

Arts Workforce Initiative 2021 Reference Guide For Prospective Host Organizations and Apprentices

Deadlines and FAQs

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Deadlines for Host Organizations

- **Thursday, January 28th at 6pm** - AWI Info Session
- **Friday, January 29th** - "Intent to Apply" Application Opens (on SurveyMonkey)
- *Monday, February 1st* - COA Begins to Review "Intent To Apply" Applications
- **Friday, February 26th** - "Intent to Apply" Application Closes
- *Thursday, March 4th* - Review of "Intent to Apply" Applications End
- By **Friday, March 5th** - Selected Organizations Are Invited to Officially Apply (on Google Forms or email)
- *Monday, March 8th* - COA Begins to Review Official Applications
- **Wednesday, March 31st** - Official Applications Close
- *Friday, April 23rd* - Review of Official Applications End
- By **Friday, April 30th** - Organizations Are Matched With Apprentices
- By **Friday, May 7th** - Non-Selected Organizations Are Connected with Non-Selected Apprentices for Mentorship/Volunteer/Aligned Interests
- **Tuesday, May 11th** - 2021 AWI Orientation for Selected Organizations
- **June - September** - Apprenticeship Occurs; Organization Supervisor; Check-In(s) (1 required)
- **Thursday, September 30th** - Final Report Due (on SurveyMonkey)

Deadlines for Apprentices

- **Thursday, January 28th at 6pm** - AWI Info Session
- **Monday, March 1st** - Application Opens (on SurveyMonkey)
- *Monday, March 15th* - Phone/Video Interviews Begin
- **Wednesday, March 31st** - Application Closes
- *Friday, April 16th* - Phone/Video Interviews End
- By **Friday, April 30th** - Apprentices Are Matched With Organizations
- By **Friday, May 7th** - Non-Selected Apprentices Are Connected with Non-Selected Organizations for Mentorship/Volunteer/Aligned Interests
- **Tuesday, May 11th** - 2021 AWI Orientation for Selected Apprentices
- **June - September** - Apprenticeship Occurs; Apprenticeship; Check-Ins (3 required)
- **Thursday, September 30th** - Final Report Due (on Google Forms)

*** Kindly note, dates are subject to change so please make sure you're subscribed to the COA newsletter and add kolton.Harris@ct.gov and brianna@brvisionaryconsulting.com to your email's contact list to avoid emails going to spam.*

Common FAQs - Host Organizations

What is the Arts Workforce Initiative?

The Arts Workforce Initiative (AWI) is a paid apprenticeship program that gives Connecticut-based college students, emerging creatives, formerly incarcerated individuals and military veterans an opportunity to gain high-level professional work experience with not-for-profit arts and cultural organizations throughout the state.

This program is specifically designed for applicants from diverse and traditionally underrepresented backgrounds.

A host organization must provide a hands-on and engaging learning opportunity that allows an individual to gain relevant skills and work experience in the arts.

Selected host organizations will be granted \$3,750 per apprentice to be used to pay an hourly rate of \$15. Selected participants work 25 hours a week for 10 weeks for the selected host organization. Participants receive payment from the host organization where their apprenticeship will take place.

What types of organizations are considered for AWI?

We consider organizations that align with the READI framework.

READI stands for Relevance, Equity, Access, Diversity and Inclusion. More information about the framework can be found [here](#).

How do I know that I'm a good fit?

Your organization is good fit if:

- Its mission and values align with READI.
- It has experience managing apprentices.
- It has the capacity to manage apprentices.
- It has an open role for an apprentice, that's descriptive and engaging.
- It has a positive work environment for talent to thrive (in-person and virtually).

What is an "Intent to Apply" application?"

The "Intent to Apply" application is a requirement and preliminary screening to the official application process. By submitting an "Intent to Apply," you're notifying us that you want to be considered for the AWI program.

How can my "Intent to Apply" application stand out from other organizations?

To make your application stand out, please complete the entire application. Also, be intentional and thorough with your answers--particularly the uploaded job description and open-ended questions.

I've been chosen to apply for the program, now what...?

After submitting an Intent to Apply application, selected organizations will be notified and invited to submit an official application. Official applications will be reviewed and 15 organizations will be selected to be a host organization by April 30th.

If selected to be a host organization, how do I onboard (i.e. overview of responsibilities, payroll, work schedule, etc) my apprentice?

Because each organization is different, each organization will be responsible for onboarding their apprentice. We recommend that supervisors review the job description, confirm working hours and reporting of hours; and decide convenient communication methods with their selected apprentice.

For payroll, please consult with your HR department to determine which documentation (i.e. W4, W9, 1099, etc) you should give to your apprentice. Payment to the apprentice is provided by the organization. The payment scheduled should be discussed with your HR department and agreed upon with your apprentice.

Apprentices and their supervisors are to determine the exact work schedule (*this includes the June-start date*). The exact start-date is up to the organization and the apprentice, but all apprenticeships are expected to begin by mid-June. Additionally, we expect all apprenticeships to be completed by August 30th, but no later than mid-September. The requirement is 250 completed hours (*25 hours a week for 10 weeks; no more than 40 hours a week. Hours can be consolidated on a case by case basis.*)

How do I navigate this apprenticeship in COVID?

Generally, please be mindful of statewide policies and mandates that may impact opening/closing requirements because of COVID-19. In the event your organization is considering re-opening for Summer 2021, keep in mind that:

1. The **ability to reopen is FIRST determined by the Governor**. Not by the comfort of the organization.
2. **Organizations are in charge of creating their reopening policy**. All organizations should draft, receive approval from their boards, and circulate, a reopening policy that is clear and transparent. There are guidelines for Arts/Cultural Institutions created by the COA and the CT Arts Alliance ([Link](#) - as of Spring 2020)
3. If an organization is able to re-open, **they must follow all applicable state guidelines**. These may include state guidelines for non-arts/culture organizations, like those for offices and restaurants. Overall, follow social distancing and safety precautions.
4. **An apprentice isn't obligated to follow the policies that their organization has drafted and approved, so please include a statement about when/how an apprentice is able to work on-site**. COA is in no way responsible for the health and safety of each apprentice. However, if both an organization and apprentice agree to work in-person (while following social distancing), that's fine.
5. Be sure to visit the [COVID CT resource page](#), and subscribe to the [COA newsletter](#) for updates.

What documentation am I responsible for during and post the apprenticeship?

Before the apprenticeship begins, please submit a copy of the agreed work schedule to Brianna (AWI's Operations Consultant) at brianna@brvisionaryconsulting.com. During the apprenticeship, you aren't required to submit documentation to the Office of the Arts. Kindly note, at least one check-in with Brianna or Kolton (COA's Program Associate) is required. The check-in will be virtual and planned in advance.

After the apprenticeship, you are required to submit a Final Report which will look similar to [this report](#). The report is due by September 30th. Kindly note, this Final Report is separate from the apprentice's final report. Neither require collaboration.

What are some supervisor dos and donts?

We want all of our organization and apprentice matches to be positive, educational and resourceful. Some "Dos" include:

- Create an evaluation process that tracks your apprentice's progress
- Have consistent and effective communication with your apprentice
- Contact us immediately if there are any issues so that we can interfere
- As a reminder, this apprenticeship is for an engaging hands-on high level experience. The apprenticeship should go beyond mundane tasks and reflect a practical work experience.
- Stick to the job description that's approved by the Office of The Arts
- Offer insight and ask questions
- Be transparent
- Over-communicate to ensure everyone is on the same page
- Find ways to meet your apprentice in the middle (*especially with training/teaching and being open minded to different learning methods*)
- Hold each other accountable by setting deadlines and asking questions for clarity
- Be empathetic and kind

You can also [watch this video](#) for suggestions on how to create an ideal experience for your apprentice.

Do I get to choose my apprentice?

To avoid biases and maximize the value of the AWI experience for host organizations and apprentices, the entire matching process will be completed by the Connecticut Office of the Arts. Neither prospective organizations nor apprentices will have insight into either candidate pool during the application process. Matches are determined by a variety of factors including but not limited to: common interests and values, skills, location, alignment with READI and alums to the program.**

** Organizations and apprentices that have previously applied and/or have been accepted are encouraged to apply to the AWI program again. However, being an AWI alum doesn't guarantee placement.

How many roles/job descriptions can I submit in my application? How many apprentices will I receive?

Only one job description is allowed. Selected host organizations will receive one apprentice.

If I'm not selected as a Host Organization, can I become a mentor, offer a paid apprenticeship outside of AWI or a volunteer position?

Yes! We believe mentorship and volunteering is a rewarding experience that gives the mentor *and* mentee the opportunity to build authentic relationships, learn from each other, become empowered to make decisions, enhance hard and soft skills, and identify alternative solutions that can further advance Connecticut's arts scene. Also, if you're able to offer a paid apprenticeship not funded by AWI, we strongly encourage you to do so. Non-selected organizations and apprentices will receive information to facilitate their own outreach by May 7th.

Common FAQs - Apprentices

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What types of organizations can I apply for? What types of organizations should I apply for?

We consider organizations that align with the READI framework.

READI stands for Relevance, Equity, Access, Diversity and Inclusion. More information about the framework can be found [here](#).

When you submit your application, you're applying to be an apprentice in the AWI program, generally--not a specific organization.

What makes a quality application?

To make your application stand out, please complete the entire application. Also, be intentional and thorough with your answers--particularly the open-ended questions. Also, be sure you upload an updated resume.

How many AWI apprentices will be selected this year?

Like last year, there will be 15 apprentices selected.

What is a Work Journal?

A work journal is a living document that will allow you to keep track of your hours and completed tasks at your host organization. Your Work Journal will also help you complete your final report. It's recommended that you update the work journal after each shift. Apprentices are responsible for creating and updating their Work Journal. Work Journals must be submitted in the apprentice's final report due on September 30th.

We recommend that you use excel or word to create/update your Work Journal.

How do I properly network/nurture relationships with my supervisors and organization members? What are some interview dos and donts?

We want all of our organization and apprentice matches to be positive, educational and resourceful. Some "Dos" include:

- Review all and any submitted assignments for grammatical errors
- Be responsive and timely
- Be an effective verbal and written communicator
- Dress appropriately
- Express moments of gratitude to your supervisor/organization members
- Observe rules and the way things are done within your organization
- Offer insight and ask questions
- Be transparent
- Over-communicate to ensure everyone is on the same page
- Find ways to meet your supervisor in the middle (*especially with training/teaching and being open minded to learning*)
- Hold each other accountable by setting deadlines and asking questions for clarity
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You can also [watch this video](#) for suggestions on how to create an ideal experience for your apprentice.

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5. Be sure to visit the [COVID CT resource page](#), and subscribe to the [COA newsletter](#) for updates.

How will I be onboarded and paid? When should I expect payment?

Because each organization is different, each organization will be responsible for onboarding their apprentice. We recommend that supervisors review the job description, confirm working hours and reporting of hours; and decide convenient communication methods with their selected apprentice.

For payroll, organizations will consult with their HR department to determine which documentation (i.e. W4, W9, 1099, etc) they should give to their apprentice. Payment to the apprentice is provided by the organization. The payment scheduled should be discussed with your HR department and agreed upon with your apprentice.

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Lastly, you should NOT be paying for any programs, premium features for tools, etc. If your organizer is requesting the use of a costly tool to complete a task, they should be the ones to pay for it.

What documentation am I responsible for during and post the apprenticeship?

Before the apprenticeship begins, please submit a copy of the agreed work schedule to Brianna (AWI's Operations Consultant) at brianna@brvisionaryconsulting.com. During the apprenticeship, you aren't required to submit documentation to the Office of the Arts. Kindly note, at least three check-ins with Brianna are required. The check-ins will be virtual and planned in advance.

After the apprenticeship, you are required to submit a Final Report/Survey. The report is due by September 30th. Kindly note, this Final Report is separate from the organization's final report. Neither require collaboration.

If I'm not selected as an Apprentice, how do I become a mentee, find a paid apprenticeship outside of AWI or become a volunteer at an organization?

Yes! We believe mentorship and volunteering is a rewarding experience that gives the mentor *and* mentee the opportunity to build authentic relationships, learn from each other, become empowered to make decisions, enhance hard and soft skills, and identify alternative solutions that can further advance Connecticut's arts scene. Also, if you're able to get an offered paid apprenticeship not funded by AWI, we strongly encourage you to do so. Non-selected organizations and apprentices will receive information to facilitate their own outreach by May 7th.