



## Frequently Asked Questions

### About the Program

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#### **What is the Aloha Connects Innovation (ACI) program?**

Aloha Connects Innovation (ACI) is a new initiative led by the Economic Development Alliance of Hawaii (EDAH) to nurture and grow knowledge-based work opportunities in Hawaii and fuel our emerging industries and innovation sectors. Originally envisioned by Omar Sultan of Sultan Ventures, the program is designed to help convert the loss of jobs due to COVID-19 into a potential new career opportunity for our residents.

#### **Who is the ACI program intended to serve?**

The ACI program is designed to serve:

- Displaced workers as a result of the COVID-19 impact
- Recent college graduates
- Recent high school graduates

#### **How long will the ACI project last?**

The ACI project will last about 4 months, beginning on September 1 and ending on December 15, 2020. The timeframe of this program is very tight, so we encourage you to apply as soon as possible.

#### **What are the Innovation sectors featured in the ACI program?**

The Innovation sectors consists of non-tourism dependent emerging industries which includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Clean Energy
- Local Foods, Production and Manufacturing
- Natural Resource Management
- Waste Reduction Services
- Smart, Sustainable communities
- Technology, Cyber Security
- STEM fields
- Healthcare
- Creative Industries
- Aquaculture
- Aerospace
- Manufacturing
- Agri-tech

#### **Who is presenting the ACI program?**

The Economic Development Alliance of Hawaii, otherwise known as EDAH, is pleased to serve as the presenting organization of the program. Formed in 1998, EDAH is a statewide nonprofit organization

whose mission is to create shared sustainable prosperity and opportunity through responsible, diversified economic development across the Hawaiian Islands.

**Who is funding the ACI program?**

ACI is funded by Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism. The funding originates through the CARES Act which made federal funding available to the Hawaii state government.

**How will the COVID-19 pandemic affect the program?**

To address COVID-19 on operations, the AIC will require that all Host Companies and Participants follow government recommendations and policies that relate to COVID-19. Guidelines include but are not limited to social distancing, mask wearing, and public gathering protocols. Altres will also assist with assessing safety protocols and precautions in the workplace.

## **Host Companies**

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**What is a Host Company?**

A Host Company is where a Participant is placed and offers a safe and rewarding internship.

**How are Host Companies selected?**

Eligible Host Companies are companies in non-tourism-dependent emerging industries that may be more resilient to the lasting impacts of COVID-19. Host Companies are selected according to their ability to provide meaningful internship opportunities in the Innovation sector. Host Companies must be willing and able to mentor, train, support, and provide day to day supervision for interns throughout the program.

**What is a Host Company required to do?**

A Host Company will offer an enriching experience for the Participant, introducing them to a new industry or field and a new set of skills. Host Companies will provide day to day mentoring of Participants, working with ALTRES (the program’s PEO) regarding the Participant’s pay, benefits, or human resources needs, and ensure a safe working environment.

**What are the Host Company’s reporting requirements**

A Host Company will approve timesheets for each Participant, report on the number of Participants and hours worked, check in with EDAH on a regular basis, participate in monthly evaluation progress reports, and participate in an evaluation at the end of the program.

**Is the Host Company required to pay the Participant in the Aloha Connects Innovation program?**

No. ACI will cover the wages and benefits of the Participant from as early as September 1 to December 14, 2020.

**Is the Host Company guaranteed to receive a Participant?**

A placement is not guaranteed through this program so EDAH suggests you apply to be a Host Company as soon as possible.

**Will the ACI assist the Host Company with preparing and nurturing the Participant?**

Yes, each Host Company will be linked to a Facilitator, an organization whose role is assist the Host Company with posting their opening on the Altres site, helping them with developing an enriching Participant experience, and providing them with support for the duration of the program.

**Will the Host Company be compensated for accepting a Participant for the Aloha Connects Innovation program?**

Yes, the Host Company will be provided \$800 per month per Participant each month for committing to the experience for the Participant. The Host Company would sign a contract with EDAH and provide proper tax documentation to be eligible for the compensation.

**How many Participants are Host Companies allowed to accept through the ACI program?**

EDAH suggests no more than two Participants per Host Company because of the mentoring that we anticipate during the internship. Exceptions will be at the discretion of EDAH. Participants, especially those with little to no experience in your will need your support and encouragement to succeed.

## Participants

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**How do displaced workers and students apply for the ACI program?**

Interested residents can apply to be a Participant in ACI on the ALTRES website by clicking here. Applicants will be selected by Host Companies contingent upon the Participant's successful completion of the pre-employment process.

**What kind of job opportunities Participants be offered?**

Through ACI, Participants can expect to work in emerging sectors listed above. They will explore Innovation work as a possible new career to pursue. Clerical and administrative work should not be the primary function of the job.

**How are Participants selected?**

The target population or eligible Participants to be served by this Program are displaced workers, recent college graduates, and recent high school graduates living in the state of Hawaii. Host Companies will select Participants who apply to the program through ALTRES and meet the qualifications for the position.

**Will Participants have access to training for desired or required skills?**

All Participants must enroll in a Higher Skills Academy and Microsoft training date during the preemployment process. Participants will also have access to other training opportunities, budget permitting, as well as a host of on the job training provided by their Host Company.

**Does a resident need to have a background or past experience in innovation to apply?**

No. You just need to have an interest in learning new skills and trying new jobs. To help us find the best match for you, include your volunteer activities, talents, or hobbies that may make you an exceptional applicant for an Innovation sector job.

### **How will Participants benefit from the ACI program?**

Participants will:

- Learn about yourself and develop your reflection skills through the Higher Skills Academy and Microsoft training program
- Receive on-the-job training and experiences
- Interact and learn from innovation industry leaders, their colleagues and networks, and other Participants
- Be paid on this journey including benefits
- Help shift Hawaii's economy to more resilient sectors

### **Where can I go to find out more information about the ACI program?**

For more information, go to <https://www.edahawaii.org> or email [info@edahawaii.org](mailto:info@edahawaii.org)