

## Solowork Theater

The Jobs Council has been focused on Solowork as a potential major economic base job creation program theater especially for rural communities finding it increasingly difficult to compete for traditional economic base projects. A pilot for a Solowork Job Creation Program has been developed by the CELab (501C3) in collaboration with Cibola Communities EDC, USDA, NMEDD, NWCOG, and a consortia of 5 service providers. A pilot program is organized and is expected to launch in October, 2016. The elements of this program are:

1. **Remote work training and placement module:** A rapid recruiting, screening, training and placement program focused on local residents that are willing, able and qualified to pursue solowork careers that match the spectrum of jobs offered by the program's out of state employer partners. 90% of training graduates are placed in e-base job openings within 6 weeks of starting the program.
2. **Solopreneurship module:** A Solopreneurship program focused on recruiting, starting up and converting local residents that wish to establish their own solo business, or have their own solo business that are under performing or not yet economic base in nature. This module could also be provided by experienced mission driven SBDC or incubator personnel.
3. **Entry-level worker module:** An entry-level worker program module is focused on recruiting, training and placing new entrants with the interest and the aptitude to be solopreneurs or do solowork. This population includes high school and higher education students, the hard to employ and the chronically poor clients of the NM Workforce Solutions-DOL systems, corrections, disconnected youth, Jobs Corps, Veterans, etc - including those who need remedial education, soft skills training and social services support to transition into the mainstream workforce.
4. **Retention and advancement platform:** A member based solowork support platform that develops a discounted suite of back office support services, concierge services, co-working space, tax and regulatory advocacy and socialization services and performance reporting on each program module. This module is crucial to improving productivity and reducing the social isolation that drives the high rate of attrition among solo workers.

Initial program assessments estimate that minimum job creation potential using the following heuristic.

Population	Workforce Size	Workers suited for solowork	Served by program (.2% of pop)
10,000	4,000	400	200

In summary, for every 10,000 residents in the population, 200 could be placed in a solowork position by the program over 10 years. A post-performance cost for a SoloWork Center to create and support each job ranges from \$3,500 to \$5,000.

The factors of production associated with running a successful Solowork Job Creation program are listed below.

### Marketing and Sales

Problem/Gap	Solution Topic	Status	Action
No formal program exists for creating economic base jobs in this theater	Design a program model, an RFP process and build a consortia to conduct a field test.	Initial program model design completed. pilot business plan completed	-Refine program design with input from initial pilots
	Conduct a pilot solowork program to test the program model and develop a state-wide program strategy.	SoloWork Pilot in Grants, NM is fully funded and ready to launch.	waiting on class size estimates and on-going funding assessment
	Size the pilot to potential demand for the program	Assessing the impact recent layoff notices in the region on class size & costs	Meeting with local leaders and impacted employers

### Real Estate, Infrastructure, Capital

Problem/Gap	Solution Topic	Status	Action
Lack of secure funding sources for recurring program costs	Potential for existing federal, state and local funding to cover local program start up costs.	Research team is working on developing program, policy and appropriation options	
Lack of secure funding source for state and local program development -start up costs	-Potential for existing federal, state and local economic development, workforce and higher education programs to pay f\$3,500-\$5,000 training, placement and retention fees	-Research team is working on developing program, policy and appropriation options	-Explore existing program rules (rule changes) to allow post performance funding to the SoloWork Centers program. -JTIP,STEP. Rapid Response, LEDA, WIOA

			and others. -Use LEDA to get physical location and infrastructure in place
Lack of adequate broadband service in rural areas	-Broadband planning and implementation	-	-Change LEDA rules to allow funding of broadband projects to directly related to SoloWorks Center programs.

### Workforce, Housing, Community Quality

Problem/Gap	Solution Topic	Status	Action
Unemployed and transitional workers often lack education/skills to succeed at solowork	Identify key areas of need in education/training and provide programs that target those areas with SBDCs and Higher Ed.		
	Have a focus group of current soloworkers from diverse fields to ID factors in appealing to soloworkers and what skills they need.		
No system for determining community appeal for solowork	Develop community rating system and market best communities nationally		

### Leadership, Organization, Business Climate

Problem/Gap	Solution Topic	Status	Action
No champions for solowork as a job creation strategy	-	-	



No data analytics on state's competitive position for bringing in soloworkers			
No practical way to count solo e-base work	Add an accounting element to pilot program that would count soloworkers and track their professional trajectory	Grants project is designing a tracking system for program participants.	
	Set up state level economic base accounting system	Accountability and planning act is being drafted	
GRT makes solo businesses expensive to operate compared to other states			