

ATTACHMENT I – PROJECT TOPIC

Building Capacity for State, Local, and Territorial Governments to Use Administrative Data for Evidence-Building

Key Objective

The objective of this project is to explore how a potential, future National Secure Data Service (NSDS) could support state, local, and or territorial capacity building through development of an interface and roadmap to enable repeatable state and local data analysis that may inform state and federal policies. The [CHIPS and Science Act](#), Section 10375, requires engagement with state agencies to support government-wide evidence-building activities in accordance with the 2018 Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act. The [Year 2](#) report prepared by the Advisory Committee on Data for Evidence-Building (ACDEB), further expands on the need for stakeholder engagement outside of the federal statistical community, including routine engagement with key partner groups, advocacy for use of data for decision-making, and supporting state, local, territorial, and tribal governments in conducting data linkages and analysis. One of the first steps toward capacity building can be accomplished through a series of demonstration projects to show how existing state, local, and territorial governments administrative databases could be used to produce new data products to shed a brighter light on workforce inequality issues. Specifically, the demonstration projects would be used to encourage and enable state, local, and territorial governments to be innovative and produce new and expanded data that respond to the interest in labor market equity and the demographics of today’s workers that could help inform state and federal policies. The interface and roadmap will support research capacity at the subnational level by providing a tool and roadmap that can be leveraged by multiple states, territories, and other researchers. All states have individual wage records, and an NSDS sponsored and hosted tool with a corresponding roadmap will be explored to support innovations to enhance the workforce information system and make it more robust.

Background

The CHIPS and Science Act, Section 13075(c), calls for engagement with federal and state agencies through an NSDS demonstration project to “collect, acquire, analyze, report, and disseminate statistical data in the United States and other nations to support governmentwide evidence-building activities consistent with the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018.” The existing array of federal, state, and private survey-based data provides key economic information for policymakers and data users but does not fully portray the dynamic nature of today’s job market. Many existing workforce and labor market information products do not provide adequate detail, especially demographics and geographic detail, that can illuminate crosscutting issues on a timely basis. The nation is made up of many individual labor markets, and important trends can be gleaned from data that these state, local, and territorial governments have access to and can link. This demonstration project will develop roadmaps for how a future NSDS can help state, local, and territorial governments take advantage of the

administrative data under their control to answer important questions about workforce inequalities that can inform broader initiatives.

For instance, several states have successfully demonstrated the value of linking state Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Records (WR) to datasets like department of motor vehicle records, community college enrollments, and apprenticeship programs to explore outcomes that highlight workplace inequalities within their states. However, most state, local, and territorial governments do not have the infrastructure and or knowledge to take advantage of these powerful linkages.

As such, this project will involve:

1. Partnering with each of two state, local, and/or territorial governments who have access to WR and other data sources within their state that could be linked to WR in a secure environment to answer workforce inequality questions. One state, local, and/or territorial government will be the development partner and the other will be the testing partner.
 - a. Help define measurable questions related to workforce inequalities that could be answered using those data sources.
 - b. Support project plan development that covers project scoping to final delivery of research analysis.
 - c. Guide research process and provide technical support when required, including how to analyze and understand results from linked data.
 - d. Review and edit final deliverables that meet end-user needs.
2. Developing an open-source, flexible, scalable, and sustainable tool that harnesses the power of state UI wage records and can be hosted through a future NSDS. The focus is to develop a tool that can support the development of statistical capacity in the state, local, and territorial governments so that they can answer important questions about issues such as workforce inequalities.
 - a. Create an automated process to ingest data in a common data platform that has features to standardize, clean, and assess data quality of linkage identifiers and other covariate data. This data standardization will be necessary to analyze and link data.
 - i. Document data quality assessments and metadata about the linked records to support analyses using the linked data.
 - b. Provide a versatile data analysis and visualization tool that can ingest data in multiple formats and standardize it to a common data model. This should be flexible enough to accommodate different format of data including WR data from different states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and/or the U.S. Virgin Islands.
 - c. Support linking with other data sources that are readily available within the state like:
 - i. student cohorts from colleges and technical schools
 - ii. recent UI benefits recipients
 - iii. Department of Motor Vehicles records.
 - d. Allow for customization of state, local, and territorial governments specified indicators.
 - e. Provide several canned analyses and data visualizations that can be further customized.
3. Creating a plain language roadmap and communication plan that could be used by other state, local, and territorial governments who want to utilize state UI wage records to develop their capacity related to workforce inequalities leveraging WR.
 - a. Informed by experience gained through this project.
 - b. Contains concrete prerequisites but provides enough flexibility to be used by multiple parties.

4. Test proposed tool, roadmap, and communication plan using a second state, local, and/or territorial government WR data and other data sources and modify as necessary based on feedback.
 - a. Validate if the tool is flexible enough to be used and modified with provided documentation by having another state, local or territory government use the tool and provide feedback. The purpose of the validation is to not link WR and other data sources across states, but a lift and shift whereby the full process developed using one state's WR can be repeated entirely using another state's WR.
 - b. Stress test roadmap and communications plan by working through the process and refining as necessary.
5. Teaming is a critical component for this project and is required. It is essential that the project team includes key individuals from each of the two selected state organizations, local organizations, and/or territories to ensure statistical capacity in the state, local, and territorial governments is improved. Team members must be engaged at the project from the outset to obtain their input on all planning and implementation activities.

Information Gaps

This project will support:

- State, local, and territorial governments in building capacity for evidence-building using unemployment insurance individual wage records and other sources of data that can be linked to answer questions about workforce inequalities to inform state and federal policy.
- Developing a tool or interface that can be used by State, local, and territorial governments to answer questions about workforce inequalities.

Key Evidence Building Considerations

- Key focus questions to assess innovation in user engagement and customer service:
 - What support do state, local, and territorial governments need to build capacity for evidence-building?
 - How can a customizable tool using administrative wage data for evidence-building inform similar efforts in other domains at the Federal, state, local, and territorial levels?
 - How can a data concierge service support the state, local, and territorial governments to answer questions about workforce inequalities?

Deliverables

At a minimum, offerors will provide the following if selected for an award. Additional deliverables may be required.

- Monthly status reports on progress towards project objectives which will include quarterly updates on lessons learned.
- Report detailing the process used to help the state, local, and/or territorial governments go from the start of the process by defining measurable questions to the final product of meeting customer needs.
- Open-source, flexible, scalable, and sustainable tool, that harnesses the power of state UI wage records, and step-by-step documentation that describes how to use the tool.

- Report that can be used as a roadmap for other state, local, and/or territorial governments, highlighting successes, challenges, and lessons learned during this project to help them strengthen their ability to use WR to answer questions about workforce inequalities.
- Recommendations on hosting and sharing resulting reports, interface, tools, etc. to encourage re-use and refinement as part of a shared service within a future NSDS.
- Communications plan for outreach to states and territories to use the tool.