

# Shifting Roles and Responsibilities

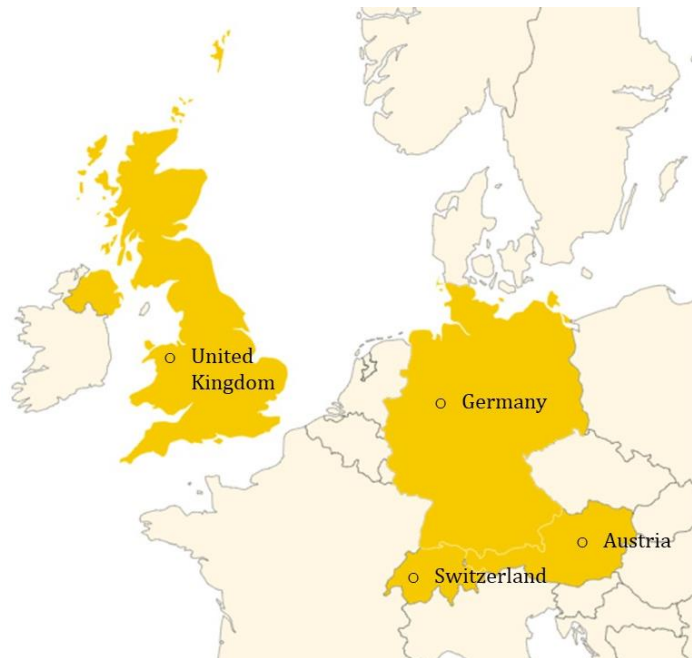
## *The Case for Employer-Led Worker Development*

For many years now, there has been a keen interest in expanding the apprenticeship system in the United States. That said, at the federal level there is no single set of apprenticeship standards that all employers and sponsors in the U.S. must follow, which results in a patchwork system. Where private firms do provide on-site apprenticeships—partnering with a community or technical college for related instruction—employers know that trainees learn company-relevant skills as well as broad knowledge about the field. But this is not the norm and as a result, employers continue to depend solely on the education system to prepare their workforce, but to varying degrees of readiness. This results in employers arguing that the education system does not equip new hires with the skills needed to be ‘job-ready’.

### Successful European Models

Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom have longstanding traditions of training in private companies of all sizes and across a range of sectors. They do this through a dual education system that links learning in school and in work.

While the social, political and labor market contexts are different in all three countries, and each are different compared to the United States, there is value in American employers better understanding how employers in other countries work with the relevant stakeholders to provide successful employer-led training opportunities.



### Apprenticeship Benefits

Apprenticeships’ appeal is not hard to understand. Evidence suggests that apprenticeships are highly effective at equipping individuals with valuable knowledge, skills and work experience. In turn, apprentices tend to be loyal to their sponsors which means reduced turnover for the employer (Helper, Noonan, Nicholson, and Langdon, 2016). Furthermore, apprenticeship graduates finish their programs with no student loan debt, compared to an average of just over \$30,000 for today’s U.S. undergraduate college student (Perez and Zientz, 2016).

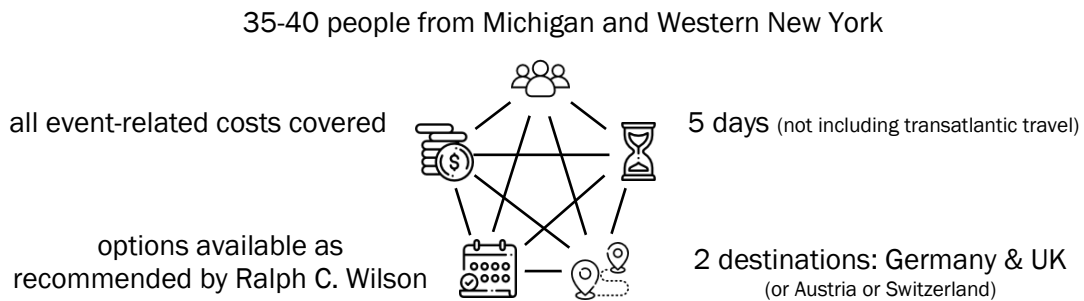


Given these benefits, the question remains: how can GMF Cities help U.S. employers better understand the value in investing in employer-led apprenticeships? Given the evidence, how can we get employers to play a role in and accept responsibility for training their future employees and with that, have a stake in skilling-up the U.S. workforce? Where apprenticeships in the skilled trades do exist, what is preventing apprenticeship programs from expanding into new sectors, such as medical technicians, engineers and IT, and employers taking the lead?

## Project Overview

GMF Cities proposes a study tour that will explore the financial, regulatory, and partnership arrangements that are the key components of employer-led training systems in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Employers play an active part in the development of the dual apprenticeship system in a systemic way. Key here is leveraging the study tour as an opportunity for U.S. employers to learn how this happens and what benefit this has for a company. Moreover, the study tour will provide the opportunity for the U.S. participants to discuss and reflect on the changes needed to policy and practice across multiple domains if such systems were to be replicated in their sector and region.



## Topics and Themes

The study tour will provide more than just a glimpse at how apprenticeships are organized. It will bring the relevant public and private sector stakeholders together to discuss:

- € How apprenticeships are financed
- ☑ Quality control of training programs
- 🎓 Partnerships with schools and universities
- 📺 Key outcomes resulting from employer-led apprenticeships

