



**For Immediate Release**

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Results for America Contact: Tiffany Edwards  
(202) 331-0110, [Tiffany@blueenginemedias.com](mailto:Tiffany@blueenginemedias.com)

Bridgespan Contact: Liz London  
(646) 562-8906, [Liz.London@Bridgespan.org](mailto:Liz.London@Bridgespan.org)

**New Study Examines How Strengthening the What Works Marketplace Can Yield Better Outcomes**

*New Report Highlights How Strengthening the Supply of and Demand for Information Regarding What Works Can Help Improve Outcomes for Young People, Their Families and Communities*

**WASHINGTON** – Today, to better understand how a marketplace focused on learning and continuous improvement can lead decision-makers to make smarter choices and achieve better outcomes, Results for America (RFA) and The Bridgespan Group released [\*The What Works Marketplace: Helping Leaders Use Evidence to Make Smarter Choices\*](#). This report emphasizes the importance of having a strong supply of and demand for information regarding the evidence of effectiveness of policies and programs, in order to help elected officials improve outcomes and make our government more effective and efficient. The recommendations outlined in the report call on leaders across all sectors (including the public, private, and non-profit sectors) to take meaningful action in a variety of ways to strengthen the marketplace in the short- and long-term. This report is part of RFA's Invest in What Works Policy Series which provides ideas and supporting research to policymakers to drive public funds toward evidence-based, results-driven solutions.

"It is important to build information on what works so our leaders can make the best decisions possible – and ultimately, improve outcomes. This report shows how we can strengthen the What Works marketplace so that decision-makers are better informed by data and evidence in order to get better results for our young people, their families and communities," **said Michele Jolin**, CEO and Co-Founder of Results for America. "I thank the authors for their hard work and I look forward to our continued collaboration to better understand and invest in what works."

Read the full report: *What Works Marketplace: Helping Leaders Use Evidence to Make Smarter Choices* [here](#).

"In today's fiscal climate, an increasing number of policymakers are using rigorous evidence to inform key budget and policy decisions and to identify programs that will work for their constituents," **said Gary VanLandingham**, director of the Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative, which consulted on this report. "An evidence-based

approach to decision-making can ultimately help reduce wasteful spending, target funding to successful programs, and increase government efficiency. This new report offers important recommendations on how to ensure leaders have access to the best and most comprehensive evidence available.”

Authored by Alex Neuhoff, Simon Axworthy, Sara Glazer, and Danielle Berfond, the report details how well the marketplace for the supply of and demand for evidence of what works today and how it could be strengthened in the future. To better understand the current state of the market and what it takes for decision-makers to use evidence in making critical decisions, the authors interviewed over 80 individuals on both the supply and demand side of the What Works marketplace. The authors find that both the supply of and demand for evidence of effectiveness appear to be growing; however, they identify six gaps that prevent the supply from effectively meeting the requirements of the demand. The six gaps include:

- **Comprehensiveness:** decision makers want information on a broader range of interventions with varying levels of effectiveness;
- **Implementation:** decision makers want information about interventions beyond evidence of impact, to help them make informed decisions;
- **Guidance:** decision makers are looking for guidance and support in selecting and planning to implement the appropriate intervention;
- **Synthesis:** decision makers are looking for information on policies and management decisions, as well as synthesized findings and best practices;
- **Usability:** users do not find clearinghouses easy to use, nor do they understand the differences between them, and;
- **Awareness:** decision makers receive information about interventions from purveyors and peers, but they do not receive information about evidence in a systematic or effective manner.

To address these gaps and strengthen the growing What Works marketplace, the report develops three sets of recommendations for decision-makers to consider:

- Strengthen the supply of evidence of effectiveness;
- Build demand for this information; and
- Develop the infrastructure that will coordinate and support the interaction between the supply and the demand.

The first four reports in RFA’s Invest in What Works Policy Series, *The Power of a Penny: Building Knowledge to Invest in What Works in Education*, *Renewing Head Start’s Promise: Invest in What Works for Disadvantaged Preschoolers*, *Moneyball for Education: Using Data, Evidence, and Evaluation to Improve Federal Education Policy*, and the 2016 Policy Playbook can be found [here](#).

### **About Results for America**

Results for America is committed to improving outcomes for young people, their families, and communities by shifting public resources toward solutions that use evidence and data to improve quality and get better results.

In November, 2014, Results for America published [Moneyball for Government](#), the national bestselling book that brings together a group of bipartisan leaders to make the case for government at all levels to inform policy and funding decisions by the best possible data, evidence and evaluation about what works.

## **About The Bridgespan Group**

The Bridgespan Group ([www.bridgespan.org](http://www.bridgespan.org)) is a nonprofit advisor and resource for mission-driven organizations and philanthropists. We collaborate with social sector leaders to help scale impact, build leadership, advance philanthropic effectiveness and accelerate learning. We work on issues related to society's most important challenges and to break cycles of intergenerational poverty. Our services include strategy consulting, leadership development, philanthropy advising, and developing and sharing practical insights.

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