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Institute for Local Government Receives Millions in Grant Funding to Grow Non-Traditional Registered Apprenticeships in the Public Sector

New Initiative Will Champion Equitable Access to High Quality Local Government Careers and Address Pervasive Recruitment, Retention, and Diversity Challenges

SACRAMENTO, CA – The Institute for Local Government (ILG)—a nonprofit organization that provides education, training, and capacity building to cities, counties, and special districts—has been awarded numerous grants to help California local governments build public sector apprenticeship programs.

The awards totaling over \$2 million from the Irvine Foundation, the Broad Foundation, and the California Workforce Development Board’s [High Road Training Partnerships Initiative](#) will enable ILG to advance their work building a strong, diverse pipeline of skilled talent for the local government sector.

“This funding comes at a critical time when public sector job vacancy rates hover near 20% and California’s local governments are on the verge of a hiring and retention crisis,” said Erica L. Manuel, ILG CEO and Executive Director. “That, coupled with the imperative to expand economic mobility and job access for diverse, underserved and hard-to reach populations, makes apprenticeships a perfect tool for the workforce development toolbox.”

Apprenticeships combine education with paid on-the-job training, and have a long history in areas like public safety and construction. Increasingly, apprenticeships are also gaining momentum in non-traditional sectors such as human resources, mental and behavioral health, accounting, and informational technology. This promising trend can help local governments hire for positions that are in high demand and notoriously difficult to fill. It can also expand economic opportunity and career mobility for traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations by minimizing some of the cost of higher education and training, allowing employees to “earn while they learn.”

Over the next few years, ILG will develop a scalable framework for a statewide Registered Apprenticeships Program for the local government sector. In addition to building the infrastructure to become a statewide Intermediary that helps local governments implement non-

traditional apprenticeships with specialized support, educational resources, and deep technical assistance, ILG will also establish a technology hub for apprentice tracking and management, and expand partnerships with educational institutions, labor agencies, unions, workforce boards, and community-based organizations.

“Our initiative will be collaborative and customized to meet the unique needs of local governments and the important stakeholders that are the backbone of civil service, like our unions. Together, we will work to craft an apprenticeship model that offers a win-win for employers and employees,” stated Manuel.

The approach will be informed by research—ILG has already conducted focus groups and needs assessments to better understand workforce challenges and opportunities for local governments with more formal research on recruitment and retention best practices to be published soon.

The framework and structure will be developed by ILG with strategic counsel from a statewide Joint Apprenticeship Council to help ensure adequate representation of key stakeholders and deep subject matter expertise. The application window for Letters of Interest for the At-Large Members of the Council will be announced soon.

After the planning phase is complete, ILG will launch a demonstration pilot program of up to ten California cities, counties, and special districts to explore non-traditional registered apprenticeships. The pilot will form the basis of a scalable turnkey solution for jurisdictions of all sizes, geographies, and demographics.

“Apprenticeship programs can democratize access to top-notch training and high-quality public sector jobs for individuals from diverse backgrounds, all while meeting local government’s evolving needs,” Manuel said.

This month, it was announced that ILG was also part of the only successful proposing team in California for an additional \$6 million Apprenticeships Building America grant from the US Department of Labor. That federal grant application was developed in partnership with NextGen Policy and the Clover Agency, and that project was developed to operate in tandem with ILG’s existing efforts to grow registered apprenticeships in the public sector.

Local governments that would like to learn more about ILG’s work in public sector workforce development or how to participate in the non-traditional registered apprenticeships pilot program can email apprenticeships@ca-ilg.org and visit the ILG website to [sign up to receive updates](#).

For more information about the Apprenticeships Building America Grant, [read the press release here](#).

About the Institute for Local Government

The Institute for Local Government (ILG) is a nonprofit nonpartisan organization that supports local governments with tackling their most pressing and evolving issues related to workforce

development, leadership, ethics, public engagement, and climate action. Since 1955, ILG has provided conscious counsel, trainings, resources, and technical assistance to empower and educate local agency leaders and deliver real-world expertise to help them navigate complex issues, increase their capacity, and build trust in their communities. As the nonprofit affiliate of the League of California Cities, the California State Association of Counties, and the California Special Districts Association, ILG proudly serves municipalities large and small, urban, and rural throughout California.

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