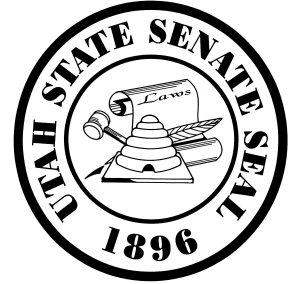




Performance Note HB0327S01 - Rural Online Initiative

Sponsor: Rep. Noel, Michael E.



Performance Note Report

Author: David Pulsipher

Agency: State Board of Regents

Funding For:

New Services or Benefit

Public Benefit:

Purpose: The purpose of the Rural Online Initiative (ROI) Pilot Program is to provide Utah's rural workforce and businesses with an agency that provides education/training and services for online opportunities in remote employment, freelance work, and online commerce.

Services: The ROI Pilot Program will educate, coach, and mentor members of the rural workforce who are currently unemployed, underemployed, or have dropped out of the workforce to obtain freelance jobs, remote employment, or online commerce opportunities.

Expected Outcome: The expected outcome of the ROI Pilot Program is for it to become the means by which the rural workforce and businesses are educated and trained about online opportunities in remote employment, freelance work, and online commerce. It is expected that this program will have an effect on: 1. Reducing unemployment in rural counties. 2. Reemployment of citizens who have dropped out of the workforce. 3. Reducing post high school graduation relocation numbers (those who want to stay have options). 4. Improving the viability of rural businesses through online expansion. 5. Improving median household income in rural counties.

Implementations and Resources: Utah State University Extension will hire the following positions to implement the 3-year ROI Pilot Program: Program Director; Extension Educators (3 positions); Staff Assistant. Utah State University Extension's Washington County Director, Paul Hill, will advise these employees in implementing and evaluating this new program.

How: The ROI Pilot Program will be led by a Director with three Extension Educators in the field that will target adults, high school students, and small businesses in rural areas that have higher than average unemployment, depressed economies, and/or areas with high relocation numbers upon graduation. The Extension Educators in the ROI unit will organize 36 events each year for the targeted clientele. These community outreach and education events will be in the form of workshops, training sessions, and town halls. This staff will also provide 1-on-1 coaching and mentorship to clientele via face-to-face, webinars, and mobile Slack channels. The Program Director will oversee the budget and approve all reimbursement for skill development and certification that will allow them to rapidly respond to market demand in the freelance economy. This person will also partner with the Department of Workforce Services to recruit and serve clients as well as companies like Pluralsight that are technology learning

platforms. The Program Director will also establish an agency of Utah freelancers on (but not limited to) upwork.com where Utah employers can hire them for freelance jobs.

Performance Measures

Goal

Title: Provide education/training and services for online opportunities in remote employment, freelance work, and online commerce.

Description: 1. Develop and deliver curriculum and educational programs that train Utah's rural workforce to generate income through freelance work and business revenue through online commerce. 2. Recruit clients to engage in ROI's program offerings utilizing a combination of traditional marketing and social media marketing, as well as Town Hall meetings. 3. Provide coaching and ongoing education/mentorship to clients participating in the ROI program. 4. Manage and oversee skill-based education (tuition) reimbursement program for clients developing skills for freelance work and remote employment. 5. Guide and direct clients who have needs outside of the ROI program to appropriate resources within SBDC, GOED, DWS, and World Trade Center.

Collection Method: 1. A pre/post Qualtrics evaluation instrument will be used to measure the effectiveness of the ROI curriculum and workshops that teach clients how to generate income through freelance work and business revenue through online commerce. Extension Faculty will perform a T-test to determine that the reported learning impacts were statistically significant and due to participating in the ROI program's workshops. ROI staff will be randomly selecting clients for qualitative telephone interviews to further measure the impact of the program's goals and objectives. After analyzing the quantitative and qualitative evaluation data, impact statements will be recorded and shared with the Economic Development and Workforce Services Interim Committee. 2. By creating a freelance agency through (but not limited to) upwork.com, ROI clients will set-up profiles that will allow the Program Manager to collect data on the number of freelancers in Utah, their job success rate on the site, the amount of income they generate from freelancing, their skills and certifications they possess and acquire, as well as their work history and feedback from past freelance jobs. This data will be used to create baseline metrics that will give the Program Director the ability to manage growth and set program goals.

	2018	2019	2020
Target	0.00	0.00	0.00
Baseline	0.00	0.00	0.00

By rule, performance notes are provided by the governmental entity that will supervise the new agency or administer the new program. Performance notes are not written by the Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst.