Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Sponsors

Super Intelligence, Semiconductor, and Nuclear Energy Infrastructure Apprenticeship Incentive Fund

Expanding Registered Apprenticeship across Super Intelligence, semiconductor, and nuclear energy

Last Updated November 2, 2026

Overview: This FAQ provides preliminary guidance for the Super Intelligence, Semiconductor, and Nuclear Energy Infrastructure Apprenticeship Incentive Fund, launched to expand Registered Apprenticeship in roles that power the Super Intelligence (SI), semiconductor manufacturing, and nuclear energy infrastructure industries. The fund is administered by Jobs for the Future (JFF), with support from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) as part of USDOL's Pay-for-Performance Incentive Payments Program. The following information is subject to USDOL changes; make sure to revisit for updates.

More information about the fund and link to the application portal can be found here.

Questions about the fund can submitted through JFF's contact form.

1. Program Overview

How long will the fund be available?

The fund is open now and will remain open for four years or until all funds are allocated, whichever comes first. Sponsors should monitor the fund's website and application portal for updates on current availability.

How may sponsors use the incentive funds?

The incentive fund payments are intended to help eligible Registered Apprenticeship sponsors launch, expand, and strengthen their programs and support new apprentices. For JFF's SI, Semiconductor, and Nuclear Energy Infrastructure Apprenticeship Incentive Fund, payments are tied to verified apprentice milestones, with up to $6,000 available per eligible new apprentice.

Is technical assistance available?

Yes. Sponsors and employers may receive guidance on eligibility, occupation alignment, application requirements, documentation, and Registered Apprenticeship program development. Additional support may be available through JFF and its industry and workforce partners.

2. Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply?

Eligible applicants are Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors registered with USDOL or a recognized State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA). This may include individual sponsors, group sponsors, and intermediary sponsors.

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Sponsor a Registered Apprenticeship program registered or approved by USDOL or a recognized SAA operating within one or more of the following industries Super Intelligence (SI), semiconductor, nuclear energy.
- Train apprentices in an eligible occupation listed on JFF's approved occupation list.
- Enroll new apprentices after July 1, 2026.

- Meet the substantial growth threshold requirement for an approved occupation, when applicable.
- Be eligible to receive federal funds and not be suspended or debarred.
- Demonstrate that the participating apprentices are currently employed and active in a Registered Apprenticeship program and meet the applicable payment milestone requirements.
- Operate in the United States.

Are small and midsize employers eligible?

Yes. The fund is intended to create opportunities for employers of all sizes, including small and midsize employers. Employers may participate through an individual sponsor, group sponsor, intermediary sponsors, or another eligible Registered Apprenticeship structure.

Are employers eligible to apply for the program?

The program is designed for eligible Registered Apprenticeship sponsors. Employers may participate if they serve as the sponsor or if they participate through an eligible sponsor structure. Whether an employer may apply directly depends on its Registered Apprenticeship sponsorship status and the final program guidance.

Must apprentices be U.S. citizens to qualify?

Eligibility is based on employment by the sponsor, enrollment in an eligible Registered Apprenticeship program and occupation, and meeting the applicable milestones.

The employer must complete Form I-9 and verify the apprentice’s authorization to work in the United States.

Are there geographic restrictions on apprenticeship program worksite locations?

The fund is expected to be available to eligible sponsors and apprentices in the United States and U.S. territories. Any additional worksite or geographic requirements should be confirmed in the final program guidance.

Are Registered Apprenticeship programs for young people eligible?

Young people may qualify if they are eligible and enrolled in a Registered Apprenticeship program.

Are pre-apprenticeship programs eligible?

Standalone pre-apprenticeship programs are not eligible for incentive payments**.** The fund provides payments to eligible Registered Apprenticeship sponsors for eligible new apprentices enrolled in Registered Apprenticeship programs.

If our Registered Apprenticeship program is currently inactive, can we still qualify?

An inactive Registered Apprenticeship program may qualify if it is reactivated before enrollment and meets all program requirements, including registration, eligible occupations, new apprentice enrollment, and payment milestones. Final eligibility rules for inactive programs are pending confirmation.

3. Apprentice, Occupation, and Growth Requirements

Which apprentices may qualify for incentive payments?

Incentive payments are tied to eligible apprentices enrolled in a Registered Apprenticeship program and employed by the participating sponsor or by a participating employer. The fund is intended to support newly enrolled apprentices (enrolled after July 1, 2026) and other apprentice categories identified in the final program guidance.

What is the substantial growth threshold (SGT) requirement?

The substantial growth threshold (SGT) is the enrollment number a sponsor's occupation must exceed before newly enrolled apprentices become eligible for incentive payments. The SGT helps ensure that incentive funds support rapid growth in apprentice enrollment.

The SGT equals 125% of the median active apprentice count across 12 quarters, from FY 2023 Q4 through FY 2026 Q3 (July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2026).

- If an occupation has been registered to a Registered Apprenticeship program for fewer than 3 years within the FY23 Q4 - FY26 Q3 window, the SGT is calculated using only the quarters during which the occupation was actually registered to that program.

- An occupation registered after July 1, 2026, has an SGT of zero. Newly enrolled apprentices in that occupation count immediately toward payment eligibility.

The SGT is fixed for the entire period of performance.

Some examples are provided below:

- Scenario 1: Existing occupation with a median active apprentice count of 8 apprentices across the 12 quarters
- Three-year median active apprentice count: **8**
- *125% threshold: **10 apprentices***
- *The program must exceed 10 active apprentices.*
- *If it reaches 14 active apprentices, **4 apprentices above the threshold** may qualify, assuming they otherwise meet the program and milestone requirements.*

- Scenario 2: Larger existing program
- Three-year median active apprentice count: **20**
- *125% threshold: **25 apprentices***
- *The first 25 apprentices establish the growth threshold.*
- *Apprentices **above 25** may qualify. For example, if the program reaches 30 active apprentices, **5 apprentices** may be considered above-threshold growth.*

- Scenario 3: New program established after July 1, 2026
- *Baseline threshold: **0***

Where can I find the approved occupation list?

The approved occupation list can be found here, and is available through the fund website and application resources. Sponsors should review the list before applying and reach out to JFF through the contact form if an occupation is not included or requires further review.

What steps can a sponsor take if an occupation is not on the approved list?

Sponsors should contact JFF through the contact form before submitting an application for an occupation that is not listed. JFF will provide instructions for requesting an occupation review, including any required occupation description, registration information, labor-market rationale, or supporting documentation. USDOL or SAAs will make the determination on new occupations for apprenticeships.

4. Application and Documentation

What documentation will I need to provide?

Sponsors should be prepared to provide documentation supporting:

- Sponsor identity
- Contact information
- Employer Identification Number
- Registered Apprenticeship registration or approval
- Sponsor ID or other program identifiers, as applicable
- Apprentice enrollment and employment with the requesting sponsor
- The eligible occupation and applicable apprentice cohort
- The milestone being claimed and the date it was achieved
- Apprentice names and supporting milestone documentation
- Tax and banking information, including a W-9 and ACH authorization
- Any additional documentation requested during eligibility or payment review

Can sponsors submit requests for multiple apprentices?

Yes. Sponsors may include multiple apprentices in a single payment request and may submit additional requests as they add or expand apprentice cohorts.

What happens after I submit an application?

Sponsors receive an automated confirmation that their application or payment request was received. JFF then reviews the sponsor's eligibility, apprentice information, milestone documentation, and supporting materials. If information is missing, the request may be returned with instructions for correction and resubmission.

Approved sponsors receive confirmation of the eligible apprentices, milestones, payment amounts, and expected payment dates.

Can I correct and resubmit an application?

Yes. Sponsors may correct and resubmit requests when an application is incomplete or additional documentation is needed. Sponsors may also appeal a funding decision through the program's established review process.

How long does application review take?

Applications will be reviewed within 15 business days. JFF will provide an estimated review timeline and notify applicants after the review is complete.

5. Incentive Payments

What counts as the two payment milestones?

Sponsors may request incentive payments when an eligible apprentice reaches the required milestones:

- **Payment 1:** $3,750 after 90 days of retention
- **Payment 2:** $2,250 after 12 months of persistence or program completion, whichever comes first.

Together, the milestones provide up to $6,000 per eligible apprentice.

How much incentive funding will be provided and when?

Eligible sponsors may receive up to $6,000 per eligible new apprentice, paid in two installments tied to verified milestones:

- $3,750 after the first 90-day milestone is achieved.
- $2,250 after 12 months of continuous enrollment or program completion, whichever comes first.

What happens if an apprentice leaves before reaching a milestone?

An incentive payment is available only when the apprentice meets the applicable milestone and the sponsor provides documentation supporting eligibility and milestone completion. Apprentices who do not reach a milestone may not qualify for that payment.

How are payments delivered?

After a request is approved and required payment information is verified, incentive payments are issued electronically by ACH. Sponsors should provide accurate tax and banking information through the secure process identified in the application or onboarding materials.

How will I know if my application has been approved, and when can I expect the funds?

JFF will notify sponsors after reviewing the application or payment request. The notice will identify the eligible apprentices, approved milestones, payment amounts, and expected payment dates. Funds will be issued after approval and completion of required payment and banking verification.

6. Sponsor Responsibilities

What is required of sponsors?

Sponsors are expected to:

- Maintain an eligible Registered Apprenticeship program.
- Enroll and employ eligible apprentices in approved occupations.
- Submit complete and accurate applications and payment requests.
- Maintain documentation supporting sponsor, apprentice, occupation, employment, and milestone eligibility.
- Provide accurate tax and banking information.
- Use incentive payments in accordance with the approved incentive plan, award terms, and applicable federal requirements.
- Respond promptly to requests for additional information.
- Support monitoring, reporting, and audit requirements.
- Notify the program of material changes that may affect eligibility or payment status.

What are the responsibilities and expectations associated with receiving incentive funds?

Sponsors must use the funds consistently with the program's award terms and approved incentive plan, maintain accurate supporting records, and cooperate with eligibility review, payment verification, monitoring, reporting, and audit activities. Sponsors are responsible for ensuring that information submitted for each apprentice and milestone is complete, accurate, and supportable.

7. Questions and Support

Who can I contact with questions?

For questions about eligibility, occupations, applications, documentation, or payments, reach out to JFF through the contact form.

Where can I get more information about apprenticeships?

Sponsors can learn more through USDOL's Office of Apprenticeship, their State Apprenticeship Agency, and the resources listed on the fund website.