

Future of Work Initiative

World Youth Skills Day July 2026 – Designing Career Readiness for Systemic Impact

What We Are Learning from the Career Education Leadership Accelerator

Context

The panel brought together education and industry leaders to explore how career readiness can grow from isolated programs into a lasting part of how education systems work. It drew on the Career Education Leadership Accelerator (CELA), a collaboration between Teach For All and DHL Group that reached across eight countries and connected 2,464 students, 35 schools, 57 educators, and 207 industry volunteers over six months. Leaders from Bangladesh, Chile, Zimbabwe, and DHL Group's GoTeach shared what they learned about two design choices that shape whether career-connected learning reaches every learner: bringing employers in as co-designers of learning, and using digital tools to widen access and reach.

Key learnings

Career Readiness Creates Greater Impact When Designed for Systems. Lasting impact comes from designing career readiness as part of an education system, not from programs or activities that stand on their own. Access to career-connected learning is still uneven across communities, and designing at the system level is how more young people, in more places, come within its reach. Panelists described how a shared vision among schools, employers, policymakers, and communities helps weave career-connected learning into a young person's education, and how partners who design for the long term and adapt to their own context build something that lasts, reaches every learner, and holds up at scale.

Meaningful Employer Partnerships Are Built Through Co-Design. Speakers explored how strong employer engagement goes well beyond a one-off visit or a day of volunteering. The best partnerships rest on a shared commitment to young people's futures, with employers helping to shape learning experiences alongside educators rather than arriving once the plan is set. Preparing partners well, giving everyone a clear role, and staying in it together over time create career-connected learning that feels real and worthwhile, for students and employers alike.

Technology Expands Access When Combined with Intentional Design.

Technology does its best work when it strengthens the relationships and experiences that give career-connected learning meaning, rather than standing in for them. Panelists shared how digital tools can open career-connected learning to far more young people, though how much they add depends on the care behind them: teachers who feel ready, learners who stay engaged, and real moments of contact with working professionals. Paired with strong partnerships and thoughtful design, technology helps bring good career-connected learning within reach across very different settings.

Resources

- [Session Recording](#)
- [Career Education Leadership Accelerator Phase 2 Insights](#)
- [Article](#) - When schools and industry build together, students lead—and that matters more than ever in the age of AI
- [Career Readiness Education Framework](#)

Want to know more?

Learn more about the Future of Work initiative [here](#) and use [this link](#) to stay informed of activities, updates, and more.