Center for an Urban Future

Innovative Ideas. Independent Policy.



Event - April 2019

Rethinking Public Benefits for the Future of Work

Our forum examined what New York City policymakers can do to develop and implement the next generation of public benefits for the future of work, including portable benefits for independent contractors, lifetime training accounts to make upskilling affordable, new approaches to childcare and retirement, and other innovative programs designed to update the social safety net for the growing independent workforce.

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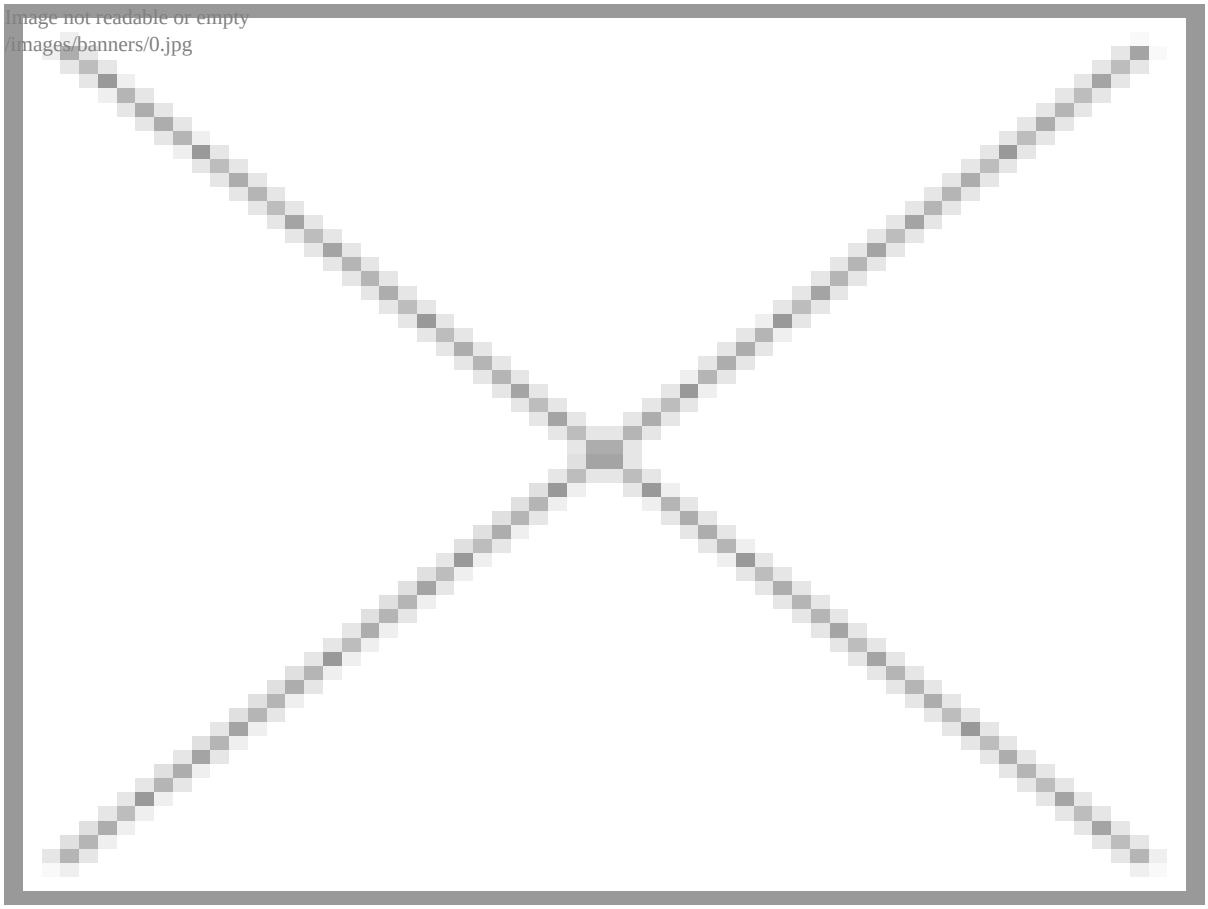
New York City is now home to more than half a million independent workers, in industries ranging from software engineering and transportation to housecleaning and childcare. But access to public and employee benefits that support independent workers—such as health insurance, unemployment, and retirement—remains limited for workers in the rapidly expanding gig economy. To help more New Yorkers thrive amid these changes, city leaders and the private sector will need to rethink how public benefits are designed and provided to meet the needs of the growing on-demand workforce.

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A panel discussion included the following speakers:

- Phillip Thompson, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives, City of New York
- Ben Geyerhahn, CEO, Workers Benefit Fund
- Andrei Greenawalt, Head of Public Policy, Via; former White House policy advisor (2009–2014)
- Caitlin Pearce, Executive Director, Freelancers Union
- Shelly Steward, Research Manager, Future of Work Initiative, The Aspen Institute

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The symposium was part of the Center for an Urban Future's Middle Class Jobs Project, a research initiative made possible by Fisher Brothers and Winston C. Fisher. The Center for an Urban Future receives general operating support from The Clark Foundation and the Bernard F. and Alva B. Gimbel Foundation. We are also grateful for support from a number of other philanthropic funders.

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