H-1B TECHHIRE

H-1B TechHire Grants:

Grantee Technical Assistance Guide

The U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Division of Strategic Investments has selected Jobs for the Future (JFF) and its partners Maher & Maher and ICF International to provide technical assistance (TA) to H-1B TechHire grantees throughout the four-year grant cycle.[1] JFF and its partners will provide a comprehensive array of programmatic TA as well as supporting the performance reporting TA provided by ETA staff.
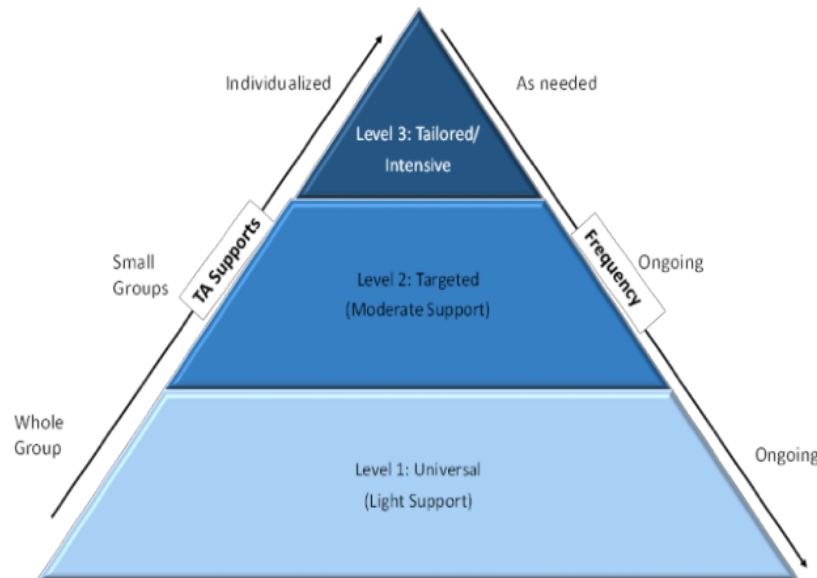
TechHire TA Activities
TA Framework and Overall Approach

The programmatic TA provided to TechHire grantees will be modeled on the learning framework below and will include three levels of assistance: universal, targeted, and tailored/intensive. TA delivered at the universal levels will engage a large number of grantees and will foster a peer learning community through activities such as webinars, the virtual institute, and in-person convenings. Targeted activities will be tailored to the challenges experienced by a smaller group of grantees and will be delivered in small group format (e.g., peer learning groups on a particular topic)—though it will be open to any grantee. Intensive TA will take place through activities such as regular coaching between a grantee and assigned TA coach.

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[1] Jobs for the Future is a national education and workforce development nonprofit that builds educational and economic opportunity for underserved populations in the United States. More information is available about the TA team via the following links for Jobs for the Future and its partners Maher & Maher and ICF International.

Through this approach, grantees will have access to a robust set of regularly-scheduled TechHire programmatic TA activities, including:

- Coaching Calls: TA Coaches will hold monthly calls with grantees to discuss progress and provide them with customized TA.
- Peer Learning Groups: These quarterly small-group discussions will focus on a specific topic and will be facilitated by the TechHire TA team. These discussions will provide an opportunity to learn about best practices from fellow grantees and to interact with expert practitioners.
- Virtual TA Meetings: These webinars and peer consultancy sessions will take place approximately every other month and will draw on innovative web-based formats (e.g., facilitated chats, interactive webinars) to engage grantees and convey information on key programmatic topics.
- TechHire Online CoP: This online platform, located on www.WorkforceGPS.org, will be launched during the summer of 2017 and will provide a place for grantees to engage virtually with fellow grantees, interact with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and the coaching team, and to access resources relevant to their TechHire grant project.

The TA team will provide regular updates to grantees on upcoming TA events via email sent from TechHire@dol.gov; in addition, information will be available through the online TechHire CoP.

Programmatic TA

Programmatic TA aims to provide grantees and their partners with customized TA supports to help them achieve the goals and the objectives of the TechHire grant program. The purpose of this TA is to provide grantees with programmatic support in the development, implementation, and operation of their TechHire grants. TA will address topics relevant to grantees and will be offered through a variety of formats, such as webinars, virtual institutes, peer consultancies, a TechHire online CoP, and in-person convenings. In addition, each grantee will have a coach who will work closely with them to help them address their specific programmatic needs. This guide provides a detailed overview of these programmatic TA activities and resources TechHire grantees will have access to with the grant and provides an overview of the TA team.

Throughout the grant period, the TA team will solicit ongoing feedback from grantees in various formats to understand their TA needs, including through regular coaching calls and opportunities to provide post-webinar feedback. This will allow grantees to directly inform the TechHire TA activities and enable the TA team to provide programmatic TA topics most relevant to grantees—both individually and as a group.

Potential topics for programmatic TA activities include:
- Participant recruitment and outreach
- Employer engagement and building industry-aligned partnerships
- Using customer-centered design
- Planning for sustainability
- How to effectively tailor training strategies to targeted populations
- Collecting, analyzing, and using performance data to improve outcomes

In addition, specific grantee TA needs and priorities will also be identified through the Needs Assessment process, which is described below.

TechHire Grantee Needs Assessment and Customized TA Plan

TechHire grantees will be contacted by their assigned coaches. Through the coaching process, grantees will engage in the Needs Assessment process with their coach during the Spring of 2017.[2] The Needs Assessment will provide an opportunity for grantees and coaches to engage in a detailed and candid conversation on each grantee project's strengths and to identify

[2] Timeline for Needs Assessment: The Needs Assessment will be complete by mid-June 2017; coaches will share customized TA plans with grantees and incorporate their feedback by mid-July 2017.

This H-1B TechHire TA Guide was developed by Jobs for the Future (Contract DOL-ETA-17-F-00005) on behalf of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.

specific areas in which they would benefit from TA activities. The Needs Assessment will address a variety of topics, including:
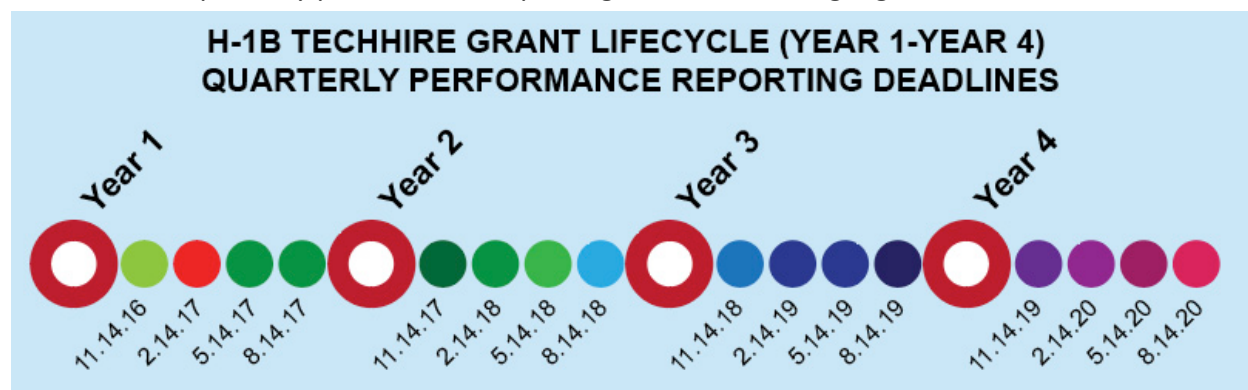
- Programmatic characteristics
- Industry-specific knowledge
- Serving specific populations
- Capacity for long-term impact
- Organizational structure
- Performance reporting processes

Based upon both the Needs Assessment and information from the grantees' Quarterly Narrative Reports, coaches will develop a customized TA plan for each grantee. This plan will summarize recommendations from the Needs Assessment, identify the top three TA needs for each grantee, provide suggested courses of action to meet those needs, and identify relevant resources for the grantee.

Performance Reporting TA - Workforce Innovation Performance System (WIPS)

To complement the programmatic TA described above, grantees will also have regular opportunities to participate in performance reporting TA. The TechHire TA team will provide grantees with a variety of training materials—including web-based tutorials, user guides, and webinars—related to performance reporting. In addition, the TA team will hold quarterly conference calls with grantees in advance of the quarterly reporting deadlines and provide small-group and individualized TA on an as-needed basis.[3]

The TechHire quarterly performance reporting deadlines are highlighted below:

H-1B TECHHIRE GRANT LIFECYCLE (YEAR 1-YEAR 4)
QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORTING DEADLINES

Year 1 — 11.14.16 — 2.14.17 — 5.14.17 — 8.14.17
Year 2 — 11.14.17 — 2.14.18 — 5.14.18 — 8.14.18
Year 3 — 11.14.18 — 2.14.19 — 5.14.19 — 8.14.19
Year 4 — 11.14.19 — 2.14.20 — 5.14.20 — 8.14.20

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[3] Note: TechHire performance reporting TA activities will also include H-1B America's Promise and Strengthening Working Families Initiative (SWFI) grantees.

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Throughout the grant period of performance, grantees' specific needs will be reassessed based upon information gleaned from quarterly performance reports and feedback from grantees. Potential topics for performance reporting TA include:

- Overview of the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS)
- Guidance on reporting requirements, such as:
  - Required data elements and their definitions
  - Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) form and aggregation rules
  - Quarterly Narrative Reports (QNR)
- Promising practices for collecting and submitting participant-level data
- Preparing quality QNRs

Grantees are encouraged to email TechHire@dol.gov with specific TA requests or questions related to performance reporting.

Staffing: The H-1B TechHire Technical Assistance Team

H-1B TechHire grantees will have access to a highly-qualified team of SMEs and TA Coaches. Throughout the project, members of the TA team will collaborate closely with both the Division of Strategic Investments (DSI), the DOL National Program Office for TechHire grants, and regional Federal Project Officers (FPOs). Please note, the Coach's roles do not supplant the role of monitoring, oversight, and TA provided by FPOs. Examples of topics typically handled by the FPO and TA Coach include:

Federal Project Officer's Guidance	TA Coach's Guidance
Clarification of H-1B FOA, including definitions	Organizational structure: staffing, systems, and processes
Statement of work modifications	Participant outreach and recruitment strategies
Fiscal questions, including allowable expenditures and budget	Participant services, including case management, supportive services, and job placement
Quarterly performance outcomes against target outcomes	Training design and implementation
Other policy questions, as they arise	Employer engagement and participant placement

The SMEs and TA Coaches have extensive backgrounds in topics critical to TechHire grantee success, including working with specific target populations, customer-centered design, trauma-informed care and supportive services, H-1B occupations and industries, and regional and sector strategies. Additional information on the team of coaches and SMEs, including their areas of expertise, is included in the section that follows.

TechHire Coaching Team

Coach	Grantee	City and State	DOL Region
Christy Montgomery Led national project with ETA, coaching teams on Customer centered design through human-centered design methodology; 6 years as WIA youth program manager; Experience teaching ELL students. **Email: cmontgomery@mahernet.com**	BridgeValley Community & Technical College	South Charleston, WV	Region 2
	Indiana AFL-CIO Labor Institute for Training, Inc.	Indianapolis, IN	Region 5
	James Sprunt Community College	Kenansville, NC	Region 3
	Pellissippi State Community College	Knox, TN	Region 3
	Youth Policy Institute	Los Angeles, CA	Region 6
Jessica Kendall Served as coach for states in the TANF Policy Academy, linking disconnected youth and TANF recipients to WIOA training and employment resources; designed and oversaw coaching for federal Health Professions Opportunity Grant recipients. **Email: jessica.kendall@icf.com**	Jobs for the Future, Inc.	Boston, MA	Region 1
	Mount Wachusett Community College	Gardner, MA	Region 1
	North Central Texas College	Gainesville, FL	Region 3
	State Technical College of Missouri	Linn, MO	Region 5
	The Westchester County Department of Social Services	White Plains, NY	Region 1
Lynn Bajorek Provide coaching to Workforce Innovation Fund grantees on systems alignment and integration of business services. Completed Illinois environmental scan of cross-program business services and recommendations for integration. Supported development and updating of an integrated service delivery toolkit. **Email: lbajorek@mahernet.com**	Citadel Community Development Corporation	Colton, CA	Region 6
	Exceptional Family Center	Bakersfield, CA	Region 6
	Goodwill Industries International, Inc.	Rockville, MD	Region 2
	Miami Dade College	Miami, FL	Region 3
Matt Poland Over 13 years' experience in workforce development program design and implementation targeted to serve youth; extensive experience providing TA to grantees on employer engagement and other topics. **Email: mpoland@jff.org**	Chippewa Valley Technical College	Eau Claire, WI	Region 5
	Clackamas Community College	Oregon City, OR	Region 6
	Seattle Central College	Seattle, WA	Region 6
	UAW-Labor Employment and Training Corporation	Cerritos, CA	Region 6
	Worksystems, Inc.	Portland, OR	Region 6

Coach	Grantee	City and State	DOL Region
Randy Wilson Experience coaching and provide TA to grantees in a variety of programs designs, implementation and subject matter areas, with emphasis on developing and advancing the health care workforce; coauthored "Six Effective Approaches for TechHire Initiatives, Lessons from the Field" (May 2016). **Email: rwilson@jff.org**	Full Employment Council, Inc.	Kansas City, MO	Region 5
	Midlands Technical College	Columbia Richland, SC	Region 3
	Suffolk County Community College	Selden, NY	Region 1
	Tampa Bay Workforce Alliance, Inc. (DBA CareerSource Tampa Bay)	Tampa, FL	Region 3
	Waukesha-Ozaukee-Washington Workforce Development Board, Inc.	Pewaukee, WI	Region 5

Coach	Grantee	City and State	DOL Region
Todd Cohen Experience training and coaching on customer centered design; coached ETA Customer Centered Design teams; Led ETA's Sector Strategies TA initiative; Supported organizational change initiatives. **Email: tcohen@mahernet.com**	Daytona State College	Daytona Beach, FL	Region 3
	Flying HIGH Inc.	Youngstown, OH	Region 5
	Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana	Indianapolis, IN	Region 5
	Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board	Waterbury, CT	Region 1
	Polk State College	Winter Haven, FL	Region 3
Venessa Marks Experience providing TA for workforce development programs for out-of-school and transitional-aged youth, including Year Up, the KIPP Charter School Network, and OIC of South Florida. Project Manager for the Reentry Employment Opportunities benchmarking study, analyzing the practices of high-performing employment-focused reentry programs. **Email: venessa.marks@icf.com**	Atlanta Technical College	Atlanta, GA	Region 3
	Atlanta Workforce Development Agency	Atlanta, GA	Region 3
	Everett Community College	Everett, WA	Region 6
	Research Foundation of CUNY on behalf of LaGuardia Community College	Long Island City, NY	Region 1
	Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico	Albuquerque, NM	Region 4
Silvia Middleton Expertise in providing technical assistance and facilitation for local and statewide projects in workforce system assessment and improvement, industry sector strategies, talent pipeline development, and regional strategic planning and implementation among local and regional one-stop system partners. **Email: smiddleton@mahernet.com**	Coastal Counties Workforce Inc.	Brunswick, ME	Region 1
	Employ Milwaukee	Milwaukee, WI	Region 5
	Montgomery College	Rockville, MD	Region 2
	Wake Technical Community College	Raleigh, NC	Region 3
	United Migrant Opportunity Services/UMOS, Inc.	Milwaukee, WI	Region 5

To Request Technical Assistance

We are excited to work with you to ensure the success of your H-1B TechHire grant programs!

If you have any suggestions, including potential topics for future TA opportunities, please contact the H-1B TechHire mailbox at TechHire@dol.gov. Please remember to include your grant name and number, and to provide a courtesy copy to your FPO.

Additional Information

In the Appendix to this TA Guide, a set of FAQs related to TechHire TA activities is included for your reference.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Who are the TechHire SMEs? What types of opportunities will grantees have to interact with them?**

   The TechHire SMEs bring extensive knowledge of H-1B occupations and industries, meeting the needs of the TechHire target populations subpopulations, and effective program design and implementation. SMEs engaged in this project include:
   - Beth Brinley, Vice President, Workforce Innovation, Maher & Maher
   - Brent Orrell, Vice President, ICF International
   - Carrie Yeats, Director, State and Regional Workforce Solutions, Maher & Maher
   - Carroll McGillin, Independent Consultant (formerly with Cisco Networking Academy)
   - Cynthia Sherlock, Principal, ICF International
   - Gretchen Koch, Executive Director, Creating IT Futures Foundation
   - Heide Wrigley, Literacywork International
   - Lucretia Murphy, Director, Jobs for the Future
   - Russell Harty, Senior IT Employment Services Associate, Upwardly Global
   - Terry Grobe, Director, Jobs for the Future

   SMEs will participate in both in-person and virtual convenings, some peer learning activities, webinars, and other TA activities during the grant period. In addition, SMEs will periodically engage with grantees through the online TechHire CoP, (e.g., by facilitating a discussion thread). Please work with your coach to coordinate collaboration with SMEs on an as needed basis.

2. **Are grantees able to give feedback on TA that's useful, as well as TA that is not working?**

   There will be regular opportunities for grantees to provide feedback to the TA team. A grantee should provide this information directly to the coach or submit feedback to the H-1B TechHire mailbox at TechHire@dol.gov. In addition, there will be opportunities to provide feedback directly to the TA team, which will be provided after webinars and other TA activities. These feedback mechanisms are anonymous and aim to gauge the extent to which grantee found a particular TA activity useful.

3. **Are grantees required to attend TA events? Is there a minimum amount of TA activities that grantees must participate in?**
   All grantees are strongly encouraged to participate in the universal TA activities offered to all grantees, the specific small-group sessions that are relevant to their program and TA needs, and their monthly coaching calls.

4. **How closely do grantees work with coaches? Can a grantee switch/request another coach?**

   Coaches will hold monthly meetings with each grantee and will work directly with them to implement the grantee's customized TA plan. Every effort was made to match grantees to a coach with relevant experience and expertise during the matching process. If a grantee would like to request another coach, please email the TechHire mailbox. While the TA team anticipates that such requests would be unusual, they will be honored to the extent possible.

5. **How can grantees access TA on performance reporting?**

   The TA team will develop web-based tutorials, host webinars, and hold regularly-scheduled virtual office hours to support your grants performance reporting needs. The team will also conduct individual performance-reporting TA calls with grantees as needed. Please submit specific requests or TA needs related to performance reporting to the TechHire mailbox (TechHire@dol.gov).

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