) for low-income, rural learners |  |  |  |  |  |
| Working with employers to identify the skills required for in-demand jobs and to implement skills-based hiring practices |  |  |  |  |  |
| Working with employers and education partners to align locally offered credentials and degrees with those required for in-demand jobs |  |  |  |  |  |
| Creating a community-wide vision, goal and plan around talent development to promote pathways to mobility |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increasing employer participation in the talent development pipeline to create stronger ties between employers, learners and educators |  |  |  |  |  |
| Establishing a one stop shop or navigator program to wholistically address barriers to well-paid employment for low-income, rural leaners  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Are there any other programs or initiatives that you have been interested in or thinking about implementing or could be worth piloting in your community that’s not represented on the list above?**

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*Question 7*

**Please provide some high-level thoughts on how you will evaluate the success of your work. What are your goals? Are there any specific metrics you are interested in tracking? Please touch on community-level goals and outcomes where appropriate.**

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*Question 8*

**ACCE will be providing grants of up to $50K to participating chambers. Each chamber will be asked to make a set of commitments to this work in exchange for these subgrant funds. At a minimum, chambers will be expected to:**

* **Dedicate at least 5 – 10 hours a month to activities related to this work, including cohort meetings, technical assistance sessions, meetings with partners, data collection, project planning, etc.**
* **Collaborate with employers and community partners like postsecondary institutions, organizations that provide supportive services, and others and use an assessment tool to understand the strength of these relationships over time**
* **Develop and track three to five key performance metrics during and after the grant period to demonstrate the longer-term impact of these efforts, which could include individual worker/learner data**
* **Attend an in-person mid-program cohort meeting in late 2023 or early 2024**
* **Provide a mid-program report in June 2024 outlining progress to date that includes quantitative and qualitative improvements in outcomes, progress on relationship building, key challenges and learnings, and an initial roadmap for the future**
* **Submit a final report in November 2024 with documented learnings and a roadmap for continuing to place low-income, rural learners in well-paid jobs with career mobility**
* **Present or serve as a panelist for ACCE webinars or conference sessions highlighting promising strategies for placing low-income, rural learners in jobs**
* **Provide relevant content for ACCE’s communications platforms as requested**

**Please sign below to indicate that you have read these expectations and, if selected for this cohort, would be able to meet these commitments.**

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**Signature**