



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.

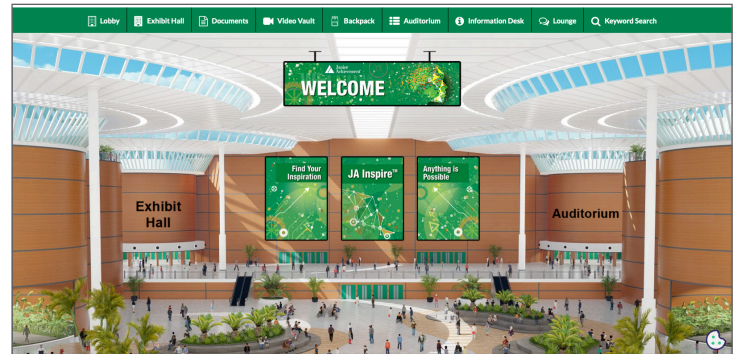
The program consists of three segments: (1) pre-event career-oriented sessions; (2) the *JA Inspire Virtual* career fair, with career exhibit booths to explore and various webinars or sessions led by local businesspeople; and (3) a post-event reflection. The learning experience is aligned with local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

Curriculum Outline

Session	Overview	Objectives	Activities
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.	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider their values, skills, and interests. • Take a Career Interest Inventory. • Relate their values, skills, interests, and Career Interest Inventory to future career opportunities. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a Career Plan • Career Interest Inventory Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the Match • What is a Growth Mindset? • How to Develop a Growth Mindset
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.	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn why career planning is important. • Recognize career clusters. • Identify career clusters that match their skills and interests. • Identify requirements to obtain jobs in fields of interest. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Is Career Planning Important • Career Clusters Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JA Future by Design
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.	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand why it's important to choose a career where they can be successful and develop a career plan. • Practice soft skills. • Recognize education and training requirements and opportunities for careers of interest. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing to Meet Your Future • Soft Skills • Education Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JA Access Your Future

Curriculum Outline

Session	Overview	Objectives	Activities
Session Four: Local Business Means Opportunity	Students learn about their local economy. They review the list of <i>JA Inspire Virtual</i> 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.	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize traits of their local economy. Identify common career clusters in their area and among <i>JA Inspire Virtual</i> exhibitors. Create a list of exhibitors to visit during <i>JA Inspire Virtual</i>. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Your Local Economy Exhibitor Booths to Visit Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What Is the Gig Economy? Gigs Are Everywhere
Session Five: Learn from the Experts	Students review the speakers and webinars available at the <i>JA Inspire Virtual</i> career fair, create a list of at least three to view, and define what they would like to learn from them.	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify relevant <i>JA Inspire Virtual</i> speakers and webinars to attend. Note facts about the speakers and topics of webinars they will attend. Develop questions to consider when watching the speakers and webinars. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speakers and Webinars to View Learn from the Experts
Session Six: Welcome to JA Inspire Virtual	Students attend the <i>JA Inspire Virtual</i> career fair.	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit exhibits at <i>JA Inspire Virtual</i>. Attend speeches and webinars at <i>JA Inspire Virtual</i>. Complete the What I Learned section of the chart from their Learn from the Experts worksheet. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the 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.	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate personal goals and priorities based on their experience at the <i>JA Inspire Virtual</i> event. Identify next steps, including exploration of high school coursework and other research. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflection and Next Steps Personal Reflection Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>JA Connect Learning Pathways</i> activities