

# Implementing the Federal Work-Study Program: A Resource Utilization and Cost Study at Six CUNY Colleges

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## Appendix A. Cost Analysis Data and Methods

### Applying the Ingredients Method

We rely on data from a survey of FWS coordinators and supervisors, interviews with campus administrators and staff, and student payroll records. To assess whether reported resource use in the 2021-22 academic year may reflect lingering pandemic-related operational disruptions, we fielded the same survey instrument in December 2023–January 2024 and asked FWS coordinators to report on the 2022-23 academic year.

This cost analysis focuses on the actual use of resources rather than funding formulas, which can differ significantly from the allocation of FWS funds at the campus level. When campuses receive a block amount of FWS funds, their responsibility is to enable students to engage in paid work. Campuses may claim up to 5% of their allocation to offset the costs of administering FWS, but they may also contribute institutional resources to support the administration and operation of the program. Although these amounts are regulated, prior evidence suggests that they are unlikely to directly correspond to the total resources that institutions allocate for implementation of the program (Bowden & Belfield, 2015).

For each of the six campuses, all FWS ingredients were identified, described, and quantified using the data collection methods described below. We then matched all ingredients with average New York prices in constant 2023 U.S. dollars. Ingredients were grouped in categories of personnel, professional development and training, and materials and equipment. For personnel prices, we drew 2022 public salaries from Openpayrolls.com and the Empire Center's SeeThroughNY websites. This process involved assigning an appropriate price and fringe benefit rate for each personnel type based on the titles of the personnel. For instance, personnel in the College Assistant title at CUNY can work up 1,040 hours per fiscal year at a rate of \$17.65 per hour. Prices for FWS coordinators reflect their actual salaries taken from public salary databases, while FWS supervisors' average salaries were assigned based on their reported titles and qualifications in the FWS supervisor survey (e.g., higher education specialist or associate/officer,

administrative assistant, and faculty). Prices for materials and equipment, such as technology platforms and software, were drawn from the FWS coordinator survey responses. To avoid double-counting, we did not include the cost of professional development and training in our cost estimation. The personnel cost estimation factors in the virtual training opportunities that predominantly occur during work hours.

## Data Collection

**Interviews.** We conducted virtual interviews and focus groups with financial aid directors and FWS coordinators from our six campuses and CUNY Central FWS staff. The first round of interviews focused on the implementation of the FWS program at both the campus and system levels and involved 13 staff members. The second round of interviews focused on the costs associated with managing and operating the traditional FWS program at the campus level, with six staff members participating. Overall, we interviewed a total of 20 staff members across both rounds, exploring topics such as resource shortages, staffing, technology solutions, and the role of supervisors.

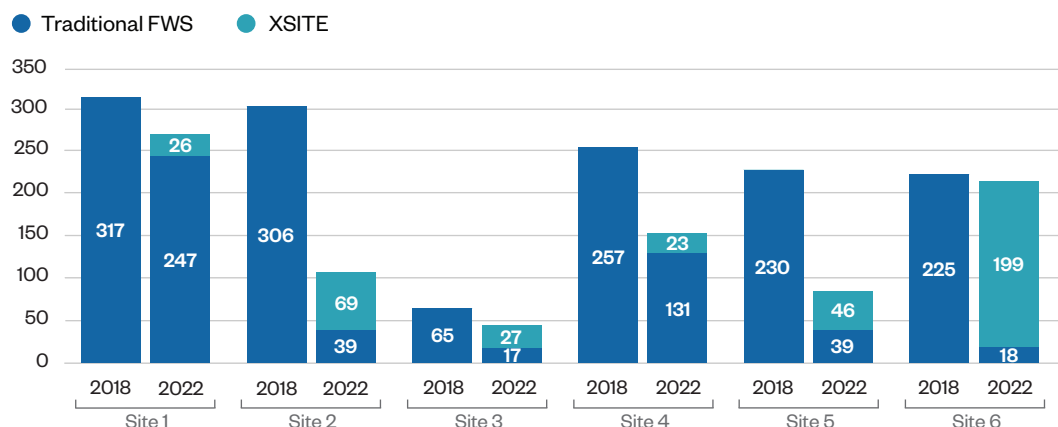
**Surveys.** We administered cost study surveys to FWS coordinators from our six campuses in October and November 2022. The 15-minute Qualtrics survey focused on FWS coordinators' experiences working for the FWS program (current and past) and the resources that it takes to manage and operate FWS. We received six responses in total, one from each campus. We fielded a follow-up coordinator survey in December 2023–January 2024 to validate the 2022 FWS coordinator responses. We also administered cost study surveys to FWS supervisors at our six campuses in February and March 2023. FWS coordinators at each campus sent the surveys to all of their FWS supervisors. The 10-minute Qualtrics survey focused on FWS supervisors' experiences supervising FWS student workers (current and past) and the type of work FWS student workers do. We received 40 responses in total, including on- and off-campus supervisors working with FWS student workers from all six campuses.

**Other data sources.** We supplement these data sources with publicly available data, including information from CUNY and campus websites (e.g., for the CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment; CUNY Office of Applied Research, Evaluation, and Data Analytics; and CUNY University Budget Office), the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard, and the Urban Institute's Education Data Explorer. In addition, we use student-level FWS payroll records for participating student workers, which provide information on total award amounts, total hours worked, earnings, and FWS job location (department location).

## Appendix B. Supplemental Figure and Tables

### Appendix Figure 1.

#### FWS Participants by Campus



Source. Student payroll data.

Note. Traditional FWS refers to standard FWS jobs. XSITE refers to jobs authorized through the Federal Experimental Sites Initiative, including positions in student teaching, clinical placements, and fieldwork.

### Appendix Table B1.

#### Characteristics of Cost Study Campuses Compared with Other CUNY Campuses

| Characteristic                                  | Cost study campuses | Other campuses | Difference | p-value |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------|---------|
| Undergraduate FTE (N)                           | 10,613              | 9,780          | 832.60     | (0.768) |
| Attend part-time                                | 0.286               | 0.372          | -0.086     | (0.094) |
| Total revenue per FTE                           | \$26,760            | \$22,549       | \$4,211    | (0.466) |
| Tuition revenue per FTE                         | \$7,893             | \$8,635        | (\$742)    | (0.176) |
| Revenue from tuition/fees                       | 0.344               | 0.392          | -0.048     | (0.420) |
| Female                                          | 0.552               | 0.608          | -0.056     | (0.120) |
| First generation in college                     | 0.457               | 0.453          | 0.004      | (0.941) |
| Household income < 200 of federal poverty level | 0.478               | 0.423          | 0.055      | (0.275) |
| Financially independent                         | 0.280               | 0.333          | -0.053     | (0.354) |
| Pell Grant recipient                            | 0.535               | 0.477          | 0.058      | (0.185) |
| Married                                         | 0.100               | 0.120          | -0.02      | (0.284) |
| American Indian/Alaska Native                   | 0.000               | 0.002          | -0.002     | (0.166) |
| Asian                                           | 0.147               | 0.185          | -0.038     | (0.448) |
| Black or African American                       | 0.218               | 0.253          | -0.035     | (0.571) |
| Hispanic/Latino                                 | 0.452               | 0.333          | 0.119      | (0.091) |
| White                                           | 0.115               | 0.160          | -0.045     | (0.329) |
| Graduation rate                                 | 0.420               | 0.425          | -0.005     | (0.945) |
| Federal loan rate of students                   | 0.042               | 0.072          | -0.03      | (0.023) |
| Earnings (10 years post college)                | \$48,767            | \$51,865       | (\$3,097)  | (0.429) |
| Number of institutions                          | 6                   | 12             |            |         |

Source. National Center for Education Statistics (n.d.); College Scorecard (<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>); CUNY, University Budget Office (2022); college websites. Note that First generation in college (%), Married (%), and Financially independent (%) are from CUNY, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) (2016); others are from CUNY, OIRA (2020).

**Appendix Table B2.****Number of FWS Jobs by Type and Aid Year (All CUNY Colleges)**

## Panel A. Senior Colleges

| Job category                                                       | 2021-22      | 2017-18      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Academic: Non-STEM                                                 | 320          | 822          |
| Academic: STEM                                                     | 85           | 344          |
| Administrative: Dean & president's office                          | 86           | 194          |
| Administrative: Academic & student services                        | 306          | 735          |
| Administrative: Academic, finance & budgeting, business & services | 11           | 115          |
| Administrative: Central administration, programs & centers         | 149          | 389          |
| Administrative: Campus operations & services                       | 98           | 442          |
| Administrative: IT, communications, and marketing                  | 65           | 209          |
| Other: XSITE jobs                                                  | 789          | 0            |
| <b>Number of FWS jobs</b>                                          | <b>1,908</b> | <b>3,250</b> |

## Panel B. Community Colleges

| Job category                                                       | 2021-22    | 2017-18      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Academic: Non-STEM                                                 | 56         | 248          |
| Academic: STEM                                                     | 31         | 149          |
| Administrative: Dean & president's office                          | 66         | 299          |
| Administrative: Academic & student services                        | 259        | 352          |
| Administrative: Academic, finance & budgeting, business & services | 10         | 40           |
| Administrative: Central administration, programs & centers         | 33         | 141          |
| Administrative: Campus operations & services                       | 49         | 217          |
| Administrative: IT, communications, and marketing                  | 10         | 84           |
| Other: XSITE jobs                                                  | 334        | 0            |
| <b>Number of FWS jobs</b>                                          | <b>846</b> | <b>1,530</b> |

Source. Student payroll data.

Note. Job location information is not available for aid years 2018 and 2019. XSITE jobs are in student teaching, clinical placements, or fieldwork. The analysis sample includes FWS jobs in aid years 2018 (07/08/17–08/18/18), 2019 (06/23/2018–08/17/2019), 2020 (06/23/2019–09/23/2020), 2021 (03/26/2020–09/23/2021) and 2022 (06/17/2021–10/06/2022) for regular and 12-week/6-week colleges students who enrolled at CUNY's 11 senior colleges and 7 community colleges in academic years 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22, respectively.

### Appendix Table B3.

#### Core Components of FWS Program Implementation

| FWS core components                                         | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Main actors                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1. Accounting, compliance, and auditing                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audits of payroll procedures and compliance with FWS funding requirements</li> <li>Accounting and reporting</li> </ul>                                                                                           | FWS coordinators and CUNY Central personnel work to ensure all parties comply with FWS program requirements, including community service and drawdown requirements, determining award amounts, monitoring student awards, transferring funds between FSEOG and FWS, carrying FWS funds forward or backward, and allocating funds for the administrative cost allowance (ACA).                                                                                                                                                                                                         | FWS coordinators and CUNY Central personnel |
| 2. Program admission, placement, and hiring                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation and posting of eligible job positions for students</li> <li>Management of hiring and placement</li> <li>Organizing student work-study orientation</li> <li>Organizing supervisor orientation</li> </ul> | FWS coordinators work with on- and off-campus employers (FWS supervisors) to maintain an active database of FWS job postings, organize interviews between students and prospective FWS supervisors, solicit and verify documents from student workers, process student financial aid packages, distribute digital or in-person orientation information for FWS student workers and supervisors regarding their responsibilities, and place eligible students in FWS job positions throughout the academic year.                                                                       | FWS coordinators and supervisors            |
| 3. Oversight and supervision of FWS employment              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision of FWS employment</li> <li>Assigning duties and responsibilities</li> <li>Providing feedback and training to students</li> </ul>                                                                     | Supervisors provide mentoring and on-the-job training necessary for student workers to succeed in their positions, ensure student workers are fulfilling the responsibilities of their positions, monitor student worker schedules in accordance with the academic calendar, and ensure ongoing compliance with FWS program requirements. FWS coordinators process extensions or increases requested by supervisors and/or students and troubleshoot issues that arise, including those related to supervisor–student relations.                                                      | FWS coordinators and supervisors            |
| 4. Processing contracts and payroll                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drafting and executing FWS contracts</li> <li>Timesheet maintenance</li> <li>Payment to students</li> </ul>                                                                                                      | FWS coordinators—after having ensured that all required documents have been submitted by the student worker and all orientation materials have been distributed—process student worker contracts with start dates, payroll amounts, and information needed to start work. FWS coordinators ensure timesheet submission and that pay stub and W-2 access is understood by student workers and FWS supervisors. As timesheets are submitted by students to their supervisors every two weeks, they are tracked and reviewed by coordinators and their staff to ensure accurate records. | FWS coordinators and supervisors            |
| 5. Manual packaging and distribution of discretionary funds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating and managing a waitlist</li> <li>Awarding discretionary funds</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                | FWS coordinators maintain a waitlist for students while their eligibility for FWS is under review. FWS coordinators work in collaboration with CUNY Central to manage the distribution of discretionary funds to students who may be approaching their maximum FWS award. Discretionary funds may be used on personnel, technology platforms and software, training, and materials. FWS coordinators may transfer remaining discretionary funds to FSEOG.                                                                                                                             | FWS coordinators and CUNY Central personnel |

Source. FWS coordinator and financial aid administrator interviews.

**Appendix Table B4.****FWS Program Ingredients and Roles Across Six CUNY Campuses**

| Ingredient                                               | Description                                                                                                                                                       | Role                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personnel</b>                                         |                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>FWS coordinator</b>                                   | One FWS coordinator per campus, working an average of 24.5 hours per week (28 hours/week for high-scale FWS programs, 17.5 hours/week for low-scale FWS programs) | Manage and operate the FWS program at the campus level, serving as key personnel connecting various stakeholders (student workers, FWS supervisors, financial aid offices, and other departments); involved in nearly all activities related to the FWS program, including compliance, admissions, placement, hiring, and student employment oversight.            |
| <b>FWS supervisor</b>                                    | 30 FWS supervisors, working an average of 2 hours per week                                                                                                        | Provide supervision and mentorship to FWS student workers at on- and off-campus jobs; use software or paper systems to post positions and hire FWS student workers; review, approve, and submit FWS student timesheets; monitor the academic calendar to align student work schedules with campus timelines.                                                       |
| <b>Financial aid director</b>                            | One financial aid director, working an average of 2 hours per week is sometimes involved                                                                          | Assist with auditing processes to ensure student eligibility (e.g., running enrollment status reports); have authority to hire additional FWS administrative support or allocate staff hours for FWS management.                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Financial aid assistant/associate director</b>        | One assistant/associate director, working 5 to 15 hours per week is sometimes involved                                                                            | Responsibilities include assisting with document verification, correction, and uploads; consult with students on FWS-related matters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>College assistant/enrollment coordinator</b>          | One to three college assistants, working 5 to 20 hours per week; one enrollment coordinator, working 2.5 hours per week                                           | Provide administrative support, including document processing, record management, copywriting, and outreach.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Professional development and trainings</b>            |                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Professional development and orientation sessions</b> | Regular professional development training for FWS coordinators and online student and supervisor orientations during their work hours                             | Training and development opportunities aim to enhance staff knowledge, promote collaboration, and improve workplace training for FWS students. There is minimal variation in training resources—most campuses provide monthly coordinator training, supervisor orientations, and student worker orientations, with some offering additional training for students. |
| <b>Materials and equipment</b>                           |                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>FWS technology platform and software</b>              | 4 out of 6 campuses invest in a dedicated FWS platform and software                                                                                               | Most campuses use software to manage FWS data and processes due to the complexity of the program. Four campuses with larger FWS programs use NextGen, while two smaller campuses opt for manual processes due to cost concerns regarding software subscriptions.                                                                                                   |

Source. FWS coordinator survey responses and interviews.

**Appendix Table B5.****FWS Coordinator Experience and Time Spent on FWS Activities, 2021-22**

| CUNY Campus    | Years of experience working at CUNY | Years of experience working for the FWS program | Hours per week spent managing and operating the FWS program |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Site 1         | 25                                  | 21                                              | 35                                                          |
| Site 2         | 24                                  | 22                                              | 20                                                          |
| Site 3         | 17                                  | 6                                               | 15                                                          |
| Site 4         | 16                                  | 14                                              | 30                                                          |
| Site 5         | 5                                   | 3                                               | 20                                                          |
| Site 6         | 30                                  | 25                                              | 27                                                          |
| <b>Average</b> | 19.5                                | 15.2                                            | 24.5                                                        |

Source. FWS coordinator survey responses and interviews.

**Appendix Table B6.****Resource Inputs for FWS Administration, 2021-22 and 2022-23**

| CUNY Campus                  | FWS coordinator hours per week spent managing and operating the FWS program | Other staff involved in managing and operating FWS | Technology platforms used       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Academic year 2022-23</b> |                                                                             |                                                    |                                 |
| Site 1                       | 35                                                                          | Yes                                                | Dynamic Forms, JobX, TimesheetX |
| Site 2                       | 25                                                                          | Yes                                                | JobX, TimesheetX                |
| Site 3                       | 12                                                                          | Yes                                                | None                            |
| Site 4                       | 35                                                                          | No                                                 | Dynamic Forms, JobX, TimesheetX |
| Site 5                       | 20                                                                          | No                                                 | None                            |
| Site 6                       | 25                                                                          | Yes                                                | JobX, TimesheetX                |
| <b>Academic year 2021-22</b> |                                                                             |                                                    |                                 |
| Site 1                       | 35                                                                          | Yes                                                | Dynamic Forms, JobX, TimesheetX |
| Site 2                       | 20                                                                          | Yes                                                | JobX, TimesheetX                |
| Site 3                       | 15                                                                          | No                                                 | None                            |
| Site 4                       | 30                                                                          | Yes                                                | Dynamic Forms, JobX, TimesheetX |
| Site 5                       | 20                                                                          | No                                                 | None                            |
| Site 6                       | 27                                                                          | Yes                                                | JobX, TimesheetX                |

Source. FWS coordinator survey responses and interviews.

Note. JobX and TimesheetX are platforms developed by NextGen.

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