# Chapter 3: Partnerships Categories

Chapter Overview

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Describe each JTED Category.
- Describe the different partnership roles.
- Comply with Private Business Vocational Schools (PBVS) guidelines.
- Ensure partners comply with JTED equity values.
- Develop strategic partnerships to support program success.
- Effectively manage partner relationships.
- Leverage resources.

JTED Workforce Partnership Categories

The JTED Program partners should strategically support one or more of the JTED program categories.
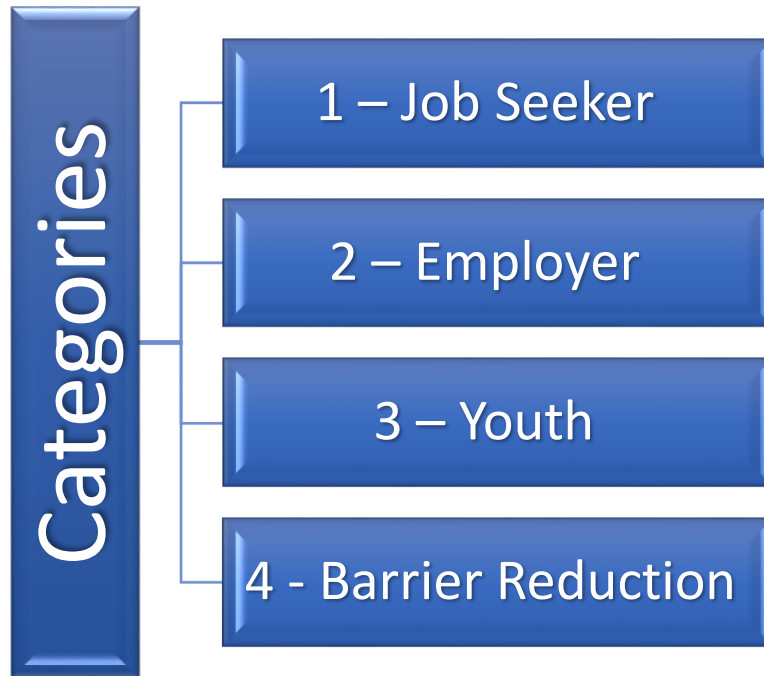
Category 1
Jobseeker Focus

Projects focusing on **Category 1** will establish partnerships with employers and education entities to develop regional or local strategies for individuals needing occupational training and supportive services to obtain self-sustaining employment in under-represented areas, including those impacted by public health and environmental factors. The partnership must focus on sector-specific occupational training in conjunction with work-based learning. Training strategies must be part of a career pathway for demand occupations in the target industries and result in participants earning stackable certifications or credentials.

Any combination of work-based learning under Program Services may be offered to participants. However, the work-based learning opportunity must align with education and training within a career pathway. Essential employability skills, digital and financial literacy, and career readiness services must be incorporated into the program model. Additionally, based on a needs assessment, support services, and Barrier Reduction funding should be offered to stabilize the individual, support entry and completion of training, and support placement and retention in employment. The list of allowable services can be found under "Program Services" *(see item #7)* of the NOFO.

Eligible Participants

This includes unemployed and under-represented individuals who reside and are eligible to work in Illinois. *See Chapter 1 for definitions.*

Performance Goals

1. Number of individuals enrolled in program
2. Number of individuals completing program
3. Number of individuals obtaining credential(s)
4. Number of individuals placed in unsubsidized employment
5. Number of individuals retained in unsubsidized employment for 6 and 12 months

Category 2

Employer Focus

In **Category 2**, Eligible Entities partner with local employers that need to upskill their workforce to address labor shortages created by negative economic and public health impacts. This partnership requires that the employer identify the specific skillset needed for entry-level positions or those needed to advance their careers. Proposals should include an overview of the existing curricula or address how a customized training approach will support the employer's productivity and increase the skills and competencies of current employees or new hires. Elements of the training strategy should consider short-term credentials for entry positions and long-term training in a career pathway facilitating advancement with the employer or within the industry sector. Applicants may consider incorporating Barrier Reduction funding (defined under Category 4) into the training strategy to support retention for the participant. The list of allowable services is under "Program Services" *(see item #7)* of the NOFO

Eligible Participants

This includes under-employed and under-represented individuals who reside in Illinois and are eligible to work in Illinois. *See Chapter 1 for definitions.*

Performance Goals

1. Number of individuals enrolled in program
2. Number of individuals completing program
3. Number of individuals obtaining credential(s)
4. Number of individuals retained in unsubsidized employment for 6 and 12 months
5. Number of individuals experiencing a wage/benefit increase

Category 3

Youth Focus

In **Category 3,** the program design engages educators and business leaders in providing or creating a combination of academic, employability, and technical skills through three components — contextualized instruction, career development, and support services. The model also must include a strong supportive services component that can include Barrier Reduction funding to ensure youth have the tools to complete the program and be successful in either post-secondary education or the workforce.

Training must include one or a combination of the following industry-recognized credentials; a license recognized by the State or Federal government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree with multiple entries and exit points or entry into a Registered Apprenticeship Program. Employers are included in

leadership roles to guide the development of career pathways and opportunities to experience the workplace through related paid or unpaid work experiences, internships, pre-apprenticeships, or apprenticeships.

These training programs create opportunities for youth to obtain marketable in-demand skills and prepare them for jobs. Partnerships in this category must support and commit to leveraging resources to educate, train, support, and identify youth employment.

Eligible Youth Participants

This includes unemployed, under-employed and at-risk in-school and out- of-school youth ages 16-24 who reside in Illinois and for out of school youth are eligible to work in Illinois. Definitions for "at risk" factors are available at [Workforce and Education Partners Job Training and Economic Development Partner Guide (illinoisworknet.com).](#)

Performance Goals

1. Number of individuals enrolled in program
2. Number of individuals completing program
3. Number of individuals obtaining credential(s)
4. Number of individuals placed in post-secondary education
5. Number of individuals placed in unsubsidized employment
6. Number of individuals retained in unsubsidized employment for 6 and 12 months

Category 4

Barrier Reduction Fund

Barrier Reduction Funding is flexible funding that can be a line item in a grant that includes one or more of the other categories listed above or can be a stand-alone grant if the applicant demonstrates that other funding sources (grant or contract) will support training, work-based learning, and career services. Barrier reduction funding is to increase family stability and job retention by covering accumulated emergency costs for basic needs, such as: housing-related expenses (rent, utilities, etc.), transportation, childcare, digital technology needs, education needs, mental health services, substance abuse services, income support, and work-related supplies that are not typically covered by programmatic supportive services [[20 ILCS 605/605-415(b)](#)].

Barrier Reduction Funds Requirements

At a minimum, all applicants for Barrier Reduction Funding are required to:

- Describe the exact types of barrier reduction funding services to be provided (e.g., housing, transportation, childcare, etc.).

- Demonstrate the applicant has established policies for resource and service coordination with appropriate provider organizations.

- Demonstrate there is a need to use Barrier Reduction Funding to assist program participants in a manner related to either a Job Training and Economic Development Grant or a complementary workforce or job training grant program or contract, including a reason why these services are unavailable through other social service programs.

- Distinguish between when support services will be used compared to Barrier Reduction Funding and why Barrier Reduction Funding is the better option.

- Describe the population of individuals to be served, the region of the State to be served, the types of assistance to be provided to program participants and the estimated total amounts and the amounts to be provided per participant.

- Describe the anticipated outcomes by using the Barrier Reduction Funding to assist program participants.

- Establish criteria, if offering emergency cash assistance, for determining the need, and amount of cash being provided; this also needs to be addressed in the applicant's Barrier Reduction Funding policy (Emergency cash assistance will need prior approval by DCEO).

- Demonstrate that the applicant has policies and procedures to account for the grant funds and prevent fraud or misuse of barrier reduction funds.

Stand-alone Barrier Reduction Grants

For grantees with a stand-alone Barrier Reduction grant, in addition to the above, the grantee will have provided a description of the complementary job training grant or contract, including the source and amount of funds, the type(s) of target population served, the location(s) of the services, a description of the job training program, and a copy of the agreement that provides the complementary funding.

Barrier Reduction Funding requests included as a component of a grant opportunity category listed above must serve individuals listed in the categories. Stand-alone Barrier Reduction Funding grants serve individuals that meet the definition of unemployed, under-employed or under-represented with a barrier to employment and who are or will be receiving job training services through a complementary grant or contract. *See Chapter 1 for definitions.*

In addition, Barrier Reduction Funding in a stand-alone grant, must use funds to assist individuals who:
- Reside in or receive job training services in a qualified census tract or in a disproportionately impacted area (identified at this link illinoisworknet.com/qctdiamap); or
- Who have experienced negative economic or public health impacts, as defined in the JTED rules (56 Ill. Admin. Code 2660.20)

Performance Goals

1. Number of unduplicated individuals receiving barrier reduction services
2. Total number of barrier reduction services provided
3. Total amount of funds expended on barrier reduction services
4. How many individuals received barrier reduction services and are employed

Grant Managers, Monitors, and Regional Administrators

Another key partner is the **JTED Team**. These DCEO employees oversee and support the JTED programs and will be an essential resource for program implementation. Get to know the JTED team!

Partner Roles

While grantees may have expertise in one or more required program areas, it may be necessary for them to leverage the support of strategic partners. Strategic partnerships can be essential to comprehensive program implementation and long-term success.

Below are typical strategic partner roles:

- **Grantees/Recipients**
  A non-state entity receiving an award directly from DCEO to carry out the activities outlined in the award agreement.

- **Subgrantees/Subrecipients**
  A non-state entity that receives a sub-award to carry out part or a portion of a state award. The sub-award creates an assistance relationship between the Grantee/Recipients and the Subgrantee/Subrecipient.

- **Contractors/Vendors**
  A non-state entity that receives a contract to provide goods and/or services for the awarding non-state entity. The contract creates a procurement relationship between the contractor and the Grantee/Recipient and/or the Subgrantee/Subrecipient. This relationship may include an employer contracting with grantees for a work-based learning job site practicum.

Note: A vendor may provide products or services but does not necessarily require a contract. However, it will create a procurement relationship. Refer to Chapter 11: Finances, Records, and Reports for procurement policy information.

Each partner may have a different relationship with the grantee depending on the nature of the agreement, the services provided, and the payment/compensation structure. The terms of the partnership must be clearly delineated in a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU),** which establishes the expectations for each party in the agreement.

Note: For information about relationships that require MOUs see Table 1: Partnership and Provider Relationship Requirements below.

Components of a **Memorandum of Understanding** may include, but not be limited to:

- Parties involved
- Name of project/program/grant
- Purpose of agreement
- Scope of work
- Responsibilities per party/entity
- Mutual understandings
- Communication/Reporting expectations
- Recordkeeping, maintenance, and retention
- Duration of agreement (start and end date)

Partners may fill a particular role and have specific grantee reporting requirements. Broadly speaking, partners relate to the grant in the following ways:

Grantees/Recipients
- Are officially on record for the grant and can receive the actual funds for the grant through a grant agreement with DCEO.
- Require an MOU with subgrantees if there is no exchange of money. If there is an exchange of money, there should be a sub agreement.
- Must report program participation and outcomes through the periodic performance report, periodic financial report, and other required reporting through the JTED Reporting System.
- Must maintain program documentation for five years.

Subgrantees/Subrecipients
- Are officially on record for the grant (**note**: *if this is a program requirement*).
- Require an MOU with Grantees/Recipients if there is no exchange of money. If there is an exchange of money, there should be a sub agreement.
- Must report program participation and outcomes to the Grantees/Recipients.
- Must maintain program documentation for 3-5 years (**note**: *this must be in line with the funding source and outlined in the grant agreement*).
- Provide services and outcomes that are reported and managed by the Grantees/Recipients.
- Are supervised and monitored by the Grantees/Recipients.

Contractors/Vendors
- Are not officially on record for the grant agreement.
- Are compensated by the Grantees/Recipients or Subgrantees/Subrecipients.
- If there is not exchange of money, an MOU may not be required but is recommended. If there is an exchange of money, there should be a contract agreement.
- Must report activities and services per the requirements of the Grantees/Recipients or Subgrantees/Subrecipients.
- Are supervised and monitored by the Grantees/Recipients or Subgrantees/Subrecipients.

It is important to note that contractors/vendors do not have to be a part of the grant contract, but utilizing a contractor/vendor will create a procurement relationship.

Note: *If an MOU was submitted for an agreement that includes the exchange of money, they will need to be updated with sub agreements. Please see sample MOU, sub agreement, and contract agreement in Partner Guide.*

Note: *For more information about* Contractual Services see (2 CFR 200.318) and Subawards see (200.92). *For more information about procurement policies see Section 11: Finances, Records, and Reports.*

Table 1: Partnership and Provider Relationship Requirements

Requirements	Grantees/ Recipients	Subgrantees/ Subrecipients	Contractors/ Vendors
On Record for the Grant	Yes	Yes	

Receives Funds Directly from DCEO	Yes		
Receives Funds from Grantee through Subgrant/Contract		Yes	Yes
Requires an MOU	Yes	Yes	No
Must Report Program Participation and Outcomes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Must Maintain 3-5 yrs. of Program Documentation	Yes	Yes	

Remember that the main Grantee/Recipient will be held accountable by DCEO for all grant outcomes and for following all of the required program guidance. If a Subgrantee/Subrecipient or a Contractor/Vendor is not performing as agreed, they can be removed and/or replaced. However, a **Grantee/Recipient is legally responsible for executing the project as agreed with DCEO.**

Private Business Vocational Schools (PBVS)

An entity is required to submit an application to IBHE relative to the PBVS Act of 2012 when seeking to operate in Illinois, offer programs/courses of study in Illinois, add an extension site, change ownership of the institution, relocate the main campus, make changes to a program or the institution, or to be declared exempt from IBHE oversight.

Approved institutions are required to submit an Annual Renewal application yearly, then every fifth year a 5th Year Permit of Approval application is required.

Note: *Any business entity not governed by a certifying body (i.e. ICCB), must comply with PBVS. See https://www.ibhe.org/pbvsapplications.html for more information.*

Steps to obtaining PBVS approval:

1. Register
2. Select the appropriate application to (Permit of Approval or Exemption Application)
3. Once the Permit of Approval Application is complete, you will be required to submit a New Program of Study Application for each proposed program.

Questions related to your specific institution can be asked in your institution portal. If you have system issues, contact: pbvs_apps@ibhe.org

Note: State Food Safety Food Handler Training is approved with IDPH. Commercial Driver's License (CLD) is approved by the Secretary of State.

Equity Values

It is important that ALL partners understand that equity is the foundation of the JTED programs. **Trust** should be established in a way that allows for honest dialogue with partners, to best support customers. Trust is essential for building a diverse workforce pipeline in the state of Illinois.

ALL partners should be educated on:

- Equity values
- Diversity among customers
- Diversity among community

Each of these are critical for removing barriers and providing customers with the support they need to be successful.

Note: For more information regarding educational opportunities, see Chapter 9: Professional Development.

Trauma-informed practice is the ability to recognize the link between trauma, social, and academic challenges. It helps ensure that people feel safe and are not re-traumatized by their engagement with the JTED Programs. Trauma informed practices should be a component of the professional development provided for partners with the goal of enabling them to best support program participants. Trauma-informed practices can help cultivate trust. **Trust** should be established in a way that allows for honest dialogue between partners and JTED customers.

Note: For more information about the JTED program culture, core values and overall equity focus, see Chapter 2 Program Culture.

Developing Partnerships

The success of the JTED Programs depend on grantees' ability to **develop partnerships** with external organizations, such as organized labor, employers, community-based organizations, and workforce agencies for apprenticeship placement, support service referrals, best practice sharing, and more.
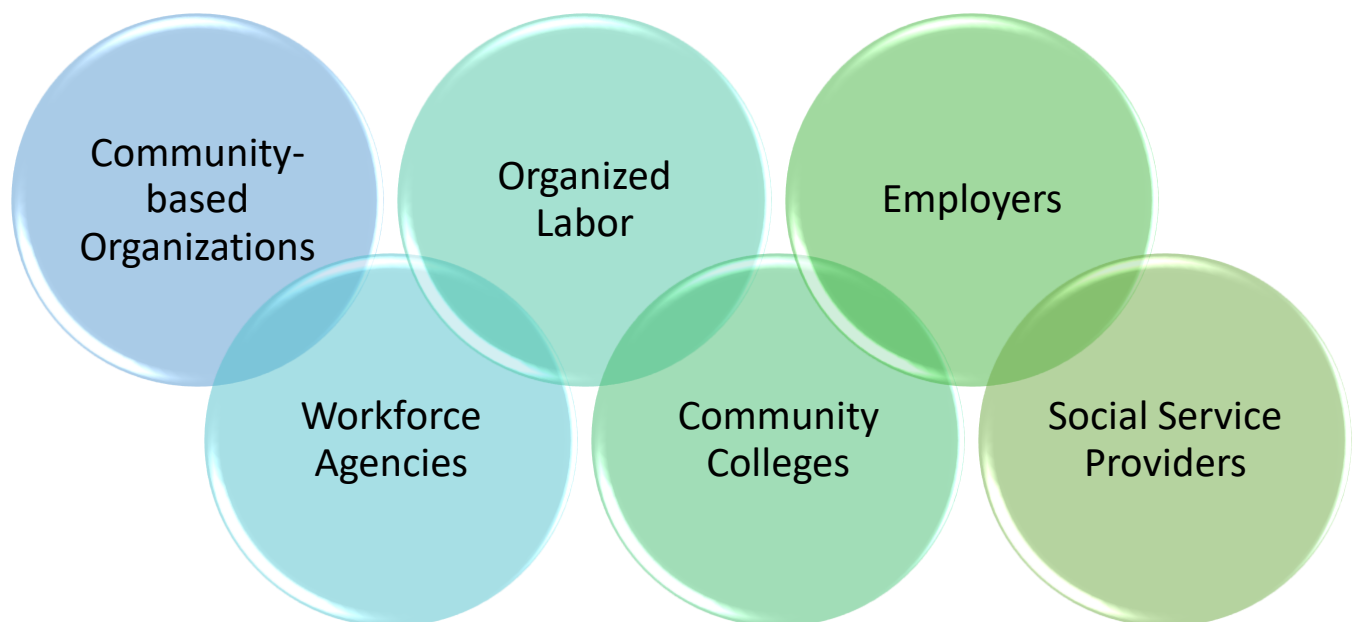
Many of these partnerships may already exist. Continue cultivating these relationships. Consider which type of partnerships will support the different program categories.

Outreach and Recruitment

What organizations might help with outreach and recruitment? To recruit participants, consider developing relationships with high school counselors, community-based organizations, or reentry organizations.

Reach out to the local Illinois workNet/American Jobs Center, or the Regional Economic Development (RED) Team for ideas on recruiting participants. The QCT-DIA Map Search tool helps you identify if an address is in a QCT or DIA defined area.

Reach out to these organizations and consider ways to:
- Co-host outreach events
- Spread the word about the program through fliers, posters, and word-of-mouth
- Attend meetings with their clients to share information about the program

Support Service Delivery

JTED offers a wide variety of support services. Still, it is unlikely that one program will be able to provide all the barrier reduction services in-house. Leveraging formal and informal partnerships and relationships for referrals can help meet the needs of program participants. Referrals to other organizations will be much more effective if relationships are developed beforehand. Reach out to organizations that provide food, housing, transportation assistance, legal assistance, mental health services, substance use treatment, childcare, and more. Learn how to work together to support participants. Discuss how services will be paid for and how JTED can support service delivery.

Training Program Delivery

Work-based learning is a crucial—and required—element of the JTED training. If partnerships do not currently exist with employers or other organizations for work-based learning elements, developing these relationships must be a priority.

Explore how employers or apprenticeship programs might:
- Provide job site practicums so your participants can have hands-on experience at a real job site.
- Provide job shadowing or field trips so that participants can see workers in action.
- Provide class visits so that participants can ask questions about employment.

Additionally, consider developing relationships with external education providers for tutoring or other barrier-reduction services for participants with special needs.

Apprenticeship Placement

The program aims to help participants enter and succeed in registered apprenticeships, as appropriate. Grantees must develop relationships with registered apprenticeships to facilitate apprenticeship placement. This relationship may involve learning how many openings they have per year, exploring the application process, and structuring the training schedule so that participants can enter an apprenticeship program right after they complete the training. It may involve learning about the skills that apprenticeship programs expect new apprentices to have and helping participants develop these skills. The following resources can help you find registered apprenticeship programs:
- Apprenticeship Job Finder

- Approved Occupations for Registered Apprenticeships

Job Placement

Because not all participants will enter apprenticeship programs (many may be waitlisted, and others may decide that they want to get a job instead), it will be essential to develop relationships with employers in the respective industries and discuss how JTED pipeline of graduates can support their hiring needs.

RED Team

The Regional Economic Development (RED) Team can assist with connecting to business partners. When communicating with employers and apprenticeship programs, identify the value proposition: what's in it for them?

By partnering with your program, employers and apprenticeship programs can:
- Access qualified candidates with basic construction skills, fundamental clean energy knowledge, and essential employability skills.
- Meet minimum equity or supplier diversity requirements for participation in state solar, wind, and energy efficiency programs.
- Make commitments to diversify their workforce.
- Grow their businesses to take advantage of clean energy project funding.

Managing Relationships with Partners

Memorandum of Understanding

Establish a **Memorandum of Understanding** with partners to clarify the expectations of the relationship. Especially with employers and apprenticeship programs, it is essential to explain what is expected of them in terms of:

- Hiring program graduates.
- Offering work-based learning opportunities.
- Supporting participants after hire.
- Tracking outcomes.
- Communicating with staff about participant needs.

How will you share information about participants? How will you continue to support participants who are hired by employers? What information will you need from them to report program outcomes? These issues will be addressed in subsequent chapters.

A sample Memorandum of Understanding can be found in the Partner Guide.

Contracts and Sub-Agreements

Establish a **Contract** or **Sub-Agreement.**

Leveraged Resources

JTED encourages grantees to maximize the use of their resources and minimize duplication of efforts through system alignment, leveraging alternate funding, network building, and information sharing. Leveraged resources can include the following:

- **Co-enrollment**
  In addition to enrolling in the JTED Program, participants may also qualify for other programs, such as the [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#) (WIOA), that can offer critical services for participants. JTED allows co-enrollment with specific programs; however, it is essential to note eligibility or ineligibility for other services does not and should not impact a grantee's decision to accept the participant into the pre-apprenticeship program.

  Note: *Participants cannot be co-enrolled in another program (such as the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program).*

- **Alternate Funding**
  JTED does not require grantees to seek out additional programming funding. However, if grantees are interested in securing alternate funding or in-kind resources for service support or to help improve the cost-effectiveness of their programming, this is allowable and encouraged. Various other state, federal, and private programs exist and may provide an opportunity to expand the capacity of programming.

- **Service Networks**
  Many grantees have informal or formal relationships with other community-based organizations. These networks can be invaluable in helping to enhance existing programs and services. Informal relationships may consist of referral networks, while formal relationships may be solidified in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Grantees that leverage their networks may provide participants with a more robust menu of support services.

- **Resource and Best Practice Sharing**
  JTED will offer grantees a suite of tools and resources based on industry best practices available throughout their grant year. Grantees are encouraged to utilize the tools available in this manual and in the Partner Guide. JTED also encourages grantees to contact their fellow JTED grantees to pull from the network's collective knowledge and experience. DCEO will also host technical assistance webinars and other events to share best practices and provide a space to network among grantees.