

Introduction

In 2012, the Creating IT Futures Foundation launched IT-Ready to train unemployed and underemployed adults for successful careers in IT. And now you are joining our network of providers.

This manual will help you set up and implement your IT-Ready program. It is an overview of how we run our programs, with details for each stage of the process. Consider the manual a guide — a framework of standards, procedures and expectations that allows you to incorporate your own approaches to training adults for CompTIA A+ certification and new careers in IT. We note when an aspect of IT-Ready is firm. Otherwise, we encourage you to bring your ideas, resources and expertise to the program.

Throughout the manual, we link to the documents you will use in your program. They include timelines, checklists, handouts and email templates. For a complete week-by-week list of these resources, see “Weekly Log of Administrative and Logistical Needs.” To obtain resources from the “Weekly Log” that are not in this manual, contact our IT-Ready program coordinator. The coordinator can also answer questions about setting up and running your program.

We are excited to welcome you to the IT-Ready Network. Together, we will set the stage for bright, motivated adults to make a difference in their lives.

Basic Terminology

- **Participant:** a student in the IT-Ready program.
- **Graduate:** a participant who has completed the eight weeks of training.
- **Certified graduate:** a graduate who has earned the CompTIA A+ certification.
- **Employment partner:** an employer that has committed to interviewing, and possibly hiring, certified graduates.
- **On-the-job experience:** for certified graduates, a six-month position with an employment partner.
- **Candidate:** a certified graduate interviewing for a job.
- **CITFF:** the Creating IT Futures Foundation.

IT-Ready and the IT-Ready Network

The IT-Ready Network is a group of nonprofit organizations dedicated to preparing low-income adults for successful information technology careers through the IT-Ready program. At no cost to participants, IT-Ready trains adults in the skills and knowledge they need to earn a CompTIA A+ certification — a vendor-neutral certification that validates the skills required by today’s computer support professionals — and succeed in an entry-level IT job. The program also trains participants in the soft skills, such as problem solving, conflict resolution and customer service, that prepare them to be work-ready graduates.

We target populations that are underrepresented in the IT community, including women, veterans and minorities. The average age of participants in our programs is 35. Many participants have work experience. And many are among the long-term unemployed or underemployed. Often they have overcome personal and professional challenges.

Through a rigorous screening process, you choose the participants who will thrive in your program. In the eighth week of training, participants take the CompTIA A+ certification exams.

You also screen program graduates to find the best candidates for an employer. At the end of training, IT-Ready helps graduates who have earned their CompTIA A+ certification to find their first jobs in IT and get started on a new career path.

Some of these first jobs are six-month on-the-job experiences that offer distinct benefits to both certified graduates and employers. Graduates have the chance to hone their skills and gain experience in an IT job, while employers have the chance to see how the graduates do in the workplace and, in some cases, consider them for permanent positions.

IT-Ready certified graduates are prepared to make a difference on the job. They are primed to continue their education and earn additional certifications. By offering your IT-Ready program, you are giving participants the tools to build rewarding careers and make positive changes in their lives.