



RESEARCH IMPROVING PEOPLE'S LIVES

RIPL Granting \$12 million to States to Combat Unemployment and Transform Workforce Development

Providence, RI, February 9, 2023 – Research Improving People’s Lives (RIPL) announced the launch of its Opening Workforce DOORS Grant Program to help states transform outdated workforce and unemployment programs and get people back to work through cloud technology, streamlined digital services, and government data.

In the first half of 2023, RIPL will grant \$12 million worth of technical assistance and cloud technology to state governments to help them build and deploy the Data for Opportunity in Occupational Reskilling Solution (DOORS) and solve pressing challenges in workforce development.

DOORS is a digital tool that connects people with meaningful opportunities for reskilling and employment in in-demand industries at scale. RIPL’s approach leverages government’s own data and accessible, user-centered design to analyze a user’s resume and skills and provide actionable recommendations for training opportunities, job openings, and new careers proven to lead to higher wages and earning potential. The DOORS recommendation engine is powered by AI and scientifically-validated machine learning, which analyzes millions of state wage records to understand which careers similar job seekers have switched to, stuck with, and earned more in.

“Finding the right career path can change an entire family’s trajectory – especially for those from under-resourced communities. We are excited to work with states and other organizations to help them leverage cloud-based technologies to even the playing field. We look forward to bringing the power and potential of modern data science and cloud technology to modernize workforce training programs and ultimately empower people to change their lives,” said Scott Jensen, CEO of RIPL.

As many learned from painful experience during the pandemic, state workforce training and employment programs must quickly modernize to handle the needs of residents. Government agencies and residents struggle with antiquated and hard-to-use systems, which can delay critical benefits. Meanwhile, services intended to help unemployed and dislocated workers are scattered across agencies and disconnected databases. Too many residents fall through the cracks and are left to struggle on their own.

Through the Opening Workforce DOORS Grant Program, RIPL seeks to support governments to better apply innovative technology in addressing real-world challenges – particularly by helping labor and workforce development agencies apply their expertise and unlock their own data to address America’s widening skills gap.

Initial versions of DOORS have been successfully deployed by state governments in Maryland and Hawai’i, and work is currently underway in four other states. RIPL partnered with these states to

customize DOORS, creating a one-stop-shop for digital workforce services and integrating it into the existing technology landscape in each state.

Through the Opening Workforce DOORS Grant Program, RIPL will work with additional states to implement DOORS and explore new ways to leverage the platform. Grantees will receive full-service project management, technical, and scientific support as well as access to and ownership of all related technologies. Amazon Web Services (AWS) helped fund these grants through an ongoing collaboration with RIPL.

“Cloud computing technology enables organizations to be more cost-effective, flexible, and user-friendly, which improves customer experiences,” said Kim Majerus, Vice President, Global Education, U.S. State and Local Government at AWS. “State and local government agencies should have access to the same great infrastructure and services that are driving innovation in other industries, and RIPL is using the cloud to improve the way citizens manage unemployment and underemployment. AWS is proud to support this new grant program to help states build the foundation to transform their workforce and unemployment systems, to make it easier for individuals to discover new career opportunities.”

The deadline for priority applications is Friday, March 10, 2023, at 5 PM ET. Applications will be accepted after this date; however, those received by the deadline will be given priority. Governments, non-profits, educational institutions, local workforce, or economic development entities are invited to apply.

For more information and how to apply, visit [RIPL's website](#), join an [informational webinar](#) on Tuesday, February 14th at 2-3 pm ET or reach out to innovationcatalyst@ripl.org with any questions.

About RIPL

Research Improving People's Lives (RIPL) is a nonprofit tech-for-social-impact organization that works with governments to help them use data, science, and technology to improve policy and lives. We work with faculty research affiliates from top research universities across the country to provide powerful, scientific-grade insights at the speed of policy directly to policymakers so that they can positively impact lives, solve pressing social challenges, and build their capacity to innovate and measure success going forward.

Learn more about RIPL at ripl.org

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