

Project 3: The promise and progress of work-based learning: How are students and communities benefiting from workforce centered programs across the US?

Funder: Grantmakers for Education's Postsecondary Access and Attainment (PSA2) Impact Group (contact: Andrea Robledo)

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Given a variety of public funding available from the state and federal levels often times with heavy restrictions and limited philanthropic resources with highly flexible dollars, what value add can philanthropy bring to the intersection of postsecondary education and workforce training? Through this research we hope to provide a primer for philanthropy interested in entering the workforce learning space by focusing on how work-based learning programs (at campuses and at nonprofits) are working, what's working, and most common industry areas that have seen success.

Research questions: What kinds of outcomes do work-based learning programs produce? Do folks complete credentials? If so, do significant numbers of students complete stackable credentials? What influence do work-based learning programs have on motivating students to continue their education and training? What techniques and tools are providers using to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their work-based learning programs? Which regions or states are doing this well? How do employers, nonprofits, or state/local agencies determine which work-based learning programs they will offer? To what degree are they basing their decisions on workforce data and labor demands and how do they prioritize program development accordingly? Which industries are most suited/ have seen the most success through the implementation of work-based learning programs? In what ways are work-based learning programs beneficial to employees and their employers?

This information gained from the fellowship will be used to inform philanthropic investment, learning, and strategic approaches pursued across the Postsecondary Access and Attainment network within Ed Funders.