



Work-Based Learning Navigator

Bringing career readiness and work-based learning resources to the classroom.



Educator User Guide

Welcome to the PrepareRI Work-Based Learning Navigator

The PrepareRI Work-Based Learning Navigator is a free, online portal that helps bring rich career exploration and work-based learning opportunities into the classroom. Through this platform, employers can post in-person or virtual work-based learning and career exploration opportunities for K-12 students, like job shadowing and internships (we call these resources), and educators can create an account and browse, search for and request those resources.

On the back-end, staff from Skills for Rhode Island’s Future, the agency charged with managing this new platform, will validate and approve resources to make them available for browsing. As requests are received from educators, SkillsRI will work to match educator requests with employer resources that best fit their needs. The SkillsRI team will coordinate all of the logistics to ensure easy and streamlined execution of all activities.

The Navigator was built with two goals in mind:

1. Make year-round, classroom career exploration and work-based learning opportunities more accessible for Rhode Island educators and students.
2. Provide an easy way for employers to engage with students and help shape the future of Rhode Island’s workforce.

How Will the Navigator Benefit Students?



Career Exploration & Work-Based Learning Opportunities Available on the Navigator

The Navigator offers a variety of options for educator resources, and all work-based learning resources can be counted toward the state’s requirement of 80 work-based learning hours for students. Resources are grouped by “tiers,” which are differentiated based on the need for additional capacity or grant funding to execute. Detailed descriptions of each resource, including definitions, examples and categorizations of work-based learning and career exploration opportunities can be found in the Appendix of this manual.

Explore



- Workplace Tour
- Career Panel
- Guest Speakers

These resources are typically available upon request

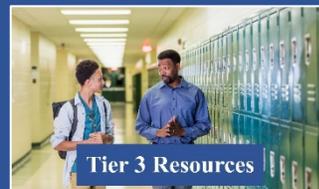
Expose



- Employer/Industry-Specific Project
- Job Shadow
- Career Fair
- Employer Advisor for CTE Program
- Mentorship
- Service Learning Project
- Work Readiness Workshops

These resources may require additional capacity, planning time, or funding to implement, and cannot be guaranteed.

Engage



- Academic Year Internships
- Summer Internships
- Teacher Externships

These resources will most often require a formalized partnership with the school in order to seek out grant or district funding to support service delivery, and cannot be guaranteed

The Need for Work-Based Learning and Benefits

Work-based learning and career exploration help to close the gap between what students learn in school and what they need to navigate high-demand career pathways. Career-preparedness strategies not only equip young people with the skills and experiences needed to thrive in the work place but also help strengthen local businesses and our state's economy by developing a pipeline of talent.

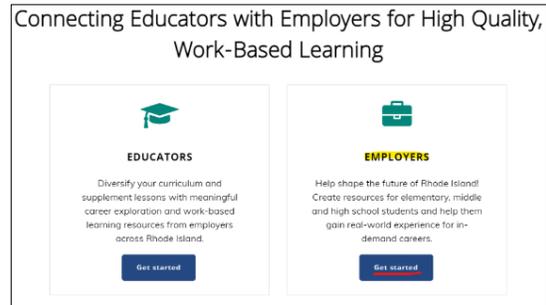
Key Benefits		
Educators	Students	Employers
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide innovative supplemental learning experiences for students. • Encourage diversity of thought and ideas in the classroom. • Raise graduation and college application rates. • Bridge the gap between traditional education and workforce skills. • Jumpstart career planning with students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore various career pathways. • Gain real-world skills to succeed in the workforce. • Boost resume with meaningful work experience prior to graduation. • Learn to use the tools and technologies being utilized by companies across Rhode Island. • Network with employers and build meaningful connections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate meaningful relationships. • Build a strong recruiting pipeline. • Help junior employees develop critical management and mentorship skills. • Gain critical insights from youth. • Help shape RI's future workforce. • Invest in the community and economy in a meaningful way.

Getting Started With the Navigator

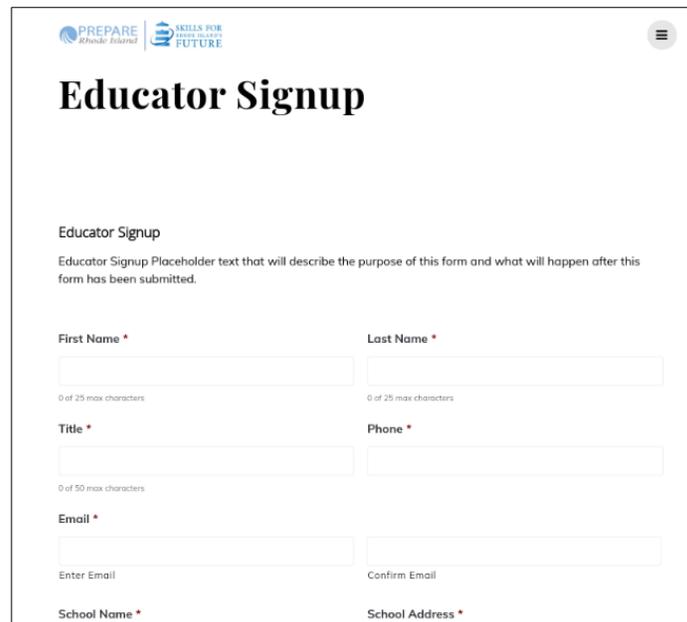
Now that you're ready to get started, follow the steps below to register for an account and begin requesting resources for students.

Registration

1. Register for an account by clicking on the homepage or click here: <https://riwblnavigator.com/>.



2. This will take you to the educator [sign-up form](#). Please be sure to use your work e-mail address when signing up for an account and double check to make sure your school name and address is accurate.



3. Once your account is submitted, you will receive an email letting you know your sign-up form has been received. Behind the scenes, SkillsRI will be validating educator's accounts and confirming email addresses. Please note: all sign-ups that are not affiliated with a career coordinator will require additional validation via phone by the SkillsRI team.
- Once validated, you will receive an email prompting you to sign in with a temporary password. For security purposes, it is important that you change your password immediately when you log in for

the first time.

If for some reason your account cannot be validated by the SkillsRI team, you will receive an email notification stating that additional information is required. You will be contacted by a SkillsRI staff member to resolve the issue and promptly get your account up and running.

Requesting a Resource Once Your Account Is Validated

1. Once your account is set up, and you've changed your password, you should see the educator dashboard.
2. To request a resource, click on "Request Resource" on the left navigation bar.
3. The resource form will then pop up. **Please note that you can only request one resource at a time.** For instance, if your school would like three different resources, you'll need to submit three separate "Resource Request" forms.

My account

- Dashboard
- Orders
- Downloads
- Addresses
- Account details
- Request Resource**
- Logout

Please note that the resource requested is not guaranteed and will be based on availability, capacity and available funding.
Once a resource is selected, the resource lead time will be displayed.
To request a resource, please choose one of the following resource types.

Type of Resource? *

Academic Year Internship (Septem... Career Fair Career Panel
 Employer Adviser for CTE Programs Employer Connections for Industry... Guest Speakers
 Job Shadow Mentorship Service Learning
 Summer Internship (June - August) Teacher Externship Work Readiness Career Enhancem...
 Workplace Tour

Format of resource requested *

In-person
 Virtual

Industry *
For more information, click [PreparesRI/CareerClusters](#)

Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources

Please provide a description of the topic and project you would like to cover. *

The resource request form will ask you a variety of questions that can help us match your request to the right employer resource. Here are a few tips to ensure your request is approved by SkillsRI staff:

- When selecting a type of resource, hover over the resource to view a description of it and ensure it matches your needs.
 - Determine beforehand whether your resource request must be delivered in-person, in a virtual format, or both.
 - If in-person, be sure to document whether or not background checks are required for the individuals who will be providing the resource.
 - Think through whether your resources need to be accessible to English Language Learners or those with special needs (particularly hard-of-hearing/deaf or visually impaired/blind students). This information will help us match the resource request to an employer able to accommodate these populations.
 - If you request a career panel or career fair in which you would like to have representation from more than one industry, select one industry in the form, and add the others in your request description.
 - When requesting a resource, please note the specific name of that resource in your request description by writing, “Requesting a published resource with the following title [insert title of resource].”
4. Once your request form has been submitted you will receive an email confirming the submission. On the back-end the SkillsRI team will review your request, ensure all fields have been completed, and approve it. Once approved, the SkillsRI team will work to fulfill your request and connect you with an employer.

If for some reason your request cannot be validated, you will receive an email notification stating that additional information is required. You will be contacted by a SkillsRI staff member to promptly resolve the issue and get your request approved and published on the Navigator.

5. Once a match has been identified for your request, the SkillsRI team will coordinate all of the logistics and make sure you have everything you need to make this a successful experience for your students and the employer. Our goal is to make this process as seamless as possible for educators and employer partners alike.

Thank you for using the Navigator to bring real-world career exploration and work-based learning opportunities into the classroom!

Contact Information

If you have general questions about the Navigator and how to use it, please contact the SkillsRI team at Wblnavigator@skillsforri.com. If you need immediate assistance, you can contact the program manager:

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Thanks & Acknowledgments

The PrepareRI Work-Based Learning Navigator was developed in partnership with Fidelity Investments, the Governor's Workforce Board, Partnership for Rhode Island, Rhode Island Department of Education, and Skills for Rhode Island's Future.





PrepareRI

Work-Based Learning Navigator

Appendix

Educator Resource Definitions & Examples

Key Definitions

Resources in the Navigator are categorized in two topic areas - career exploration and work-based learning opportunities:

1. **Career exploration activities** refer to programming that introduces students to a wide variety of work opportunities and teaches students about how they can pursue a career of their choice. These programs are typically focused on children in elementary and middle school but are also applicable to high school students who do not have work-based learning experience and haven't yet been exposed to a work environment.
2. **Work-based learning opportunities (WBL)** provide students with real-life or simulated work experiences that provide students with rigorous opportunities to pursue career and industry-connected learning both during and outside of the traditional school day. WBL experiences can occur through a variety of delivery mechanisms, including **internship programs, apprenticeships, service learning programs, school-based enterprises and industry projects**. High quality WBL programs are rigorous, relevant, reflective, interactive and integrated.

The WBL Navigator is a great tool to help educators access the resources they need, and those available through the portal can be counted toward the state's requirement of 80 work-based learning hours for students:

Career Exploration Resources	Work-Based Learning Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Fairs • Career Panels • Guest Speakers • Advisor for CTE Programs • Mentorships • Job Shadows • Workplace Tours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year Internships • Summer Internships • Employer/Industry • Specific Project • Teacher Externships • Work Readiness Workshops

For more detailed information regarding the resources available in the WBL Navigator, please review the following pages and note that time commitments are estimates and will vary based on the scope of each request.

Tier One Career Exploration Resources

Career Panels: (1-2 hours): Career panels are in-school opportunities for students to interact with professionals in a wide variety of roles and industries to learn about how to best prepare for various career pathways. Panels may focus on a specific occupation, such as in marketing or human resources, or an industry such as manufacturing or healthcare. They may also cut across jobs and industries.

Examples:

A classroom is focusing on manufacturing and wants to bring in a panel of 4-5 professionals to speak to students about different career pathways within the industry; a classroom wants to provide a career exploration program and is seeking a panel of employees that represent different occupations, such as marketing, human resources, and finance, and represent numerous industries and employers.

Guest Speakers (1 hour): Guest speakers visit the classroom to meet specific learning outcomes. Presentations are tied to classroom curriculum and help students connect what they are learning in school with the workplace. Speakers are welcome to present on any number of topics which may be focused on career pathways, a specific industry, soft skills development, financial literacy and other relevant topics.

Examples:

A bank is asked to provide an hour-long financial literacy workshop, a marketing professional delivers a workshop on social media do's and don'ts, etc.

Workplace Tours (1-2 hours): Enhance workplace knowledge and build career awareness by illustrating how key academic concepts are applied in the real world. Tours offer students a chance to ask questions and observe work in progress while promoting interactions with professional adults.

Examples:

A classroom takes a virtual tour of a hospital or manufacturing plant.

Tier One Work-Based Learning Resources

Service-Learning Opportunities (1-3 hours): Service-learning projects provide an opportunity to connect community service with academic learning, teaching important content and curriculum objectives while making a meaningful impact on local communities. Facilitating a service learning activity is a great way for employers and students to collectively identify an issue they are passionate about, assess community need and develop real-world solutions. Some examples include a public health campaign to educate the community about safety measures amid COVID, developing a peer-tutoring program for youth struggling with academics, or cleaning up a park. With service-learning projects, all talents are appreciated and creativity is encouraged.

Examples:

An employee(s) from a local hospital work with a group of students to design a COVID-19 public service campaign regarding mask wearing and social distancing; a behavioral healthcare organization helps students design a peer support program for teens struggling with mental health issues.

Tier Two Career Exploration Resources

Career Fairs (Approximately 4 hours and coordinated with multiple employers): While career fairs are typically offered to students in grades 7-12, content should be relevant to the age of participating students. For younger students this means offering broad information about careers, while fairs attended by high school students should provide more detailed information about specific careers and the education and other requirements for them. Fairs provide students with opportunities to learn about a wide variety of potential career paths, help them identify career interests and learn how to access the education and training required. The employers' primary role is to interact with students and answer questions that will help them focus their future career exploration activities.

Examples: 5 local employers in the finance industry set-up informational booths on-site in a classroom cafeteria for a half-day (or via a virtual platform), discussing various career pathways and answering students' questions; a large virtual multi-employer job fair is held with 20 employers representing diverse industries and promoting in-demand jobs.

Job Shadows (Typically one 8-hour day but may be less or more): Designed to help students explore a field of interest while developing skills and building knowledge, job shadowing provides students with an up-close look at a particular occupation, company and industry. Employers offering job shadowing opportunities help students make the connection between school and the workplace while helping to inform career planning. Job shadows also allow students to practice and demonstrate key work-readiness skills such as communication and appropriate workplace behavior.

Example: A student interested in becoming a lawyer spends the day with an attorney from a local law firm; a student from a science class shadows a nurse at a hospital for a day.

Tier Two Career Work-Based Learning Resources

Work Readiness Career Enhancement Workshops (Typically 2-4 hours although may be less or more): Work readiness workshops are designed to provide students with the essential knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the workplace. Trainings may focus on the development of soft skills such as communication skills, conflict resolution, professional etiquette and many other topics that cut across professions and industries. Sharing various talents with young people is a great way to help prepare tomorrow's workforce.

Example: An employee volunteers to offer a workshop on professional ethics, communication skills, public speaking or other pertinent topics.

Tier Three Career Exploration Resources

Employer Advisor for CTE Programs (4-5 hours per month) While schools do a great job developing their CTE programs, employer advisors can help teachers build their curriculum and ensure it is aligned with real-time employer needs and industry standards. Employers who are able and willing to offer this resource can be involved at varying degrees, from a review of existing content to design of new curriculum.

Example: A school with a computer science program requests that a technology company review their curriculum to ensure it incorporates the most up-to-date content and is aligned with best practices in the field.

Mentorships (4-5 hours per month) Mentorship in middle and high school has the power to impact the course of students' academic and personal life trajectories. Employees volunteering to serve as mentors can select a time commitment that works best for them with flexible hours. Employers interested in providing mentorship opportunities may provide general career and/or industry information and guidance, assistance with college applications, mock interviews, and teach other important skills such as time management, communication, etc. Mentoring experiences will vary based on the unique needs of students and availability and expertise of employer volunteers.

Example: A weekly mentorship meeting with female students interested in the STEM field, led by a female engineering lead from a local company; a student interested in nursing is matched to a nurse from one of the state's healthcare systems to provide guidance regarding recommended course work, potential colleges, different career pathways and help the student begin building a professional network.

Tier Three Career Work-Based Learning Resources

Academic Year and Summer Internships (time commitment varies best on engagement): Academic year and summer internship programs provide unique opportunities for students in grades 8-12 to embed themselves within a company, be a part of a team and gain real-world experience of what it's like to work with others in a professional setting. Employers benefit by building meaningful connections with students, providing hands-on training and developing a strong recruiting pipeline of future talent.

Example: A student intern is placed in a company's marketing department and is given responsibility for social media posts; a student learns about fashion by doing an internship with a local design firm.

Teacher Externships (time commitment varies based on engagement): Teacher externships are work-based learning and professional development opportunities that provide teachers extended exposure to industry-specific work environments based on the types of careers their students may pursue. Employers that are able to sponsor a teacher externship will work with a teacher(s) for a set number of hours to meet agreed upon learning objectives through a mutually approved scope of work.

Example: A teacher working at a school with an agricultural CTE program spends 4 hours per week on-site at a working farm to develop classroom lessons based on best practices and trends in the field.

Employer/Industry-Specific Projects (5-10 hours a month): Project-based learning, or an employer/industry-specific project, is an important strategy in which students work on a project over an extended period of time to engage them in solving a real-world problem. They demonstrate their knowledge and skills by creating a product or presentation for a real audience. Through this experience, students develop deep content knowledge as well as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication skills. As a partner for an industry-based project, employers may create a project idea and facilitate its solution, or may help a group of students already working on an identified solution aligned with classroom curriculum.

Example: The healthcare industry wants to ensure that messaging related to COVID-19 safety measures are reaching all segments of the population, and students are asked to develop an education and outreach campaign through various platforms; an employer needs a new logo for its company, and a classroom selects the project and develops a new logo and marketing materials to present to the company for use.