

Appendix A. Conceptual Definition and Historical Evolution of Workforce Intermediaries

Conceptual Definition and Historical Evolution

The origin and evolution of workforce intermediaries (WIs) as a subset of labor market intermediaries can be traced back through several decades, marked by shifts in economic conditions and labor market needs. Initially, labor market intermediaries primarily included traditional institutions like public employment services, educational institutions, and temporary help agencies. These entities focused on basic job matching and training, often driven by immediate labor demands and the skills available within the workforce.

As economic landscapes evolved with globalization and technological advancements, the nature of work and the skills required in the labor market began to change significantly. This shift necessitated a more dynamic approach to workforce development, leading to the emergence of WIs. Unlike their broader counterparts, WIs began focusing more on bridging the skill gap by providing targeted training and development programs, tailored to the specific needs of evolving industries.

WIs started gaining prominence in the 1980s, a period marked by significant economic changes, including the decline of traditional manufacturing jobs and the rise of service and knowledge-based industries. This era witnessed a growing need for specialized skills and training, which traditional labor market intermediaries were not fully equipped to address.

To fill this gap, WIs began to emerge, offering more than just employment and training services. They started playing a crucial role in analyzing labor market trends, anticipating future skills requirements, and adapting their training programs accordingly. This proactive approach was in contrast to the more reactive nature of traditional labor market intermediaries.

Another key factor in the evolution of WIs was the increasing involvement of non-traditional players in workforce development. This included community-based organizations, non-profits, and even private sector entities, all contributing to the diverse landscape of WIs. These organizations brought new perspectives and approaches to workforce development, often focusing on underserved communities and emerging sectors.

Over the years, WIs have also become instrumental in policy advocacy, working to influence workforce development policies and programs to create a more favorable environment for job seekers and employers. This role further distinguishes them from traditional labor market intermediaries, highlighting their broader impact on the labor market ecosystem. Today, WIs continue to evolve, adapting to the rapidly changing economic conditions and labor market dynamics. They are increasingly leveraging technology and data analytics to enhance their services and programs. As the workforce continues to evolve, WIs are likely to play an even more critical role, not only in training and development but also in shaping future labor market policies and practices.

In the contemporary setting, WIs are defined by their role as facilitators, connectors, and innovators in workforce development. They not only assist individuals in acquiring relevant skills and finding employment but also help employers in identifying and training talent. This involves a range of activities, from job training and placement services to career counseling and labor market research. Moreover, WIs have become integral in addressing broader societal challenges such as economic inequality, skill gaps, and demographic shifts. They work at the intersection of public policy, education, and business, making them pivotal in shaping a more adaptive and inclusive labor market.

The historical evolution of WIs reflects a shift from traditional job placement services to more holistic workforce development strategies. This transition highlights their increasing importance in not just responding to immediate labor market needs, but also in proactively shaping future workforce trends and policies. As we continue to navigate a rapidly changing economic landscape, the role of WIs is likely to become even more critical. Their ability to adapt, innovate, and bridge diverse stakeholder interests positions them as key players in the ongoing endeavor to create a resilient, skilled, and adaptable workforce.

Appendix B. Research Methodology

Overall, our methodology was designed to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the landscape, guided by a collaborative approach with TBF Staff and a commitment to human-centered research methods. This report, and the research conducted to write it, is the culmination of various data gathering activities. Below, we outline the major steps and summarize the goal of each one in turn:

- ▶ **Initial Working Session with The Broad Foundation Staff:** This foundational meeting aimed to align our objectives, understand barriers, and define the scope of the landscape analysis, ensuring mutual expectations and timelines were established.
- ▶ **Establishment of Landscape Analysis Goals:** In partnership with TBF, we outlined clear report goals, outcomes, and metrics, embedding human-centered design principles to prioritize the needs of individuals served, agencies, and employers.
- ▶ **Literature Review:** This process informed our working definition of a WI, clarified the core functions and roles of WIs, identify the current landscape of WIs in LA County, identify WI best practices, and establish criteria for measuring the effectiveness of WIs.
- ▶ **Stakeholder Engagement:** We engaged several different stakeholders and subject matter experts through interviews and community forums.
 - **Interviews with Key Stakeholders:** We conducted interviews with local direct service providers, employers, and WIs. The goals of these interviews were to understand their roles, challenges, and strategies within the workforce development ecosystem. These discussions aimed to identify effective practices, gaps in services, and opportunities for collaboration to enhance employment outcomes. The insights gathered were intended to inform the development of more integrated, responsive, and effective workforce programs that meet the needs of job seekers and employers alike, thereby improving labor market efficiency and supporting economic growth.
 - **Interviews with National Subject Matter Experts:** The goals of these interviews were to explore innovative strategies for integrating workforce development with other sectors, such as health and education, and to understand the evolving role of workforce intermediaries in addressing the needs of diverse populations across various stages of career development. These conversations aimed to identify best practices, challenges, and opportunities for creating more cohesive and responsive workforce systems that not only meet the current labor market demands but also anticipate future needs.
 - **Community Forums:** The goals of the youth and adult community forums were to gather insights directly from community members about their experiences, challenges, and needs related to workforce development. These forums sought to understand the barriers individuals face in accessing employment opportunities and the effectiveness of current support mechanisms. Engaging with both youth and adults provided a broad perspective on the aspirations and obstacles across different age groups, informing strategies to enhance workforce development practices and programs tailored to diverse community needs.
- ▶ **Continuous Collaboration:** As part of this project, we engaged in a few key working sessions with TBF Staff at outset of the project, the midpoint, and the conclusion, supplemented by regular check-ins to ensure alignment and adaptability.

This methodology combined strategic collaboration with research techniques to foster an inclusive, insightful, and impactful analysis.

Appendix C. Strategic & Core Functions of Workforce Intermediaries

Workforce intermediaries play a crucial role in bridging the gap between labor markets and educational institutions, aligning workforce development with economic needs. This synergy is achieved through two complementary frameworks – **strategic functions and operational tasks**. The strategic framework focuses on high-level functions such as convening stakeholders, connecting partners, measuring policy impacts, and ensuring sustainability. It positions WIs as facilitators and visionaries, crafting a common agenda among diverse entities like schools, businesses, and community organizations. The strategic functions effective intermediaries are summarized in Table 1.

Strategic Functions and Core Tasks of Effective Intermediaries

STRATEGY	STRATEGIC FUNCTION	IMPLEMENTATION
CONVENE	Convene local leadership and other key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and engage local leaders Convene the local leadership body around issues of common concern Share quality practices among partners Build and sustain a common vision among key stakeholders Engage constituents across sectors and communities, and Create a forum for building a system that connects schools and other youth-serving institutions with workplaces and other community resources
CONNECT	Broker and/or provide services to workplace partners, educational institutions, young people, and the youth-serving system	<p>Work with employers/workplace partners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create demand for working with youth; and Provide services to address the needs of these partners <p>Work with schools and other youth organizations in the community to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build staff awareness and buy-in; and Provide services to support school and youth-organization involvement <p>Work with youth to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect all youth to appropriate quality experiences; Promote and improve the quality of work-based learning <p>Work with all partners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the communications link among partners; and Create a system focused on quality and continuous improvement
MEASURE	Ensure the quality and impact of local efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set goals and measure success Use data to improve performance Conduct regular and formal reviews Commission or conduct external evaluations, and Share information, strategies, findings, and results
SUSTAIN	Promote policies to sustain effective practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate public awareness and support Influence programmatic, local, and state policies Connect to and align with other systems Represent the labor market interests of workplace partners Generate resources, and Promote the long-term commitment to education

Note: Adopted from previous New Ways WI work (Author: Steve Trippe)

The operational framework involves direct, actionable tasks that bring the strategic vision to life. This includes skill development, job placement, labor market analysis, policy advocacy, and fostering collaborations. Through these tasks, WIs provide tangible services like training programs, job fairs, and career counseling, which directly address the needs of individuals and employers. By analyzing labor market trends, they adapt

strategies to remain relevant and effective. The policy advocacy aspect seeks to influence workforce-related policies, ensuring long-term success and adaptability of workforce initiatives.

Operational Functions of Effective Intermediaries

OPERATIONAL FUNCTION	IMPLEMENTATION
Skill Development & Training	<p><i>Identify skill gaps in labor market & provide/facilitate training programs to address gaps</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps individuals improve employability and helps employers access skilled workforce • Training ranges from technical to employability skills crucial for career advancement
Job Placement & Career Development Support	<p><i>Actively work to connect trained individuals w/potential employers (e.g., through job fairs, networking events, & direct recruitment services)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May also offer career counseling and support services, such as resume writing and interview preparation, to enhance job seekers' prospects.
Labor Market Analysis & Forecasting	<p><i>Monitor trends & changes in job market allows WIs to adapt programs & strategies to meet evolving needs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generates foresight crucial for proactive workforce planning and ensuring training programs remain relevant and effective
Policy Advocacy & Development	<p><i>Advocate for & develop policy is critical to achieving long-term WI sustainability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to influence policies and programs that impact workforce development; strive to create more favorable environment for job seekers and employers • Efforts lead to more inclusive & effective labor policies, benefiting the broader community
Collaboration with Employers & Other Stakeholders	<p><i>WIs act as brokers, facilitating dialogue & partnerships between various parties involved in workforce development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborations lead to tailored and industry-specific training programs, ensuring that training aligns with employer needs

Note: Adopted from previous New Ways WI work (Author: Steve Trippe)

Together, the strategic and operational frameworks create a robust model for WIs, enabling them to effectively address both immediate and long-term workforce challenges. By integrating strategic planning with on-the-ground operations, they ensure that workforce development efforts are comprehensive, relevant, and aligned with broader economic objectives. This dual approach not only benefits individuals in terms of employment opportunities but also supports employers in accessing a skilled workforce, ultimately contributing to economic growth and societal well-being. One of the more recent types of intermediaries, those focused on youth apprenticeships, further facilitate individual, economic, and societal growth.

Appendix D. Workforce Intermediaries and Youth Apprenticeships

Youth apprenticeships are structured, work-based learning programs that combine on-the-job training with classroom instruction, specifically designed for young individuals, typically high school students or recent graduates. These programs are crucial as they offer a unique blend of practical experience and theoretical knowledge, tailored to prepare youth for specific careers. The critical aspect of youth apprenticeships is the opportunity they provide for learning directly within a workplace environment while earning a wage. This approach is particularly beneficial for young individuals from diverse backgrounds and varying socio-economic statuses. Below we summarize just a few of the key benefits of apprenticeships.

Accessibility

- Offer alternative path to traditional academic routes, appealing to those without means or desire to pursue four-year college degree
- Youth can avoid substantial financial burden associated with higher education. Instead, they earn while they learn, gaining practical skills and foothold in job market without accruing significant debt

Address Skill Gaps

- Provide employers with way to cultivate skilled workforce tailored to their specific needs
- Apprentices gain hands-on experience and develop technical competencies that are immediately applicable and valuable in job market
- Benefits both apprentice, who gains relevant and marketable skills, and employer, who shapes future employee to their specifications

Promote D & I

- By providing opportunities to broader range of individuals, apprenticeships help level the playing field, allowing young people from all backgrounds to access otherwise unreachable careers
- Inclusivity not only benefits individuals but also enriches industries with diverse range of perspectives and skills

To realize the full potential of these youth apprenticeships, the role of apprenticeship intermediaries becomes pivotal. These intermediaries act as crucial bridges, connecting apprentices with employers, educational institutions, and sometimes government agencies. Their primary role is to bridge the gap between apprentices, employers, educational institutions, and, in some cases, government agencies. These intermediaries play a crucial role in the development, implementation, and expansion of apprenticeship programs across various industries.

One of the key functions of apprenticeship intermediaries is to assist in the development of apprenticeship standards and programs. They work closely with employers to understand their workforce needs and help tailor apprenticeship programs that meet these specific requirements. This includes developing curriculum, structuring on-the-job training, and ensuring that the programs comply with relevant regulations and standards.

Intermediaries also engage in outreach and promotion of apprenticeship programs. They raise awareness among employers about the benefits of apprenticeships as a workforce development tool. This involves marketing the apprenticeship model to businesses that may be unfamiliar with it and demonstrating how it can be a cost-effective solution for training and developing a skilled workforce.

In addition to employer engagement, apprenticeship intermediaries play a vital role in supporting apprentices. They assist in recruitment, providing information and guidance to potential apprentices about the opportunities available. Intermediaries often connect apprentices with support services, such as mentoring, tutoring, or

assistance with transportation and childcare, which are critical for the success and retention of apprentices, particularly those from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds.

Furthermore, intermediaries frequently facilitate partnerships between different stakeholders in the apprenticeship system. This includes building connections between educational institutions and employers to ensure that the training provided is aligned with industry needs and credentials. By fostering these collaborations, intermediaries help create a robust and responsive apprenticeship ecosystem that benefits all parties involved.

Lessons from the Construction Industry

Drawing lessons from the construction industry, where apprenticeship intermediaries have a strong presence and have been pivotal in developing and sustaining successful apprenticeship programs, can facilitate our understanding of their significant impact. These intermediaries, including trade unions and construction industry associations, have been instrumental in promoting, funding, and operating high-quality apprenticeship programs. Their efforts have resulted in the creation of a highly skilled and productive workforce, characterized by high wages and productivity.

A key function of these intermediaries is to bridge the gap between government, employers, and apprentices. They actively engage in outreach to employers and unions, promoting the benefits of registered apprenticeships and providing technical assistance to launch and maintain these programs. This involves developing industry-driven strategies, building curricula, and forming competency-based program models that align with the skill needs of the industry. Intermediaries also play a crucial role in increasing awareness of apprenticeship models among educators and career and technical education programs.

Another significant contribution of intermediaries is in partnership building and offering technical assistance. They assist employers in developing high-quality apprenticeship standards and recruitment strategies, leveraging partnerships to build a talent pipeline that supports sector growth and competitiveness. This includes helping employers and partners offset the costs of developing, launching, and sustaining apprenticeship programs.

Moreover, intermediaries are vital in supporting a diverse and inclusive apprenticeship pipeline. They provide guidance on strategies and best practices that lead to successful placement and retention in apprenticeship opportunities, especially for underrepresented populations. This includes linkages with pre-apprenticeship programs and the provision of critical support services.

Overall, the construction industry's experience with intermediaries highlights the importance of these organizations in expanding apprenticeship opportunities, enhancing workforce diversity, and meeting industry skill needs. Their role in rapid program development, technical assistance, partnership building, and supporting diversity and inclusion is crucial for the growth and effectiveness of apprenticeship programs.

Appendix E. Key Emergent Themes from Each Stakeholder Group

Key Themes from Employer Interviews

The interviews with employers highlight the essential role of workforce intermediaries in connecting employers with skilled workers and providing valuable training and resources. The major themes include:

- ▶ **Collaboration with Workforce Development:** Employers value strong partnerships with workforce development organizations for sourcing skilled labor and training, emphasizing the role of these collaborations in filling employment gaps effectively.
- ▶ **Challenges in Leadership and Bias:** Issues such as leadership gaps within organizations and unconscious biases in hiring practices highlight the need for ongoing training and awareness to ensure equitable workforce development.
- ▶ **Importance of Mentoring and Training:** Employers stress the significance of mentoring programs and comprehensive training initiatives in preparing individuals for long-term careers, not just immediate job placements.
- ▶ **Strategic Investment Recommendations:** Suggestions for targeted investments in workforce development focus on comprehensive support services, including mental health resources, housing assistance, and skill development programs to address employment barriers.

These intermediaries are seen as critical for facilitating successful employment outcomes, offering a bridge between potential employees and employers. Employers suggest that intermediaries could be improved by incorporating real-life field experience, focusing on the inclusion of underrepresented groups, and ensuring that training programs are accessible and relevant to the needs of the community and employers. The effectiveness of workforce intermediaries is enhanced through partnerships that align with the mission and values of employers, as well as through support services that address barriers to employment.

The interviews further revealed additional obstacles and challenges, including:

- ▶ **Bureaucratic Hurdles:** Difficulties in navigating bureaucratic processes for accessing supportive services for workers.
- ▶ **Employer Engagement:** The challenge of encouraging employers to hire candidates from workforce development programs.
- ▶ **Access to Training:** Limited access to training opportunities in certain areas, affecting candidate readiness.
- ▶ **Turnover:** High turnover rates in some workforce organizations, impacting continuity and effectiveness.
- ▶ **Awareness and Marketing:** Lack of awareness among potential employees and employers about the services offered by workforce intermediaries.

These challenges underscore the need for strategic improvements in leadership, bias training, streamlined processes, enhanced employer engagement, and better marketing strategies to raise awareness.

Key Themes from Direct Service Provider Interviews

In general, these discussions underscored the importance of strategic collaboration, inclusive programming, and targeted investments to enhance workforce development efforts and support youth employment pathways.

The major themes include:

- ▶ **Strategic Collaboration and Communication:** Direct service providers emphasize the importance of fostering effective communication and strategic partnerships between educational institutions, employers, and community organizations to enhance job readiness and employment outcomes.
- ▶ **Innovative Approaches to Workforce Development:** The use of innovative tools and technologies in training and development programs is highlighted as key to adapting to the changing labor market demands and improving job placement rates.

- ▶ **Comprehensive Support for Job Seekers:** Providers advocate for a holistic approach to support services, addressing barriers to employment such as transportation, childcare, and housing to ensure individuals can successfully engage in training and employment opportunities.
- ▶ **Effective Utilization of Foundation and Government Investments:** Recommendations for the use of investments include expanding beyond traditional training models to support innovative programs, barrier removal initiatives, and capacity-building efforts to enhance the overall effectiveness of workforce development services.

Key Themes from Workforce Intermediary Interviews

The WI interviews provided detailed insights into their roles, challenges, and strategies in workforce development. The major themes include:

- ▶ **Collaboration Across Sectors:** WIs are central in creating bridges between education, industry, and community organizations. They facilitate dialogue and partnership, aiming to align the diverse needs and resources of each sector to improve workforce outcomes.
- ▶ **Community Engagement and Accountability:** Highlighting the necessity of including community voices in decision-making and program design, ensuring that initiatives are responsive to the specific needs of the communities they serve and are accountable for the results.
- ▶ **Challenges in Navigation and Alignment:** WIs face difficulties in navigating complex systems and policies that often hinder seamless service delivery. Aligning the goals and expectations of various stakeholders, including funders, employers, and service recipients, is a continuous challenge.
- ▶ **Holistic Support for Workers:** There is a strong emphasis on providing comprehensive support services that address not just skill development but also the broader needs of workers, such as housing, mental health, and transportation, to ensure successful employment outcomes.
- ▶ **Innovation and Adaptability:** The need for WIs to remain innovative and adaptable in their approaches to meet the changing demands of the workforce and economy. This includes leveraging new technologies, developing nontraditional training programs, and finding creative solutions to systemic barriers.
- ▶ **Strategic Use of Investments:** The interviews advocate for strategic and flexible use of foundation and governmental investments to support initiatives that go beyond traditional workforce development programs. This includes funding for pilot programs, capacity building, and services that address the barriers to employment for underserved populations.

These themes underscore the complex and critical role WIs play in bridging gaps between job seekers and the labor market, highlighting the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration, adaptability, and comprehensive support for individuals entering or re-entering the workforce.

Key Themes from the Adult and Youth Community Forums

The collective themes from both the Adult and Youth Forums highlight a community-wide recognition of the need for enhanced access to career resources, addressing barriers to workforce entry, the importance of practical experience and comprehensive support, and aspirations towards entrepreneurship and passion-driven careers. Both groups emphasized the significance of tailored, accessible support systems that not only provide skill development but also address personal and logistical barriers to career progression. These insights underline the community's call for a more integrated approach to workforce development that is responsive to the diverse needs and ambitions of its members.

The key themes that emerged from the adult community forums include:

- ▶ **Valuable Community Initiatives:** Participants praised local efforts like church-sponsored job programs, underscoring the critical role of community-based initiatives in providing practical work experiences for youth. These programs are seen as essential for offering real-world skills and opportunities.

- ▶ **Awareness and Accessibility:** The discussion highlighted a gap in awareness about available resources, stressing the need for improved communication strategies to ensure programs reach more families and youth. The goal is to enhance accessibility and participation in beneficial programs.
- ▶ **Barriers to Opportunities:** Transportation and limited exposure to diverse careers were identified as significant barriers, pointing to the need for systemic solutions to facilitate access to a broader range of opportunities and career paths for young people.
- ▶ **Desire for Comprehensive Support:** There's a strong desire for programs that offer holistic support, including life and soft skills training, preparation for interviews, and advice on navigating workplace challenges, suggesting a comprehensive approach to workforce readiness.
- ▶ **The Importance of Internships and Mentorships:** A clear call was made for increased internship and mentorship opportunities in various fields, emphasizing their importance in providing valuable experience, guiding educational and career decisions, and enhancing employability.

The key themes that emerged from the youth community forums include:

- ▶ **Access to and Awareness of Resources:** Young individuals highlighted a significant need for better information dissemination about career preparation programs. They pointed out that while resources exist, the lack of awareness and accessibility prevents many from taking advantage of these opportunities.
- ▶ **Barriers to Career Progression:** Participants identified several obstacles, such as minimum age requirements for certain jobs, the challenge of acquiring initial work experience, and the fear of rejection as significant barriers to entering the workforce or pursuing desired career paths.
- ▶ **Value of Practical Experience and Skill Development:** The forum underscored the importance of gaining hands-on experience through internships, vocational training, and activities in tech centers. Such experiences were deemed crucial for acquiring both the technical skills specific to their fields of interest and soft skills like teamwork and communication.
- ▶ **Need for Comprehensive Support:** There was a strong call for programs that offer holistic career support services. This includes help with resume writing, interview techniques, and strategies to build confidence and overcome personal barriers such as shyness.
- ▶ **Aspirations and Entrepreneurial Spirit:** Many youths expressed enthusiasm for entrepreneurship and careers in areas they are passionate about, including creative industries like fashion design, technology, and arts. This reflects a desire for careers that not only provide financial stability but also align with their personal interests and values.

Appendix F. Expanded “Mini” Case Studies

Philadelphia Youth Network

Founded in 1999, the Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN) has been a beacon of hope and opportunity in the Philadelphia community, dedicated to creating pathways for teens and young adults to thrive in a changing workforce. Over the years, PYN has become a symbol of transformation, touching the lives of over 245,000 young individuals, guiding them toward a future filled with possibilities.

In program year 2021-22, PYN's impact was particularly heartfelt. The organization provided over 13,000 workforce experiences, a testament to its unwavering commitment to reach and uplift the youth of Philadelphia. Behind these numbers lie stories of hope, resilience, and empowerment. PYN's focus extended to those who had not yet stepped into the workforce, with 64% of its program participants being unemployed and 14% having never been employed prior to joining. This initiative was not just about numbers; it was about changing lives and breaking cycles of poverty and unemployment.

PYN's programs contributed significantly not only to the personal growth of these young individuals but also to the economic fabric of the community. The \$5.5 million earned by the participants in these programs is a story of empowerment, of young people taking their first steps towards financial independence and contributing back to their community. The involvement of over 720 businesses in PYN's network paints a picture of a community coming together, offering diverse opportunities and experiences, nurturing the next generation of workforce.

PYN's emphasis on digital and financial literacy addressed the evolving needs of the modern workforce, equipping the youth with skills that go beyond the traditional curriculum. This forward-thinking approach ensured that young people are not just ready for jobs today but are prepared for the challenges of tomorrow.

The adaptability and innovation shown by PYN, especially in integrating new services and responding to changing times, speak volumes about its commitment to being more than just an organization; it's a movement, a driving force for positive change in Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia Youth Network, with its deep history and its remarkable achievements, stands as a powerful testament to the belief that every young person deserves a chance to realize their dreams. PYN's journey is not just about alleviating poverty or promoting equity; it's about kindling hope, inspiring change, and building a community where every young person can look to the future with confidence and optimism.

JobsFirstNYC

JobsFirstNYC (JFNYC), since its inception in 2006, has been a linchpin in transforming New York City's workforce development landscape. This innovative organization was established to tackle the critical issue of disconnected young adults aged 18-24. Its creation marked a pivotal moment in the city's approach to workforce development, bridging gaps and streamlining processes between the public and private sectors.

By program year 2021-22, JFNYC's impact had become a narrative of transformative change. It wasn't just about establishing programs; it was about creating pathways that resonate with the needs and aspirations of young adults in the city. The sector-specific networks in technology and healthcare are a testament to their forward-thinking approach, connecting young adults to burgeoning fields where opportunity and demand intersect.

Their collaboration with OneTen is a shining example of their strategic partnerships, aimed at propelling a million Black individuals without a four-year degree into sustainable careers. This initiative speaks volumes about JFNYC's commitment to inclusivity and social equity, targeting systemic barriers and opportunity gaps.

In the realm of education, JFNYC's initiatives like the CDOS Institute for Workforce Practitioners and the Advising for Career Pathways Professional Credential stand out. These programs are not just educational reforms; they are lifelines for students and young adults, providing them with the tools and knowledge to navigate the complexities of the modern job market.

Community engagement, particularly through initiatives like CommunityINC Funder Briefing, underscores JFNYC's understanding that community investment is integral to sustainable development. Their efforts in this area have not only uplifted communities but also highlighted the critical need for local infrastructure investment.

Their influence in policy advocacy is also noteworthy, with significant contributions to the Department of Education's Career Pathways Initiative. This involvement illustrates how JFNYC has become a thought leader and a catalyst for systemic change in workforce development.

Financially robust and backed by a diverse range of investors, JFNYC demonstrates the effectiveness of strategic partnerships and collaborative approaches in driving societal change. Their journey from an ambitious concept to a key player in New York City's workforce development is a story of resilience, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to youth empowerment.

Fundamentally, JobsFirstNYC's journey represents more than just organizational triumph; it is a symbol of transformative change and a model for revitalizing communities. Their work has not only reshaped individual lives but has also played a crucial role in building a more inclusive and dynamic future for New York City.

[The Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership](#)

The Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP)/BIG STEP stands as a testament to innovative workforce development, especially in the manufacturing and construction industries of Milwaukee. Its roots can be traced back to the late 20th century when a shifting industrial landscape and an aging workforce created a profound skills shortage. WRTP was established to tackle these challenges, offering pre-employment training for job seekers, setting them on the path to secure, well-paying jobs in the industrial sector.

BIG STEP, which originated in the 1970s, complements WRTP's initiatives. Its formation aimed to diversify the building trades, increasing the employment of women, minorities, and younger workers. Together, WRTP and BIG STEP represent a powerful model of workforce development, one that emphasizes hands-on, group-size pre-employment training alongside individualized academic tutoring for apprenticeship exams.

Their role as a national leader in developing creative workforce solutions has been bolstered by their dual-customer approach. This strategy goes beyond just job retention in the community; it also focuses on maintaining the competitiveness of local companies. This comprehensive approach to workforce development is a critical factor in their success as an effective intermediary.

Central to WRTP/BIG STEP's ethos is the belief in the transformative power of apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships. By connecting people of color to these programs and providing necessary support, they have opened doors to middle-class life for many, devoid of the burden of student loan debt. This focus on equitable access and support through apprenticeship journeys underscores their commitment to not just job creation but sustainable employability and community upliftment.

Recent initiatives by WRTP/BIG STEP have been particularly impactful, aligning well with current national efforts to revitalize America's infrastructure and workforce. Their hosting of prominent political leaders, including Vice President Kamala Harris, to discuss the Biden-Harris Lead Pipe and Paint Action Plan, highlights their involvement in significant public health and infrastructure discussions. This plan, addressing the critical issue of lead exposure, demonstrates WRTP/BIG STEP's commitment to intersecting public health, environmental justice, education, and workforce development.

Their advocacy for substantial investments in skilled labor, particularly in the context of the Biden Administration's Infrastructure Bill, reflects their understanding of the crucial role these workers play in community development and environmental justice. The organization recognizes that such investments are not only beneficial for the infrastructure but also serve as a vehicle for transforming the lives of disenfranchised families, offering them a pathway to a middle-class life.

WRTP/BIG STEP's recent achievements are a testament to their effective strategies and deep commitment to the community. Their approach has not only opened up pathways to well-paying jobs but also fundamentally changed the narrative around workforce development, advocating for a holistic model that incorporates job quality, equity, and long-term career pathways.

Overall, WRTP/BIG STEP's narrative is a compelling example of how targeted workforce development initiatives, underpinned by a deep commitment to equity and community engagement, can create lasting change. Their journey from addressing local workforce needs to becoming a national leader in workforce solutions is a testament to their innovative approach and unwavering dedication to improving lives and communities.

[Boston Private Industry Council](#)

The Boston Private Industry Council (Boston PIC), founded in 1979, stands as a testament to the power of public-private collaboration in workforce development. Mayor Kevin White and State Street Bank Chairman Bill Edgerly pioneered this initiative to utilize federal job training resources effectively and engage private sector employers. This innovative model, featuring a business-majority board, became a national template for workforce development.

Boston PIC's approach is multifaceted, targeting key areas such as employer engagement, youth employment, dropout re-engagement, and post-secondary success. They've played a pivotal role in connecting job seekers with employers, aligning education with industry needs, and fostering career pathways for Boston's youth.

Key accomplishments of Boston PIC are numerous and impactful. They have successfully launched sector-driven initiatives, like the Healthcare Careers Consortium, to align training with industry demands. Their involvement in citywide initiatives, such as the Mayor's Summer Jobs Campaign, has provided invaluable work experiences to thousands of youth. In education, they've been instrumental in dropout prevention and re-engagement efforts, significantly reducing dropout rates in Boston Public Schools (BPS). The PIC's post-secondary coaching, part of the Success Boston initiative, has improved college completion rates among BPS graduates.

Boston PIC's impact transcends numbers; it's seen in the lives transformed and the communities strengthened. Their work in dropout re-engagement, for instance, has given numerous young adults a second chance at education and a path to a sustainable career. Their commitment to employer engagement has bridged the gap between education and the labor market, ensuring that training and skills development are directly relevant to industry needs.

In the realm of youth employment, Boston PIC has emerged as a pillar of opportunity. Their summer job initiatives have not only provided work experience but also fostered essential life skills in thousands of young Bostonians. These programs have been a crucial step for many in their journey towards successful careers.

Boston PIC's history and achievements exemplify the power of collaboration in addressing workforce challenges. Their ongoing efforts continue to shape a more inclusive and dynamic Boston, where every individual has the opportunity to develop, grow, and contribute to the city's vibrant economy. Their story is a source of inspiration – a reminder of what can be achieved when communities, businesses, and governments come together for a common goal.