

State of Utah
PY 2004 Workforce Information Grant Plan

Statewide Workforce Information System

The Utah State Workforce Investment Council (SWIB) exercises its responsibility for ensuring the state workforce information policy is responsive to the needs of the state and local investment system. This is accomplished by the Workforce Information Division working closely with the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) state and regional council coordinators to ensure that workforce information policy is endorsed and supported by the state and regional councils and appropriate sub-committees to ensure that the policy is in line with the overall goals of DWS and the governor. In addition, the Utah SWIB sponsors/charters several workgroups and Workforce Information participates on the appropriate groups to ensure its policy continues to meet the needs of the state and local investment systems.

Most of the activities associated with Utah's workforce information system directly support its WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan for state and local workforce development. Utah delivers services to customers through its One-Stop system, through hard-copy publications, the Workforce Information Web site, training and presentations, and expert staff. All of these methods of service delivery are also utilized in the One-Stop Centers.

- Utah transforms data into useful workforce information including occupational analysis products and career counseling tools encompassing employment trends, educational attainment levels, wages, job openings, job market conditions, major employing industries, geographic distribution of jobs, and other information.
- Utah regularly provides training for One-Stop Center resource room staff, business consultants, and employment counselors, and makes all of its information available in a user-friendly manner on its Web site and in regular delivery of hard copies, when printed.
- Utah supports the targeted industries initiative implemented by DWS. Economists selected three industries that are expected to grow, have jobs that pay reasonable wages, and have identifiable career ladders. Workforce Information provides information about the industries and occupations to the front line staff at DWS who use the information to assist employer and job seeker customers.
- Utah uses customer feedback to continuously improve and enhance its products, services and system. Utah analyzes current and prospective customer needs and works closely with the Public Relations Division of the Department of Workforce Services to support the Department's customer satisfaction standards. Utah summarizes customer needs and input, and incorporates the results into its annual plan.
- Utah continuously invests in training, technical support, and capacity building, including sending staff to trainings presented by the LMI Institute and other

relevant training. Utah develops a set of outreach and education materials describing services and products to be provided to workforce information system customers.

Utah's Workforce Information Division is housed within DWS' Workforce Development and Information Division (WDID). The deputy director of WDID is directed by and works closely with DWS' administrator who is appointed by the Governor. This line of direction ensures that Utah's workforce information system and its grant activities are consistent with the strategic vision of the Governor. Also, the State Workforce Investment Council Coordinator is in this division. The DWS deputy directors, administrator, and DWS staff work closely with the SWIB to gain approval from them and ensure that grant activities support their strategic vision. The WDID directors and managers work closely to ensure that its goals are consistent with those of the department, the state council, other state agencies, and the Governor.

Utah works closely with Department of Workforce Services' front-line staff, including business consultants and employment counselors, to ensure products and services are meeting customer needs. Utah also maintains a close working relationship with education through its participation on the Utah Career Resource Network Committee and the Workforce Education Development Alliance. Utah works with chambers of commerce and economic development agencies to ensure business customer needs are met and maintained. Utah primarily gathers customer feedback through focus groups, surveys, reports of Web site use, and feedback sheets. Customers are encouraged to provide feedback on all publications and services. All of these activities combined provide information, which is used to produce, create, and continually improve our products and services to meet customer needs.

Utah's broad strategic approach for workforce information delivery to principal customers has been developed around the core products of the ETA One-Stop grant. Utah populates its ALMIS Database and has built and deployed a Web interface system called the Utah Economic Data Viewer. Utah also maintains and continually improves the Workforce Information Web page. Utah prepares and disseminates labor supply and demand data using local data. Utah provides information about occupations that require a license and publishes a bi-monthly newsletter for the state and quarterly information at the county level. Utah also publishes an adult career guide to assist in career planning and provides presentations about Utah's economy to community and business groups and the general public. Utah provides regional economists for each of the five regions in the state to support the regional councils. In addition, Utah has begun partnering with other agencies and stakeholders to develop information delivery systems including two websites: careers.utah.gov and business.utah.gov.

Utah delivers workforce information and services as core services to customers through the state's One-Stop service delivery system. Information is provided on its Web site, which includes the Utah Economic Data Viewer and all publications. Most of the hard copy publications are used in the One-Stop centers including *TrendLines*, *County Trends* newsletters, Wage Flyers, the *Adult Career Guide*, and *Utah Job Trends*. Utah also

provides employment counselor and business consultant training for One-Stop Center staff.

As described above, Utah uses several mechanisms to gather customer feedback.

Detailed examples:

One method is including a feedback card with the publication when it is mailed out. Last year the survey for the County Trends newsletters received an overall rating of 4.29 out of a five point rating scale. Some strong points mentioned were “easy to read and understand” and “interesting and useful information.” Some things to improve included asking for more detailed data such as “new business starts” and more written analysis.

Utah conducted a survey for Regional Economists, this was sent to internal customers. About 82 percent of the internal customers agree that they “know who their regional economist is and how to contact him/her.” About 71 percent agree that the regional economist “responds quickly and effectively to data or other information requests.” Another 75 percent agreed that presentations and publications from their regional economists are “useful and valuable to me.” Open-ended comments revealed that the best thing about having a regional economist is (among several items): knowledge and availability, presentations and personal visits to the regions, and they have local information and they know my area well. When asked “one thing to improve” the responses were (among other things): More personal visits and presentations, more current data, and more detailed, local information.

More examples of overall scores on other surveys:

- Survey from training partnership with UCRN: 75 percent rated above average/outstanding.
- Survey from external presentations: 82 percent rated above average or outstanding
- Survey on Utah Economic Data Viewer: 77 percent agreed or strongly agreed that overall they were satisfied with the system.
- Survey for LMI for Employment Counselors training: 75 percent rated above average/outstanding.
- Survey for LMI for Business Services training: 85 percent rated above average or outstanding.

Our strategy for incorporating customer feedback into our products and services ranges from “quick fixes” such as adding a link to printable tables from the Utah Economic Data Viewer to doing a better job of explaining how data is gathered and published and what is or is not available and why. We basically develop themes around the feedback and develop improvements based on the themes.

During PY 2004 Utah is fortunate to have access to a portion of the state’s WIA set-aside funds. Utah will use these funds to conduct a job vacancy survey and to develop an

advertising campaign to increase awareness of LMI among students and parents for career planning purposes.

Core Products & Services

1. Continue to populate the ALMIS Database with state data.

Utah will continue to maintain the 2.2 version of the ALMIS Database and populate all of the core tables with state data. This has become the state's cornerstone for information delivery, labor market research, and product development. The core tables will be populated in accordance with guidelines issued by the ALMIS Database Consortium. Utah will update the content of the database in a timely manner. Utah will maintain the occupational licensing data and update the required files every two years. Utah will continue to gather customer feedback through a form that will be available on the Web, a written questionnaire for internal customers, and a focus group for the Utah Economic Data Viewer (UEDV).

This product supports the state's WIA plan because it enables customers to easily access information that will assist them in making good planning decisions. The Workforce Investment Board is interested in delivering the most current economic information to customers, and maintaining the ALMIS Database is a good way to accomplish this goal. Customer support for this product is demonstrated by feedback gathered from surveys and verbal feedback provided by customers. For example, a pop-up survey on the UEDV showed the following:

- 72% of the customers agreed or strongly agreed that "It was easy to navigate through the system"
- 63% of the customers agreed or strongly agreed that "It was easy to find the information I was looking for"
- 92% of the customers agreed or strongly agreed that "I will likely use the Utah Economic Data Viewer in the Future"
- 80% of the customers agreed or strongly agreed that "I would recommend the Utah Economic Data Viewer to my colleagues"
- 77% of the customers agreed or strongly agreed that "Overall, I am satisfied with the Utah Economic Data Viewer"

Utah will continue to gather feedback from customers regarding this product. We hope to focus on specific interfaces as well as compare feedback as we make improvements to the system utilizing customer feedback. We also plan to conduct focus groups and collect more information to help us continually improve this product.

The information in the ALMIS Database will be used to provide information to customers via the Utah Economic Data Viewer (UEDV) Web interface system. Principal customers of the ALMIS Database include economists, employment counselors, employers, economic development professionals, job seekers, government planners, educators, researchers, workforce investment boards and journalists.

All of the core tables (100%) of the ALMIS Database will be maintained and populated with current Utah data through June 30, 2005. Customers will be able to access current data in the database using the UEDV.

Planned Milestones

- Utah will populate and update the core tables in the ALMIS Database through June 30, 2005.
- Utah will maintain its licensing data through June 30, 2005.
- Utah will collect information from customers using a Web-based customer feedback form for the UEDV for two weeks in November 2004 and two weeks in March 2005.
- Utah will conduct a customer survey of internal customers by December 1, 2005.
- Utah will conduct a focus group for the Utah Economic Data Viewer by June 30, 2005.
- Utah will count “hits” to UEDV and the specific interfaces through June 30, 2005.
- Utah will continue to maintain the employer database with information from InfoUSA and make it available on the UEDV through June 30, 2005.

Estimated Cost: \$33,564

2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.

Utah will disseminate state-level long and short-term industry and occupational employment projections, using the methodology, software tools, and guidelines developed by the Projections Consortium and the Projections Managing Partnership. Utah will develop statewide short-term projections for the 2004 – 2006 period.

Utah will populate the ALMIS Database with the 2003-2005 short-term and 2002 –2012 long-term projections data and submit the data for public dissemination.

Long-term occupational projections will be published in several publications including *Utah Careers*, the *Utah Job Trends* publications, in brochures, on posters, and on our Web site. It will also be highlighted in *TrendLines* magazine and in trainings and presentations. It will be used for economic analysis purposes and to help customers better understand where the Utah economy is heading. Short-term projections will be highlighted in *TrendLines* magazine. The projections will be used for economic analysis purposes and to help customers better understand where the Utah economy is heading. Utah will make short-term industry/occupational projections available for the State of Utah.

This activity supports the state’s WIA activities because it provides information that is important for career and curriculum planning activities. The state Workforce Investment Board views this as a priority because it is good information for One-Stop Centers, employment counselors, education customers, and business customers. Customer support for these activities is demonstrated through informal feedback. This includes the high

number of direct requests for information and presentations from customers and their representatives and attention from the media when the occupational projections are released.

Principal customers include employers, counselors, job seekers, planners, internal DWS staff, educators, students, workforce investment boards and economists.

Planned Outcomes

Utah will make long-term occupational projections available in hard copy and electronic formats within 60 days of developing the data.

Milestones/Timetable

- Utah will develop statewide short-term industry projections by May 30, 2005.
- Utah will develop statewide short-term occupational projections by June 30, 2005.
- Utah will produce and disseminate long-term local-area occupational projections by September 30, 2004.
- Utah will populate the ALMIS Database with the long-term projections data by September 30, 2004.
- Utah will populate the ALMIS Data base with short-term projections data by June 15, 2005.
- Utah will survey internal customers by September 30, 2004.
- Utah will conduct a focus group to gather feedback for these data by December 1, 2004.

Estimated cost: \$58,887

3. Provide occupational and career information products for public use.

Utah will continue to improve customer-focused occupational and career information products, incorporating related information such as employment projections, in-demand occupations and supply indicators, wages, career ladder/lattice information, advice and supportive information, and forecasts and trends. All of the information will be SOC-based and developed in consultation with intended customers. In addition, Utah will conduct a job vacancy survey using the standard methodology developed by BLS.

Utah will publish the following publications in hard copy format and on its Web site:

- *Utah Job Trends*, which includes information about the occupations in demand in the Utah job market at the metro and non-metro levels. Utah is not publishing areas, which are not supported by the data. Most of the employment in Utah is concentrated along the Wasatch Front in one large labor market.
 - Two additional versions of this publication will be developed: one targeting youth and the other targeting the general adult population.
- The *Utah Careers*, a guide which offers all of the above information in one source, plus Holland Code tools to find the right kind of job; advice on writing resumes, interviews, keeping a job, balancing work and family; finding good

child care, using our state Career Information Delivery System; education/training options, and more.

- Three supplements to *Utah Careers* will be developed that include information targeted to women, dislocated workers, and older workers.
- Utah will also publish information in flyers, posters and brochures.
 - Utah will pilot test a brochure written in Spanish directed to parents.
 - Utah's occupational wage and projections data is published on the state's Career Information Delivery System (CIDS) Choices.

Utah will conduct focus groups to gather feedback on these new products from targeted customers such as employment counselors, school counselors, teachers, parents, and students. These products will be used as a mechanism to communicate data to customers for a wide variety of purposes including career planning, curriculum planning, economic analyses, and One-Stop service delivery.

These products will be developed in consultation with Regional Councils, specifically the sub-groups assigned to youth and other local stakeholders including education. All of these products will be SOC-based and will be developed in consultation with intended customers. Utah will investigate ways to tie these products to the O*Net system and will make a plan to accomplish this. Providing career planning information to customers is in direct support of the WIA plan and the Workforce Investment Boards' goals to help facilitate matching job seekers with job openings now and in the future. These are also important tools used in the One-Stop Centers.

Customer support for these products is demonstrated through the demand for the publications and informal feedback. We have received positive feedback from many customers praising these publications for communicating complex information in a clear manner. The publications are used regularly by employment counselors in local employment centers and we receive many requests from schools and other related groups.

Principal customers include employment/career counselors, job seekers, planners, internal DWS staff, business, workforce investment boards, education, parents, and students. Based upon feedback from the governor's office and workforce investment boards, Utah will conduct its first job vacancy survey during fall 2004.

Planned Outcome

Utah will develop and publish all of the publications outlined above in hard copy format and on its Web site. Utah will continue to conduct focus groups to gather feedback on existing products and to find out what other types of tools might be helpful to specific groups of customers such as employment counselors, school counselors, teachers, parents, students, and native Spanish speakers.

Milestones/Timetable

- The employment counselor version of *Utah Job Trends* will be published by September 30, 2004.

- The youth version and the general adult version of *Utah Job Trends* will be published by September 30, 2005.
- The *Utah Careers* will be published by September 30, 2004.
- The posters, flyers, and brochures will be published by February 28, 2005.
- Utah will conduct focus groups to gather feedback on products by March 30, 2005.
- Utah will conduct a job vacancy survey during the months of October, November, and December 2004 and publish results by February 15, 2005.

Estimated Cost: \$81,430

4. Ensure that workforce information and support required by state and local workforce investment boards are provided.

Utah will provide information and support to state and local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and provide other special demand information products and services. Utah has a close working relationship with its state and regional councils due to the organizational structure of DWS (as described in the introduction). Currently DWS has developed a targeted industry strategy that will benefit both the job seekers and businesses. This strategy is endorsed by the state and regional councils. LMI has been used to identify industries and show counselors and job seekers which jobs are in demand, which jobs pay well, and how to visualize a career ladder.

Utah publishes several newsletters to communicate information to customers at the state and local levels.

- The magazine-style newsletter *TrendLines* is published every other month and contains state and local information along with articles of general information. Its intent is to give the reader a general idea of what is happening in the economy.
- *TrendLines Extra* is a Web-only bullet point listing of economic information updated each week and is available only on our Web site.
- The *County Trends* newsletters give the reader general economic information at the county level. These newsletters are supported by detailed tables, charts, and graphs available only on our Web site quarterly.
- Occupational Wage Flyers provide customers with a quick list of occupations and wage information in a flyer format. The flyers are created for the state and sub-state levels.
- Web products include: Fact sheets for each county, E-profiles for each county, major employer lists for each county, and occupations with training potential lists for local areas.

Workforce investment boards (i.e. regional councils) will each have access to a regional economist assigned to their region that develops and produces information and responds to the needs of his/her particular region. The regional economists work closely with regional councils, employment centers, schools, and a wide variety of other local stakeholders and customers to develop and continually improve products and services to meet customer needs. Customers have demonstrated support for these products and

services formally and informally. We regularly receive informal feedback verbally and in writing for these products and services. An example of a formal survey on the County Trends Newsletters showed the following scores based on a five point rating scale (1=poor; 2=unsatisfactory; 3=OK; 4=average; 5=outstanding):

- The information in this publication is... 4.34
- Its usefulness to me is...4.29
- Overall, I think this publication is...4.29
- Themes of written comments show that customers like the local, county-specific information; comparison of the local economy to the state and nation; current information; easy to read and understand; and interesting and useful information.

Another example of a formal customer feedback survey showed support of the Regional Economists. Following are results from the survey:

- 80% of customers agree or strongly agree that they know who their regional economist is and how to contact them.
- 70% of customers agreed or strongly agreed that the regional economist responds quickly and effectively to data or other information requests.
- 75% of customers agreed or strongly agreed that presentations and publications from the regional economists are useful and valuable.
- Themes of written comments show that customers like the knowledge and availability (for staff and employers); the presentations and personal visits to the regions; they know the areas well; current information; helpful, patient, and friendly; explain the meaning of economic information; lively interesting presentations; helpful with Regional Council; and TrendLines magazine and other publications.

In addition, external customers rated the presentations by regional economists a 4.2 (out of a possible 5) overall.

Principal customers include employment/career counselors, businesses, job seekers, students, the general public, researchers, government planners, and regional councils.

Planned Outcomes

Utah's regional economists will produce two hard copy newsletters called *County Trends* for each county, and update information on the Web site four times during PY 2004. Utah will publish the *TrendLines* newsletter every other month and publish *TrendLines Extra* each week. The regional economists will update county fact sheets for each county and economic and demographic profiles for each county. Utah will gather customer feedback every other year through a card sent to customers receiving hard copy publications, to see if the customer wants to continue his/her subscription. This also helps us clean up our mailing lists.

Milestones/Timetable

- Utah will use customer feedback to improve its Web site, Web interfaces, publications, trainings, and presentations through June 30, 2005.
- Utah's regional economists will serve regional and state workforce investment boards through June 30, 2005.
- Utah will publish the *TrendLines* newsletter six times during PY 2004 (every other month).
- Utah will publish *TrendLines Extra* each week during PY 2004.
- Utah will publish *County Trends* newsletters in December 2004 and June 2005, the information will be updated on the Web in March 2005 and September 2005.

Estimated Cost: \$143,921

5. Maintain and enhance electronic state workforce information delivery systems.

Utah will continually improve, develop and deploy a publicly accessible state workforce electronic information delivery system. This system, called the Utah Economic Data Viewer, allows customers to easily access information they need from the ALMIS Database. Utah will develop a Web interface for the current employment statistics data and one that allows customers to access county and other sub-state information. The existing interfaces that access labor force information, career/occupational projections information, employment and wages information, occupational wage information, and population data will be maintained.

This product will serve One-Stop Centers and provide a mechanism for customers to easily access a wide variety of information for a wide variety of purposes. It will assist internal customers by providing important data for economic analysis purposes. The occupational information interface is currently serving as an important link for the new Careers.utah.gov, a portal created from a partnership between DWS, higher education, public education and rehabilitation.

This supports the state's WIA plan because it allows customers to easily access detailed information that will enable them to make good planning decisions. The State Workforce Investment Board is interested in delivering the most current economic information to customers and this is a good way to accomplish this goal. It will also enable internal economists and analysts to deliver information more quickly to customers, which is a goal of the state and regional councils. Based upon our customer feedback, enhancing and maintaining the UEDV is a good investment because it is a way to get them the most current, localized information to them as quickly as possible. Utah plans to explore ways of incorporating the Skill Window product into its electronic delivery tools. It has already been incorporated into careers.utah.gov and the initial informal feedback from customers has been very positive.

Principal customers include employment/career counselors, businesses, job seekers, students, the general public, researchers, government planners, and economists.

Planned Outcomes

Utah will continue to develop Web interfaces so customers will be able to easily access information from the ALMIS Database. The two interfaces that will be developed during PY 2004 include one for current employment statistics data and one for county and local information. Utah will also gather customer feedback and use it to improve the system.

Milestones/Timetable

- Utah will develop and deploy a Web interface for the current employment data by January 30, 2004.
- Utah will develop and deploy a Web interface for county and local information by June 30, 2004.
- Utah will maintain the Utah Economic Data Viewer through June 30, 2005.

Estimated Cost: \$86,243

6. Support state workforce information training activities.

Utah will support state training activities by conducting labor market information training for all Department of Workforce Services One-Stop staff in the state. Utah has developed, and continually improves, our internal training specifically for employment counselors and business consultants. This activity provides direct support of One-Stop Centers by training staff to utilize economic information to assist job seeker and business customers.

The training supports the vision and mission of the Department and the State Council as both trainings have been incorporated into the core training for department employees. Feedback from internal employees who have been through the training show that about 95 percent of them feel that the training will help them do a better job. And all of the external customers who receiving training felt that it would help them do a better job.

Utah will support the training and development of its own staff by participating in training offered by the LMI Training Institute.

Utah's Workforce Information division coordinates with state boards through the regional economists who provide training to staff in the regions. We coordinate with Utah's Career Resource Network committee and provides support for training for school counselors in the state. Utah also provides trainings for the public called "Breakfast with Your Economist." During these two-hour sessions a regional economist presents local information and an economic update to customers who sign up for the training/presentation in advance. All of these initiatives support the goals of getting information to customers that they can understand and apply to their individual situations.

Principal customers include employment/career counselors, job seekers, students, educational/government planners, businesses, and the general public.

Planned Outcomes

Utah will review and improve the training it has already developed for business consultants and employment counselors. Utah will present training for business consultants and employment counselors during PY 2004 on demand. Utah will develop and present a minimum of two presentations to local area groups such as chambers of commerce, economic development and workforce investment boards in each of the five regions. Utah will offer recertification training for Utah teachers and counselors. Utah will gather feedback from customers at every training/presentation utilizing standardized feedback sheets. Information gathered from customers will be used to continually improve trainings/presentations.

Milestones/Timetable

- Based on feedback gathered from customers, Utah will review and improve training for business consultants and employment counselors by June 30, 2005.
- The LMI training in Utah is part of the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) core curriculum. Usually we are notified about one month prior to the training; there is not a set schedule. We will conduct trainings on demand for the Department of Workforce Services through June 30, 2005.
- Utah will conduct trainings on demand in coordination with Utah's Career Resource Network committee (Department of Education) through June 30, 2005. There is not a set schedule but we expect to provide at least two trainings with them during PY 2004.
- Utah will present a minimum of two presentations in each region for groups such as chambers of commerce and economic development during PY 2004.
- Utah will attend the LMI Forum in Portland, Oregon in October 2004.

Estimated Cost: \$55,584

Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Utah consults with state and local boards, the business community, individuals, and state and local education about the usefulness of the information provided by its system through:

- Regional economist contacts with regional councils
- Workforce Information contact with sub-groups of regional councils
- The newly formed DWS/Education Coordination Committee
- Participation on the Utah Career Resource Network Committee

Utah currently:

- Gathers feedback sheets after trainings and presentations
- Gathers information from targeted focus groups in the development and continuous improvement of products. Examples of focus groups include: employment counselors, business consultants, employers, school counselors, teachers, Department of Workforce Services employees who work on-site at schools, students, and parents

- Utah is in the process of developing on-line customer service surveys. Note: Utah is currently testing a pop-up survey for the Utah Economic Data Viewer. A five-question survey pops up when the customer has moved through at least three pages of the viewer.
- Feedback cards in publications every two years on a rotating schedule.