



JA Inspire[®] Virtual (Middle School)

JA Inspire Virtual is a virtual career fair and much more. It brings together the business community and local schools and is designed to help launch middle school students into their future—high school, postsecondary education, and careers beyond. The program can be completed by students independently at home, or in a classroom with or without teacher involvement.

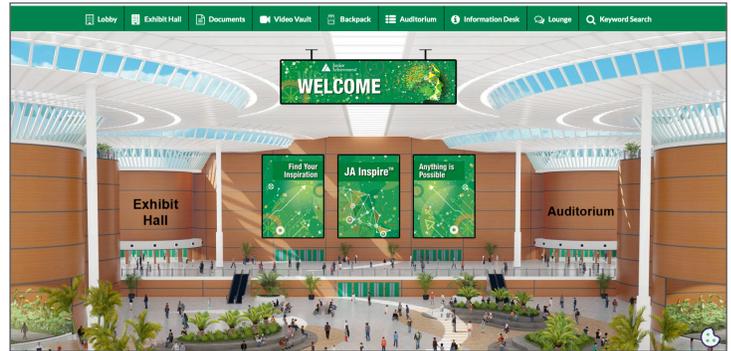
The program consists of three segments: (1) pre-event career-oriented sessions; (2) the *JA Inspire Virtual* career fair, with career exhibit booths to explore and various webinars or sessions led by local businesspeople; and (3) a post-event reflection. The learning experience is aligned with local industry and career opportunities, as well as JA Area and local school district preferences.

VFairs, the online interactive platform used to host the *JA Inspire Virtual* career fair, allows students to attend webinars and presentations, explore company exhibits, and interact with career speakers. It's a powerful way for students to learn about real-world career opportunities and their local economy.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Is a fully online, self-guided learning experience that allows students to explore their own values, skills, and interests, plus career clusters and the specific jobs that align with them.
- Offers optional wraparound classroom introductions and talking points for each session.
- Requires a digital device for each participating student.

This program is part of the JA Work and Career Readiness Pathway and is designed for grades 6–8. The default instructional contact hours for this program is 4 hours, with a variable ICH of 5–6 hours.



VFAIRS PLATFORM DETAILS

- Is accessible from any device.
- No downloads are required.
- Visually rich virtual environment mimics the dynamics of a physical live event, including a virtual lobby, information desk, auditorium for presentations, and exhibit halls with sponsoring company booths.
- Students can revisit the virtual career fair multiple times following the live event.
- Materials can be saved to a virtual backpack and emailed to students or to parents post event.

JA INSPIRE CURRICULUM

The *JA Inspire Virtual* self-guided curriculum's implementation is flexible, based on educator and JA Area preferences. Teachers can introduce and follow up activities using the optional wraparound session guides, or students can complete lessons independently at home or in the classroom. Downloadable, fillable PDF student activity pages, videos, and links to websites are accessed through the digital student guidebook. Self-guided extended learning resources are identified.

Session One: Career Interests and Your Path Students understand the importance of career planning and complete a Career Interest Inventory to assess their own values, skills, and interests in the context of career paths.

Session Two: Career Planning and Your Path Students learn to recognize career clusters and focus on those tied to the results of their Career Interest Inventory. They explore the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for their careers of interest, as well as the outlook for openings in those fields.

Session Three: Preparing to Meet Your Future Students learn how awareness of their values, skills, and interests helps guide them to a career that is meaningful, enjoyable, and positioned for success. They learn about soft skills and explore education and training requirements in their fields of interest.

Session Four: Local Business Means Opportunity Students learn about their local economy. They review the list of *JA Inspire Virtual* career fair exhibitors and the website of their local Chamber of Commerce and look for common themes, such as career clusters. They identify companies they would like to visit during the virtual career fair.

Session Five: Learn from the Experts Students review the speakers and webinars at the *JA Inspire Virtual* career fair, create a list of at least three to view, and define what they would like to learn from them.

Session Six: Welcome to JA Inspire Virtual Students attend the *JA Inspire Virtual* career fair.

Session Seven: JA Inspire Personal Reflection Students reflect on what they have learned and identify next steps to further define their academic choices and career path.