



Costs and Quality in Virtual/Hybrid Summer Youth Employment Programming

In January 2022, [Research for Action \(RFA\)](#) released their report “[Costs and Quality in Virtual/Hybrid Summer Youth Employment Programming](#)” in partnership with [Philadelphia Youth Network \(PYN\)](#).

Since 2003, PYN has provided young people summer employment opportunities through the [WorkReady program](#). In Spring 2020, because of the impact of COVID-19, PYN pivoted WorkReady programming to include virtual & hybrid experiences to continue offering Philadelphia’s young people summer career readiness opportunities.

In June 2021, PYN engaged RFA to conduct a six-month study of the virtual and hybrid WorkReady Summer experience. Through this partnership, RFA, in collaboration with PYN and its providers and employers, has aimed to:

- document *cost structures* of virtual and hybrid WorkReady Summer programming in 2021;
- examine *perceived differences in these cost structures* compared to in-person programming;
- define *high-quality* virtual and hybrid summer youth employment programming; and
- identify *resources needed* to implement virtual and hybrid programming.

Key Findings

- Virtual and hybrid programming share many—but not all—of the same categories of costs.
- Providers indicated that personnel time was the largest category of cost for virtual/hybrid WorkReady Summer programming, and that staffing costs for virtual components should not be underestimated.
- While some may assume virtual programming has fewer costs, we found that when compared to in-person programming, virtual programming may be similarly costly.
- Employers and providers echoed literature on promising practices when they reported on elements that could facilitate high-quality virtual and hybrid youth employment programming. They shared that programming should cater to young people’s interests and focus on “real world” content; leverage multiple modes of interaction to engage young people; assess and address technology needs; focus on relationship-building; and provide one-on-one supports for young people.

To learn more about RFA’s findings on the cost and quality in virtual/hybrid summer youth employment programming, [read the full report here](#).

To learn more about the WorkReady program, visit [PYN’s website](#).