**IFDA-CMU Project on the Future Workforce of Foodservice Distribution**

**Background:**

The International Foodservice Distributors Association is working with Carnegie Mellon University’s Master’s of Statistical Practice Program on a spring 2021 semester project to examine the future workforce of foodservice distribution. This consultative and educational project aims to identify challenges and opportunities in recruiting a future workforce (especially warehouse and driver positions), primary points of competition for potential employees, and a roadmap to help advance careers in foodservice distribution.

Select IFDA member companies will be invited to work with CMU graduate students to offer a deeper understanding of the current workforce situation and recruiting challenges, and to provide interviews for qualitative research purposes and select data points for statistical analysis. One graduate student will be assigned to each company to facilitate information collection.

The results of the research project will be published on the IFDA website and provided to IFDA members. While your company will be identified as participating in the project, your specific data and information will not be attributed to you without your express permission; information collected will be published in aggregate and as examples.

**Project scope:**

*IFDA is the premier trade association for the foodservice distribution industry, contributing to the growth, development, and success of the foodservice distribution industry through advocacy, events, research, and education.   Their members anecdotally report recruiting challenges in developing sufficient pipeline of qualified external candidates to keep up with their workforce demands in warehouse and commercial, interstate truck driving job families.*

*IFDA endeavors to develop a deeper, qualitative and quantitative understanding of why target candidates apply for their or other positions, what the key influences are in driving candidates to applications, and what potential remediations are possible for attracting additional candidates to member jobs and careers in order to become the premier destination industry of choice for job-seekers.*

*In this proof-of-concept project, students will engage with IFDA and a subset of IFDA members in a multi-phased approach to gather and analyze relevant information in conjunction with analyzing demographic and compensation data sets, some provided by IFDA and some publicly available from the US government (e.g. Bureau of Labor Statistics) and propose a roadmap and needs assessment for improving recruitment and retention.*

**Project timeline**:

* The project will start on February 1, 2021.
* Agreed-upon data submissions must be provided no later than February 26th, 2021.
* A first draft of the project results will be provided by April 5th, 2021.
* Project results will be published by May 14th, 2021.

**Participation requirements:**

* An optional project kick-off video-conference meeting with IFDA and CMU (60-90 minutes).
* An introductory video-conference or telephone call with the assigned student to identify what data and information your company has available that would be relevant for the project (30-45 minutes).
* Availability for follow-up calls and emails with the assigned student to further define information needed, including clarifications and estimates if hard data doesn’t exist.
* Willingness to provide agreed-upon data to the assigned student in a timely manner. Should your company require a data use agreement for confidentiality and privacy purposes, one can be provided.
* Willingness to connect student with colleagues in other disciplines within your company to provide additional data and information as necessary.
* Estimated total time required over the course of the project is X-X hours.

**Data and information:**

[describe types of information and data points the partners are expected to provide]