



# EXPANDING APPRENTICESHIPS IN THE US: AN EMPLOYERS PERSPECTIVE

Produced by the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN), with the generous support of the JP Morgan Chase Foundation.

**GAN GLOBAL**

Shaping Workforces  
of the Future



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# INTRODUCTION

The Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN) was established in 2014 in response to rising levels of youth unemployment following the 2009 economic crash. Since then, its mandate has expanded to include all forms of work-based learning (WBL) to address the evolving needs of the labor market, becoming a pivotal organization in this area across the globe. By bringing together stakeholders from the private sector, international organizations, and government, GAN aims to ensure that individuals and businesses have the necessary skills to thrive and contribute to society. In 2024, GAN Global launched the Corporate Champions for Apprenticeships (CCA), a private sector initiative bringing companies together to align on the Guiding Principles for Quality Apprenticeships, which are based on the International Labour Organization (ILO) Recommendation 208 (R208). CCA underscores GAN's commitment to quality apprenticeships as outlined by ILO R208, which was adopted in 2023 by member governments, employers and workers, representing the first-ever global framework to clearly define quality apprenticeships.<sup>1</sup>

Prior to the adoption of ILO R208, GAN deployed a survey of at least 100 US-based companies to gain a better understanding of registered and non-registered apprenticeship programs in the US, with support from the JP Morgan Chase Foundation. The survey aims to provide insights into company perspectives on apprenticeship delivery in the country. Its goal is to help companies better develop, design, and deliver apprenticeship programs to inform workforce development strategies.

A component of leveraging white-collar apprenticeships to expand career opportunities for vulnerable communities has also been highlighted. Additionally, GAN conducted focus group interviews with government officials, private sector members, and representatives from the education sector to expand on the survey findings. By gaining a better understanding of demand-driven apprenticeship models, the systemic challenges that prevent the expansion of these programs, and the state of standards, participation, and registration in the U.S. labor market, GAN aims to provide relevant stakeholders with key information to help improve apprenticeship programs and policies related to their uptake, scalability, and accessibility in the country.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.gan-global.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/GAN\\_CorporateChampions\\_Flyer\\_A5.pdf](https://www.gan-global.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/GAN_CorporateChampions_Flyer_A5.pdf)

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents an analysis of the current state of apprenticeship programs in the United States, providing insights into the implementation and impact of apprenticeships, particularly focusing on inclusive, private-sector-led models. Its objectives are to understand the systemic challenges that impact the expansion of apprenticeship programs, inform workforce development policies and practices that can expand career opportunities for vulnerable communities, and improve the overall effectiveness of apprenticeship programs in the country.

Based on the findings from a survey of over 100 companies of various sizes and sectors, and focus group sessions with employers, educational institutions, and policymakers, this report assesses their experience with registered apprenticeship programs and identifies key barriers to and drivers for implementation. The findings will be useful in guiding targeted interventions and promoting large-scale adoption of apprenticeships as a legitimate pathway to economic mobility and workforce development.

Satisfaction among those organizations currently engaged in apprenticeship programs is extraordinarily high. All respondents (100%) consider their apprenticeship program successful. Reasons for success include generating career opportunities, increased effectiveness and efficiency, and the value of learning and development programs.

Nearly all (98%) companies engaging in apprenticeship programs plan to continue or expand their program over the next 2-3 years. Half of respondents expect the number of apprenticeships they offer to increase, while 48% think the amount will stay the same.

Apprenticeship programs are used to up-skill existing workers for most respondents (64%) and 60% reported a 70-100% program completion rate. Only 11% percent reported a completion rate of less than 50%. A high number (70%) of those who complete 50% or more of an apprenticeship program continue to work for the company. 60% of respondents' apprenticeship programs have a completion rate of over 70%; 30% have a completion rate between 50-69%.

55% are registered with a state or nationally with the U.S. Department of Labor, and 45% are not. California, Texas, and Florida were the most common states to be registered at the state level for respondents. Two-thirds (66%) do not use an apprenticeship intermediary, 34% do. Among those who do not, they note there are internal capabilities (39%), no perceived need (35%), and skepticisms (13%). Among those who do, they note its effectiveness and efficiency (40%), along with generating more opportunities (29%), learning and development (11%), and requirements (9%).

Respondents who are not offering apprenticeship programs cited business or legal constraints (25%), situational or historic context (21%) and organizational structure or resource limitations (17% each). Open ended responses addressing reasons for not offering apprenticeships included lacking access to schools or universities while others cited legal constraints, lack of time to implement and the need for specific technical skills indicating internal and cultural barriers to program development. The data indicates that the barriers to implementation may be higher in advanced, technical and consumer/financial information industries. These organizations have additional hurdles to implementation.

Only a third of programs have been leveraged to provide career opportunities for employees from lower income communities. While some focus on African American, Hispanic, and Native American communities as well as veterans and those with special needs, two-thirds of respondents do not specifically target their programs to benefit these groups.

# APPRENTICESHIPS IN THE UNITED STATES

Apprenticeships offer a practical pathway to high-paying jobs and hands-on training in multiple fields, including blue-collar trades, white-collar and new-collar, frontier professions. These programs offer a structured approach to learning that combines paid on-the-job training with classroom instruction, culminating in nationally recognized credentials.<sup>2</sup> Apprenticeships offer access to a wide range of occupations, with an average starting salary of USD 77,000 per year and a lifetime earning advantage of USD 300,000.

More than 90% of apprentices remain employed after the completion of their programs, showcasing the effectiveness of apprenticeships in ensuring job placement, career progression, and business sustainability.<sup>3</sup> Despite these advantages, apprenticeships in the US have faced many challenges, including widespread belief that certain career pathways require four-year college degrees instead of vocational training.<sup>4</sup> As a consequence, the general public and employers often need convincing when it comes to focusing on skills versus degrees.

Efforts to drive apprenticeship uptake and expand these programs have gained momentum in recent years, especially after the Biden-Harris administration made the “largest combined federal investment in Registered Apprenticeships” (RAPs) at \$244 million to help “modernize, diversify, and expand” apprenticeships in growing industries.<sup>5</sup> This investment was part of a bigger agenda that aims to fortify the middle class and expand opportunities for disadvantaged populations to secure in-demand and family-supporting jobs.<sup>6</sup> A considerable portion of this award fell under the Apprenticeship Building America initiative, which was created to support public-private partnerships aimed at expanding registered apprenticeships in fields such as construction, cybersecurity, education, IT, clean energy, financial services,

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.jamesgmartin.center/2018/01/arent-apprentices-america/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/eta/eta20240711-0>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/eta/eta20240711-0>

advanced manufacturing, healthcare, hospitality, care economy, public-sector occupations, telecom, and transportation.<sup>7</sup>

### **Box 1. Key Elements of Registered Apprenticeships (RAPs)**

Programs are **industry-vetted** and approved to ensure alignment with standards so that apprentices are trained for highly skilled, high-demand occupations.

Apprentices are paid workers, earning **progressive wages** as their skills and productivity increase.

Programs provide **structured on-the-job training** to prepare for a career, which includes instruction from an experienced mentor.

Apprentices are provided with **supplemental classroom education** based on the employer's unique training needs to ensure quality and success.

Programs are designed to reflect the communities in which they operate through strong non-discrimination, anti-harassment, and recruitment practices to ensure **diversity, equity, inclusion, and access**.

Apprentices are afforded **worker protection** while receiving rigorous training to equip them with the skills they need to succeed and the proper training and supervision they need to be safe.

Apprentices earn a portable, **nationally recognized credential** within their industry.

For employers, a Registered Apprenticeship can offer other incentives including technical assistance, national credentials, quality standards, tax credits, federal resources, and recruiting incentives (particularly for veterans who qualify for benefits).<sup>8</sup>

Recent policies in expanding apprenticeships in the U.S. includes investments and forging private-public partnerships on state, federal and international levels. This includes an MoU between the U.S. and Swiss governments to expand and strengthen quality apprenticeships, especially among Swiss and Swiss-invested companies in the U.S. Switzerland's rich history and successful apprenticeship model, whereby around 70% of Swiss citizens take part in an apprenticeship program, has been crucial to the country's position in innovation and economic development.<sup>9</sup> With skills shortages threatening U.S. competitiveness in the global

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/eta/eta20220223>;  
<https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/eta/eta20240711-0>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/employers/registered-apprenticeship-program>

<sup>9</sup> <https://newsroom.accenture.com/news/2017/new-report-identifies-best-practices-for-creating-and-sustaining-apprenticeship-programs>

market, apprenticeship programs can play an important role in creating new opportunities for both individuals and businesses.

Thus, with apprenticeships becoming a powerful tool for workforce development, business sustainability, and economic growth, addressing cultural biases, leveraging best practices, forging robust partnerships and promoting inclusive models are strategies that the US is embarking on to expand and enhance apprenticeship programs to meet the needs of a dynamic and diverse labor force and market.

# METHODOLOGY

In June 2024, Emerson College Polling conducted a survey commissioned by GAN Global, with support from the JP Morgan Chase Foundation to inform the current state of apprenticeship models in the US and understand systemic challenges that prevent the expansion of apprenticeship programs. Respondents consisted of n=104 white-collar professionals at a diverse cross-section of organizations with apprenticeship programs with a minimum of 50 employees. Their positions ranged from executive leaders, vice presidents, directors, and managers to specialists and human resource professionals. An additional sample of n=25 professionals who provided reasons for not having apprenticeship programs were included. The survey was conducted via an online panel, supplied by [CINT](#). Data was collected from June 5-12, 2024. The sample of n=104 carries a credibility interval, similar to a survey's margin of error of +/- 9.6 percentage points.

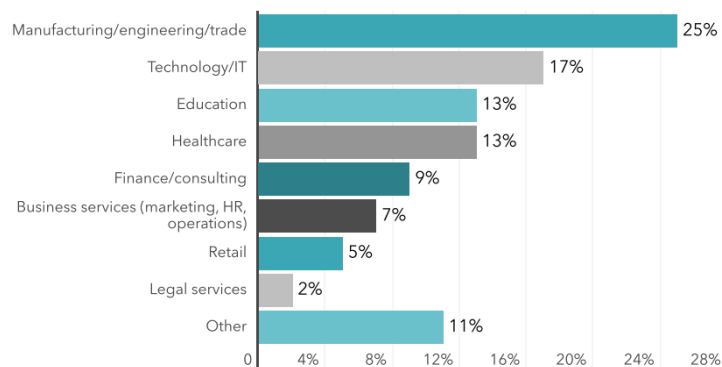
In October and November 2024, GAN Global and [GAN USA](#) validated the survey findings with four focus groups of around 25 individuals giving feedback from three main perspectives: employers and the private sector, professionals from the clean energy sector, state and federal government officials and education practitioners from a variety of states (e.g. Texas, Nevada, Ohio, and Massachusetts). The focus groups shared their feedback on the possibility to expand apprenticeship programs, particularly in white-collar occupations. All the educational institutions surveyed work directly with employers who engage in both registered and non-registered apprenticeship programs, on an equal scale.

# FINDINGS

## Respondent Organization Profiles

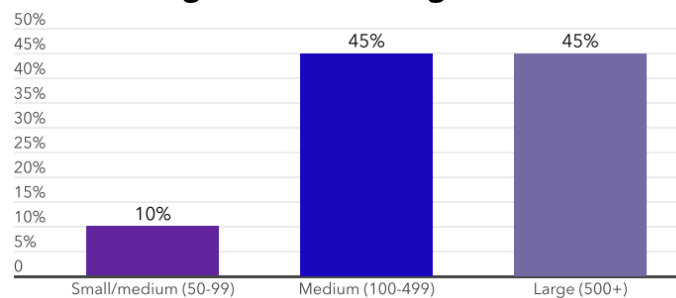
The respondents represented a wide array of industry sectors, as illustrated in Figure 1. The largest section of the group came from the manufacturing, engineering, and trade sectors, accounting for 25% of the total. The Technology and IT sectors represented 17%, followed by education and healthcare, each comprising 13%. Finance and consulting made up 9%, business services 7%, retail 5%, and legal services 2%. An additional 11% of respondents were from various other sectors, ensuring a broad range of insights.

**Figure 1. Main Business Activity of Organization**



The participating organizations varied in size, from small/medium enterprises with 50-99 employees to large corporations with over 500 employees. Figure 2 shows the distribution of company size, with medium (100-499 employees) and large (500+) organizations making up 45% of the respondents each.

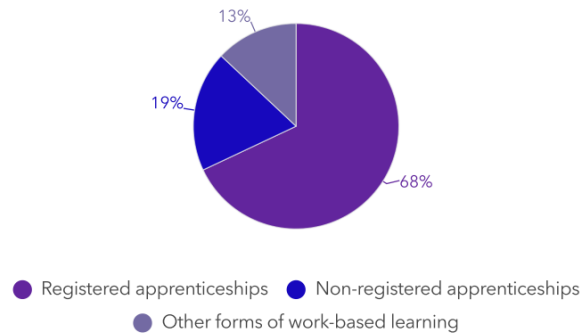
**Figure 2. Size of Organization**



From the focus groups surveyed, the respondents represented mainly employers from the clean energy sector, policymakers from the federal government and practitioners from community colleges and intermediaries. The representation of organizations of different scales and industries provides a comprehensive view of apprenticeship practices across varying contexts.

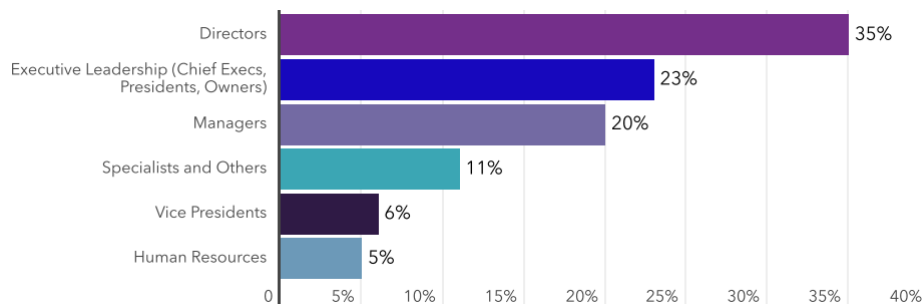
The survey also explored the extent of companies' engagement in apprenticeship programs, as detailed in Figure 3. 68% of respondent organizations engage in registered apprenticeships, while 19% are involved in non-registered apprenticeships. Additionally, 13% of respondents reported engagement in other forms of work-based learning. These findings highlight the importance of current work in the WBL ecosystem.

**Figure 3. Company Engagement in Apprenticeships**



Finally, the roles of survey respondents within their organizations are shown in Figure 4, indicating a diverse composition of positions and perspectives. Executive leaders, including chief executives, presidents, owners, and vice presidents comprised 29% of the respondents. Directors and managers accounted for 55%, while human resources professionals, specialists, and others represented 16%.

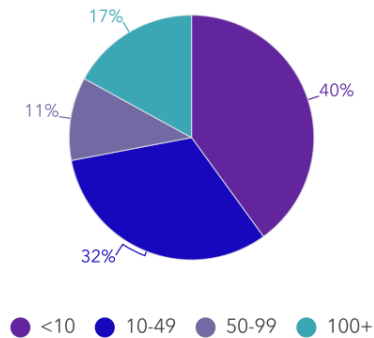
**Figure 4. Role in Organization**



## Apprenticeship Program Details and Registration

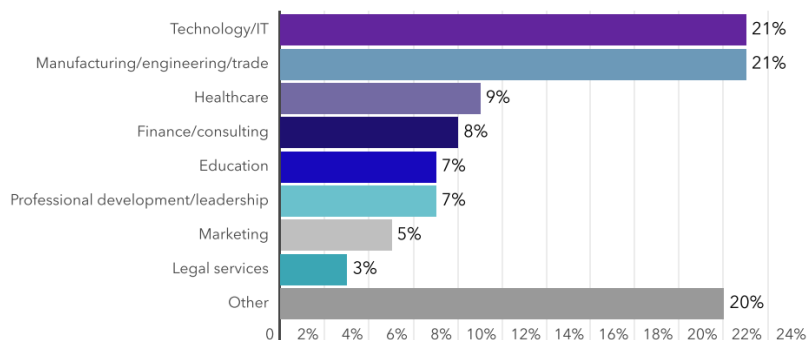
The distribution of apprentices currently in training across the respondent organizations is varied, reflecting different levels of engagement and capacity for training within the US. As shown in Figure 5, 40% of organizations have less than 10 apprentices in training, another 32% host between 10 and 49 apprentices, 11% have between 50 and 99 apprentices, and 17% have more than 100.

**Figure 5. Number of Apprentices in training at Organization**



The apprenticeship programs surveyed span a wide range of industries, showcasing the versatility and applicability of these WBL programs across different fields. Figure 6 illustrates the distribution of apprenticeship programs by industry: Technology/IT and Manufacturing/Engineering/Trade each make up 21% of the programs, highlighting the demand for skilled workers in these areas. Healthcare accounts for 9%, followed by Finance/Consulting at 8%, and Education and Professional Development/Leadership at 7% each. Marketing and Legal Services constitute 5% and 3% respectively, with an additional 20% of the program falling under other various categories.

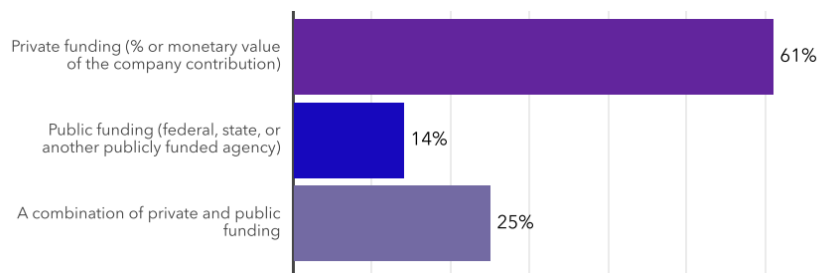
**Figure 6. Type of Apprenticeship Program in Progress**



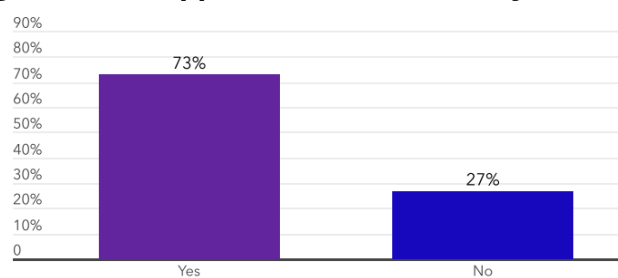
As shown in Figure 7, funding for apprenticeship programs varies. 61% of programs are privately funded, indicating significant investment from the organizations

themselves in driving skill development internally. Public funding reportedly supports 14% of the programs and 25% of the organizations benefit from a combination of both private and public funding. Regarding compensation for off-the-job training, a significant majority of the participating organizations, 73%, pay their apprentices for this kind of training, as shown in Figure 8. Nonetheless, 27% of the organizations do not, highlighting a potential area for improvement to enhance apprentice support and retention in the US.

**Figure 7. Breakdown of Apprenticeship Funding Sources**

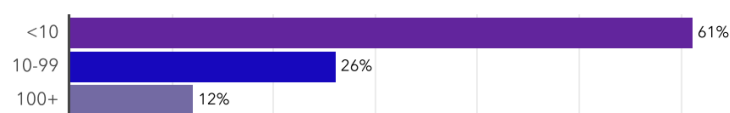


**Figure 8. Are Apprentices Paid for off-job Training?**

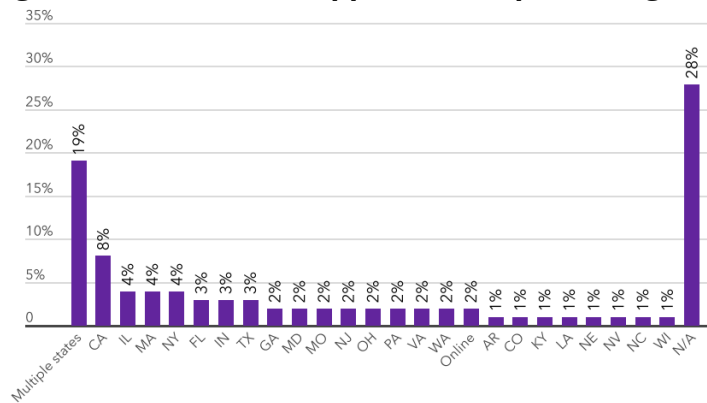


Registration with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is a crucial aspect of formal apprenticeship programs. 55% of the organization have registered their apprenticeship program at the state or national level, while 45% have not. This indicates that there is still significant room for increasing DOL registration to enhance program recognition and quality assurance. Figure 9 shows that among those registered, 61% of the organizations have fewer than 10 registered programs, 26% have between 10 and 99, and 12% have more than 100 registered programs. Additionally, Figure 10 lists the geographic distribution of apprenticeship training sites, with 19% of the companies having sites across multiple states.

**Figure 9. Number of Programs Registered with the U.S. Department of Labor**



**Figure 10. Location of Apprenticeship Training Sites**



Through a focus group discussion with 15 employers from the clean energy sector, GAN was able to better understand the impact of government incentives on apprenticeship uptake and registration. Out of the participating organizations, all had registered apprenticeship largely due to the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) adopted in 2022, showcasing how policy and tax incentives can shift the needle towards a more favorable apprenticeship environment (see Box 2).

### **Box 2. Engaging Employers in the Clean Energy Sector through Tax Incentives**

In 2022, the US adopted the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the largest-ever federal investment in clean energy. The IRA provides substantial tax incentives for employers registering apprentices in qualified clean energy projects (construction, alteration, or repair projects including solar, wind, geothermal, carbon sequestration, and electric vehicle charging stations). \* Provisions on Registered Apprenticeships contained in the IRA are meant to ensure an industry-driven approach towards a talent pipeline, offering individuals a high-quality career pathway. \* By utilizing Registered Apprenticeships, employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, while workers can obtain paid work experience, and receive progressive wage increases, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally recognized credential.

GAN Global, in partnership with GAN USA\*, organized a focus group of 15 professionals from the clean energy sector who have leveraged the IRA to hire apprentices. RAP is a requirement for large-scale utility projects and must account for 15% of total labor hours to qualify for generous IRA tax incentives. This contributes to a large potential to meet workforce needs in a burgeoning industry while allowing apprentices to grow within a company.

Other reasons for registering their apprenticeship programs included access to a stable pool of talent, the need for more skills in craft trades, future growth potential, national recognition, searchability, better engagement with schools and

workforce boards, the opportunity to meet workforce needs and upskill employees while ensuring compliance with labor requirements.

While 85% of the employers stated that they would be interested in expanding the apprenticeship roles to white-collar roles such as project management, operations, or regulatory compliance, employers stated certain challenges in implementing the programs, which include finding apprentices and maintaining the requirements necessary to sustain them.

In terms of collaborating with schools, only 25% of the employers surveyed in this group had effective partnerships with community colleges or other educational institutions. To forge more robust partnerships with educational institutions, employers stated the following measures for effective collaboration and scaling apprenticeships to other job roles and communities:

- Early engagement
- Partnering with intermediaries who understand employer needs
- Providing a clear link between theoretical, classroom instruction and the practical hands-on skills needed in the workplace
- Flexible classroom schedules, including after-work hours
- Offering more pathways to white-collar roles
- Community outreach to understand the specific training needs of the local region
- Local community colleges/universities to fill in training gaps where training organizations are not available
- Identify the skills gap, then build curriculum with industry

## **Apprenticeship Program Satisfaction and Implementation**

Satisfaction among organizations currently engaged in apprenticeship programs is extraordinarily high. All respondents (100%) consider their apprenticeship program successful, attributing their success to the creation of career opportunities, increased effectiveness and efficiency, and the value of learning and development programs. In a focus group discussion, 85% of employers in the clean energy sector are convinced of the potential to expand apprenticeship opportunities in traditionally white-collar professional roles including those in project management, operations, or regulatory compliance. Nearly all (98%) companies plan to continue or expand their programs over the next 2-3 years, with half of respondents expecting an increase in apprenticeship places and 48% anticipating they will stay the same.

A majority (64%) of respondents use apprenticeship programs to up-skill existing workers, and 60% reported a 70-100% program completion rate. Only 11% have a

completion rate of less than 50%. Over half (70%) of learners who complete 50% or more of an apprenticeship program continue to work for the company, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in retention. Moreover, 55% of respondents' programs are registered with the U.S. Department of Labor, with California, Florida, and Texas being the most common states for state-level registration.

## **Apprenticeship Intermediary Use**

A significant majority of respondents do not use apprenticeship intermediaries (66%), indicating a preference for handling apprenticeship programs internally, often due to established internal capabilities (39%), perceived self-sufficiency (35%) and skepticism (13%) or lack of awareness about intermediaries, while 4% prefer to maintain direct control over their programs. In contrast, 34% of organizations actively use apprenticeship intermediaries, citing their motivation for this choice to be related to the effectiveness and efficiencies of intermediaries (40%). 29% of respondents also justified engaging intermediaries due to their instrumental role in linking apprentices with job placements and career development pathways. Learning and development support for apprentices was cited by 11% of the respondents as another reason for their use of intermediaries, with 9% also expressing that intermediaries benefit organizations in meeting regulatory requirements and improving program structure.

## **Apprenticeship Program History and Outlook**

The survey revealed a diverse range of experiences among respondents. A minority of organizations have offered registered national or state-recognized apprenticeships for less than a year or between 1-2 years. In contrast, a substantial portion of the respondents have well-established apprenticeship programs with 37% having operated their programs for 3 to 5 years, 16% for 5 to 7 years, and 32% for over seven years. This indicates that while newer programs are still emerging, many organizations have sustained and developed their apprenticeship programs. It also highlights a need for continued work in this area so that a greater number of organizations can create and maintain their apprenticeship initiatives. The scale of these initiatives varies across the organizations, with 20% having trained fewer than 10 apprentices since the inception of their programs versus 32% having trained between 100 and 999 apprentices. Notably, 12% of the respondents have trained 1,000 or more apprentices throughout the years.

The demographic profile of apprentices indicates a strong focus on early-career investment. Most apprentices are aged 18-24 (55%), with an additional 36% falling within the 25-34 age range. The presence of only 2% of apprentices under 18 and

2% aged 45-54 suggests that white-collar apprenticeship programs in the US predominantly target young adults transitioning from education environments into the workplace. The educational institutions surveyed, however, noted that the average age group of apprentices was higher (ages 27-34), pointing to the possibility that students/apprentices in community colleges have taken up this path after already pursuing other options.

On future projections, there is a clear expectation from respondents of growth in their apprenticeship offerings. While 2% of the organizations expect a decrease in their apprenticeship programs, half of the organizations project an increase in the number of apprenticeship places over the next 2-3 years and 48% anticipate maintaining their current operations. This positive outlook highlights the growing recognition of the value of apprenticeships in addressing job market needs and supporting organizational sustainability.

Organizations also indicated interest in expanding successful in-house programs into registered apprenticeships, particularly in Technology/IT and Artificial Intelligence. Altogether, 75% of the organizations are exploring a range of other potential areas of conversion, while 25% do not foresee the need to formalize any in-house programs.

## **Barriers to Implementation**

Respondents not offering apprenticeship programs cited business or legal constraints (25%), situational or historic context (21%), and organizational structure or resource limitations (17% each) as primary barriers. Open-ended responses identified legal constraints, lack of time, and the need for specific technical skills, indicating internal and cultural barriers to program development. The data suggests that the barriers to implementation may be higher in advanced, technical, and consumer/financial information industries, potentially in new-collar, frontier roles. In the focus group discussion, employers stated that while they were interested in expanding apprenticeships in other roles outside of the traditional blue-collar space, there are challenges to overcome, including the fact that certain roles require a university degree and difficulty in convincing executives of long-term investment rather than a short-term solution. This suggests an opportunity for educational systems and policies to correspond to industry needs and provide the off-the-job theoretical learning to complement apprenticeship programs.

Additionally, 25% of the professionals in the education sector agreed that limitations are more pronounced depending on an employer's size, especially for small enterprises. This group also noted challenges related to varying standards across states and the complexities of program approval processes.

In terms of leveraging incentives or public funding for employers to register apprenticeship programs, the challenges stated include a lack of awareness of these types of support and strict qualification requirements.

Only a third of programs have been leveraged to provide career opportunities for employees from lower-income communities. While some focus on African American, Hispanic, and Native American communities as well as veterans and those with special needs, two-thirds of respondents do not specifically target their programs to benefit these groups.

## **Leveraging Apprenticeships to Vulnerable Communities and Expansion to White-Collar Roles**

Organizations are maximizing the benefits of using apprenticeship programs to upskill workers and providing career opportunities while also aligning their business needs and social objectives. 64% of respondents use apprenticeship programs as a tool to upskill their current workforce, which highlights the value of these initiatives for continuous professional development but also for organizations to successfully evolve according to industry requirements and technological advancements.

Completion rates of apprenticeship programs vary, with approximately 60% of respondents reporting a completion rate between 70-100%. However, 30% of organizations experience a completion rate between 50-69%. A smaller portion of respondents experience lower completion rates, with 10-29% completion reported by 6% of the organizations and only 1% reporting a 0% completion rate.

The retention of apprentices after program completion also demonstrates the impact of these programs on organizational continuity and talent management. For 34% of the respondents, between 70 and 100% of apprentices who complete their training continue to work for the company. In contrast, 36% of organizations retain 50-69% of their apprentices, and 20% have a retention rate of 30-49%. Only 10% of the organizations reported less than 30% retention rates, indicating that while there is room for improvement, apprenticeships stand as a strong avenue for long-term employees and organizational commitment.

When evaluating the importance of extending apprenticeship programs to white collar fields, organizations highlighted Technology/IT and Manufacturing/Engineering/Trade programs as the most crucial for their business, reflecting the high demand for technical and skilled professionals in these areas. Professional Development/Leadership programs also received attention, with 9% of the respondents highlighting the importance of investing in leadership skills within their workforce. Other areas, such as Education and Healthcare, were considered

important by 6% of the respondents, while Finance/Consulting, Legal Services, and Marketing were less prioritized.

The employers who took part in the focus group session stated a few areas in which their industry could better support white-collar apprenticeships, including partnerships with education stakeholders to develop industry-ready curricula, match potential job roles to apprenticeship occupations that can be registered, and match roles with skills instead of degrees.

In leveraging apprenticeships to provide career opportunities for low-income individuals, only 34% report using their programs with this intention in alignment with their commitment to social responsibility. Recruitment, employment, career opportunities (29%) and training and skill development (36%) are also significant factors, showcasing how apprenticeships can be a tool for socioeconomic advancement and inclusion. In the focus group, employers stated that the government offering per diem and lodging to house vulnerable workers could be a useful measure, while those in the education sector cited pre-apprenticeship programs to develop work-readiness. As transportation was cited as a challenge by the education sector for vulnerable communities, offering virtual learning was offered as a solution.

## **Apprenticeship Program Feedback**

Feedback from the participating organizations reveals an overall high satisfaction while also identifying key improvement areas. 86% of employers feel like there is enough information, support, and guidance available for those interested in offering registered apprenticeships. Only 10% of respondents express a desire to make changes to their programs, primarily in funding opportunities and recruitment processes (30%), duration and location of apprenticeship offerings (30%), and age requirements (20%).

Over half of the organizations use internal resources to design and deliver their apprenticeship programs, with community colleges and intermediaries also playing key roles. Satisfaction with program design and delivery is high at 95%, which is attributed to overall effectiveness and efficiency (40%), program structure and collaboration opportunities (22%), and the creation of employment and career development opportunities (19%).

In terms of planning, 66% of organizations have both a training plan and a budget, 21% have a training plan only, and 10% only have a budget, demonstrating both a focus on employee development and room for improvement in the integration of apprenticeships into the broader priorities of companies.

## **No Apprenticeship Program Offered: Reasoning**

Organizations reported various factors as impediments to the implementation of apprenticeship programs: 25% cited business and legal constraints and 21% reported past experiences or the current business climates as not conducive to apprenticeship models. Organizational focus or structure impacted 17% of respondents, while another 17% highlight resource limitations as constraints to advancing the apprenticeship agenda internally. A smaller portion, 8%, attribute their lack of involvement in this type of program due to uncertainty about the benefits and logistics associated with apprenticeships. Finally, 13% of the respondents gave other reasons, which might include specific industry or company constraints and preferences.

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD

In terms of the support employers need from policymakers and education providers, they would like to see the following measures:

- Partnering with educational institutions and offering credits for work-based learning programs.
- Promoting apprenticeships as a respected pathway, especially to students and the local population.
- Developing curricula based on business needs.
- Raising public awareness of the benefits of apprenticeships.
- Joining groups such as the Association of Chambers of Commerce (ACCE) to better understand industry needs and shift mindsets.
- Wraparound services including access to training, childcare, transportation
- Providing targeted information services on opportunities in certain communities.
- Offering industry-tailored incentives to other industries, like that of the IRA, and other incentives tied to reaching specific objectives. Tax incentives were also mentioned as a measure that could be offered to entice both employers and apprentices.

Professionals from the education sector suggested that community colleges and universities can offer more flexibility for learners when courses are offered, particularly in the business, IT, and healthcare fields. Receiving college credits for those who have completed or are enrolled in a registered apprenticeship program was also cited as an incentive for an expansion of apprenticeships in non-traditional sectors.

Expanding inclusive, demand-driven apprenticeships in the US is essential for bridging skills gaps, fostering economic growth, and building resilient workforces. Employers have a pivotal role to play in this transformation by championing inclusivity, investing in innovative training models, and forging robust partnerships. GAN Global has created tools for employers to ensure private sector engagement outlining how industries can contribute to a more equitable labor market where opportunities are accessible to all.

A collective commitment to action will ensure that apprenticeships remain a cornerstone of workforce development, equipping individuals and businesses to thrive in an increasingly complex global economy. A milestone was achieved in 2023 with the adoption of a [Quality Apprenticeship Recommendation \(R208\)](#) at the International Labour Conference (ILC). This Recommendation is the first global standard clearly defining the components of a quality apprenticeship program and received overwhelming support from governments, workers and employers and business organizations alike.

The Recommendation provides clear guidance on remuneration, diversity, equity, inclusion at a time when many companies are leveraging apprenticeships in a wide array of sectors to promote opportunities to underserved communities. To engage the private sector, GAN Global has created a blueprint for companies to adopt Quality Apprenticeships through developing a set of Guiding Principles and actionable steps, through its platform the [Corporate Champions for Apprenticeships](#), in line with standards found in Registered Apprenticeships. As the US continues to strengthen apprenticeships across various sectors and populations, GAN has also worked towards establishing a national platform - [GAN USA](#), to drive quality apprenticeships meeting the demands of tomorrow's economy.

GAN USA's work will focus on Quality Apprenticeship standards, shaping labour and skills policies that align with industry needs and recognizing employers who excel in apprenticeship training. Whether on an international or national level, it is GAN's core belief that employers play a pivotal role in championing quality apprenticeships and forging the partnerships necessary to ensure inclusivity.



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