

# Evaluation Approaches for the Chicago Metro Metal Consortium

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# Chicago Metro Metal Consortium (CMMC)

- 3 industries: steel, fabricated metals, machinery
- 7 Illinois counties in metropolitan Chicago

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# Evaluation Design Considerations

# Evaluation Goals

- Not just program metrics (although they are needed)!
- Measure **impact** of an intervention (quantitative)
  - Targets of impact: firms, workers, and/or regional economy
  - Define intended impacts (e.g., wage, productivity, or job growth)
  - Compare what happened to the target with what would have happened without the intervention
- Methods
  - Outcomes evaluation (before-and-after comparison for intervention recipients)
  - Quasi-experimental (compare intervention recipients with similar group of non-recipients)
  - Random assignment

# Evaluation Goals (cont'd)

- Understand what is producing or not producing impacts (**how intervention works**: case studies, primarily qualitative)
  - Semi-structured interviews with program participants and staff
  - Direct observation
  - Program documents
  - Program administrative data
  - Not just success stories!
- To accomplish evaluation goals, evaluator needs:
  - Understanding of goals and logic of intervention
  - Well-defined measures (quantitative) and evaluation strategy (quantitative and qualitative)
  - Best feasible comparison group(s)

# Special Challenges of CMMC

- Includes all six IMCP focus areas
  - Workforce & Training
  - Supplier Network
  - Research & Innovation
  - Infrastructure & Site Development
  - Trade & International Investment
  - Operational Improvement & Capital Access

# Special Challenges of IMCP (cont'd)

- Different types of potential interventions
  - Restricted services: provided to particular firms and/or workers chosen in advance (workforce & training, supplier network, operational improvement)
  - Open-access services (research & innovation, trade & international investment)
  - Impacts difficult to infer (infrastructure & site development, capital access): no evaluation proposed
- Need to conduct our own surveys of firms and workers
- Difficulty in finding feasible comparison groups
- Grants and specific proposed CMMC programs not known in advance

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# CMMC Approaches



# Restricted Services: Workforce & Training

- Implementation evaluation, may include interviews with:
  - Program management and staff
  - Participating firms
  - Participating workers
  - Training providers
  - WIB staff
- Worker outcomes evaluation, may include:
  - Employment status
  - Wages and earnings
  - Work hours
  - Industry and occupation
  - Manufacturing skill credentials

# Restricted Services: Workforce & Training (cont'd)

- Firm outcomes evaluation, may include:
  - Average worker performance rating
  - Average length of unfilled job vacancies are unfilled
  - Average job tenure of production workers
  - Rating of Chicago area as a place to manufacture
  - Productivity
  - Average production worker wage
- Quasi-experimental impact evaluations
  - Worker outcomes: compare with other workers registered with WIB
  - Employer outcomes: compare with employers hiring workers trained in other WIB programs

# Restricted Services: Supplier Network, Operational Improvement

- Implementation evaluation, may include interviews with:
  - Program management and staff
  - Participating firms
  - CMMC members
- Firm outcomes evaluation, may include:
  - Productivity
  - Profitability
  - New product introductions
  - Production worker and total employment
  - Production defect/rework/scrap rates
  - Whether or not firms systematically track product quality measures

# Restricted Services (cont'd)

- Quasi-experimental impact evaluations
  - If possible, compare with firms in Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center's annual Performance Benchmarking Survey
  - If necessary, conduct our own survey of non-participating Chicago-area metals firms. Problems:
    - Cost
    - Nonresponse (but partner organizations may help)

# Open-Access Services

- Implementation evaluation, may include interviews with:
  - Program management and staff
  - Participating firms
  - CMMC members
- Metropolitan Chicago outcomes evaluation, using aggregate regional data on regional exports, innovation measures (e.g., patents, new product/process introductions)
  - Use secondary data where possible
  - Otherwise conduct our own survey of Chicago-area metals firms (same problems as above)

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