

Employer Participation Options

Why Work-Based Learning?

Many learners⁵ crave relationships, real world experiences, and access to meaningful career paths beyond what's available in their immediate community. Employers desire a diverse talent pipeline that is ready for the workforce. Our education system and our employers will only align when we change the architecture of K-16 schools to embrace work-based learning and make it easy for them to collaborate. Work-based learning activities that help learners make informed choices, plan their educational pathway and provide actionable steps to take in school or training settings are vital to learner achievement and ultimately a positive connection to the labor force.

Additionally, WBL provides a lever to advance equity and opportunity in the workplace in the face of educational systems that have disadvantaged those who are racially and ethnically diverse, differently abled, and low-income. In addition to the career exposure and skills gained via Work-Based Learning, these experiences also connect learners and professionals who might not have been connected otherwise.

The Earn & Learn approach in supporting learners in career-related programs of study is the deliberate focus on the three facets of achievement needed for success in the labor force: the acquisition of academic, technical and core employability skills. Regardless of industry, employers consistently underscore that candidate must have experience and mastery in all three areas, with a growing priority on the development of employability skills. Alongside efforts to enhance the rigor and effectiveness of classroom instruction, the approach requires new ways to deliver authentic workplace experiences such as Career Days, Workplace Tours, Mock Interviews and Internships in partnership with employers. In some cases, these experiences can be delivered remotely or virtually with employer partners visiting remote classrooms or connecting with learners over online platforms.

Quality Work-Based Learning includes both remote and virtual options for most activities. Remote activities promote "live" learner contact with adult professionals and front-line workers via the use of technology. Virtual activities are generally simulations that provide learners with employer exposures through recordings, online research and related classroom activities.

What are the benefits of my company's participation?

Partnering with Earn & Learn offers you an effective and appropriate vehicle to help build and retain your future workforce. By opening your place of business to learners and providing them with high-value Work-Based Learning opportunities, you are able to expose young people to your business and industry and benefit from productive work. You and others on your team can observe potential future employees in a "long-term interview" context and participate in shaping their future workforce by connecting with teachers or faculty members and participating in the classroom. Interactions with learners also provide you access to a customer resource and a fresh point of view.

Your workplace benefits from a more productive and engaged workforce and by helping build leadership and supervisory skills among your current workers. Partnering with Earn & Learn provides a win-win opportunity to support and develop highly skilled and valuable

⁵ Learners include K-12, community college and college students; youth and young adults engaged in workforce development programs; and adults participating in career development activities.

employees. It also helps build awareness of your company's role in the community and offers a public relations benefit.

Why is Work-Based Learning important for learners, schools and my community?

- **It fast tracks learners to their personal career goals.** learners pursue their education focused on their long-term goals. They graduate with a diploma or certificate, direct workplace experience with partner employers and a firm foundation for entry into the workforce or future educational and training opportunities.
- **It promotes better outcomes for schools and colleges and increases graduation and college completion rates.** This approach helps schools and colleges deliver a 21st century education. The structure provides multiple pathways for learners, incentives for project-based and applied learning. It offers learners the chance to explore a career path while preparing them to become contributing members of their community. And it increases educator knowledge of area businesses and jobs as well as an understanding of the challenges industry faces.
- **It strengthens communities.** It helps align education, workforce and service systems to promote a strong economic future and build a better engaged citizenry. It provides a robust local talent pipeline and helps the local economy grow and retain a workforce.

How can my company participate?

There are many ways in which you can partner with us. While employer involvement in each of the following activities is critical to our success, employer partners are not expected to participate in all activities. Work-based learning connectors will work with you to help select the activities that make the most sense for your business.

Here are some options to consider:

- Serve on an Industry Advisory Board
- Help us map the skills needed for high demand occupations in your industry
- Provide Work-Based Learning opportunities for learners. These may include:
 - **Guest Speaker** – A group of learners listen to a presentation to learn about the speaker's organization, careers and industry and ask questions to help them consider whether they might like to pursue an opportunity in the industry.
 - **Career Day** – Business partners from a variety of companies come together at a school to share information about their company, their job and the education and skills required for success in careers in the industry.
 - **Career Mentoring** – A learner is matched one-on-one or in small groups with an adult professional to explore potential careers and related educational issues.
 - **Workplace Tour** – Small groups of learners visit a workplace, learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions and observe work in progress. Teachers and faculty also benefit from exposure to the workplace.
 - **Informational Interview** – A learner formally interviews an employer partner about his or her industry, educational and career path and profession.
 - **Job Shadowing** – A learner is paired with an employee of a host company and follows that employee during much of a regular workday.
 - **Mock Interview** – Learners are paired one-on-one with a business partner who interviews them as if he/she were being interviewed by an employer for a paid internship or job.

- **Workplace Challenge** – Small groups of learners (four to six per team) are engaged in a problem-solving exercise issued by an employer in consultation with a teacher or faculty member.
- **Internship** – A learner has the opportunity to learn by doing real work and being productively engaged in the workplace. Learners may work individually, in teams, work on a project, or rotate through a number of departments and job functions.
- **Work Experience** – An opportunity for a learner to develop and demonstrate professional and occupational skills by addressing a core business function and doing productive work with an employer.

We make it easy for you to get involved.

We offer strategies and support to limit the burden on employers and increase the educational value of these experiences. All workplace experiences are highly structured and supported by Earn & Learn partner staff. While the full range of authentic work-based learning experiences is provided to every learner, employer partners provide those opportunities that are a good fit with their business.

To learn more, visit <https://earnlearn.us/engage>

Or

Email us today: info@earnlearn.us