

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND
THE SWISS CONFEDERATION
CONCERNING
COOPERATION ON ADVANCING APPRENTICESHIP, CAREER AND
TECHNICAL EDUCATION, AND VOCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL
EDUCATION AND TRAINING 2024-2027**

ACKNOWLEDGING the long history of comprehensive relations and shared democratic values between the United States of America and the Swiss Confederation (collectively referred to herein as "the Participants");

RECOGNIZING the importance of continued dialogue and cooperation between the Participants in the fields of apprenticeship (known as "registered apprenticeship" with respect to the national apprenticeship system of the United States), career and technical education (CTE), and vocational and professional education and training (VPET);

RECALLING the 2021-2024 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the United States of America and the Swiss Confederation concerning Cooperation on Advancing Apprenticeship, Career and Technical Education, and Vocational and Professional Education and Training, which commenced December 3, 2021 (2021-2024 MOU);

SEEKING to promote the formation and expansion of high-quality, diverse, and inclusive apprenticeship programs across a variety of sectors and occupations that can equip students and workers with the work-related skills and credentials necessary to launch rewarding and remunerative careers, and that can provide employers with a trained and prepared workforce capable of driving business productivity and growth as well as fostering innovation;

With this MOU, the Participants renew their commitment to providing the opportunity for students and workers to train for the quality jobs of the future, supporting a diverse and inclusive workforce, and providing workers with competencies needed in their respective industries, thereby promoting productivity and economic growth, improving compensation for workers, and creating greater pathways to quality careers.

Statement of Purpose

The Participants believe in the importance of expanding and strengthening apprenticeships, CTE, and VPET to equip students and workers across a broad range of industries and sectors with competencies developed and valued by industry, which lead to quality jobs and careers. The

Participants recognize that expanding these opportunities for more students and workers requires the development of strong partnerships among industry, labor, education, and government.

Areas for Cooperation

The Participants intend to continue cooperation in areas that may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Encouraging industry, labor, education, and all levels of government in the United States of America and the Swiss Confederation to promote the value and benefits of apprenticeship programs, including those programs that create entry points to quality jobs in critical sectors, such as advanced manufacturing, infrastructure, renewable energy, cybersecurity, and healthcare, among others;
- Promoting equal opportunity, diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and social protections that help ensure the safety of apprentices from discrimination, harassment, and intimidation;
- Deepening sector partnerships that bring industry, labor, education, and government together (or the development and advancement of industry-driven apprenticeship, CTE, and VPET systems);
- Exploring and supporting both short-term and long-range modalities and mechanisms to facilitate the bilateral exchange and mobility of apprentices, mentors, and trainers;
- Investigating the potential and feasibility of the recognition of professional qualifications between the Participants;
- Exchanging promising practices on the development and recognition of certifications, graduation requirements, and competency standards tailored to the abilities of apprentices and the needs of industries;
- Sharing models for the training and development of apprenticeship mentors;
- Identifying promising practices in the research and measurement of apprenticeship program benefits and costs, including return on investment, with respect to apprentices, industry, labor, education, and government;
- Developing effective strategies, as appropriate, to increase awareness, knowledge, and access to work-based learning, including apprenticeships, for students and workers;
- Exploring options for enhancing incentives for employers to implement apprenticeship programs, including measures that increase the training capacity of employers; and
- Showcasing the benefits and return on investment of apprenticeship systems.

Forms of Cooperation

Unless otherwise mutually decided, the Participants intend to implement such cooperation through activities such as:

- Exchanging information, research, experience, and promising practices;

- Fostering and maintaining direct contacts, partnerships, and cooperative activities between industry, labor, education, and government in the field of work-based learning, with a view to promoting the expansion of existing and new apprenticeships;
- Conducting fact-finding visits, studies, and expert meetings;
- Exploring additional opportunities for consultations at the federal, state or cantonal, and local governmental levels, fully respecting each stakeholder's autonomy; and
- Leveraging industry networks that foster alliances and networks to promote the practice of apprenticeships, CTE, and VPET, especially in occupations where apprenticeships are not currently widespread, in order to facilitate access to such programs for all.

In accordance with this MOU, the methods, activities, and topics of continuing cooperation may be further devised by the Participants through regular dialogue between their respective agencies: the Departments of Commerce, Education, and Labor of the United States of America for the United States and the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education, and Research of the Swiss Confederation for the Swiss Confederation. Where considered appropriate and by mutual arrangement, the Participants may welcome the engagement of representatives of workers, industry, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations.

Nothing in this MOU commits the Participants to the expenditure of funds. The Participants intend to bear their own costs associated with the implementation of this MOU.

This MOU does not constitute an international agreement and does not create, guarantee, enforce, or otherwise give rise to any rights or obligations under either international or domestic law.

The 2021-2024 MOU is hereby superseded. This MOU commences upon signature and is intended to remain in effect until October 23, 2027. This MOU may be modified by mutual written determination of the Participants. Either Participant may discontinue this MOU at any time but is expected to provide three months advanced written notification to the other Participant of its intent to do so.


Signed at Washington, DC, on this 23rd day of October, 2024, in duplicate, in the English language.

**FOR THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA:**



Julie A. Su
U.S. Acting Secretary of Labor

FOR THE SWISS CONFEDERATION:



Guy Parmelin
Federal Councillor and Head of the
Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education, and Research



Miguel A. Cardona, Ed.D.
U.S. Secretary of Education



Gina M. Raimondo
U.S. Secretary of Commerce