



Oregon

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Program Year 2013 Workforce Information Grants to States (WIGS) Annual Performance Report

1. Workforce Information Database (WIDb)
 - a. Oregon is currently using Version 2.5 of the WIDb. We continue to use new database structures as they become available and recommend changes to the existing WIDb structure through our participation in the Analyst Resource Center (ARC).
 - b. During Program Year 2013 Oregon updated the following core and supplemental tables:
 - i. Monthly updates of Current Employment Statistics estimates at the state and county level;
 - ii. Monthly updates of Local Area Unemployment Statistics at the state and county level;
 - iii. Annual updates of the occupational wages at the state and workforce region level;
 - iv. Annual updates of short-term industry and occupational employment projections at the state level;
 - v. Biennial updates of long-term industry and occupational employment projections at the state and workforce region level;
 - vi. Updates of the employer database as they are received from Infogroup®; and
 - vii. Quarterly updates of the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.
 - c. Oregon attended all ARC meetings during the 2013 grant period.
2. Industry and Occupational Projections
 - a. Oregon develops its long-term industry and occupational employment projections on a two-year cycle.

- i. State and workforce region level long-term industry and occupational employment projections for 2012-2022 were completed, published on QualityInfo.org, and submitted to the ETA in June 2014.
 - ii. Statewide long-term projections can be found on QualityInfo.org at <http://www.qualityinfo.org/pubs/projections/projections.pdf>, Workforce region level long-term projections can be found at <http://www.qualityinfo.org/olmisi/PubReader?itemid=00003217>, and both statewide and workforce region long-term projections are incorporated into the website's most popular tool, the Occupational Information Center <http://www.qualityinfo.org/olmisi/OIC>.
 - b. Oregon develops its short-term industry and occupational employment projections every year. The 2013-2015 short-term projections were completed and submitted to North Carolina in February 2014.
3. Annual Economic Analysis and Other Reports
 - a. In May 2014, the Oregon Employment Department published a special economic study titled *Endangered: Youth in the Labor Force*. This report provides a data-driven economic analysis of the decline in youth labor force participation. The topic was selected based on input and priorities from the Governor's Office and Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs).
 - i. The report is based on analysis of labor force data for Oregon and the United States conducted by the Oregon Employment Department's Research Division.
 - ii. The report includes additional policy and program insights from representatives of Oregon's seven LWIBs. This collaboration was made possible by the efforts of the Oregon Workforce Partnership (OWP), a statewide association of LWIBs that invest their resources to better align economic, education, and training systems based on the needs of our businesses and communities.
 - iii. Presentations of early findings were shared with the OWP before the report was written. Feedback was solicited and received from the group, which helped ensure the economic analysis was relevant and of benefit to Local Workforce Investment Boards.
 - iv. Early drafts of the report were shared with LWIB Directors and selected LWIB staff. Those reviewers were then interviewed to discuss the various topics covered in the report. Their insights and selected quotes were incorporated into the report to complement the Oregon Employment Department's analysis.
 - v. A PDF copy of the report is available at this link: www.qualityinfo.org/pubs/youth.pdf

- vi. The findings of the report were presented on various occasions to state policy makers and others. One example, where the report's findings were presented to the Oregon Workforce Investment Board, is available at this link:
<http://www.qualityinfo.org/pubs/presentations/g061314youth.pdf>
- b. Additional reports Oregon produced during the program year, including a link to their PDF:
 - i. Quarterly Job Vacancies Snapshots
www.qualityinfo.org/pubs/vacancy/quarterly/sw-0414.pdf;
 - ii. Almost Half of Oregon's Job Vacancies Are Difficult to Fill
<http://www.qualityinfo.org/pubs/difficult.pdf>;
 - iii. Occupations in Demand
<http://www.qualityinfo.org/pubs/demand/sw.pdf>;
 - iv. Oregon Job Vacancies
<http://www.qualityinfo.org/pubs/vacancy/sw.pdf>; and
 - v. Oregon Help Wanted Online Ads
<http://www.qualityinfo.org/pubs/hwol/hwol.pdf>;

4. Customer Consultations

- a. Because the WIDb operates at a level below the interest of our customers, we do not discuss it with local WIBs or other customers.
- b. We do discuss our website, QualityInfo.org, and other data center products that rely on the contents of the WIDb. Contacts with our customers and online customer satisfaction surveys indicate a high level of satisfaction with our developed products.
- c. Oregon does not consult with customers regarding methodology or customer needs prior to developing the short-term and long-term projections.
 - i. The projections are produced using statistically valid methods, in consultation with other experts in the projections and employment forecasting field.
- d. Contacts with WIBs, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) providers, workforce development professionals, planners, and other customers indicate that the long-term projections are heavily used and are the underpinning for workforce development discussions in Oregon.
- e. Oregon has not previously published the short-term industry and occupational projections, so no assessment is available. Discussions with most customer groups suggest there is little demand for these projections in Oregon. Discussions within Oregon's Workforce and Economic Research Division's Technical Review Board produced agreement on the

serious quality limitations of such short-term projections. These projections are made available upon request.

- f. Following a statewide conference of the International Association of Workforce Professionals, Oregon's Systems Development team assembled a highly enthusiastic group of local field office ("one-stop") staff, researchers, and partners to work on wording/language issues for the redesign of Oregon's Labor Market Information website, QualityInfo.org. The team became known as the "Words Group" and was tasked with phrasing items on the homepage in a way that the public understands. The results of the "Words Group" were usability tested with customers.
- g. Oregon's Research staff met regularly with state and local WIB members and other key policy advisors or partners. This ensures that Oregon's Research staff is adhering to a key principle of the WIA: "consult with key customer groups" by: 1) listening to their needs; 2) contributing to their discussions; 3) making sure they are aware of what we can offer them; and 4) presenting information.
 - i. Some local WIBs now expect our local out-stationed staff to be at all local WIB meetings to provide information to enhance decision making.
 - ii. The Research Administrator met frequently with the Governor's workforce policy advisor and communicated with her several times a week via email.
 - iii. The Research Administrator attended several Oregon WIB meetings and local WIB meetings during the program year, and participated in the policy discussions and presented information.
 - iv. The Research Administrator attended several Oregon Workforce Partnership meetings during the program year. The Oregon Workforce Partnership is made up of the seven executive directors of Oregon's local WIBs.
 - 1. In December 2013, Research conducted a brief customer satisfaction survey with the Oregon Workforce Partnership. Overall the local WIB Directors gave high marks to the work of Research in areas related to timeliness of service, ability to provide the correct services the first time, availability of information, and overall quality of services. Slightly lower marks were given in helpfulness and knowledge and expertise of staff.
- h. The Research Administrator met with a variety of workforce, education, and economic development partners and customers, contributing LMI expertise and resources to policy, resource, and other decision-making.

Many Research staff also participated in or provided information subsequent to these meetings.

- i. The Research Administrator met regularly with the leadership from Oregon's Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development.
 - j. Information gathered from conversations with WIB members indicates that Research staff efforts to provide WIBs with high quality, timely, and localized information and products result in a high level of satisfaction at both the state and local level.
5. Activities Undertaken to Meet Customer Needs
- a. Oregon responded to more than 9,200 customer requests during the 2013 calendar year.
 - b. Oregon uses several methods for assessing customer needs on QualityInfo.org.
 - i. Feedback is gathered through a "Contact Us" feature available from the homepage.
 - ii. Anecdotal information and feedback is gathered from Research staff, other Oregon Employment Department staff, and other key customers.
 - iii. Usability testing and assessment is conducted with end-users for all new development and any redevelopment projects.
 1. During program year 2013, the usability analyst continued testing all new development projects using Morae software that captures audio, video, and screen movement. Morae is one of the most respected software packages used by usability professionals. The software also contains analysis tools that allow one to measure time on task and success rate. These two measures are instrumental in determining improved site usability.
 - iv. QualityInfo.org usage is tracked via both internal web logs and Google Analytics. These usage statistics provide valuable data about what works and does not work on the site.
 - c. The Research Division engages with customers through social media. The Workforce and Economic Research blog (OregonEmployment.Blogspot.com) and Twitter feed ([Twitter.com/OrEmployment](https://twitter.com/OrEmployment)) had a combined total of 10,500 visits, new followers, mentions, and re-tweets from businesses, media outlets, job seekers, local workforce boards, and other customers during the program year.

- d. Oregon continues its participation in the Census Local Employment Dynamics (LED) project, and provides LED data (including new mapping tools) to WIBs and other customers.
- e. The long-term projections are heavily used in many areas on Qualityinfo.org.
- f. Oregon continues to build and develop its Geographic Information System (GIS) resources in support of providing accurate local labor market information to local WIBs.
- g. Oregon developed an analysis on youth employment, per a conversation with local WIB executive directors.
 - i. The topic was selected based on input and priorities from the Governor's Office and Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs).
- h. Oregon continued producing vacancy surveys quarterly.
 - i. Per customer request Oregon added an "Are these vacancies difficult to fill?" question to the survey and developed a publication specifically to report the responses to this question.
- i. As a result of customer consultations, primarily with the Governor's office and state and local WIBs, Oregon is completely redesigning its workforce performance measures system. The Research Division has been given responsibility for this work and has successfully identified and defined seven measures. Two others are still under development. Ultimately, partly using Oregon's Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant, Oregon will collect, analyze, and publish data on these new measures, including the development of a new, user-friendly web tool to allow performance measure analysis by geographies, demographics, and programs.
- j. The Research Division has been very involved in Oregon's redesign of its workforce system, providing data, information, and analysis to support efforts to redefine geographic boundaries of local workforce areas, to implement sector strategies, and to measure workforce system performance.
 - i. In September 2013, a Workforce Analyst in Lane County was asked to present on the state of the local workforce to a group of teachers. The teachers and counselors were attending a newly constructed continuing education opportunity sponsored by Lane Workforce Partnership (the local WIB) and City Club of Eugene. In the first class, the Analyst was asked to kick off the series with an overview of our economy. She spoke to the group about local workforce demographics, projected employment, emerging jobs, and workforce challenges. She helped them understand the types

of businesses that existed in Lane County and the jobs they would see on their tours. The next step for the teachers was to visit a local employer each week, for seven weeks, to learn about employment needs and job requirements. The local Workforce Analyst accompanied the teachers on the employer visits as a resource.

Due to the success of this partnership, the WIB representative and the Workforce Analyst presented the findings (along with one of the employers) to the Eugene City Club membership at a monthly meeting in January 2014. In May 2014, the Workforce Analyst was asked to speak to the Lane Education Service District about emerging opportunities for youth employment in order to repeat the project on a larger scale in the fall of 2014.

- ii. The Portland area Workforce Analyst assisted Worksystems Inc. (WSI) in the spring/summer of 2014, helping them to identify employers hiring for specific computer coding, programming, and software development jobs as part of WSI's Code Oregon initiative. This program provides free access to online coding and programming certifications and creates pathways to employment in high-demand, high-wage jobs for customers across the Portland Metro region (with plans for a statewide rollout). The Workforce Analyst supported these efforts by pulling job listings data from the Employment Department's internal job board (iMatchSkills) as well as data from the agency's subscription to The Conference Board Help Wanted OnLine (HWOL). The data was sorted by occupation and required certifications. The Workforce Analyst, along with Project Leads from WSI, identified employers based on this data mining. The WSI Lead is actively working to recruit these employers for participation in Code Oregon.
- iii. Similar assistance was provided to other WIBs in Oregon on other projects.

6. New Tools and Resources

- a. Oregon has ensured that all data and components of the Oregon Labor Market Information System (as presented on the QualityInfo.org website) are maintained in a timely and accurate fashion.
- b. More than 402 new or revised articles and more than 315 new or revised weekly, monthly or annual publications were added to QualityInfo.org during the program year. These ranged from articles about occupations such as [Tuning in to Oregon's Radio and TV Broadcasting Opportunities](#), to regional articles such as [Columbia Gorge High-Paying Industries in 2013](#), to statewide analysis such as [Who Are the Working Poor?](#), to articles about specific industries such as [Home Building in Oregon: First In, Last Out of Recession](#).

- c. Oregon's Systems Development team continued work on QualityInfo Next Generation during program year 2013. The complete redesign of the state's labor market information website is a major undertaking that is nearing completion. Major accomplishments include: a complete redesign of the site's most popular LMI tool – the Occupational Information Center; a complete redesign of 11 additional tools on the site; a new look and feel for the site's homepage incorporating a responsive layout that displays content fluidly on any device from a PC monitor to a smartphone; and the beginning of testing and training of end users.
7. Efforts to Create and Support Partnerships and Collaborations
- a. Through regular meetings with the Governor's Office workforce policy staff and state and local WIBs, Oregon has not only met a need to respond to customer requests, but has formed a true partnership for solving problems and developing new products. This effort is ongoing and continues to grow.
 - i. Oregon completed a special report on youth labor force participation which was selected based on input and priorities from the Governor's Office and Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs).
 - b. Oregon is working with other ARC partners to develop WIDb v3.0.
 - c. The long-term projections are presented to the Oregon Legislature, State and local WIBs, State Board of Education, businesses, higher education institutions, and many other groups through presentations and QualityInfo.org.
 - d. The industry and occupational long-term projections for 2012-2022 provide two of the 10 key factors in Oregon's Occupational Prioritization for Training methodology. Occupational Prioritization for Training will be updated during the summer of 2014.
 - e. Oregon continues to share best practices and ideas regarding application and website development with members of the ARC consortium.
 - f. Oregon Research staff serve on two BLS Policy Councils, the Projections Managing Partnership Board of Directors, and the LMI Institute Board of Directors.
 - g. The Research Division led efforts, in collaboration with the state's Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development and the Oregon Workforce Investment Board, to develop new workforce system performance measures. Research staff and management led several work groups creating new measures of workforce system customer satisfaction, targeted sectors engagement, skill gain, and employment and wage metrics for those served by the system.

- h. Out-stationed Workforce and Economic Research Division staff members have regular contacts with their local WIBs. They frequently attend WIB meetings.
 - i. Oregon Research staff gave at least 30 presentations with WIB members in attendance during the program year. These presentations included information ranging from population trends and a special Youth Report to skills and the general economy.
 - ii. In addition staff gave more than 365 presentations to various audiences throughout Oregon during the program year.
- 8. Activities to Leverage LMI-WI Funding
 - a. Part of the funding strategy for Oregon's LMI activities is to charge customers for projects that go beyond what can reasonably be expected from base funding sources. However, the base funding provides the infrastructure that allows Oregon to take on those additional "special" projects. It is fair to say that Oregon leverages the WIGS and other base funding to allow us to take on other, paid projects for economic development entities, WIBs, community colleges, and others.
- 9. Recommendations to ETA for Changes and Improvements to WIGS Requirements
 - a. Oregon recommends moving to the WIDb v3.0 when it becomes available.
 - b. Either eliminate the requirement for short-term industry and occupational projections, or change the timing or methodology to make the data more current upon its release.
 - i. Those states whose customers request these projections can use Workforce Information Grant funds to develop them.
 - ii. Short-term projections could become in demand if they contained more timely information.
 - c. Oregon is disappointed that the specific references to electronic LMI dissemination (whether websites, blogs, etc.) have been removed from the core deliverables for the PY 2013 grant. Given the limited LMI funding that many states received, using some of the WIGS money to build and maintain an excellent web presence is a crucially important and indispensable tool. Electronic dissemination is the most efficient and cost effective method of delivering LMI.