



## **Hands-On Learning Partner Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What is the program?**

Chicago Career Tech is an innovative leading resource for local businesses. It strives to close the workforce skills gap by providing businesses with the talented, retrained professionals they need. Leveraging public-private partnerships, and with key financial support from the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois, Chicago Career Tech provides unemployed emerging- and middle-income Chicago residents the training necessary to obtain and succeed in high demand technology-based careers.

### **2. What are the minimum eligibility qualifications for participants?**

Chicago Career Tech applicants must meet and provide appropriate documentation for ALL of the following core minimum qualifications:

- Legal right to work in the United States
- Resident of the City of Chicago
- Minimum of a high school degree, GED certificate, or higher level of education
- Unemployed (no earlier than January 1, 2008) with previous annual income of \$25,000 to \$90,000 (NEW!)
- Eligible to collect or have exhausted unemployment insurance (UI) benefits in the State of Illinois
- Not enrolled in another job training program during the duration of the Chicago Career Tech program
- Not a previous Chicago Career Tech participant
- Able to pass criminal background check and drug test

### **3. How are Participants selected for the program?**

Applicants that meet Chicago Career Tech's minimum eligibility requirements are invited to participate in phone interviews with PeopleScout, a Recruitment Process Outsourcing firm. Applicants who successfully pass phone interviews are invited to a face-to-face interview that includes both attitudinal and aptitude measurement. The top applicants are invited to participate in the program based on a weighted measure of all application steps.

### **4. Do you conduct background checks and drug screens on Participants?**

Yes. Chicago Career Tech partners with TalentWise, a dominant leader in the employment screening industry, to provide background checks and drug testing for all of our Participants. The specific services provided by TalentWise are: Social Security Number (SSN) Trace, Address History Search, 7-Year County Criminal History Search, Multi-State Criminal Database Search, Nationwide Sex Offender Registry Search, and eScreen 5 Panel Urine Drug Test.



## **5. How are Participants matched with a hands-on learning host?**

Chicago Career Tech and United Way of Metropolitan Chicago review Participant profiles, work and education experiences, designated classroom training tracks, and hosts' detailed requests, in order to match Participants with host organizations.

## **6. Can my organization serve as a hands-on learning site for multiple Participants?**

Yes. If your organization has the infrastructure to provide sufficient oversight and training, you may request as many Participants as you have hands-on learning opportunities.

## **7. Is there a stipend for Participants? If yes, who is responsible for providing this stipend?**

Yes. Participants in the Chicago Career Tech program will be eligible to continue certification and collection of Illinois Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits if they have not been exhausted. Chicago Career Tech will offer a daily stipend of \$50.00 to participants. As required by Illinois law, the amount of the stipend will be offset by the amount of UI benefits that one is eligible to collect. Some participants may not qualify for a stipend due to the offset in benefits. Finally, if a participant exhausts their UI during the program, the participant will become eligible for a stipend.

## **8. Is this program compliant with US Department of Labor Fair Labor Standards Act?**

Hosting participants through Chicago Career Tech is compliant with six criteria of the US Department of Labor Fair Labor Standards Act regarding paid and unpaid interns. Chicago Career Tech requires that hosts do NOT compensate Chicago Career Tech participants and under FLSA, hosts are not obligated to pay participants. As you develop appropriate projects for your Chicago Career Tech participant(s), please refer to the six criteria of FLSA below to ensure FLSA compliance:

- The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;
- The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
- The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
- The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern; and on occasion its operations may actually be impeded;
- The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and
- The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.



**9. What are the training tracks for Group 5 which begins spring 2012?**

The following career training tracks and corresponding hands-on learning assignment durations are being offered for the spring session:

- Microsoft IT Support (City Colleges of Chicago), beginning in late May 2012, up to 24 weeks
- Network Technician/CISCO (City Colleges of Chicago), beginning in late May for 24 weeks
- Project Management (Illinois Institute of Technology), beginning in late May 2012; up to 21 weeks
- Web Design and Development (Illinois Institute of Technology), beginning in late May 2012; up to 21 weeks
- SharePoint Content Management (Illinois Institute of Technology), beginning in late May 2012; up to 21 weeks
- Mobile Application Development (Tribeca Flashpoint Academy), beginning in late May 2012; up to 24 weeks
- Microsoft Office Specialist (City Colleges of Chicago), beginning in late May 2012; up to 24 weeks

**10. Do hands-on learning hosts need to commit three full days per week for up to six months?**

Yes. Hands-on learning assignments should engage Participants for three days per week, Monday – Wednesday, for the timelines listed above. Generally, Participants report to their hands-on learning host sites from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**11. Is the Chicago Career Tech hands-on learning program the same thing as an internship?**

No. The hands-on learning experience is connected to Chicago Career Tech classroom learning and the Participants' individualized training needs. These hands-on learning experiences will be tailored towards what Participants are learning in their Chicago Career Tech training tracks for the purposes of implementing classroom learning in a work environment, building workplace competence and facilitating career exploration. Unlike many paid internship programs offered by an employer, Chicago Career Tech Participants may not displace or substitute for regular employees, and receive close observation from onsite professionals.

**12. Will business or nonprofit partners be able to select the Chicago Career Tech Participant that they host?**

Chicago Career Tech and United Way of Metropolitan Chicago review Participant profiles, work and education experience, designated classroom training tracks and hosts' detailed requests in order to match Participants with host organizations. If you would like to review resumes of Participants being considered for your organization, we are happy to provide this opportunity.

**13. What are the responsibilities of the host site?**

Host sites should endeavor to provide quality hands-on learning experiences by engaging participants in project work or shadowing opportunities that complement the classroom training of their participants. Chicago Career Tech also requires that host sites provide participants with materials and equipment (a computer and work area) necessary to perform their hands-on learning responsibilities.



**14. Is a written agreement required to serve as a host in the program?**

Chicago Career Tech requires that all host businesses and nonprofits execute a Memorandum of Understanding before a participant can be placed at a host site.

**15. Do hands-on learning hosts need to maintain a record of attendance for participants or provide notification of absences?**

There may be instances where Chicago Career Tech will ask you to confirm the attendance of your participant. Therefore, we recommend that your participants complete a daily sign-in sheet. In addition, we ask that you notify Chicago Career Tech if your participant is absent.

**16. Who should we contact in the event that we must terminate or have a concern with our relationship with an existing Chicago Career Tech Participant?**

Chicago Career Tech will provide a representative from our Business Development Team to act as liaison from our Business Development Team with each hands-on learning host. The host should contact the assigned Chicago Career Tech or United Way representative in the event that the host company would like to terminate or has a concern with their relationship with an active Chicago Career Tech Participant.

**17. Where do I obtain additional information?**

Please visit the Chicago Career Tech website at [www.chicagocareertech.com](http://www.chicagocareertech.com) or email your question to [biz@chicagocareertech.com](mailto:biz@chicagocareertech.com). If you have questions that are not addressed in this document or on the website, please call Chicago Career Tech at (312) 201-4503.