

# Bridge to Employment Site Reflection

## BTE Site Reflection

Prague, Czech Republic

September 2025



### Why BTE?

In Prague, Czech Republic, students begin to specialize in vocational fields around the age of 15—a system designed to prepare them for direct entry into the workforce or university. While this approach offers focused training, it can limit the degree of early exposure to the full spectrum of career possibilities, particularly in emerging and interdisciplinary fields like STEM<sup>2</sup>D.

Recognizing this, BTE Prague launched in September 2022 with the aim of expanding students' horizons. Through academic enrichment, mentoring, entrepreneurial training, and career exploration, vocational students were introduced to a broader array of opportunities. Many gained the confidence to consider higher education and discovered alternative pathways—including entrepreneurship and STEM<sup>2</sup>D careers—that they hadn't previously encountered when choosing their vocational track.

## BTE: A Catalyst for Postsecondary Education & Career

In partnership with Johnson & Johnson (J&J) Czech Republic, Junior Achievement (JA) Czech Republic engaged 60 students across three vocational upper-secondary schools. The program aimed to increase access to higher education and STEM<sup>2</sup>D careers while developing workplace readiness and 21st-century skills.

Over three years, students participated in a rich mix of activities: company site visits (such as Seznam.cz); skill-building workshops on AI, LinkedIn, and financial literacy; inspirational lectures from J&J professionals; and entrepreneurship competitions. J&J mentors provided ongoing guidance, helping students create education and career plans and motivating them to stay focused through their final exams. Volunteer projects ranged from environmental clean-ups to community support initiatives, fostering leadership, responsibility, and connection to local communities.

The result was a program that significantly broadened students' horizons, enabling them to reimagine their educational and career trajectories.

### Site Profile

**Location**

Prague, Czech Republic

**Grant Period**

2022 – 2025

**Sponsor**

Johnson & Johnson

**Coordinator**

Junior Achievement  
Czech Republic

**Community Partners**

SOŠ & SOU Hlinky Beroun

SŠ a VOŠ, Nový Zlíchov

Automobile & Informatics

Prague Hostivar

## IMPACT OF BTE

BTE Prague had a transformative impact on its 43 graduates. Over three years, students demonstrated steady academic growth, with GPAs rising by nearly 4% and both math and Czech language grades improving. Throughout the program, attendance increased significantly, reflecting greater motivation and engagement. Most importantly, the program inspired students to pursue higher education at rates well above the national average: 94% planned to continue studying after graduation, and 72% were accepted into universities or colleges.

The program also broadened students' career aspirations, with 63% choosing STEM<sup>2</sup>D pathways compared to just 27% nationally. Workshops in artificial intelligence, LinkedIn, and entrepreneurship, combined with site visits to companies like Seznam.cz, gave students practical skills and confidence in exploring new fields. Nearly all participants reported feeling prepared for their futures, noting improvements in teamwork, problem-solving, and public speaking. One student described BTE as “a big kick starter,” while others emphasized how mentorship and hands-on experiences gave them a clearer vision of their future.

## Sustainability

BTE Prague also benefited Johnson & Johnson employees, who gained leadership, mentoring, and cross-cultural communication skills through volunteering. Many described the experience as “reverse mentoring” and reported feeling more connected to their community and colleagues.

The program demonstrated the power of combining corporate engagement with education reform. By exposing vocational students to broader possibilities and equipping them with skills for higher education and entrepreneurship, BTE Prague has become a model of how to expand opportunity in systems where pathways are often determined early. Currently, there is hope for a trainee program with J&J Czech Republic to establish a talent pipeline.

## Student Outcomes

**100% of BTE graduates** say BTE helped them to achieve their career goals.

**72% of BTE graduates** were admitted to postsecondary education institutions.

**63% of BTE graduates** plan to pursue a career in STEM<sup>2</sup>D.

**90% of BTE graduates** feel confident in their workplace skills.