



P20 WIN Research Agenda

P20 WIN is a unique state resource in Connecticut for addressing critical policy issues that require data from more than one agency; therefore, data requests to P20 WIN should align with either a participating agency's individual research agenda or the P20 WIN research interests: 1) predictive models for college and career success, 2) student readiness, 3) financial aid, 4) workforce training, and 5) overcoming barriers to success. More information about P20 WIN's research agenda can be found [here](#). This document provides more details for potential researchers on the topic of workforce training.

Workforce Training

A research focus for P20 WIN is to develop standards for measuring the return on investment (ROI) for Connecticut's public workforce training programs. Several states have already developed a framework to assess the ROI of public workforce programs and how those returns vary by population demographics and service levels.

There is a range of methodologies across studies to measure the ROI of workforce training programs. According to Hollenbeck, King and Stevens (2012), "ROI is the net benefit of the [human capital] investment. It can be expressed as a percentage, a percentage that is annualized, a gross return in dollars-per-dollar invested, or as a payback period." (pg. 1) Usually the ROI of public workforce program participation are measured from the government's perspective, rather than the participant's. Benefits to government include tax receipt increases due to increased earnings and employment, decreases in public benefits usage (SNAP, TANF, UI), and lower incarceration costs. Costs include program expenditures and foregone tax receipts while a participant is in training. According to [Virginia](#)'s study, "Return on Investment for Virginia's Workforce Programs," the most straightforward ROI calculation is (Benefits-Costs)/Costs*100.

Studies in [Minnesota](#) and [Virginia](#) have implemented a quasi-experimental design to measure employment benefits that are directly attributable to public workforce programs. Program recipients are matched to an unemployed control group based on a series of demographics related to program participation, such as age, race, gender, and prior employment patterns. In [Texas](#) and [Indiana](#), public workforce training participants were compared to those who received lower levels of WIA services.

Hollenbeck (2009) notes that there are two common methods in practice to measure the net impact of a program on earnings and employment: levels estimates and differences-in-

The Governor's Workforce Council strategic plan calls for the establishment of a data dashboard by the end of 2021 to measure what works and what doesn't.

"One of our strategic initiatives is to significantly enhance program evaluation and measurement and to make the results transparent to students and job seekers and program managers ... so they can select the education and career opportunities that are going to match their interests and achieve their goals," said GWC Chair Mark Argosh.

["What do we get for the billions spent on job training? Connecticut wants to know." Connecticut Mirror, December 21, 2020](#)

differences. Levels estimates directly compare the outcome of program exiters at a particular point in time after completion to the control group. The difference-in-difference method is calculated by measuring the difference between the treatment and control group in the baseline period, measuring the same difference in a particular period of time, and then taking the difference between the two. Both levels estimates and difference-in-difference methods can include regression adjustment controls for differences between participants and control group members.

The expansion of the P20 WIN system and the strong performance reporting requirements in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) allow for an improved assessment of the core WIOA programs, administered by DOL. In Connecticut, a study is planned to be developed by the end of 2021 that assesses the ROI of CT's WIOA Adult program, a core WIOA Title 1 program with [mixed results in practice](#). The methodologies and standards developed in such a report can then subsequently be applied to other public workforce training programs. Work on this research agenda should demonstrate how the ROI differs across key demographic indicators, such as race, age, and previous educational attainment using participant-level data , and can help to identify the correct net impact and ROI measurements for other workforce training programs.

As part of this research, P20 WIN agencies also aim to develop complementary performance metrics on a more granular level that can actively inform state staff. Interactive dashboards can illustrate aggregate wage and employment trends by credential, occupation codes or providers. These tools can be filtered by key demographics, such as education, race / ethnicity, gender to visualize outcomes over multiple years. Though not causal, descriptive statistics can inform a more holistic picture of public workforce training programs beyond a singular ROI metric.

Request Data

If you are a researcher, analyst, evaluator or other data user and need data from two or more of the P20 WIN Participating Agencies, you may submit a data request to P20 WIN. Data requests should align with either a participating agency's individual research agenda or P20 WIN research interests. More information about how to request data is available on the P20 WIN website [here](#).

References

1. Harper-Anderson, Elsie. "What Is the Return on Investment for Public Workforce Programs? An Analysis of WIA and TAA in Virginia." *State and Local Government Review* 50.4 (2018): 244-258.
2. Maryns, Nicholas and Raymond Robertson. "Smart Investments, Real Results: A Net Impact Evaluation Framework for Minnesota's Workforce Development System and Initial Findings." *Report to the Legislature as required by 2014 Minnesota Statutes 116L.98* (2015).
3. Hollenbeck, Kevin. "Return on investment in workforce development programs." *Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, Upjohn Institute Working Paper* (2012): 12-188.
4. Hollenbeck, Kevin. "Return on investment analysis of a selected set of workforce system programs in Indiana." (2009).
5. King, Christopher T., et al. "Texas Workforce Return-on-Investment Analysis Plan." (2008).
6. WIOA Performance Reports, Annual Report Narratives, and State Data Books: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/results>