Work Study That Works

Strategies for a stronger campus program

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ISFAA
Indiana Student Financial Aid Association

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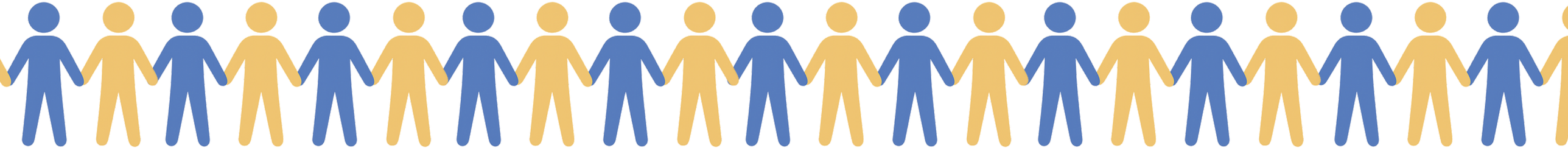
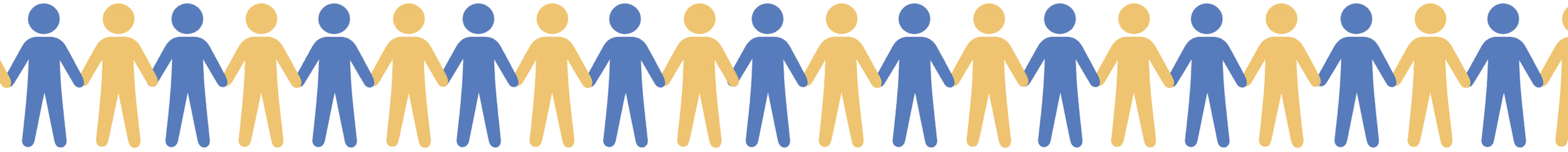
Outline

- Why Work Study Matters
- Define Roles and Responsibilities
- Making a Communication Plan
- Creating & Maintaining Relationships
- Creating Meaningful Positions
- Monitoring the Program
- Continuous Improvement



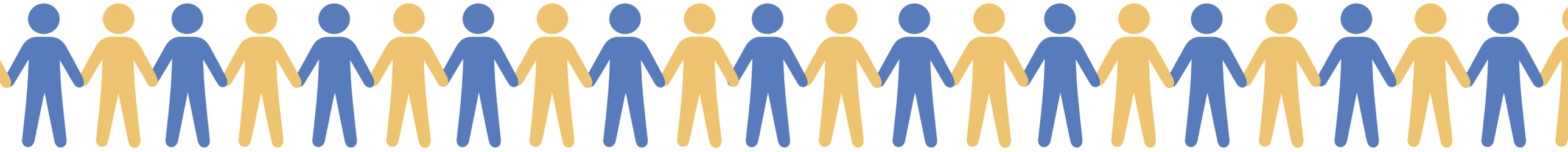
Why Work Study Matters

Mission alignment	Institutional value	Director Perspective
Supports access and affordability Reduces borrowing Improves retention and completion Builds career readiness	Supports student services, tutoring, labs, and outreach Strengthens community partnerships	Work-study is not just aid — it is a **student success strategy** Requires intentional leadership, not passive awarding



Define Roles and Responsibilities

- Program Marketing
- Formal hiring and onboarding processes
  - Financial Aid requirements
  - Human Resources requirements
- Positional needs (computer, desk, etc.)
- Peripheral student needs
  - Resume Assistance?
  - Professional Clothing for interviews?



Making a Communication Plan

Timeline of events and important dates

Present Information Sessions early

- Students
- Potential/returning partners

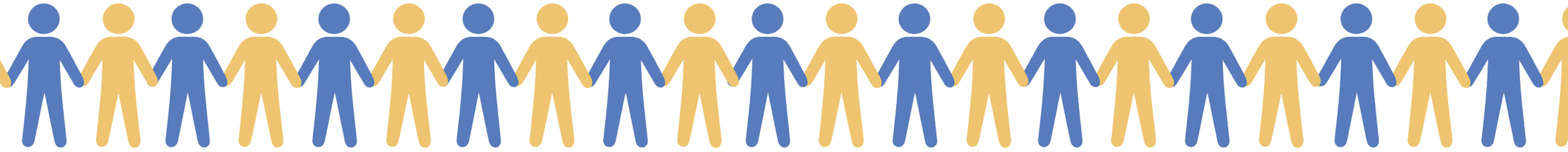
Handouts

- Student & Supervisor Handbooks
- How-to guides (One page guide for our Human Services Interns)
- FAQs

Work-Study information station

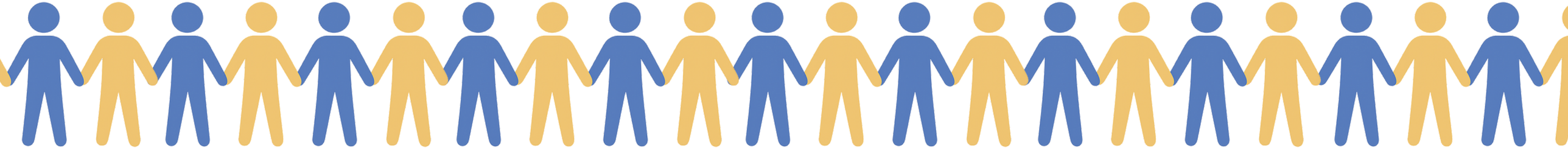
Regular Email Communications

- Timesheet submission



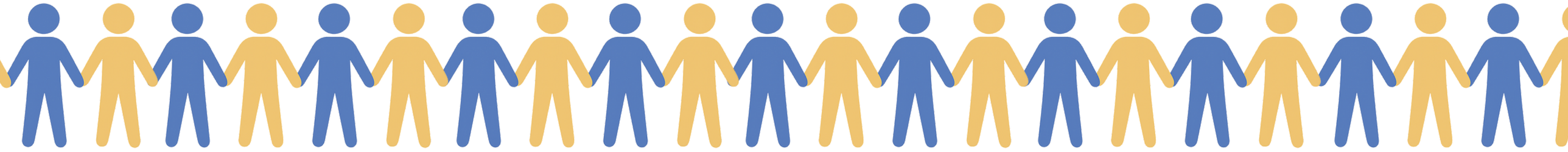
Creating & Maintaining Relationships

- Directed outreach
  - Campus departments/program chairs
  - Community Non-profits
    - Utilize existing campus partnerships
      - Career Link referrals
      - Existing non-paid internship requirements
    - United Way
  - Community For-profits?
- Selling your program



Creating Meaningful Positions

- What makes a position meaningful
- Create a General Template to share with partners
- Offer ideation assistance or help fully flushing out a role
- Offer a variety of positions to align with as many degree paths as possible
- Make sure to follow compliance requirements
- *Certain organizations, such as religious-affiliated institutions have additional requirements for work student workers cannot do*



Monitoring the Program

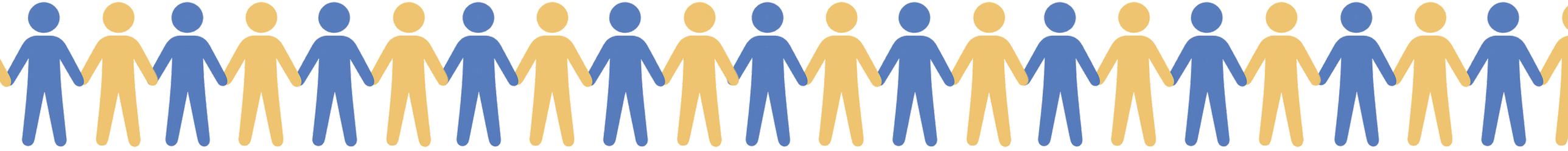
Use a Planner

Reports, reports, reports

- Enrollment/eligibility changes
- Payments by pay period
- Timesheet submissions/approvals
- System status reports

Master control sheets

- Eligibility/Hiring/Firing/Directory
- Budget
  - Micro and macro levels



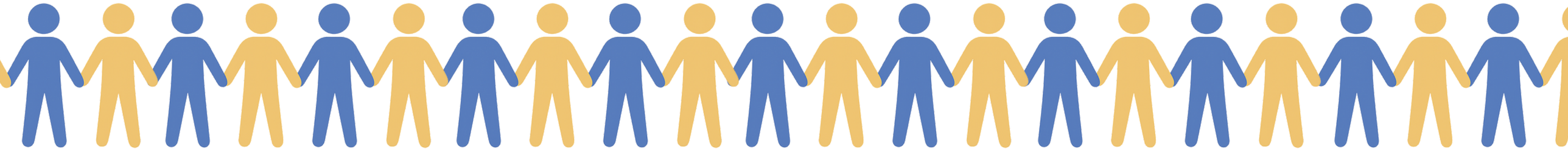
Continuous Improvement

Respond to challenges you consistently encounter

- Decentralized program information and documentation
- Inconsistent supervisor familiarity with FWS processes
- Communication gaps with students and supervisors
- Limited visibility into real-time budget utilization
- Manual or inconsistent information for positions and partners

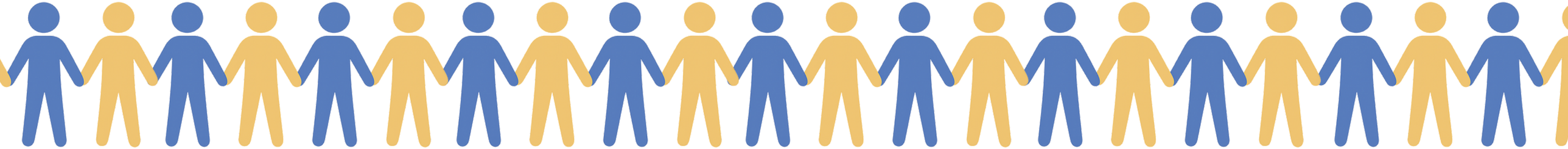
Feedback Surveys

- Students
- Supervisors



Closing

- Beyond federal and institutional compliance, there is no single “correct” model for administering Federal Work Study
- Successful programs are built around what works best for your institution and your available staff resources
- Continuous improvement and communication are key to maintaining an effective program



Questions?

Thank you!

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Stronger Together:
Resilience Through Community