Questions To Consider
When Designing a Work-and-Learn Program

The National Network has compiled this guidebook to inspire businesses and industries to create new work-and-learn programs within their communities. Provided below is a list of questions to consider in the design and development of a work-and-learn program.

1. **Program Goals and Objectives:** What are the goals and objectives of the work-and-learn model? How will the program benefit the business?

2. **Workforce Needs and Model Selection:** What are your current and future workforce needs, and how might a work-and-learn model support these needs? Which model type(s) best align with your workforce needs?

3. **Budget:** What is the available budget for the work-and-learn model?

4. **Resources:** What other internal and external resources are available to the organization to develop and run the work-and-learn model (teachers, equipment, corporate partnerships, etc.)?

5. **Alignment with Company Culture:** How will the design of the work-and-learn model align with company culture?

6. **Employee Involvement:** Will employees value the program enough to serve as mentors/managers for work-and-learn program participants? Do you have plans to identify mentor and manager resources for the program?

7. **Partnerships:** What groups might the business partner with or leverage to make the work-and-learn model a success? Partnerships to consider include educational institutions, for-profit organizations, government, nongovernment organizations, parents/guardians, consultants, workforce development groups, and local businesses and industries.*

8. **Recruitment:** How will you develop an effective recruiting process to attract students and workers to the work-and-learn program? Might you leverage program partnerships in the recruitment of talented students and workers for the program?

9. **Value to Program Participants:** Does the work-and-learn program provide students/workers with something of value (academic credits, employer recognition, credentials, etc.)?

10. **Management Support:** Is the work-and-learn program supported by senior management?

11. **Return on Investment and Cost-Benefit Analysis:** How will you quantify the success and return on the model?**

12. **Program Management:** Who will manage the work-and-learn program and track its performance against established model goals and objectives?

13. **Skills and Competency Mapping:** Have you developed a map of the skills and competencies needed for your company's jobs and a plan to teach these skills to work-and-learn participants?

14. **Program Pilot:** Are you prepared to pilot your program with a small group of program participants?

15. **Evaluation of the Pilot and Larger Program Rollout:** Do you have a plan to review model goals and objectives against the pilot program results? Do you have a plan to adjust program elements as needed before adding additional resources and individuals to the program?

*One resource that lists many organizations working in career education and workforce development is *A Guide to Understanding Career and Technical Education* by the Career and Technical Education Foundation.

**A number of third-party resources have been created to support the development of return-on-investment calculations for work-and-learn models. These include tools from The Manufacturing Institute and Grads of Life.