



Design Sprint Request for Partners

Founded in 1962, the [Harold K.L. Castle Foundation](#) works to build resources for Hawaii's future. The Foundation's education investments help low-income youth graduate high school on a path to success, with college credits and relevant career experiences, by supporting industry-led partnerships, strengthening academic rigor and career pathways, increasing student supports, and building work-based learning into the high school and college experience.

Youth apprenticeship is a strategy that helps young people ages 16-24 connect to college and career opportunities while also addressing the talent needs of employers. Through this Request for Partners (RFP), the Foundation seeks partnerships interested in a six-month Design Sprint. With support from national expert Jobs for the Future, you will develop a work plan to launch a youth apprenticeship program. Each partnership selected to participate in the Design Sprint will receive up to \$35,000 in financial support as well as customized technical assistance and coaching.

The Foundation expects to fund a cohort of 2-4 partnerships. Over six months, partners will assess their readiness, build out the design and funding model, and lay the groundwork to launch the program. This cohort – known as the “Hawaii Youth Apprenticeship Network” – will also engage in peer-to-peer learning activities; work together to raise awareness and understanding of youth apprenticeship; and identify shared policy and systems change needs/opportunities.

At the conclusion of the Design Sprint, select partnerships that demonstrate significant progress and potential can each apply for up to \$200,000 in additional funding over 24 months to launch their youth apprenticeship programming.

About Youth Apprenticeship

What is Youth Apprenticeship?

Youth apprenticeships have the same core components as traditional apprenticeships:

- **Employer-Informed Learning:** Employers determine the knowledge and skills apprentices need to learn over the course of their apprenticeship.
- **Paid Employment:** An apprenticeship is a real job that pays an hourly wage.
- **Mentoring:** Apprentices are guided by a skilled and experienced mentor.
- **Hands-On Learning:** Apprentices learn and practice new skills on-the-job.
- **Related Coursework:** Apprentices complete related instruction that complements their on-the-job learning via classroom-based, online, or hybrid coursework.
- **Rewards + Recognition:** Apprentices earn increased wages each time they achieve specific milestones and an industry-recognized credential at the end of their apprenticeship.

To be recognized as a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) a program must be registered with the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship or the State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA). In Hawaii the SAA is the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

Youth apprenticeship programs incorporate several additional components to ensure that young people ages 16-24 can benefit from this proven approach:

- **K12 + College Connections:** Local high schools, GED programs, or community colleges help recruit youth apprentices, deliver related courses, award credit for on-the-job learning, offer flexible scheduling, and implement policies and practices that help apprentices balance school and work.
- **Modified Scheduling:** High School aged youth apprentices work part-time during the school year + full-time in summers. School or work schedules may be adjusted to allow students to balance both activities.
- **Robust Supports:** Young people receive employability skills training, coaching, help with transportation, money for tools or uniforms, and other supports to help ensure their success.

For example, a youth apprenticeship experience might look something like the following:

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Senior Year of High School	HS general education requirements Related CTE course(s)	HS general education requirements Related dual enrollment course(s)
	Part-time employment/OJT (5-15 hours/week)	Part-time employment/OJT (5-15 hours/week)
	High school graduation	
Summer	Full-time employment/OJT (40 hours/week)	
1st Year Post-HS	6-9 hours related college coursework	6-9 hours related college coursework Certification exam
	Part-time employment/OJT (20 hours/week)	Part-time employment/OJT (20 hours/week)
	Completion of industry-recognized certification + 15-24 college credits earned	
+ free or low-cost tuition, transportation stipend, coaching throughout		

Youth apprenticeships are often described as an “**options multiplier**” because they provide **accelerated on-ramps** to a broad range of future work and learning opportunities. By the time a young adult completes a youth apprenticeship (typically 2-3 years), they will acquire:

- skills and knowledge relevant to a career/industry of interest;
- work experience;
- professional contacts and references;
- a HS diploma or GED;
- an industry-recognized credential; and
- college credit.

Importantly, the hands-on experience youth apprentices acquire working on-site at a real job also helps young people to **clarify their college and career aspirations**. Graduates leave youth apprenticeships well-prepared to transition to one of several pathways to continue their journey to a good career and economic security:

Post-Apprenticeship Pathway	Youth Apprentice Advantages
Full-time employment	YA graduates have skills, knowledge, work experience, and professional contacts that help them compete for good jobs and qualify for a broader range of employment opportunities.
Full-time enrollment in college	YA graduates have already earned college credit that may count towards their degree and may be able to petition for additional credit for their on-the-job learning.
Combining part-time school and part-time work	See above. In addition, YA graduates already have experience balancing college-level classes with work.
A Registered Apprenticeship Program	Some RAPs offer YA graduates preferred consideration when applying for apprenticeships and/or advance standing, which gives YA graduates “credit” for relevant skills and knowledge they’ve already acquired and may allow them to complete their RAP more quickly.

Importantly, youth apprenticeships offer key advantages for employers and schools as well:

For industry, youth apprenticeship provides:

- an opportunity to cultivate relationships with early-career workers and preview their potential as long-term employees;
- increased input into course offerings and what is taught in K12 and postsecondary career and technical education courses;
- a chance to cultivate future leaders in your organization by offering promising workers mentoring roles; and
- access to new and more diverse pools of talent, particularly for industries that are struggling to hire enough workers using their traditional recruiting strategies.

For K12 and postsecondary institutions, youth apprenticeship offers:

- a way to demonstrate that your school is responsive to industry needs;
- an opportunity to cultivate stronger relationships with employers that can help to inform course offerings and curriculum;
- a strategy for developing new pathways to college and careers that are well-defined, supportive, and accessible to a broad range of students;
- a means of attracting a broader range of students to postsecondary opportunities; and
- potential access to new sources of funding, such as federal grants for apprenticeship programs.

How Youth Apprenticeship Programs Operate

Youth apprenticeships are typically designed and operated by cross-sector, multi-stakeholder partnerships. Key partners include:

1. A backbone organization known as an **apprenticeship intermediary** that:

- coordinates the youth apprenticeship partners
- collaborates with employer and education partners to design apprenticeships
- develops financing strategies and leads fundraising to support/grow the partnership
- collects and uses data to assess program performance and outcomes
- leads marketing, outreach, and communications for partnership

Note: A variety of different types of organizations can serve in the intermediary role, including community-based nonprofit organizations, business/industry associations, labor unions, schools/complex areas, or community colleges.

2. **Employer partners** who:

- specify the skills, knowledge, and experience apprentices need to develop for specific occupations
- collaborate with education partners to ensure coursework/curricula is aligned with industry needs
- provide paid employment for Youth Apprentices that includes on-the-job learning opportunities
- designate a mentor to guide and support each Youth Apprentice

3. **K12 partners** who:

- help to identify and recruit potential participants
- explore options to align CTE programming with youth apprenticeship opportunities
- collaborate with postsecondary partners to design and deliver dual enrollment programming
- work to identify and remove barriers to youth apprentice success, such as scheduling issues

4. **Postsecondary partners** who:

- collaborate with K12 partners to offer relevant dual enrollment programming
- work with employers to update college courses/curriculum to align with industry needs
- offer related courses
- identify strategies to ensure that youth apprentices do not incur debt for tuition and fees
- explore opportunities to award post-secondary credit for on-the-job learning

In addition, youth apprenticeship partnerships often opt to bring on additional partners, such as nonprofits that offer supportive services or sector partnerships that can help to recruit multiple employers interested in growing the pool of talent available to their industry.

Eligibility Requirements & Selection Criteria

Applications will be considered through our grants management platform Fluxx. To apply, visit <https://castlefoundation.org/hyan/>. You will be asked to register and may then upload your application. Should you require assistance, please contact Maria Quidez at mquidez@castlefoundation.org.

To qualify, applicants must:

1. Convene a partnership that includes a Lead Organization that is based in Hawaii to serve as the apprenticeship intermediary; at least two employer partners; a representative of K12 education; and a postsecondary partner.

*One organization is permitted to serve two roles (e.g., Lead Organization and post-secondary partner). However, **the Lead Organization must be based in Hawaii**. If the Lead Organization is not a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization, please contact the foundation (see below) to verify eligibility.*

2. Specify one or more industries and occupations you would like to develop a youth apprenticeship for.

The proposed employer partners should have a clear connection to the industry/occupation focus you propose. For example, if you propose launching a Radiation Technologist youth apprenticeship, at least one of your employer partners should be a healthcare organization that employs (or plans to employ) Radiation Technologists.

3. Ensure that all partners fully commit to participating in all Design Sprint coaching, technical assistance, and peer-to-peer learning activities.
4. Ensure that all partners fully commit to working together to develop a written work plan for launching a youth apprenticeship program by the end of the Design Sprint

Two to four partnerships will be selected to participate in the Design Sprint. Grant recipients will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Organizing a promising coalition of partners with sufficient capacity to build a successful youth apprenticeship program
- Evidence of relevant expertise, experience, and capabilities
- A focus on in-demand skills in key Hawaii industry sectors
- Attention to building career pathways that lead to quality jobs
- Demonstrated commitment to equity, inclusion, and dismantling disparities

[Download the list of application questions](#) to help you with your proposal.

For Further Information

Applicants can contact Maria Quidez at mquidez@castlefoundation.org or 808-493-6863 with any questions you have about this RFP.

An Applicant Information Webinar will be held on Monday, May 12th from 2:30-3:30 pm to allow interested parties to learn more about this opportunity and ask clarifying questions.

[Please click here to register for the Webinar.](#)

The following resources provide additional information about youth apprenticeship and may be helpful to preparing your application:

Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA):

- [Definition and Guiding Principles for High-Quality Youth Apprenticeship](#)
- [Youth Apprenticeship Resource Library](#)

Jobs for the Future

- [Youth Apprenticeship in Action: Principles in Practice](#)
- [Youth Apprenticeship Road Map: A Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary Journey](#)

Education Strategy Group:

- [The Critical Role of Intermediary Organizations in Expanding Youth Apprenticeship](#)

RFP Timeline

Mon, May 5, 2025	RFP Released
Mon, May 12, 2025 2:30-3:30 pm	Online Application Live on Fluxx and optional Applicant Information Webinar for interested applicants to learn more. Zoom Link Registration: https://castlefoundation.org/hyan-webinar
Fri, May 30, 2025	Request writeups due
Mon, June 16, 2025	Selection announcement
Tue, July 1, 2025	Projects begin
July – November 2025	Launch Event Strategic Planning and Coaching Employer outreach
Fri, December 19, 2025	Submission of Strategic Plans for Implementation Funding Consideration