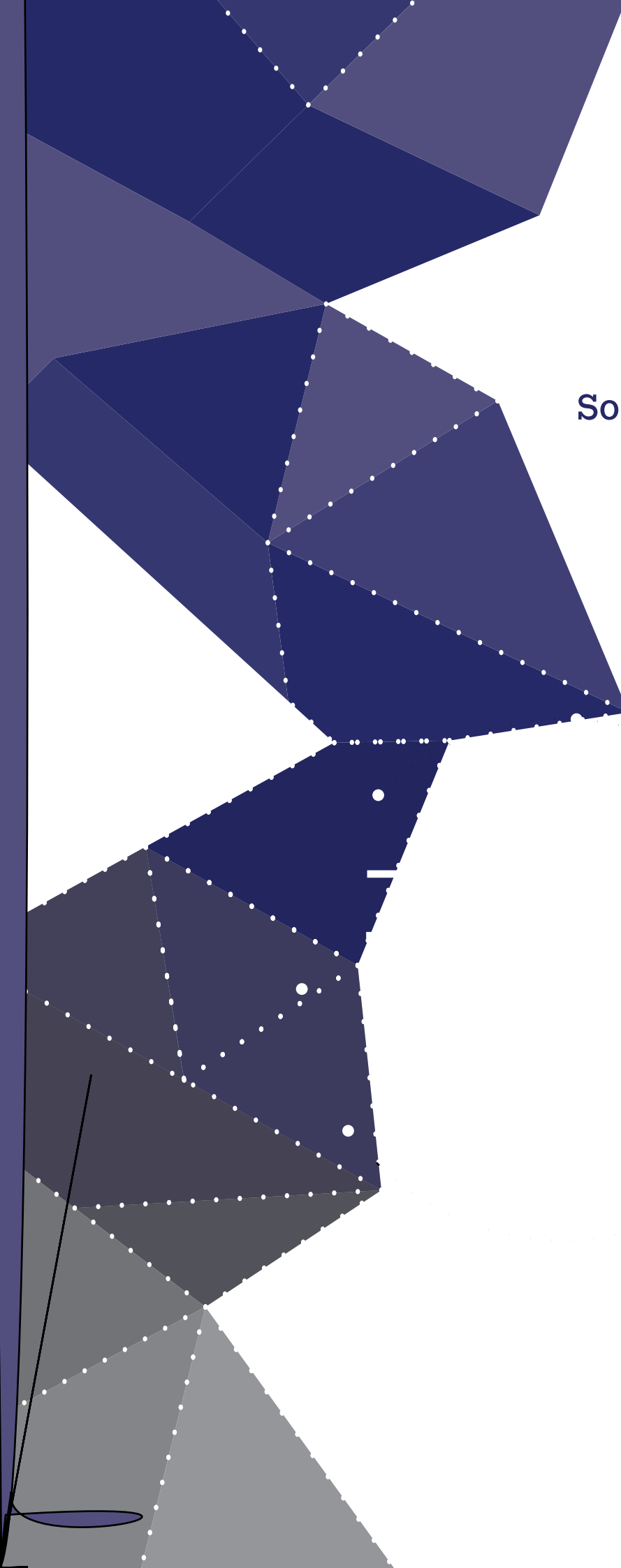




Social Return on Investment Evaluation Analysis





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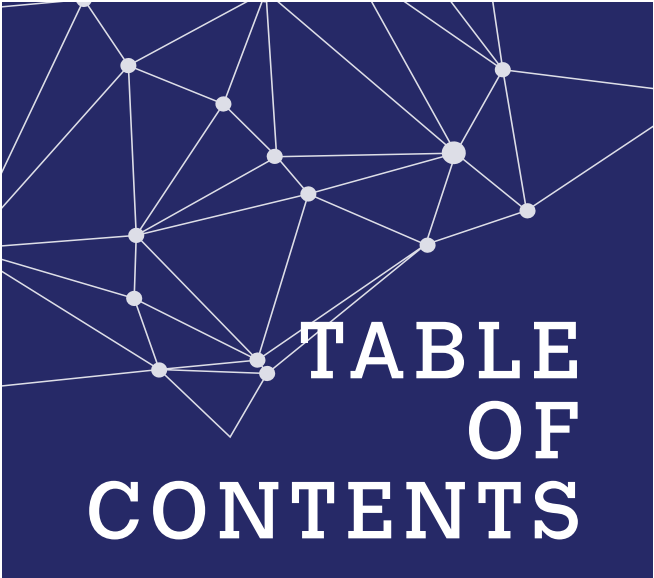


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Summary

In Appalachian Ohio, a grassroots group of citizens across industry sectors have convened to use community assets to create solutions impacting multiple parts of the community system, thus attempting to solve complex rural problems in innovative ways. One intermediary organization, Building Bridges to Careers (BB2C), has implemented community and career connected learning programs as a way to solve problems threatening rural community viability through engaging multiple community stakeholders including the community's youth.

Using focus groups and survey methods, this study investigated the contributions and the impact of stakeholders of one community and career connected learning program: high school internships. The place-based, cross-sector, bidirectional interactions facilitated by community and career connected learning created a learning ecosystem through the high school internship program; a complex system with many stakeholders and impacts. Using Social Return on Investment (SROI) to quantify impact within the learning ecosystem to communicate and maximize change afforded BB2C the opportunity to capture impact to multiple stakeholder groups in the voice of those stakeholders, to make decisions around impact, and to communicate impact to diverse audiences.

This evaluative SROI found that for every \$1 invested in high school internships, between \$9.01 - \$13.07 of value is created. The ability to

explore career fields through experience in order to eliminate career paths not of interest to them and then to be able to clearly define next steps in career paths that were of interest to them were outcomes valued most by students as stakeholders. Host site stakeholders reported the most valuable impacts to economic and social systems were, respectively, development of a workforce with basic skills and the personal satisfaction of being able to watch a young person in their community grow and develop through the internship period and beyond. For community supporting stakeholders, the most valuable impacts were the increased connection between schools and businesses in the community as well as the potential to reduce outmigration. Repeatedly, participants drew attention to long-term impacts of their contributions to the learning ecosystem as "an investment in the future" of the community, a perspective which matches this study's SROI measurement framework.



For every \$1
invested in
highschool
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of social value
is created



SROI is a framework for measuring and accounting for a broad concept of value. "It

seeks to reduce inequality and environmental degradation and improve wellbeing by incorporating social, environmental and economic costs and benefits" (Nicholls et al., 2012, p. 8).

SROI illustrates a complex ecological approach to community thriving. SROI emphasizes local voice and local knowledge in sourcing and quantifying outcomes. Instead of standards imposed from without, SROI, emphasized the values and change created within this Appalachian place, community, and people.

Principles of SROI

1. Involve Stakeholders
2. Understand What Changes
3. Value The Things That Matter
4. Only Include What is Material
5. Do Not Over-Claim
6. Be Transparent
7. Verify The Result
8. Be Responsive





About Building Bridges to Careers

Building Bridges to Careers (BB2C) is a nonprofit organization built to foster student, business, and civic relationships to inspire career choices through experience, entrepreneurship and education. BB2C is based in a city of approximately 13,350 people in Appalachian Ohio (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). This city is one of the few "urban cluster" areas in Appalachian Ohio, and it is not surrounded by a metropolitan area (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Further, the county where BB2C is based has been delineated by the U.S. Census Bureau (USDA Economic Research Service, 2013) as changing metro status from "metro to nonmetro" due primarily to loss of population. Although BB2C is based in a city in an urban cluster, it serves only one school district in this urban cluster. The rest of the districts are located in rural, non-metro areas of Appalachian Ohio.

BB2C provides direct program services aimed toward education innovation including programs such as job shadowing, career mentoring in local schools; family career awareness day, a county-wide career fair for students, families, and employers; and curricular resources to help local teachers bring real-world business and community problems into the classroom for students to solve. Additional programs focus on entrepreneurial growth or workforce development, but all have a strong student-foundation component and a tie to building educator awareness and connection to the business sector.

BB2C's High School Internship Program is the subject of this SROI evaluation.

BB2C's High School Internship Program Structure

- Average of 18 students participate annually in Washington County, Ohio
- Facilitated by 3/4 FTE internship coordinator acting as intermediary
- Students work with businesses 40-80 hours
- Any student who contacts BB2C can be placed
- Businesses encouraged to pay students, but not required
- Students complete a 4-hour job shadow at the host site prior to internship
- Internship coordinator makes site visits, regular follow-up to students and business

“

It's an investment
in our community's
future

”



The internship experience pairs one student with a local business or community organization for 40-80 hours of work. The programs are designed to be as flexible as possible, emphasizing job shadowing and adult connections prior to beginning projects or “work” associated with the internship. The program, facilitated by BB2C, encourages students to spend the first part of the internship not dedicated to a skill or task but simply meeting as many adults connected to the host business or organization as possible. Through this intention, the program seeks to address the opportunity gap through intentionally supporting youth interaction with community professionals in diverse roles and positions.

Purpose of SROI Evaluation

BB2C's Theory of Change



BB2C has numerous anecdotes of individual students whose lives have been changed forever by the high school internship experience. However, no data existed that measures the impact of the high school internship program on all stakeholders impacted by the program including the businesses, the students, BB2C staff, and the community writ large.

Further, the existing impact data BB2C previously collected did not allow the organization a way to make internal decisions about the internship program. The SROI evaluation of the internship program represents the first in a series of studies to refine stakeholder data collection methods to more accurately reflect the impact created by all BB2C programs to enable the organization to make internal decisions about resources, approaches to existing programming, and future programming while also communicating the results of the comprehensive impact analyses to a wide range of audiences.

The extant literature on the impacts of experiential learning via internships, especially from the perspectives of multiple stakeholders, is not well documented.

The research on both short and long-term outcomes is scant, limited to mostly urban centers, and limited to research on only one stakeholder group, usually students (Ito et al, 2020; National Youth Employment Coalition, 1998; Philadelphia Youth Network, 2008; Pilz, 2016). Further, the research on the social impacts of internships in rural areas either lacks strong empirical data (National Employment Leadership Council, 2002) or has a distinct urban bias (Alliance for Excellence in Education, 2010). An urgent need exists to research the impact of programs designed to promote student success and rural community viability. In addition, to mitigate the historic patterns of urban bias, it seems critical that the voice of rural students, businesses, and the community members be drawn to center in the research of these programs.

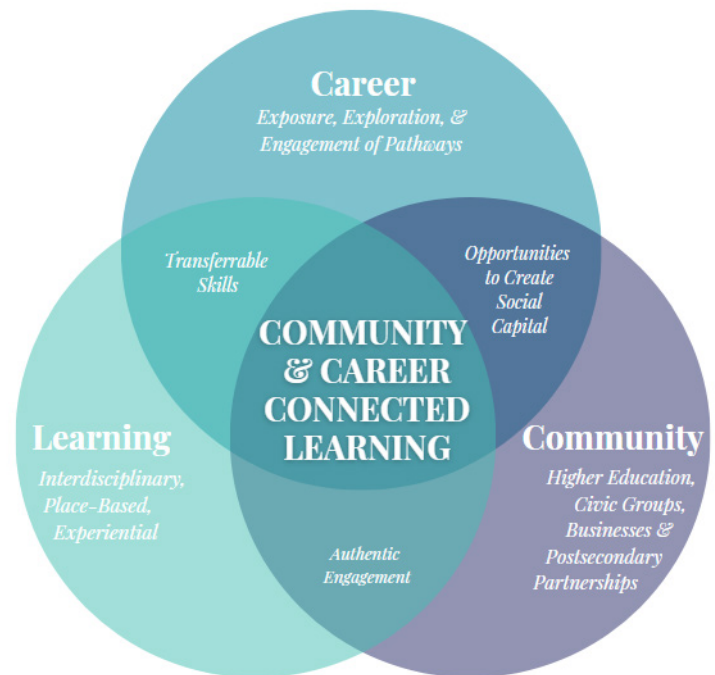
Scope

This SROI evaluation of BB2C's high school internship program included interns who had participated in the internship program as high school students from academic calendar years 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2019-2020. All research was conducted in December 2020 – August 2021. BB2C wanted to understand the lingering impacts of the internship program for stakeholders who had previously participated; that is, they wanted to understand the impacts stakeholders experienced in the year or first few years after participating. Specifically important were impacts to students as primary beneficiaries who might have participated as high school juniors or seniors in 2017-2018 and were contacted for this research study to discuss impacts on current career path choices one year post graduation. These lingering impacts are of particular importance when understanding if BB2C is meeting its mission, which serves students in school, but seeks to impact their career trajectory and outcomes. In order to understand if the organization is achieving its mission, impacts beyond the immediate learning or benefits of the program must be evaluated.

Community and Career Connected Learning

This SROI evaluation was done as part of a larger body of academic work that takes a systems approach to understanding and quantifying community and career connected learning in the learning ecosystem. For this SROI, BB2C's high school internship program is used as an instrumental case (Stake, 1995). Researcher knowledge of Rural Community Economic Development, youth development (i.e., youth "sparks" and career identity formation), the U.S. K-12 education system and policy, the unique context of Appalachian Ohio, and pedagogy guide the judgements made throughout this SROI study.

Community and career connected learning is a learning system integrating community partnerships and career awareness into experiential, place-based learning (Ricket & Werry, 2020; Ricket et al., 2022a, 2022b; Yahn et al., 2023). Community and career connected is an overarching term uniting various pedagogical practices, programs, and thinking frames wherein learning inextricably connects with community partners and occupational pathways (See Figure 1). As an approach to learning, community and career connected learning emphasizes the importance of intentionally involving local community, business, and industry as active participants in the process of schooling. In this learning system, students learn from community members in both formal and informal spaces, in ways both outside of and connected to school objectives such as grades or graduation. At the same time, where students participate in community spaces with adults or the community space overlaps with school, those spaces and adults are likewise changed.



Community and career connected learning refers to the activities and programs that are implemented to create a Learning Ecosystem. The Learning Ecosystem thrives on cross-sector relationships built with the intent to provide opportunities to explore, learn about, and engage with the local community and career fields (Ricket et al., 2022a, 2022b). Critical facets of community and career connected learning are:

- **Learning extends to audiences and experiences beyond the classroom and the teacher** (Allen, 2000; Almeida & Steinberg, 2001; Christensen, 2015; Cartun et al., 2017; Freire, 2000/1970; Mather, 2020; Vaclavik et al., 2017)
- **Students participate in an active learning process that involves a community member(s) (i.e., businessperson, staff from community organization, government official) also as an active participant** (Ben-Eliyahu et al., 2014; Ito et al., 2020; Scales et al., 2011; Vaclavik et al., 2017)
- **Learning incorporates assets from the local community, including its land and culture** (Bauch, 2001; Holtkamp & Weaver, 2018; Howley, 2006; Kretzmann et al., 2005; McLennen, 2017; Montessori, 2007/1948; Theobald, 1995)
- **Learning, in both formal and informal school spaces, includes a continuum of experiences from exploration to extended immersion, connected to careers and occupations** (Cartun et al., 2017; Lent et al., 1994; Lent & Brown, 2019; Markus &

SROI Framework & The Learning Ecosystem

BB2C's unique approach views the entire community as a learning ecosystem where influence and impact are experienced as bidirectional for all stakeholders.

BB2C is a state and national leader in creating both formal in-school and informal out-of-school experiential learning opportunities for K-12 students that combines career exploration with place-based, local community assets.

SROI as Learning Ecosystems Measurement Framework

Community and career connected learning, and thus, high school internships, typify a systems approach to learning. BB2C, as an ecotone of the Learning Ecosystem (Hecht & Crowley, 2019), combines the formal learning space of schooling and the informal spaces in the community to create a zone of rich interaction wherein all participating parties act on one another, impacting one another in bidirectional relationships. While community and career connected learning clearly illustrates the learning ecosystem framework as partnerships across boundaries is the foundation of each learning site, an equally complex measurement framework must be adopted to account for and recognize the contributions and impacts of all ecosystem stakeholders, including those nonhuman actors.

Importantly, no research conducted with a Learning Ecosystem framework (or ecological orientation) has researched the learning experience from the perspective not only of students and parents but also of the wider social, environmental, and economic stakeholders. The Learning Ecosystem framework necessitates first, a complex methodology of multiple methods, some which may have not been devised (for a brilliant example of new materialist methods, see Moe & Reinertsen's (2019) use of diffraction in an analysis of an early childhood learning center). Second, the Learning Ecosystem framework emphasizes relationships and the understanding of the whole as the unit of study, which means a researcher must have deep, immersive participant-knowledge of the system (Barron, 2006; Johnson, 2008). Finally, research must capture outcomes from multiple stakeholder perspectives, including nonhuman nature, as there is no center of the experience of learning (Hecht & Crowley, 2019).

In order to address the lack of data on outcomes of community and career connected learning from the perspective of multiple stakeholders from a systems perspective, the measurement framework of Social Return on Investment (SROI) was applied to the Learning Ecosystem created by BB2C's high school internship program in a rural, American context.

Methodology

This evaluation used The Guide to SROI (Nicholls et al., 2012) and mixed methods research design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Clark 2018) with both qualitative and quantitative methods. The first two stages of the SROI process use qualitative data collection from stakeholders. Stages 3-5 use a quantitative approach, which is validated and member-checked in Stage 6.

For me [student], the big thing I discovered during the internship was my own personal development.



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The Principles of SROI

The purpose in choosing SROI as the framework for this study lies in its ability to both quantify the value of the internship program while simultaneously increasing understanding of how the organizations make a difference (Courtney & Powell, 2020). Although the formula for calculating SROI as the final representation for value created by an organization relative to costs seems prescriptive, the power for organizations lies in the process of measuring and maximizing impact through applying the principles of the SROI framework (Nicholls, 2017). The principles are a set of standards to guide the evaluator in making sure the impact measurement process is rigorous, thorough, and representative of the change brought about by the program in question.

Involve Stakeholders. At the heart of the framework is the first principle, a principle which undergirds every other principle: SROI prioritizes the perspectives of those who are usually not heard, the stakeholders of the program. SROI actively involves the primary beneficiaries and adjacent stakeholders in the valuation and articulation of outcomes of program activities; in contrast with accountability measures forced from external measures of outputs or metrics (Adams et al., 2015). This principle guides the evaluation process in that stakeholders articulate how change is created for them (Courtney & Powell, 2020). Thus, SROI allows social enterprises and nonprofits to measure the extent to which they are meeting their social mission from the perspective of the stakeholders they seek to serve. In addition, SROI makes room for value accounting for multiple stakeholders and beneficiaries (Yates & Marra, 2016; Cooney, 2016). This principle is a key strength of the SROI framework wherein inclusiveness of stakeholder groups allows a "bottom up methods for measuring social value" (Cooney, 2016, p. 113).

Understand What Changes. The principle Understand What Changes uses an approach similar to using grounded theory to understand and create well-defined outcomes based on the experiences of those experiencing the change. The evaluator uses qualitative research with participants and key stakeholders to inform the development of Chains of Events, Indicators, and Valuations (Courtney & Powell, 2020). Once the evaluator has established indicators and outcomes from qualitative research methods, measuring the amount of change for outcomes for all stakeholders via survey instrument or other method is a further effort to apply both principle one and two (Nicholls et al., 2012).

Value the Things That Matter. Valuation is the process in SROI wherein the evaluator, with input from stakeholders, assigns worth to the changes brought about by a program or business activity. The valuation process, whereby SROI quantifies social outcomes serves firstly to help organizations understand where value is being created and how they can create more social value for stakeholders. Value is monetized using a fiscal proxy, a financial representation of value. This fiscal proxy is a "metaphor of impact" (Cooney, 2016, p. 11) that ultimately relies on stakeholders for verification. By monetizing value, even intangible social values such as an increase to confidence in leadership ability, puts social outcomes "on a common 'yard-stick' for comparison" (Adams et al, 2019, p. 7).

Only Include What Is Material. This principle includes making decisions about relevance and significance when deciding what to include in the impact measurement and what to exclude. Ultimately, the evaluator's expertise and judgement is used to make decisions of materiality, but, as with all standards, stakeholder involvement ultimately member checks the evaluator's judgement. To include every outcome that every individual stakeholder experiences would not be proportionate or possible in the SROI framework; therefore, the organization and evaluators use thresholds to guide the process for inclusion of impact or exclusion. This principle also emphasizes the necessity of including both positive impact and negative impact which reach above a threshold as determined collectively by stakeholders and evaluator. In addition to thresholds, evaluators and organizations use the scope and use of the evaluation to guide decision making around materiality. (Social Value International, 2018).



Do Not Over-Claim. The principle of ensuring that impact is not over-claimed or over-quantified includes a few processes to ensure the credibility of the SROI analysis. The first process applies throughout the SROI process: **avoiding double counting.** This applies to inputs or investments as well as stakeholders and beneficiaries. Each stakeholder, activity, and input should only be counted once, and outcomes should be carefully considered so they are distinct and avoid counting the same impact twice, which would violate Principle 5.

The four processes which check for over-claiming and discount accordingly are **deadweight, displacement, attribution, and drop-off.** Deadweight is “a measure of the amount of outcome that would have happened even if the activity had not taken place” and is calculated as a percentage (Social Value UK, 2019b, p. 56). Evaluators use research and stakeholder involvement to situate activity in trends in wider social, economic, and cultural spheres (Social Value UK, 2019b).

Displacement also requires a view of activities as nested in geographic, political, and social systems. Displacement considers how much one outcome displaced another outcome somewhere else. The overall proxy is discounted to account for displacement in outcomes (Nicholls et al., 2012).

Attribution takes into account other programs and activities available to the same beneficiaries which could similarly contribute to the outcomes. Contributions made by similar programs or companies during the same time period (or in some cases, even in the past) must be acknowledged through discounting for attribution. A program can only take credit for part of the valuation of the outcome if it can be reasoned or stakeholders report similar outcomes contributed by other organizations. Attribution accounting is usually an estimate, since accounting for all other similar contributions for every individual stakeholder would not be possible. However, attribution discounting is an important part of transparency and holding to the principle of not overclaiming. Drop-off likewise acknowledges the decline of impact over time. Therefore, when involving stakeholders, a critical question following what changes they experience as a result of the activity is how long that change persisted. (Social Value UK, 2019c).

Be Transparent. According to SVI, the aim of SROI is “to create accountability to stakeholders” (Nicholls et al., 2012, p. 74). For this reason, transparency and verification are the final principles in the SROI framework. The SROI ratio should never stand alone as an SROI report or even as the only reported impact metric. In an SROI report, the entirety of the impact story with a focus on stakeholders and beneficiaries holds true to the principles of the framework (Cooney, 2016). Detailing methods, decisions, and researcher judgement are vital parts of transparency that ensures reliability and validity of conclusions.

Verify the Result. All decisions, details of stakeholder involvement, sources of data both primary and secondary should be included in formal reporting to provide credibility and understanding of the quantification. Because of the principle of transparency, SROI reports, even those conducted by third-party, non-academic affiliates read like empirical research journal articles (see Social Value International's archive of verified SROI reports). This reporting process allows for verification of results by stakeholders themselves as they see their words reflected in the formal reporting and also by outside investors.

Be Responsive. Although this SROI evaluation was carried out before SVI published the management principle “Be Responsive,” pieces of this principle are nevertheless present in the study. The principle of Be Responsive infuses the work of the SROI evaluation with action. Throughout the process, stakeholders are invited to consider how findings should be used to inform decisions to create more wellbeing.

SROI Principle	Principle Applied to Evaluation Methods
Involve Stakeholders	Stakeholders were involved at every step of the process, as involving stakeholders is at the heart of measuring social value. The first part of the study involved stakeholders in focus groups where they articulated outcomes, suggested other stakeholders and recruited them to be part of the process, and member-checked language of the survey instrument. Survey methods were used to involve determine extent of change and materiality, rank-order outcomes by stakeholder group, and determine valuation for outcomes. Finally, through a series of community meetings, stakeholders responded to findings and crafted a plan for maximizing impact moving forward.
Understand What Changes	Using the SROI Guide and augmented by the process of ripple effects mapping (Chazdon et al., 2017) in a focus group of stakeholders, the stories of impact were crafted into outcomes. The first phase of the focus group consisted of peer-to-peer interviews followed by whole group discussion and mind mapping of outcomes. A survey instrument was developed in the quantitative phase of the study to indicate outcomes.
Value What Matters	A multi-step process to valuation and proxy development guided this analysis. First, where possible, stakeholders reported direct values in the survey instrument. Second, rank-order questions allowed stakeholders to determine the relative importance of outcomes specific to their stakeholder group. Finally, guided by a rigorous research protocol, each outcome deemed material by stakeholders received a fiscal proxy which was then member-checked against rank-order questions and stakeholder input.
Include Only What is Material	Stakeholder involvement determined which outcomes were deemed significant and important enough to include in the analysis. Determinations of materiality, where guided by focus group data and not survey data, was member-checked with additional stakeholder involvement.
Avoid Over-Claiming	Stakeholder involvement via the survey instrument and focus groups alongside additional outside academic literature triangulated to inform discounting and avoid double-counting. In order to combat reporting bias, an optimism discount was taken overall to approach this standard.
Be Transparent	This report, following after stakeholder meetings and communications of the findings of the evaluation, endeavors to delineate all methods, calculations, assumptions, judgements, sources, and risks to the evaluation as clearly and transparently as possible.
Verify the Result	All stages of the process were member-checked with stakeholders. All key findings and valuations were verified by stakeholder involvement and verification.

*At the time this report was conducted and presented, the 8th principle, Be Responsive, was not yet released

Methodology

This SROI study used a mixed method design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Clark 2018). An exploratory sequential mixed method design was used with multiple stakeholder groups including students, parents, BB2C staff, business host sites, and community organizations where qualitative methods inform quantitative instruments (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The exploratory sequential approach honors the primary SROI principle “Involve Stakeholders” (Nicholls et al., 2012), allowing the researcher to capture the contributions and outcomes of the program in the words of the stakeholders themselves prior to quantifying them.

Qualitative Design

Setting

The qualitative part of the mixed methods study on site in Appalachia Ohio USA. Because the internship program operates in a rural area where access to broadband and other technologies make talking with stakeholders on virtual platforms nearly impossible or increase difficulties in gaining a diverse cross section of participants, face-to-face interactions with stakeholders in their own communities was necessary. The changes in the lives of the stakeholders and on the environmental, economic, and social structures as created by the program are also context dependent and required the immersion of the researcher to gain context sensitivity (Patton, 2015).

Participants

Participants were selected to form a group of 15 participants representing each stakeholder group—program implementers (n=3), students as primary beneficiaries (n=4), host sites (n=4), and community organization stakeholders (n=4) were selected. BB2C implementation staff and administrative team were consulted in forming the stakeholders selected for the focus group.

From the list cultivated with the collaboration of BB2C staff and administration, the participants were selected using maximum variation sampling (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) to participate in the focus group. Maximum variation sampling is defined by Merriam & Tisdell (2016) as a sample of participants “who represent the widest possible range of the characteristics of interest for the study,” which for this study, are possible changes as a result of the program (p. 98). Although Patton (2015) explains that maximum variation sampling adds value because “any common patterns that emerge from great variation....capture the core experiences and central, shared dimensions of a setting or phenomenon” (p. 283), the key reason for using maximum variation sampling in the SROI framework is to make sure the many diverse voices of beneficiaries, stakeholders, and subgroups are represented in the outcome creation stage, especially as it pertains to uncovering unintended impacts of the program’s activities (Nicholls et al., 2012; Adams et al., 2015).

The focus group was facilitated by the researcher, comprised of two phases, as recommended in *A Field Guide to Ripple Effects Mapping* (Chazdon et al., 2017). The first phase consisted of peer-to-peer interviews followed by whole group discussion and mind mapping. Barbour (2005) says of focus groups, “[focus groups] dilute the power imbalance between researcher and researched by taking advantage of the naturally occurring peer group. This can pay dividends in encouraging relatively uninhibited discussion” (p. 743). The first phase where members of the focus group interview one another in heterogenous pairs was guided by a structured interview protocol as recommended by Chazdon et al. (2017).

Qualitative Focus Group Data Collection

All peer-to-peer interviews and large group discussion were recorded on hand-held recorders, transcribed by an AI transcription service, and stored in secure files on the researcher's computer.

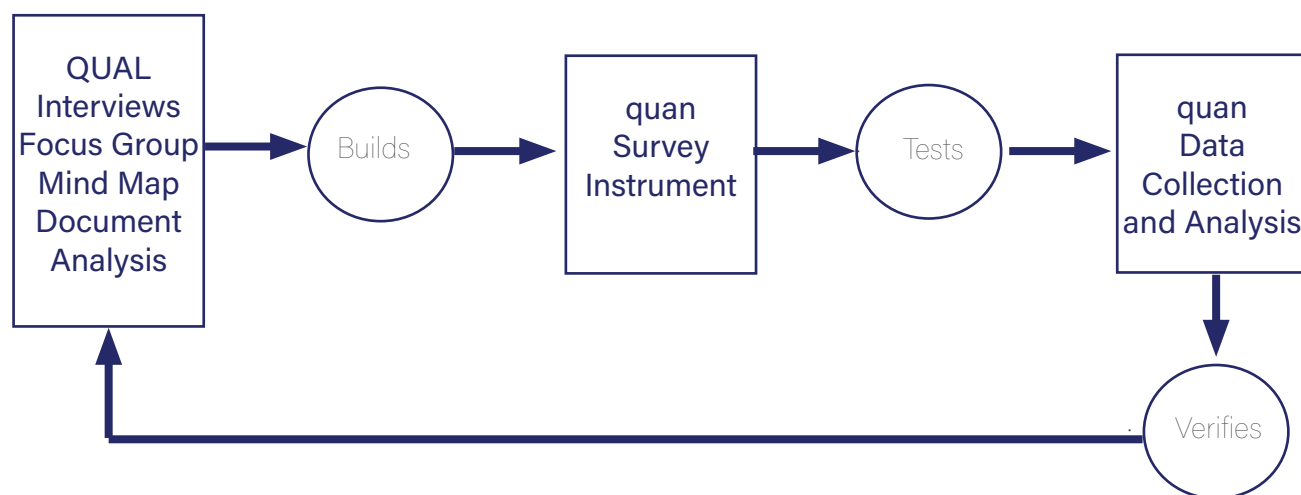
Peer to Peer Interviews

During the first half of the focus group, participants conducted "peer-to-peer interviewing" (Chazdon et al., 2017, p. 11). Peer interviews are the first step of Ripple Effects Mapping (Chazdon et al., 2017). Each participant was paired with another participant of a different stakeholder group; for example, a student was paired with a host site and a community organization stakeholder was be paired with a program implementor. The peer-to-peer interviewing followed a structured approach with questions developed by the researcher ahead of time and distributed to participants on a printed page along with the overall focus group agenda (See Appendix). Chazdon et al. (2017) encourage the use of a structured approach with explicit instructions for interview participants "not to deviate from the interview protocol, to use active listening skills, and to take notes on their interviewee's responses" to increase the validity of interview data collected by participants, who are obviously not expert interviewers or researchers (p. 12). The goal of peer-to-peer interviewing was less about solidifying outcomes and more about building trust for the whole group interview that followed.

Using peer to peer focus groups for quantitative data collection responds to rural concerns where boundaries between in-groups and out-groups have marked effects on trust and openness (Jacobsson & Akerstrom, 2012). Whereas participants may be reluctant to share their full experience with an unknown outsider such as the researcher, the participants may be more likely to share their experience and thoughts - especially as it relates to unintended or negative outcomes - when surrounded by others from their program and community.

Whole Group Interview and Mind Mapping

Immediately following the brief peer-to-peer interviews, the researcher led a whole group discussion where the group "mind-mapped" outcomes as articulated by the focus group participants. Many of the questions (see Appendix) repeated questions asked in the peer-to-peer interviews. Mind-mapping is a key process of Ripple Effects Mapping, a generative strategy wherein "program participants and other community stakeholders to reflect upon and visually map intended and unintended changes" (Chazdon et al., 2017, p. 2). The whole group discussion with mind-mapping was also recorded on hand-held recorders which the researcher placed on each of the three tables of participants. While mind-mapping, the researcher captured and used the words of participants when describing contributions and outcomes on the mind-map as visualization, member-checking for validity as the discussion progressed. This iterative process allowed for multiple contributions, conversations, and discussion around each impact as the researcher recorded the thoughts of the group (Chazdon et al., 2017). The mind map also served as field notes (Glesne, 2016).



Methodology

Triangulation

Additionally, all program records from BB2C were available for this analysis, which were collected in addition to the participant interviews, large focus group discussion, and field notes (Patton, 2015). These documents such as "routine records on clients...financial and budget records, and organizational rules, regulations" annual reports, evaluation materials previously collected, and grants written and evaluated will provide "a rich source of case data to supplement field observations and interviews" (Patton, 2015, p. 376). In order to collect relevant documents, a document protocol was developed: first, a keyword search was performed for all documents in the shared BB2C Drive. The initial keyword searches generated 45 documents that were further winnowed by selecting only documents pertaining to the overall BB2C organization structure (i.e., logic models, theory of change) and those documents containing information specific to the internship program (i.e., grant reporting documents). Although the internship program has operated since 2016, robust records beyond names of students and host sites do not exist in the organization's records until 2018; therefore, selection was also limited to documents created in 2018 or after.

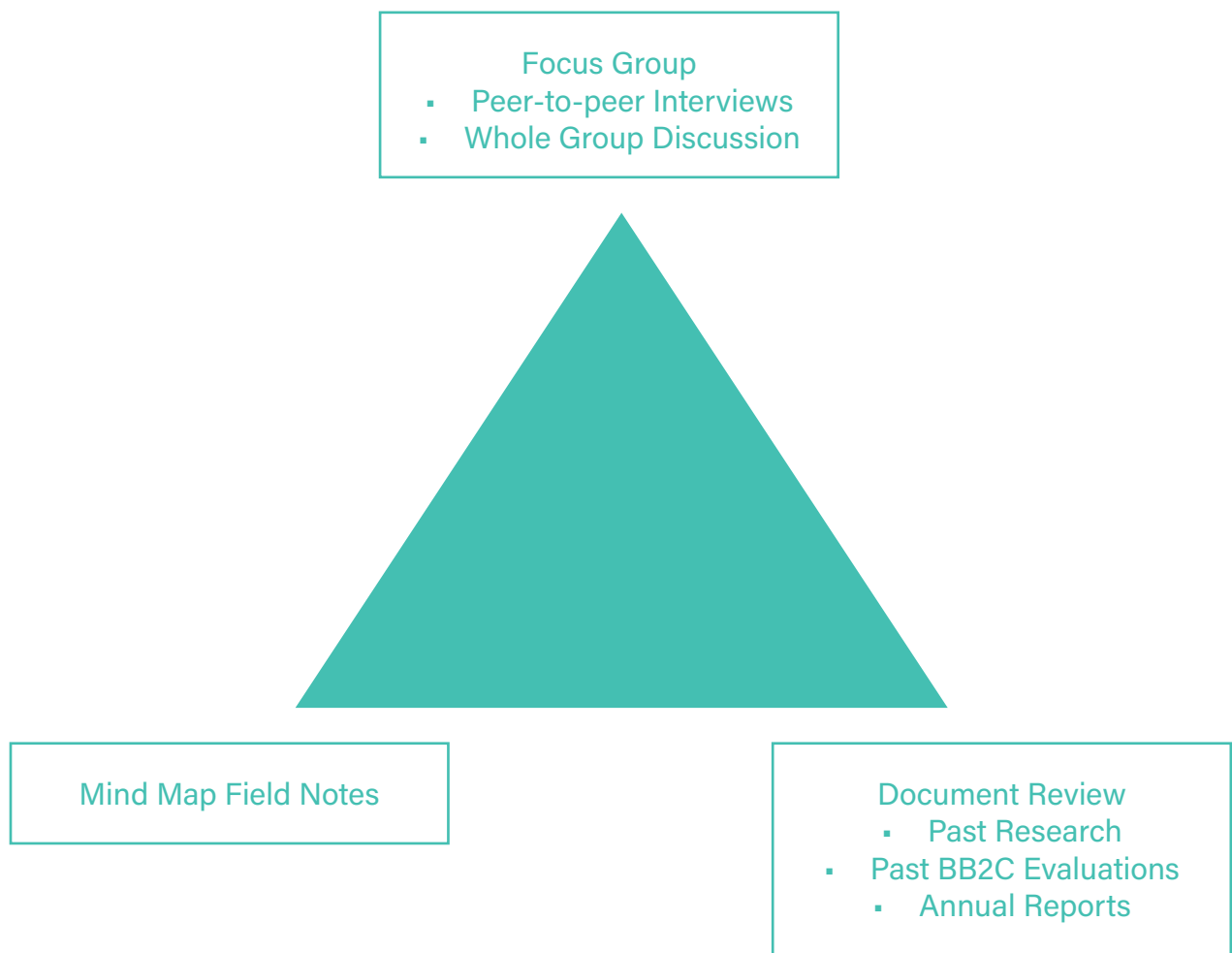
Data from the mind map analysis and document analysis was triangulated with the transcript analysis. Using Miles et al.'s (2020) "data type" construction of triangulation, "corroboration from three different sources" provided confirmation and nuance for subcodes in addition to information that might conflict or contradict subcodes generated from focus group participants (p. 294).

A code list of 10 economic, 13 social, and 1 environmental subcodes emerged from triangulation and member checking of subcodes. Each subcode then underwent an extensive process to transform from the code word or phrase to an articulated outcome statement. In order to create articulated outcomes for each subcode within each system (social, environmental, and economic) needed for the SROI framework, Merriam and Tisdell's (2016) process for creating "category names" was followed (p. 211). Especially relevant for crafting outcome statements were Merriam and Tisdell's (2016) guidance to create categories that are "sensitizing" and "mutually exclusive" (p. 211). When refining each subcode into an articulated outcome, the use of participants' words or phrasing within the outcome and collapsed similar subcodes was retained where appropriate, keeping in mind the SROI principle of Do Not Overclaim (especially eliminating for instances of double counting). Each outcome, generated from the list of subcodes, was tested against these principles and collapsed where necessary. All articulated outcomes were member checked by focus group participants and other BB2C staff.

As part of the SROI framework, outcomes were moved from coding into the SROI Value Map (SVI, 2021). The SROI Value Map guides data integration and development of the survey instrument, where outcomes are quantified and tested by stakeholder group



Source Triangulation for Verifying Results of Mixed Methods Approach



The data collected and used for qualitative data triangulation further served as a resource for guarding against low student response rates during the quantitative portion of the SROI evaluation (See Section on Data Indicators). Document review aided as a validity check when analyzing quantitative results and extrapolating the amount of stakeholders experiencing the change from low response rates.

Potential Risks to the Analysis and SROI Ratio

SROI Principle	Risk	Explanation	Possible effect on results	Mitigation attempt
Involve Stakeholders	Response bias due to low student survey response	Because only 20% of students participated in stakeholder involvement strategies, there is a chance this group does not represent outcomes to the whole group	Some outcomes not reported; relative outcomes not representative of all student stakeholders	Verification of outcomes through triangulation of outcomes using document analysis and field notes
Understand What Changes				
Value What Matters	Optimism bias	The tendency for participants to retrospectively overvalue positive outcomes or to bias responses in favor of positive outcomes for BB2C (Babbie, 1990; Pritchard et al., 2021)	Overestimation of SROI ratio	Included in the sensitivity analysis is the application of a 15% adjustment for optimism bias, predicated on past practice (Pritchard et al., 2021).
Include Only What is Material	Decision on materiality and thresholds	An outcome identified by community members as important to host sites was deemed not relevant because the business host sites did not see it as relevant and BB2C decided it was unable to manage this outcome, so it was excluded from the outcome list.	Under/Overestimation of SROI ratio	Although the qualitative data pointed to not relevant, the question was included on the survey to test for significance to community members. A lengthy discussion with BB2C followed regarding managing this impact.
Do not overclaim	Proxy development	Although the proxy valuations match the relevant significance to stakeholder groups as evidenced by rank-order questions, each proxy was developed independently, using directly stated value and values found in research.	Over/Underestimation of SROI ratio	A thorough explanation of all proxy calculations is present in this report. All proxies were member-checked by stakeholders.
		Some attribution is self-reported through the survey.		

Stakeholders



"I'm learning a lot about myself as who I want to be when I get older."

Stakeholders



The initial stakeholder list for the focus group was created together with the BB2C staff through a process of asset mapping around the internship program. From this asset map, invitations were sent to members in four key stakeholder groups. Focus group participants were asked to name additional stakeholders for inclusion.

Stakeholder	Involvement	Group Size	Sample Size	Included/ Excluded	Reason
Student interns previously participating in internship, now graduated	Focus Group	52	2	Included	Main beneficiary of program
	Survey	52	7		
Host site mentor previously and currently hosting interns	Focus Group	24	3	Included	Main beneficiary of program
	Survey	27	12		
BB2C Staff: program implementors	Focus Group	3	3	Excluded as subgroup	Included as host sites based on focus group feedback
	Survey	N/A	N/A		
Funders of the internship program	Focus Group	3	1	Excluded as subgroup	Included as community members based on focus group feedback
	Survey	N/A	N/A		
Community member of businesses and organizations in local community (including local college)	Focus Group	20	4	Included	Indirectly involved in activities and indirect benefit as a result of thriving communities
	Survey	20	20		
Teachers in local school district not directly involved in internship	Focus Group	1	1	Excluded as subgroup	Included as community members based on focus group feedback
	Survey	N/A	N/A		
Employees in host sites	N/A	N/A	N/A	Included	Included based on survey results from host sites
"The Region"	N/A	N/A	N/A	Included	Seen as part of community member stakeholder outcomes

Stakeholder Groups



During the focus group a clear theme emerged: Participants continually resisted containment in just one stakeholder category. Host sites and funders continually referred to themselves as community members, articulating changes they experienced not just as business owners and employees but also to themselves and their families as community stakeholders. Similarly, BB2C's staff continually referred to themselves as host sites, not just as implementors; it was later revealed that BB2C's staff, in addition to implementing the program, also serves as a host site organization wherein the staff mentor interns. This activity of mentoring their individual interns had become more important to BB2C staff in terms of outcomes than implementing the overall program. In order to honor the stakeholders' sense of identity, some subgroups were eliminated, subsumed into larger categories with which stakeholders identified.

Inputs and Outputs

Program Inputs

Data to understand the inputs, or contributions both pecuniary and nonpecuniary of stakeholders to run the program, was collected during the focus group session and from document analysis provided by BB2C staff.

Stakeholder Group	Input/Contribution	Evidence from Stakeholder Qualitative Analysis
Students	Time (if unpaid)	Unpaid internships pose difficult decisions for some interns
	Transportation expenses	Cost of getting to and from site represented a challenge for coordinators to help students overcome in past years
Host Site	Mentor Time	"It is truly hard work to actually create [the internship work] inside the host site"
	Business Resources	"The other thing is, is, you know, we're now asking [other employees] to somewhat participate in the work [of helping the intern]."
	Internship Coordinator Cost	BB2C employs the equivalent of one .75 FTE employee to coordinate, place, and facilitate interns. Other staff participates in the internship program as well.
Community Stakeholders	Financial Support	Donations and grants directly in support of the BB2C internship program and BB2C organizational structure for internships.

Program Outputs

- 28** Number of student placements in paid internships
- 24** Number of student placements in unpaid internships
- 52** Total number of student placements
- 27** Number of business host sites participating
- 20** Number of community support organizations

Contributions to Program: Inputs

Stakeholder	Contribution	Value
Student	Student time (if unpaid)	\$11,220.00
Student	Transportation cost	\$1,440.00
Host Site	Host site time	\$78,000.00
Host Site	Student wages (if paid)	\$13,090.00
Host Site	Operating Costs of BB2C	\$119,075.79
Community Supporter	Community Donations	\$9,000
TOTAL		\$231,825.79

Represented in these figures are the inputs identified in the qualitative portion of the and indicated by the quantitative survey portion of the mixed-methods study. Where averages are used for the valuation (e.g., transportation cost and wages paid by employer) values were taken from the quantitative survey portion, sourced from stakeholders. These figures include the median student wages (taken from quantitative stakeholder survey) at 50 hours average per internship. Other figures such as annual operating costs (\$39,691.93) and average donation to the internship program (\$3,000) were taken from BB2C documents and member checked by BB2C staff for accuracy. Annual numbers were taken for years under investigation in this study (FY 2016-2017 through FY 2019-2020). Contributions of time for unpaid student interns and host site time are calculated using opportunity cost measures multiplied times the average number of hours for an internship. Host site opportunity cost is calculated using the median graduate or professional degree salary divided into an hourly rate (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). Travel expenses for students in an unpaid internship as a contribution are calculated using U.S. Census Bureau (2019) average commute time for a worker in Washington County (22 minutes) represented by average number of miles (n=10) able to be driven in that 22-minute timeframe multiplied times the IRS (2021) mileage reimbursement rate for nonprofits, which is \$0.20.

Understand What Changes



Defining outcomes is a critical part of the SROI framework in the principle “understand what changes”. SVI describes a well-defined outcome as a change in behavior or circumstance, not necessarily attitude or awareness. According to the SROI framework, changes in attitude are usually preceded by a change in behavior and are a result of people doing things differently as caused by the activities of the program or organization. The task of qualitative analysis in this study was to establish chains of causation according to stated stakeholder experience. Clear outcome articulation of the changes experienced captured in the words of the stakeholders was the goal of the qualitative phase of this study.

The Words of Stakeholders

The focus group involved peer to peer interviews and large group interviews for drawing out outcomes, including unexpected and unintended impacts. While the purpose of the focus group was to actively map outcomes with stakeholders, all interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for any additional outcomes.

In many instances, the peer-to-peer interviews had the effect of one stakeholder member suggesting outcomes fitting the other’s stakeholder group.

For example, in one interview, a host site continually suggested to the student that an important outcome of the internship was the fact that the student was offered a position at the conclusion of the internship. The student, while acknowledging that this was a true

outcome, segued the conversation to personal development and the importance of having a mentor he could count on for advice as a more relevant and important outcome of his experience in the internship.

For the student, the outcome of receiving a job offer was not relevant to them, especially as compared to outcomes concerning personal development and confidence building. Consequently, during analysis of the focus group interviews, it became pertinent to test for “relevance” of outcome to the stakeholder group.



**Now I want to reinvest
back in Building
Bridges (BB2C) and
Building Bridges**



-Host Site

Outcomes to Students

Student Outcomes	Stakeholder Example Quotes	Relevance
Obtain a job offer at the conclusion of the internship	These high school kids, they came out of high school, they make \$26 working for us.	No Relevant to other stakeholders, not to direct beneficiaries
Earn a wage during the internship	It was important to me to be paid [for the internship] so I didn't have to work instead.	Yes
Avoid pursuing a career path and/or college major they will not use and will not like	Well, once you're in that program, and decide after the first six months, it's not what I want to do. How do you get back on the path to go somewhere else? So it definitely told me that I cannot sit behind a desk and do the same thing for eight hours a day, 40 hours a week.	Yes
Increased personal development (A combination of personal, career, and community identity)	For me [student], that was a big thing for my experience was what I discovered during the internship was my own personal development.	Yes
Defined career path for students, enabling them to take the next step	When I walked out the doors of graduation. Yeah, I checked all my boxes. I had my paper, but I also had this [the internship]. I had worked with [the host site]. I had this in my belt.	Yes
Increased soft skills	[The internship] helped build out soft skills. I have a real work environment, and I need to be there at a certain time, I have responsibilities.	Yes
Increased technical skills	We taught her how to run a CNC And we set him up a project with an Arduino to automate a piece of machinery.	Yes Relevant to other stakeholders, norms, policy, not to direct beneficiaries
Increased relationship with adults in the community	She said I could use her as a reference anytime. It's all about networking	Yes

Outcomes to Host Sites

Host Site Outcomes	Stakeholder Example Quotes	Relevance
Able to hire employees after the internship in full or part time positions	For us the internship gives us pathways to new employees. You know, if they can get through an internship and they enjoy what they're doing. Yeah, we'll hire them, right	Yes
Work completed by interns is used by employer (Increased business capacity)	One student helped us get a system that we still use today that has made my crews work, as well as myself and my other people. jobs easier because you cannot remember every detail of every little thing. That's probably the biggest thing [impact] in the past.	Yes
More work ready employees	And even if it's not in our community, they still need some skill sets and basic skills. You know, there's no job [here] for what I want to do. Well, go to Cleveland but you got some basic skills. Chances are, you will be back at some point. Right. But leave the area with skill set.	Yes
Growth of ability to give back and watch a young person grow and develop through mentoring relationships	I think seeing them both grow [is the most important change]. I mean, when I first met her [student], she was so shy and then later she was speaking in front of an audience! [The internship] gave her that confidence and trusting in herself that now she's going to be a Deputy Sheriff. So, I mean, yeah! Seeing those young people find themselves is it.	Yes
Increased passion for all business's employees	I think growing passion, I mean, it's helped develop my passion for what I do. And the excitement that our staff have, they look forward to doing it every year. Our leaders get super excited about it. So I think that developing that passion to help the next generation continue to grow and explore is something that's extremely important. I'm learning a lot about myself as, who I want to be when I get older.	Yes
Increased talent recruitment in region through awareness building and word of mouth	If they have a good experience, like, so you're not going into [our field], but if you had a great experience, you're going to share that with someone else. And you never know, they may be the next person to work.	Yes

Outcomes to Community Stakeholders

Community Outcomes	Stakeholder Example Quotes	Relevance
Increased business support in other areas of the community [as a result of participating in the internship]	Not only students connect with each other, but the businesses connect with each other and then kind of deepen their investment into the community	Yes
Retain interested students as workforce in the rural community	The other thing is, is being able to have them come back.	Yes
Stronger communities	I think trust [is the most important change] We got to look at it from a self less point-of-view. It can't be about what's in it for me as an organization, or what's in it for me as a, as an organization or a school system or whatever. It's about that holistic approach, right? What's it going to do for that student? What's that student going to do for our community, in whatever field that they go into? And again, that goes back to we have to grow, grow our own, right, grow our community, in whatever way that we can do that.	Yes
More programming combining K-12 education and businesses	So I think probably the biggest one is a lot of the schools want us to come in and talk to their students, right? We get invited by multiple schools in the area to come in and talk to the students about not just the internship, but all of our opportunities.	Yes

“

It's important because that's the pulse of the future. And if we're not moving with that future generation workforce, we're losing out.

”

Outcome
Experienced
by All
Stakeholders

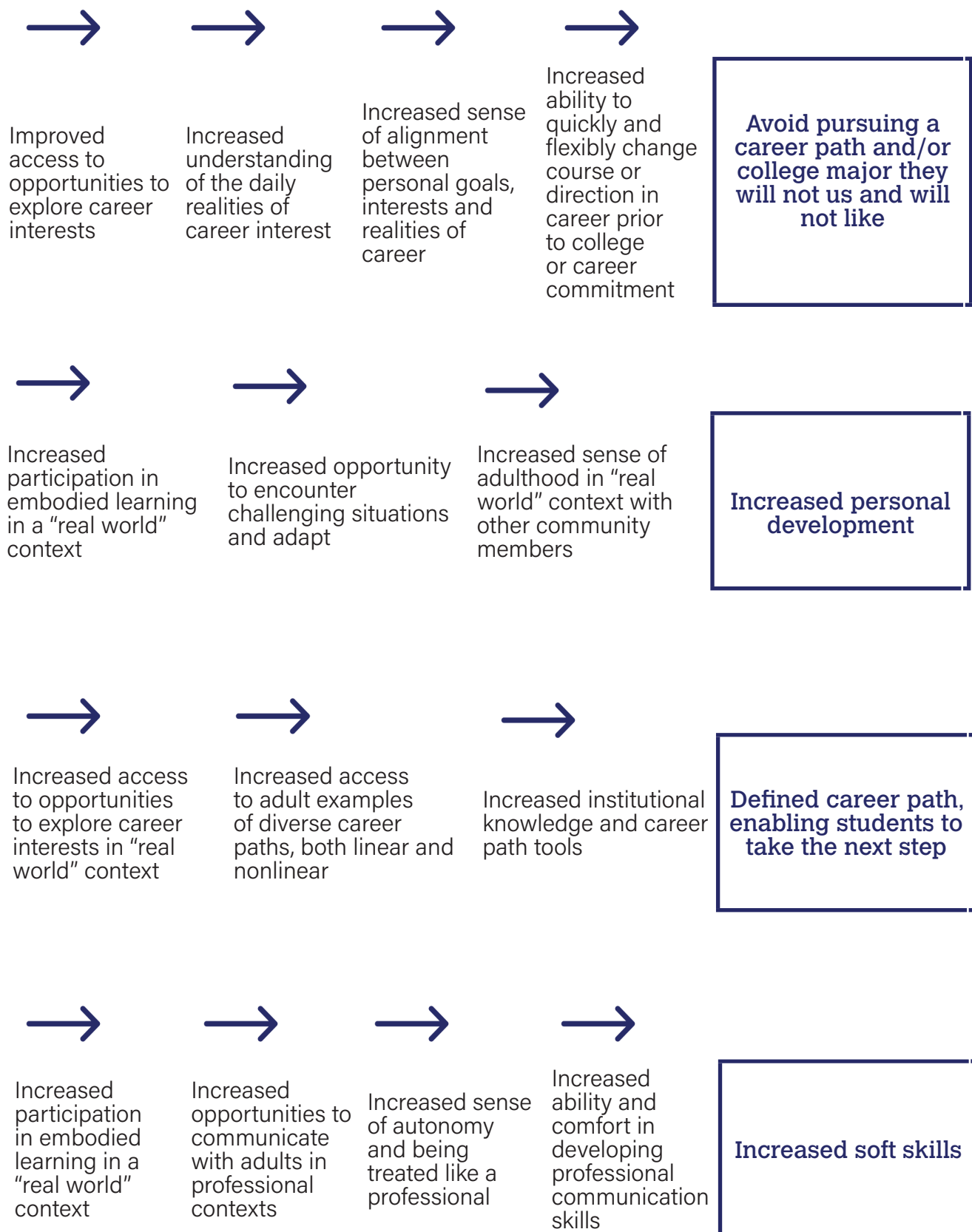
Increased
Social Capital

“

I have people now I can count on, supporting me, who I know I can count on in the future.

”

Outcome Chains for Student Stakeholders



Outcome Chains for Student Stakeholders



Increased participation in embodied learning in a "real world" context



Increased opportunities to learn to operate technical machinery, software, or perform field-specific procedures



Increased sense of autonomy in performing increasingly difficult field-specific, technical tasks

Increased technical skills



Increased participation in embodied learning in a "real world" context



Increased access to adults in diverse professional positions



Increased opportunity to interact with adults in professional positions as a fellow professional

Increased relationships with adults in the community
[Increased Social Capital]



Increased opportunity to participate in embodied learning in a "real world" context



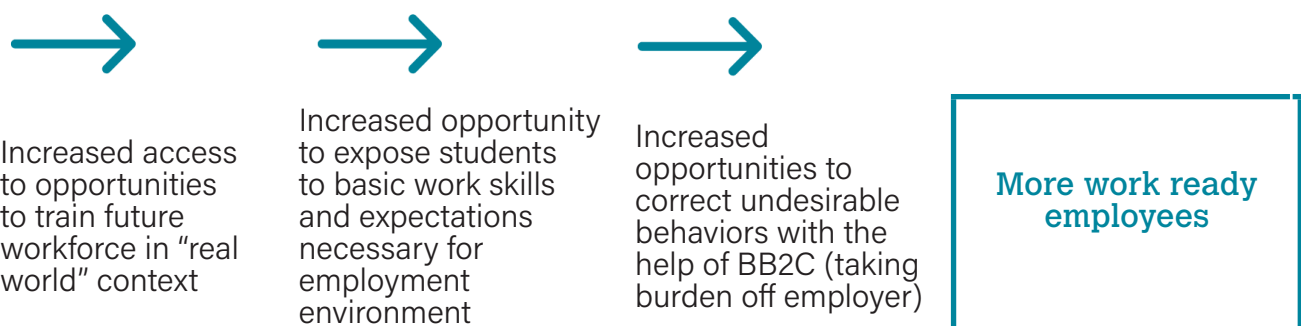
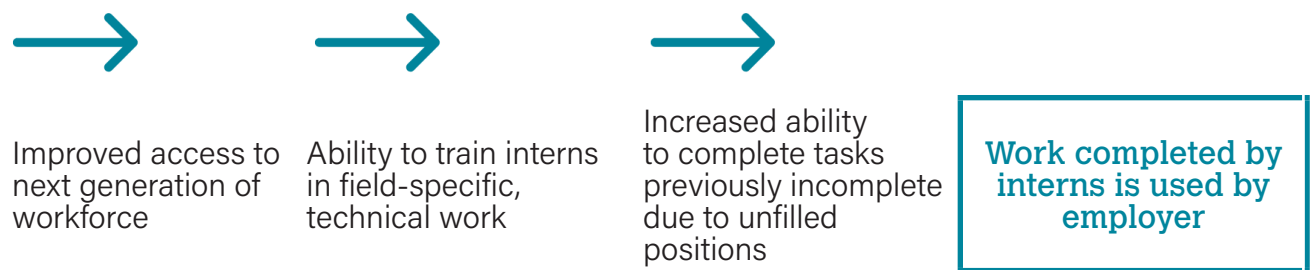
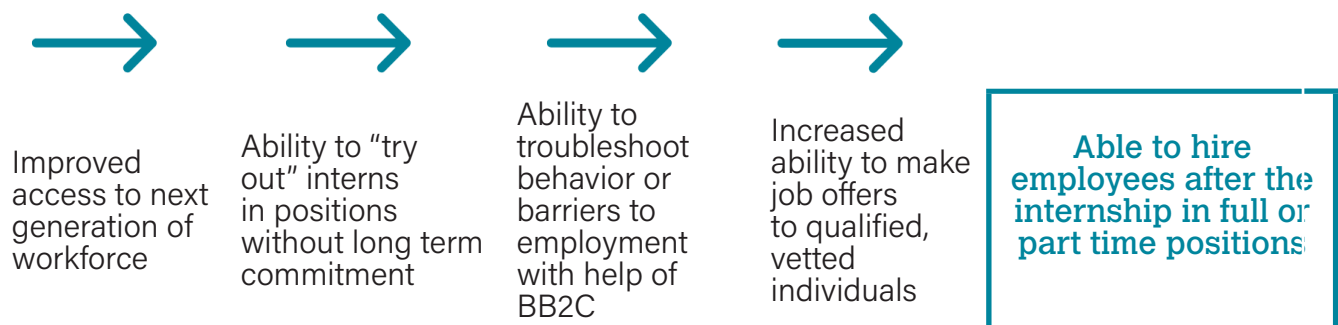
Choice to take a job to make money or take opportunity to participate in internship



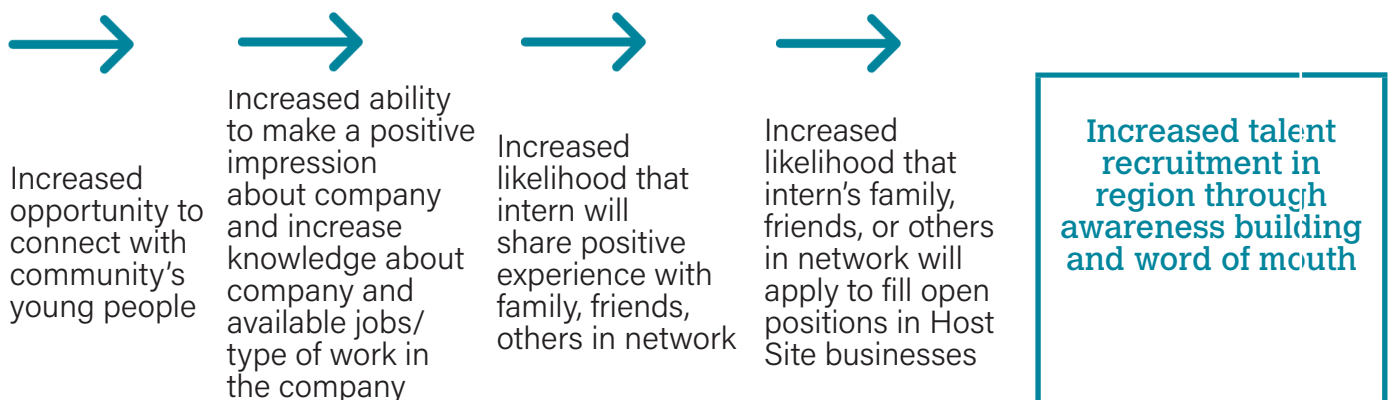
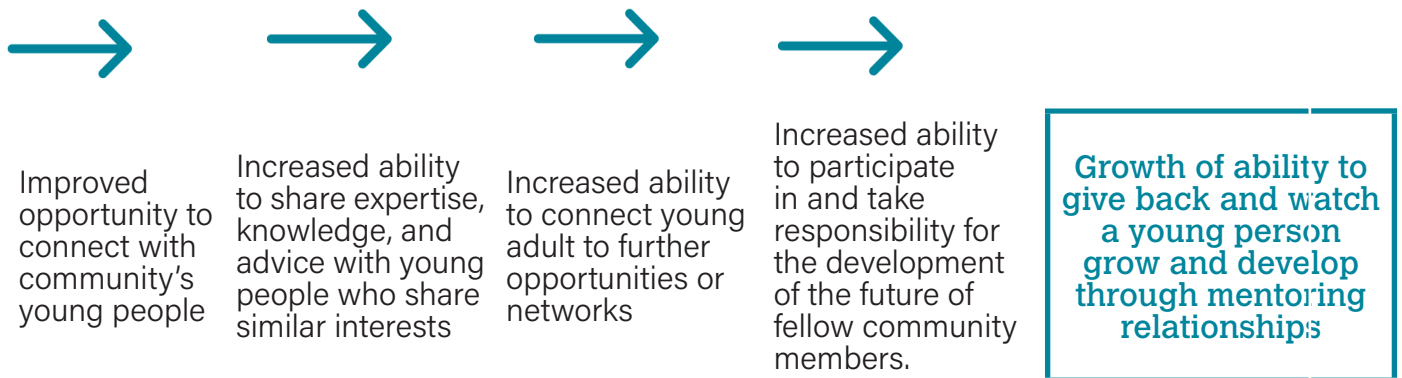
Improved ability to participate in internship and also make money - removal of choice

Ability to earn a wage during the internship

Outcome Chains for Host Site Stakeholders



Outcome Chains for Host Site Stakeholders



Outcome Chains for Community Stakeholders



Increased connection to network of organizations supporting growth of next generation

Increased awareness of the ways other orgs. and businesses operate in the community

Increased desire to play supportive role in the growth of community

Increased business support in other areas of the community



Improved access to next generation of workforce

Increased awareness about the types of living-wage jobs, companies available in rural region

Increased connection of students to adults in fields/ companies located in rural region

Ability to align student interests with career in region either as immediate position or future

Retain interested students as workforce in the rural community/ region



Increased connection to network of organizations supporting growth of next generation

Increased sense of self-efficacy in tackling persistent community problems through collaborative approach

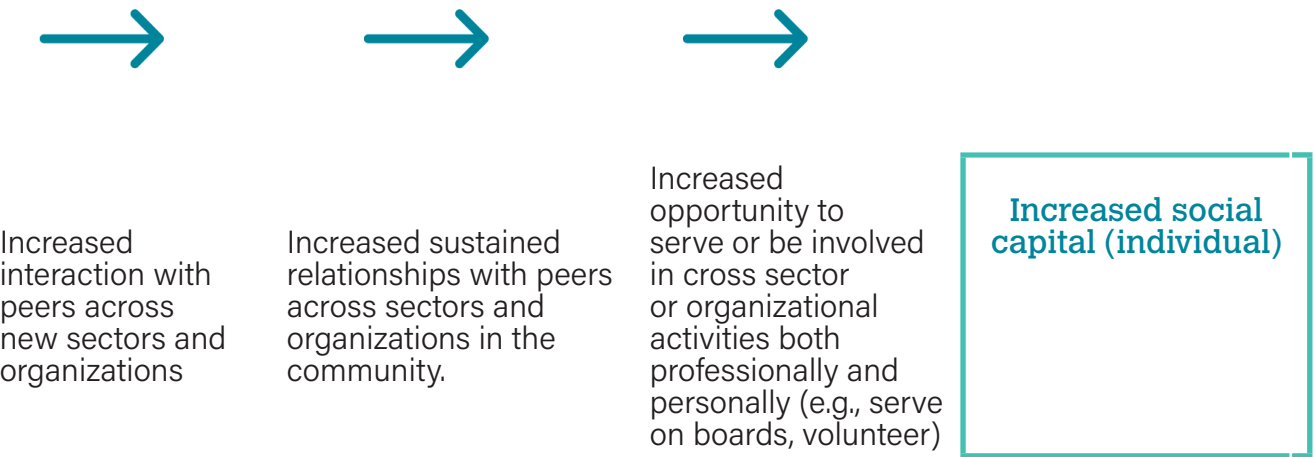
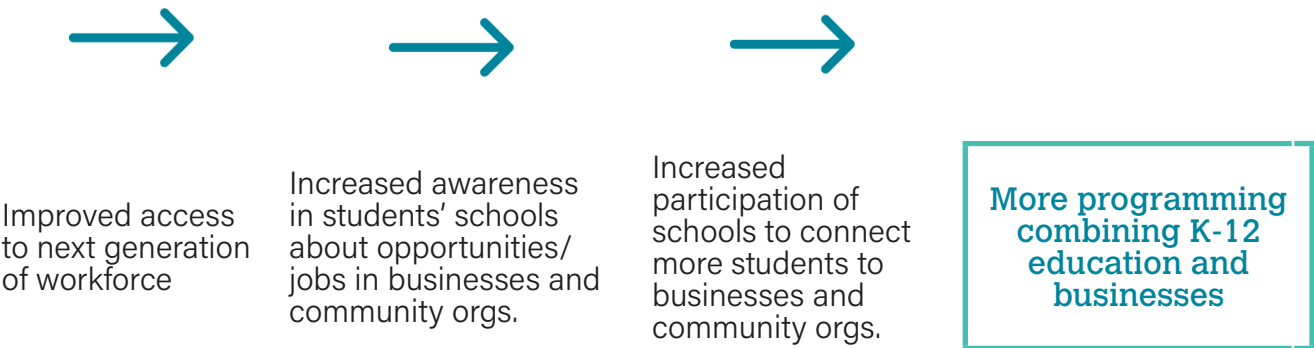
Increased opportunity for partnerships, civic service, involvement in the community

Increased trust in organizations, systems, and people in the community

Stronger Communities



Outcome Chains for Community Stakeholders



Quantitative Design: Survey Indicators

Following the focus groups, indicators were developed for each outcome and integrated into survey design. In this phase, survey items were developed to test for materiality of outcomes and to inform valuation. Materiality, as defined by SVI (2018) is the process of determining “what information and evidence must be included in the accounts to give a true and fair picture, such that stakeholders can draw reasonable conclusions about impact” (p. 3). Although determining materiality occurs throughout the analysis, for this study, data integration led to decisions as to the relevance of outcomes to stakeholders and subgroups of stakeholders as demonstrated by qualitative findings and the design of quantitative survey questions to test for the significance of those outcomes (SVI, 2018, p. 6).

During quantitative data collection, stakeholder surveys tested the following materiality questions:

- How many people experienced the change/outcome?
- How much change happened?
- How much change can be attributed to BB2C's activities?
- What is the relative value of the outcome?

Data integration was guided by SVI's (2021) value map (See Appendix), questions were included to test for each question in the materiality standard and to test for valuation of outcomes including discounting, attribution, and deadweight. The goal of data integration at this stage and the materiality standard of SVI was to ensure only material outcomes are included in the final SROI analysis and also to ensure no outcomes material to a stakeholder group or subgroup were excluded and consequently not able to inform decision making appropriately (SVI, 2018). Surveys were sent to the total population of each stakeholder group.

Of the 45 surveys sent out via email, 6 student emails were returned as undeliverable. The majority of these emails were linked to K-12 school email accounts collected by BB2C as contact information for students which now were no longer relevant since students taking the survey were 18 years of age or older and had graduated high school. Host sites and community members were emailed the survey total of three times. The survey was emailed to students a total of four times. Attempts were made to find students on social media to solicit working emails to send the survey. BB2C also sent out a newsletter to its subscribers announcing the survey and instructing students to check their emails to respond to the survey.

Survey Response Rates

Stakeholder Group	Total Population	Responded to Survey	Undeliverable	Response Rate
Students	45	7	6	15.5
Host Sites	27	12	1	44.4
Community	20	20	0	100

Data Collection: Be Responsive

The realization that BB2C did not have correct or sufficient contact methods for its participants led to a discussion during this phase of the SROI evaluation with BB2C about changing record keeping for the ongoing management of impact data. BB2C has since changed its record keeping practice and now collects personal emails from students, phone numbers, and guardian contact information in order to continue to track ongoing impact after students have completed the program. Additionally, conversations with the BB2C Board during the SROI evaluation process has led to a strategic management decision to increase the amount of BB2C relationship building with students before and after the internship period in order to increase impact and understand the lasting impacts of the internship program. These updated practices are likely to yield higher stakeholder involvement and response rates for future SROI reports.



Quantitative Survey Indicators

Rindfuss et al. (2015), in an article investigating the accuracy of the field-wide presumption that low response rates unequivocally indicate biased results in Japan, found that low response rates did not necessarily lead to results that were biased. The researchers point to decreased response rates across populations and fields, a trend exacerbated to an extreme degree by the COVID-19 pandemic (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022), as an impetus for examining the assumption that low response rates lead directly to "low data quality" (Rindfuss et al, 2015, p. 789). In a multivariate analysis of the impacts of service learning on social capital outcomes D'Agostino (2010) received only 20% response rate, a rate below a "typical" pre-pandemic response rate of 30% (p. 320). The primary concern with low response rate is response bias. Babbie (2001) pointed out that analyzing for homogeneity of the population is key to determining the sufficiency of the survey sample. Babbie (2001) provided an extreme example of research in laboratory experiments where one case of something, for instance a molecule of hydrogen or sample of bone marrow, is used as representative of a whole population.

The survey population of students (n=45) all had in common the experience of completing a BB2C internship with a local business located in their community, attending one of the five public schools school in Washington County, graduated high school between the years of 2017-2020, and would be in the age range of 18-21 years of age. The internship experience, while flexibly accommodating both student and business schedules, included the same essential component parts during this time, and all students completed the internship. BB2C did not collect demographic information on students during their internship period.

To compensate for missing demographic information and to further ensure stakeholder inclusion and address the potential for response bias, survey data was triangulated with a desktop research including extant literature and BB2C specific documents including a qualitative interview study recently published by BB2C on the consequences of internships on student outcomes (Rickett et al., 2022). **Due to low response rates, all student outcomes were triangulated to ensure proper amounts were taken for number of people experiencing the change.**

Comparison of Student Impact Survey Responses to Document Analysis

Outcome Question	Survey n=7	BB2C Records N=25
College major	85%	25%
What college to attend	43	18
Enter workforce	29	8
Gain communication skills	71	72
Gain technical skills	71	44
Find a career path	100	72
Gain mentors	100	100



Survey Indicators

Similarly, although the host site responses returned at a rate high enough to be considered acceptable, due to the small size of the overall population, host site demographic information (i.e., In what field would you classify your business/ organization?) was similarly compared to BB2C's records of host sites to ensure the host sites who answered the survey were representative of the whole population.

Comparison of Host Site Survey Responses to Whole Population

Organization information	Survey n=12	BB2C Records N=27
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	17%	22%
Trades, Construction, & Manufacturing	42	37
Health Sciences	25	30
Other	8	11
No Designation	8	0

Also important to note in overall response bias is that Google Forms forces a response to all questions, so no questions had incomplete or missing data values. Overall, the measures taken to address low response rates and the step taken in the SROI framework to involve stakeholders in the measurement of extent and valuing of change to systems illustrated a proportional and effective approach to extrapolating results to the whole population to which the sample represents.

Other questions on the survey verified analysis of qualitative data. For example, outcomes to economic systems valued by host sites and community members included the hiring of students in open positions at the conclusion of the internship. However, qualitative analysis revealed, and quantitative survey data confirmed, this outcome was not relevant to students. Although 71% of students reported being offered full-time, part-time, or summer employment at the conclusion of the internship, 57% of those students were unable to accept that position at the time. However, the students responding that they were able to take the position also reported continued employment with their internship host site two or more years later. These results confirm the success of interns who are able to take jobs and their importance to employers, while also confirming the relative unimportance of this outcome to the majority of students.

From this data, it becomes clearer that students prioritize outcomes of the internship that assist them in career exploration and development of professional networks in the community to help them begin to take necessary steps on their career path. In fact, 71% of students reported the internship made them more aware of job opportunities available in the area and 100% of students reported they would not have known or would have been uncertain about what next step to take to make their career goals a reality without the BB2C internship (See Appendix for full survey instrument and value map of indicators). However, host sites and community stakeholders prioritize longer-term impacts such as retention to the rural region and developing a skilled workforce. Collecting accurate data on long-term impacts valued most important by host site and community stakeholders requires measurement of student decisions caused by the internship, a key discovery made about the impact process that will help future efforts for BB2C to gather ever more precise figures.

Outcome Ranking

All outcomes articulated by the qualitative stage of the study were tested in individual survey questions using binary questions, Likert scale questions, valuation questions, and then relative importance was tested via a ranking question. Each stakeholder group ranked outcomes specific to their stakeholder group. Questions specifically targeting ordinal ranking were analyzed for frequency and weighted rank was calculated to inform an overall ranking of outcomes for each stakeholder group (Marden, 2017). This approach to analyzing ranking questions, is considered a "sufficient statistic model" as it informed a weighted approach to valuation as a check on proxy development in the next step of SROI (Marden, 2017).

Top Outcomes Valued By Students:

1. Avoid spending time pursuing a career path or major students will not use or like
2. Defined a career path and enabled student to take the next step
3. Increased personal development
4. Increased soft skills
5. Increased technical skills
6. Earn a wage during the internship
7. Increased relationships with adults in the community



Top Outcomes Valued by Host Sites

1. More work ready employees
2. Growth of ability to give back and watch a young person grow and develop through mentoring relationships
3. Increased talent recruitment in the region
4. Work completed by interns is used by employer
5. Able to hire employees after the internship in full- or part-time positions
6. Increased passion and purpose for all employees



Top Outcomes Valued By Community Stakeholders:

1. More programming combining K-12 education and businesses
2. Retain students to workforce in the region
3. Stronger communities
4. Increased business support in other areas of the local community

Relevant Context:

High School Internships In Rural Appalachia, USA

Rural Southeastern Ohio faces a deep paradox. On the one hand, business is booming. The region has over 1,000 entry-level jobs currently unfilled (JobsOhio, 2021), and 49 businesses expanded in 2020 alone, funneling \$20 million in development capital into the region (Ohio Business, 2021). Businesses in this rural area struggle with retention and recruitment to fill open positions at all levels, forcing some businesses to operate below capacity or at limited hours. On the other hand, a recent survey shows Southeastern Ohio high school students exhibit a distinct lack of knowledge about these available jobs; over 12% of graduating seniors surveyed in one county have no plan for work or postsecondary education, and over 23% of graduating seniors do not have a specific career path in mind (BB2C, 2021). There is also evidence to suggest that those students who do report having chosen a career path, do so arbitrarily. For example, of the 54% of students who enter college within two years of graduating high school, only 35% of those students finish college (Ohio School Report Cards, 2023).

Further, rural areas face unique barriers not as material in urban areas including a dispersed population, distance to markets, inadequate or disproportionate funding access, increased levels of poverty, labor shortages, and lack of access to programs and opportunity more readily present in areas of more dense population and resources. The qualitative and quantitative data from this study confirmed that BB2C's high school internship program is serving the needs of multiple stakeholders in the learning ecosystem in ways not addressed by other programming.

In the US, schools for Career Technical Education (CTE), also known as Vocational Schools, have long incorporated experiential, work-based learning as a core of their programs and certifications (Papadimitriou, 2014). However, students attending traditional high schools - those students who are the focus of BB2C's internship program - have lacked the opportunity for career exploration and career experience. Further, since the *A Nation At Risk*, the education sector intensified focus on one-dimensional measurement of student success through academic achievement on standardized tests (Ravitch, 2013). Subsequent national legislation such as No Child Left Behind continued to increase accountability stakes on measures such as annual test scores, attendance, and graduation rates, further limiting school focus on experiential and career-based learning.

By addressing the skills gap needed for businesses to be successful while simultaneously addressing the opportunity gap by assisting students with building networks based on exploration and mentorship, all stakeholders experience positive changes in the increasing strength of the community as a whole.



"There's not a whole lot of opportunity for young people to figure out what they want to do with their lives, which is kind of scary. And I think having more guidance and having more opportunities for young people to just get out in the world and meet people that could be their mentors is huge. I think that's lacking in Southeastern, Ohio." -Student

A Gap in Opportunities for Rural Students

BB2C's High School Internships foster student, business, and civic relationships to inspire career choices through experience, entrepreneurship and education (BB2C, 2021). In 2006, BB2C began as a small group of cross-sector leaders trying to address the simultaneous problems of outmigration, dearth of qualified workforce to fill available jobs, and lack of student knowledge about opportunities in their own community. The high school internship program specifically developed in large part as a response to employers who continued to express difficulty recruiting skilled workers for available positions.

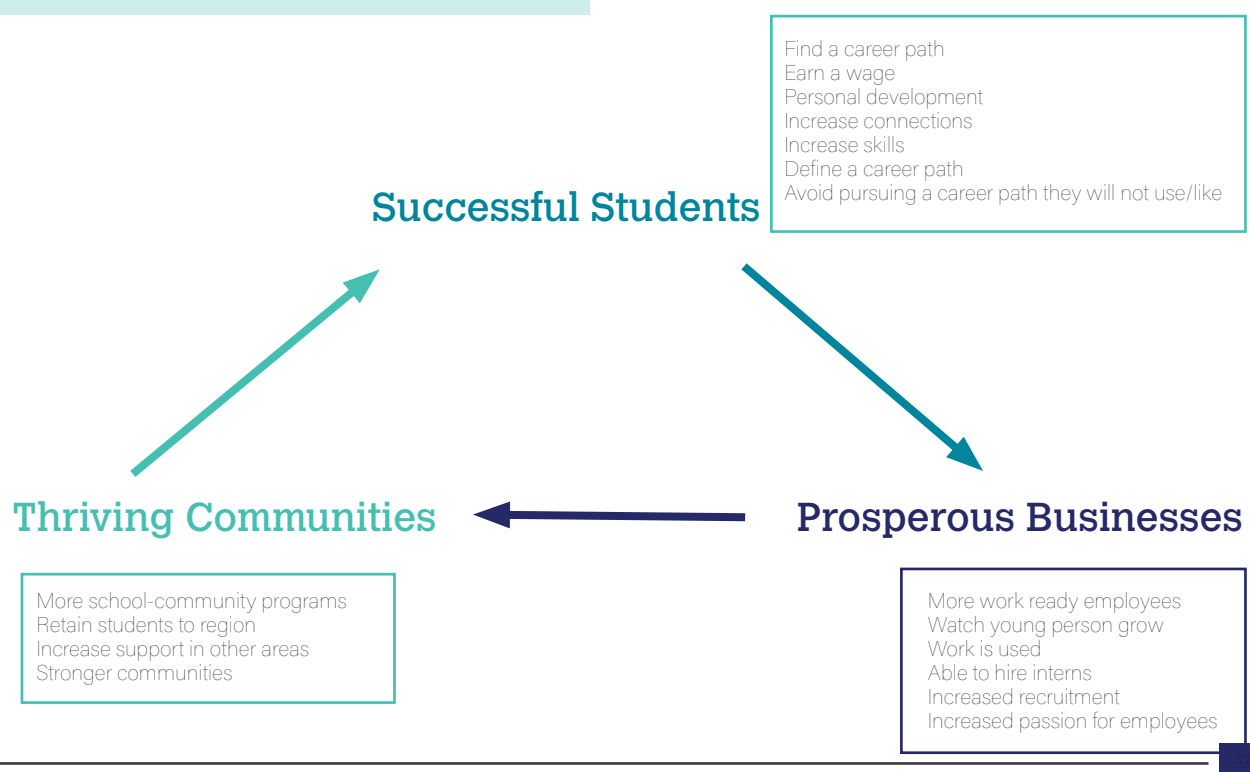
The BB2C Internships fill a gap in traditional high school curriculum. For many, the internship is an introduction to the adult working world, an introduction not provided by family networks or traditional school networks (Ricket et al., 2022).

53% of students said they had little to no networking experience before the internship (Ricket et al, 2022)



A key aspect of the BB2C internships which is not investigated in the extant literature is the need for students to be exposed to a diverse array of people, places, and experiences as a way to try on identities and interests that might catalyze the sparks, zest, and "ah-hah moments" which lead to deep engagement and subsequent positive outcomes (Brown, 1999; Markus & Nurius, 1986). For far too many students, the lack of influence from the external environment, exposure to diverse people from diverse backgrounds, and familial resources may constrain spark identification and future self-identity development (Lent et al, 1999; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Waterman, 1982; Yates & Youniss, 1996).

Internship Theory of Change



Valuation of Outcomes

For this SROI evaluation, the following fit-for-purpose measures were used to determine the fiscal proxies for each outcome:

- Stakeholder sourced: This follows SVI's standard
- Regional context: Where data was available to speak directly to the place-bound program ecosystem, I used this data. Where that data was not available, I used state-level; Appalachian-regional; and lacking those figures, I used national figures
- Accepted U.S. industry standards where appropriate (i.e., value of a volunteer hour as reported by the Independent Sector)
- Academic literature aligned with proxy valuation method chosen for the outcome

This section contains explanations for each proxy developed for the outcomes deemed material following from the qualitative and quantitative analysis. As fitting SVI's (2022) reporting assurance standards, I report the method of valuation used for each outcome, cite the relevant literature (if any) used to source per unit values, and detail the deadweight, displacement, drop off, and attribution values taken from the quantitative survey analysis. Percentages from the previous phase of quantitative analysis are extrapolated to the whole population of students and host sites; where calculations resulted in fractions of people, standard rounding was used. (For detailed linkage of survey questions indicating valuation and discounting, see Value Map.)

Fiscal Proxies

Fiscal Proxies are a translation of values to things that are more difficult to value and are therefore "routinely left out of traditional economic appraisal" (Social Value UK, 2019d, p. 4). Fiscal proxies are representations of value, guided by the stakeholder stated relative importance of outcomes.

Some proxies do report actual financial savings or benefits obtained. The most straightforward example of this is where jobs have been created and income generated. However, the goal of fiscal proxy calculations is not necessarily to catalog the myriad cash benefits and savings to people and systems, but to represent the relative value according to stakeholders in a universally understood language that is able to communicate easily across stakeholder groups.

Notes on Valuation



Outcome Duration

Outcome duration is determined by asking stakeholders how long each of the outcomes last. The issue of Outcome Duration is particularly tricky for this analyses. Many of the stakeholders refer to the internship program as "life changing," the impacts as having a lasting impact that persists well beyond the internship. This is especially true for students who are making decisions about their future based on experiences in the internship. For many of them, the internship truly altered the entire course of their lives. Stakeholders report all outcomes lasting at least a year, so in the spirit of proportionality and scope, all outcomes are measured in the length of one year.

Deadweight

Deadweight accounts for the counterfactual - discounting the value to account for "what would have happened anyway" (Social Value UK, 2019). Deadweight makes up but a small part of discounting in the fiscal proxies because BB2C is the only program in this rural area that targets a specific group of high school students who do not have access to immersive career exploration opportunities through other means.

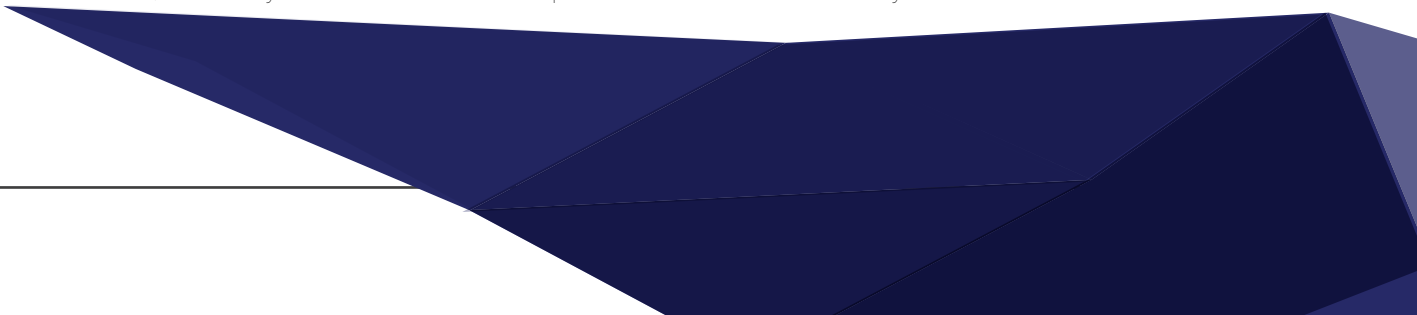
Regardless, for each outcome, the survey included questions assessing for deadweight. For example after answering a Likert scale question to determine the amount of **personal development** students experienced as a result of the internship, the below question followed to assess the deadweight of the outcome to students: **Increased personal development**, students were asked:

Without the BB2C Internship, would you have experienced the same growth in personal development?
Yes No

98% of students reported they would not have experienced the same growth in personal development, pointing to the uniqueness of this program in catalyzing personal development in youth, a finding supported by literature on experiential learning, youth "sparks," and adolescent identity (Ben-Eliyahu et al., 2014; Ito et al., 2020; Scales et al., 2011). Proxies are discounted using results from these survey questions. This pattern of little to no deadweight for outcomes persisted in survey results across stakeholders. Member-checking with stakeholders revealed that because no other program provides these services in the community, deadweight is very small.

Displacement

Displacement, represented by a percentage for each outcome takes into account the possibility that the activity creating impacts in one area has unintentionally created negative impact in another. As outlined in the "Context" section, this rural area of Appalachia faces distinct labor barriers: lower than average labor force participation rates, outmigration, and lack of skilled workforce have created a labor shortage. For this SROI, data analysis concluded that no displacement had occurred for any outcome.



Attribution

Attribution is when some of the change was caused by another organization or a group of people beyond those as part of the SROI evaluation.

In order to assess attribution for each outcome, stakeholders were asked in the focus group and in member checking sessions "Did any other organizations help you achieve these changes?" and "How much change was caused by other organizations?"

BB2C is the only program in this rural area that targets a specific group of high school students who do not have access to immersive career exploration opportunities through other means. Stakeholders repeatedly emphasized BB2C's innovative role in this space. School districts do not provide internships for high school students or career counselling, due to the increased emphasis on standardized testing; other government entities do not provide internship opportunities for all high school students. The only other organization providing anything close to high school internships are the vocational schools who provide work-experience during school hours for their students, but these programs are not similar enough to BB2C's program to have any significant attribution (or displacement) effects.

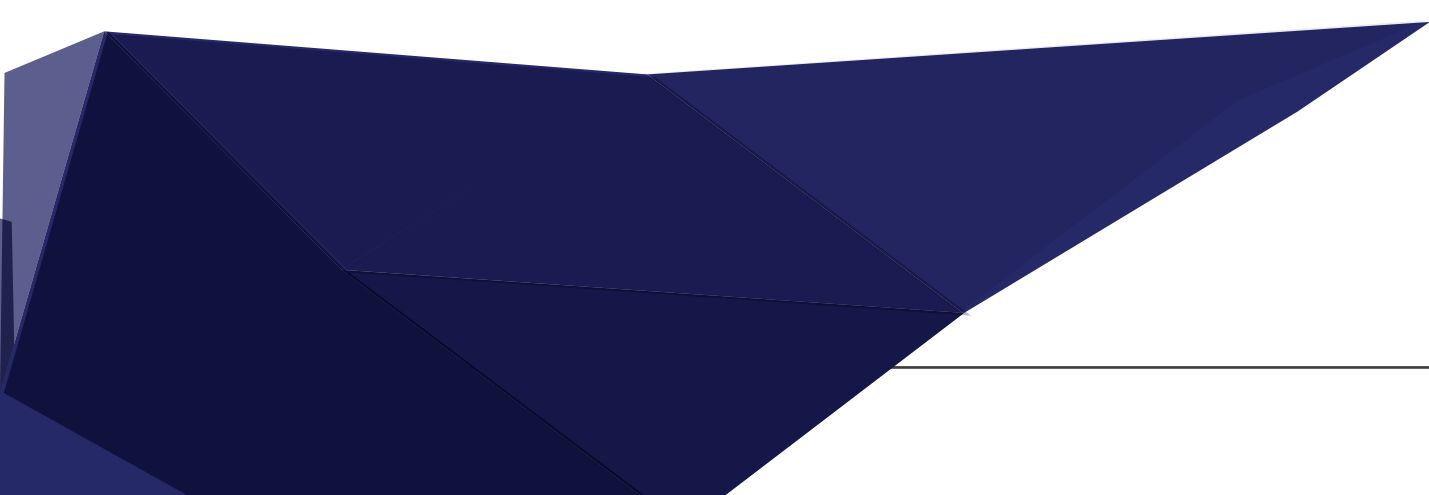
For these stakeholders, they understand the attribution of ALL outcomes valued in this report as 100% solely caused by BB2C and no other organizations, a position confirmed by data triangulation. In a rural environment with limited access to some services and barriers to participation, this is not abnormal. In fact, during the focus group, a few of the members made comments about the ability of BB2C to make changes in the community that could not be made by government organizations or other initiatives.



BB2C is a beacon in the community. They are actually making a difference in a way other organizations aren't.



-Community Stakeholder



Valuation of Outcomes to Students

Value of Avoiding Pursuing a Career Path/College Major They Will Not Use or Like.

This fiscal proxy accounts for value in terms of costs avoided to students reporting they were able to find their college major or career path one year earlier than without BB2C's internship program. The technique of damage costs avoided is used to approximate the costs incurred to students had they not participated in BB2C's program and therefore spent one year pursuing a major or career path they did not like. The cost of one year's tuition, \$12,840, and fees at Ohio University, a regionally appropriate approximation of costs incurred to students (Ohio University Undergraduate Admissions, 2022). The total students experiencing the change (86% reporting BB2C helped them find a college major) is discounted by the extent of the change: 57% of students reported they were able to find their college major or career path one year earlier. Discount rates were verified by triangulation from the literature and a further discount taken. According to Ohio State University, 50 - 75% of college students change their major at least once; the percentage of students from this SROI study matches the literature, so no additional deadweight was calculated. However, the literature shows changing majors leads to an overage and overpayment of 15 unnecessary credit hours, or only half a year, on average (Marcus, 2018). Therefore, although stakeholders reported being able to save a year's worth of time, only half of the amount of studying at a college for one year was taken. No negative impacts were reported by stakeholders. No displacement, attribution, or drop off discounts are calculated for this outcome.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Deadweight	Final Value
45		\$6,420	43%	\$164,673.00
52 Placements	86% Students finding career path		Deadweight	

Valuation of Outcomes to Students

Value of Defining a Career Path, Being Able to Take the Next Step.

The value of finding a career path and taking the next step used effect on production as a valuation technique. McDonald (2015) conducted a longitudinal analysis that revealed "significant wage returns" for individuals who used personal connections in their career path. Through regression analysis, that premium for medium wage jobs is 2%. When students receive experiences through the internship that allow them to define a career path, they then are able to be connected in that career path in a way that leads to higher earnings (McDonald, 2015). This outcome connects the exploratory value students place on the internships with the effect produced through defining a career path in an experiential, place-based setting. The per unit value uses the premium found by McDonald (2015) calculated from the median full-time earnings for a person with a bachelor's degree in Washington County, Ohio (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). The total valuation is discounted based on the extent of the change, similar to best practice in other SROI studies and this study (Allpress et al, 2014; Think Impact, 2021; Watson, 2016). Students were also asked if the experience negatively impacted their search for a career path in order to account for negative impacts, but no students indicated an outcome to the negative. No deadweight, displacement, attribution, or drop off discounts are calculated for this outcome.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Threshold	Final Value
43	9	\$913.06	50%	\$43,370.35
83% Students found internship extremely helpful	17% Students found internship somewhat helpful	Higher wages earned by people who found a job through personal connections	Discount for students responding "somewhat helpful"	

Valuation of Outcomes to Students

Value of Increased Personal Development for Students.

The revealed preferences fiscal proxy for increased personal development uses survey data from student respondents to assess the extent of the change. The per unit monetary value uses fair market value, the cost of similar program that would have had the same outcome and thus reveals the value of the outcome to stakeholders seeking the specific outcome. The fair market value of achieving increased personal development is based on the cost of a YMCA week-long leadership camp aimed specifically to grow adolescents' character and leadership skills (YMCA, 2022). This revealed preference technique arrives at valuation by asking the logical question of what would students have had to pay otherwise to achieve the same outcome? For students responding extreme growth, the whole fair market value is taken. For students responding some growth, only half of the value is taken. This discounting technique is supported by other SROI practitioners and SROI verified reporting and follows the principle for do not overclaim (Nicholls et al, 2012). To calculate deadweight, students were asked, "Without the BB2C internship, would you have experienced this same growth in personal development?" Only one student replied "yes." No displacement, attribution, or drop off discounts are calculated for this outcome.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Threshold	Deadweight	Final Value
30	22	\$610	50%	2%	\$24,759.90
57% Students reported extreme growth	43% Students reported some growth	Cost of leadership skill development	Extent of change for "some growth" students	Students responded they would have experienced growth without BB2C internship	

Valuation of Outcomes to Students

Value of Increased Soft Skills.

The value of increased soft skills is valued using damage cost avoided and extrapolated to students as beneficiaries. Phillips et al. (2020) in a return-on-investment case study of a soft skill training program that took place in a large employer found a 2% reduction in absenteeism for all employees involved in the training. This 2% reduction in absenteeism saved the employer \$306.25 per employee in the period immediately following the soft-skill building intervention. Another study from MIT found that soft skills training for manufacturing employees showed a 258% return to the firm almost one year after program completion (Adhvaryu et al, 2019). For this SROI, the \$306.25 value was taken as a more conservative value which would more closely represent the gains in basic levels of "confidence" and "professional communication" young, student survey-takers reported (see Appendix for full question). However, no drop-off is calculated because these foundational skills in professionalism and confidence persist over time due to their immediately transferable nature, unlike other soft-skills (i.e., anti-bias training), which may need reinforced (McKinsey & Company, 2021). Although this damage costs avoided represents value to the employer, students benefit from this expression. Employers repeatedly underscore the need for new hires with soft skills because of the losses incurred to the business when new hires lack those critical skills (Mourshed et al, 2016). Therefore, a student for whom the internship experience built soft skills comes with an assumed value. In keeping with other valuations, discounting is taken for students reporting less than the full extent of the change. Deadweight was assessed by asking students "To what degree is BB2C internship responsible for teaching you [soft] skills." No displacement, attribution, or drop off discounts are calculated for this outcome.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Threshold	Deadweight	Final Value
29	7	\$306.25	50%	29%	\$8,509.92
Students reporting increased soft skills	86% Students reporting some soft skills	Amount employers save in reduced absenteeism as a result of soft skill building program	Attribution for students only receiving some soft skills	Students responded "Neutral" to is the internship responsible for teaching the soft skills"	

Valuation of Outcomes to Students

Value of Increased Technical Skills.

Technical skills in this context represent field-specific skills such as "running a CNC machine," "programming an Arduino," "working with GIS," and "learning how to run the business" that are not taught at the high school level. These technical, field-specific skills include context-dependent skills relevant to the business. Student interns attending high school on a college prep track, the population under investigation in this SROI study, would not have otherwise learned these technical skills, as the high school college prep coursework does not include career technical education, and this also extends to computer technical skills (e.g., Microsoft training) (Ohio Department of Education, 2022). Further, in rural areas, access to developing technical skills is further limited by the opportunity gap.

This fiscal proxy also uses the revealed preferences effect on production as the valuation technique. In a study of 40 businesses surveyed in Virginia, Hendricks et al., (2021) found businesses were willing to pay 5% to 25% more to hire students graduating from high school with technical skills. While the study reported the broad range, ultimately, when conducting their modeling for the impact to the state's economy, the researchers used a rate of 10% because of the frequency (n=18) of selection by surveyed businesses. Similarly, this proxy uses Hendricks et al.'s (2021) 10% value taken from the median full-time earnings for a person with a high school diploma or equivalent in Washington County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). Additionally, this proxy discounts at 50% of the total value for students who report they received only beginner field-specific technical skills from the internship experience. The value for the Hendricks et al. (2021) study assumes a graduate from Career Technical Education, which would assume far more than beginner technical skills. Therefore, in for a defensible value and to follow the principle of not overclaiming, the proxy is discounted for extent of the change. No deadweight, displacement, attribution, or drop off discounts are calculated for this outcome.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Threshold	Final Value
7	45	\$2,794	50%	\$82,434.80
14% Students reporting increased advanced technical skills	86% Students reporting beginner technical skills	Amount employers are willing to pay per hire for experience with technical skills/ credentials	Attribution for students only receiving beginner skills	

Valuation of Outcomes to Students

Value of Earning a Wage During the Internship.

This economic proxy values direct financial benefit only to students (n=28) who were paid during the internship (see Table 22). The per unit monetary valuation reflects the median wage earned by those who were paid in the internship as reported by stakeholders. No discounting is necessary. For those students not paid during the internship, these same figures are used to calculate an input value in terms of opportunity costs. That is, for the 24 students not paid for the internship, they contributed a total of \$11,220.00 worth of their time to participate in the internship. This input cost is calculated in the cost of the program, whereas the value of earning a wage during the internship is calculated on the benefit side of the SROI ratio. The rate of under 16+ year olds participating in the labor force in Washington County, those who may have taken a job in place of the internship, thus earning wages anyway, is taken as a deadweight (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). No displacement, attribution, or drop off discounts are calculated for this outcome.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Threshold	Deadweight	Final Value
28		\$9.35	0%	58.1%	\$5484.71
52 Placements	48% Students finding career path	Median amount paid taken from survey 50 hours per internship		Those 16+ employed in labor market	

Value of Increased Relationships with Adults.

The fiscal proxy seeking to value an increase in individual social capital for students captures the way relationships gained during the internship experience are leveraged by students to create access to additional opportunities for themselves as individuals. In the survey stage of the study, 100% of respondents indicated they had gained mentors as a result of the internship experience, and all respondents indicated they had used their mentor for opportunities or would in the future. These actions demonstrate an increase of individual social capital.

In a study on the longitudinal impact of informal mentors on high school aged students, Kraft et al. (2021) found that informal mentors increase students' earnings by way of educational attainment. This labor market earnings increase as a result of mentorship relationships for students at a range from \$1,750 to \$2,700 dollars annually (p. 27). This proxy using the effect on production technique, takes the value at the low end of the range multiplied times the number of stakeholders reporting they found mentors. Stakeholders reported that without the BB2C program, they would not have built a network of career mentors in this same way. Therefore, no deadweight, displacement, attribution, or drop off discounts are calculated for this outcome.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Threshold	Final Value
52		\$1,780	0%	\$92,560.00
100% Students reported finding mentors		Annual earnings boost of high school students with mentors		

Valuation of Outcomes to Host Sites

Value of More Work Ready Employees.

In 2012, the McKinsey Center for Government released a groundbreaking report, *Education to Employment: Designing a System That Works* (Mourshed et al, 2012). The report was global in scale, reporting on young adult unemployment and the simultaneous “critical skills shortage” companies across the globe reported (Mourshed et al, 2012, p. 11). The problem, according to this report and others, is that there is a grave mismatch in the skills high school and college students have upon graduation and the skills needed by employers, a finding that has been reiterated many times since the initial Mourshed (2012) report (Cahill & Jackson, 2015). In Ohio, Governor Kasich established the Office of Workforce Transformation to respond to similar reports conducted at the state and national level that also reported a “skills gap” or “talent gap” (Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation [OWT], 2016; OWT, 2018). The work and policy around the “skills gap” points to the outcome most valued by host site stakeholders: businesses do not believe that traditional high school (and college, in some reports) are creating individuals with the skills needed to succeed in the workforce. These necessary skills mentioned in this study’s qualitative data analysis mirrored those existing reports: e.g., “showing up on time,” “work ethic,” and “ability to problem solve”). However, the results of this survey found that host sites believe the experiential, context-specific nature of the internship worked to counteract the skills gap, one of the only programs in the community designed to give students the necessary work ready skills.

This fiscal proxy was developed using damage costs avoided accounting for loss in productivity to employers for new hires lacking skills. Bliss’s (2000) formula for annual productivity lost to turnover and new hires includes hiring costs, training costs, and costs lost to an unfilled, open position in addition to lost productivity while a new hire learns the skills of the new position. In order to avoid double counting, this fiscal proxy does not include the hiring costs or training costs (valued in “able to hire employees” outcome) or loss productivity while position remains unfilled.

The fiscal proxy is calculated using the median full-time employment annual earnings for a person with high school diploma or equivalent in Washington County, Ohio, \$27,944.00 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019) multiplied by only the loss of productivity while the new hire learns basic skills of the job. Bliss (2000) reports the industry standard that employees are only 25% productive for the first four weeks of employment, 50% during weeks 5 – 8, 75% productive in weeks 9 – 12, but will not be fully productive until after 12 weeks of work. Further, this proxy conservatively approaches the cost benefit to employers through hosting interns who then develop basic workforce skills by only counting the benefit of basic skills which has the potential to offset the loss of 75% productivity in the first four weeks of employment. The assumption inherent in this proxy is that although all employers value the internship as developing basic workforce skills in interns regardless of the time lapse of the hiring of the interns, there would still be loss of productivity to employers in the first year of hiring a previous intern. Therefore, the total productivity is discounted by 50%, the total productivity still lost to employers in weeks 5-12.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Threshold	Final Value
52		\$20,958.00	50%	\$1,089,816.00
Placements	100% Host Sites report belief that internships develop basic skills	Annual loss of productivity to develop skills	Discounting for basic level skills	

Valuation of Outcomes to Host Sites

Value of Growth of Ability to Watch a Young Person Grow Through Mentoring.

This proxy values the outcome of host sites benefitting through the growth of ability to watch a young person grow and develop through the host site mentor relationship using the revealed preferences of fair market value. The question indicating this change in the survey asked host sites to consider to what degree the ability to watch a young person grow through the internship program's work with their organization impacts their decision to host. The basis for choosing the valuation of fair market value is based on benefit transfer of a longitudinal study of outcomes to mentors in formal, on the job mentoring relationships (Chun et al., 2012). This study found that instituting a mentor program within an organization increases the mentor's transformational leadership practices. This study reported that mentoring programs led to such a degree of observed transformational leadership in mentors that mentor programs could be considered by employers as a substitute for "conventional off-the-job leadership development programs" (Chun et al., 2012, p. 1088). The mentor relationships under investigation in Chun et al. (2012) match the relationships of the mentor to intern in the BB2C internship, wherein mentors benefit from their role in watching and facilitating the growth of the mentees in their charge. The revealed preference then in terms of the fair market value for goods or services producing the same effect used in this proxy is the cost of attending the Leadership Columbus course, a value per unit of \$5,225. This value represents the full value to stakeholders. As with other values, a discount is taken for those host sites experiencing less of the change. Based on previous information from Host Sites about the lack of other programming providing this sort of experience, no deadweight, displacement, attribution, or drop off discounts are calculated for this outcome.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Threshold	Final Value
22	5	\$5,225	50%	\$128,012.50
82% Host Sites reported mentoring "extremely important"	17% Host Sites reported mentoring "somewhat important"	Cost of building transformational leadership skills	Discounting for host sites reporting "somewhat important"	



Valuation of Outcomes to Host Sites

Value of Talent Recruitment.

The social value of talent recruitment beyond the intern through word-of-mouth marketing was calculated using replacement costs, or the cost to replace services provided. This replacement cost uses the \$5 a day cost for an employer to post a job on Indeed.com, a commonly used employer job posting site. This cost is multiplied times the median number of days a job posting goes unfilled, using data points from BB2C records, wherein an employer indicated postings had remained unfilled for over 365 days, personal communication from one of the major employers in the region in the healthcare industry who indicated staffing positions unfilled for 150 days, and the national average of 42 days a posting goes unfilled (SHRM, 2020). The number of employers who value the word-of-mouth recruiting power of the interns to help fill job postings is then multiplied times the total number of placements (n=52), as each placement represents, in the words of the host sites themselves, an opportunity to spread the word about job openings for their business. The cost of advertising for the number of days a job posting goes unfilled is the pre unit value for each of these placements. This total value is discounted by those reporting less of a change or only "some recruitment" as a result of word-of-mouth advertising. Based on previous information from Host Sites about the lack of other programming providing this outcome, no deadweight, displacement, attribution, or drop off discounts are calculated for this outcome.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Threshold	Final Value
35	17	\$750	50%	\$32,250.00
67% Host Sites reported placement leads to recruitment	33% Host Sites reported placement leads to some recruitment	Cost to advertise job on Indeed for average number of days a post goes unfilled	Discounting for host sites reporting "some recruitment"	

Value of Work Completed by Interns Used by Business.

This economic proxy uses fair market value for similar services to calculate the capacity added to host sites when work completed by interns is used by the host site. The per unit valuation is sourced from host sites from the survey wherein they were asked what dollar amount per hour they would have paid someone to complete work similar to work the intern completed. The median amount, \$13.50, is used as the per unit value for the number of placements multiplied times the percent of host sites reporting work was useful. This overall calculation was discounted by 50% deadweight, which represents the hourly rate host sites compensated interns for their work through wages. Host Sites indicated that without the intern, the work would have gone undone during the internship period so, no displacement, or attribution discounts are calculated for this outcome. However, a drop off discount is taken for businesses who responded "No" to the survey question "Was the work completed by the intern valuable to the organization beyond the hosting period?"

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Deadweight	Drop Off	Final Value
39		\$13.50	50%	8.3%	\$13,235.00
52 Placements	75% Host Sites reported work during internship is valuable	Median value of work reported by Host Sites 50 hours average time of internship	What employers paid interns anyway for work completed		

Valuation of Outcomes to Host Sites

Value of Businesses Able to Hire Employees After the Internship.

The outcome of able to hire employees after the internship is valued by damage costs avoided to employers. Because this outcome was seen as relevant only to host sites and not to students, the per unit valuation reflects the average costs to employers for recruiting (SHRM, 2017) and training a new hire (ATD, 2016). The United States national standard average cost of hiring for both full and part-time employees, which includes recruiting, background and eligibility checks, and office staff fees has a lower bound of \$1,633 per hire in a range exceeding \$5,000 (SHRM, 2017). For this calculation, the conservative lower bound is used since most students would be recruited for entry-level jobs, which typically cost less to hire (SHRM, 2017). The Society for Human Resource Management (2017) also recognizes the recruiting cost savings to employers for hosting interns as the cost to hire and train them is consequently "negligible" (p. 27). The average cost of training a new hire, including days spent with in human resource training on company benefits and protocols but not including lost productivity, is \$1,252 (ATD, 2016). These two figures are added together to represent the total per unit monetary valuation for employers who are able to hire interns at the conclusion of the internship. The final value represents only the number of students both offered a position at the conclusion of the internships and those who were able to take that position.

Number of Stakeholders	Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Deadweight	Final Value
13	\$2,885	86%	\$5,250.70
Students offered positions after the internship	Cost to hire & train new employee	Students who did not take job offer	

Value of Increased Passion for Employees.

Host sites report a change in workplace culture as a result of the internship program. This proxy values the increased passion to all employees in the host site's business through damage costs avoided. In a study on workplace stress, Azagba & Sharaf (2011) found workers in a high stress environment visit their general practitioners 26% more than workers in a low stress environment. Taking this cause-and-effect relationship, data from the Center for Disease Control reports an average of 278 general practitioner visits for every 100 people. A 26% increase in visit, equates to 72 extra visits for an employer with 100 employees. When multiplied by the cost of private pay for a general practitioner's visit at OhioHealth O'Bleness (\$289.00), the per person amount of costs avoided by having a positive workplace environment is \$208.08. This overall value is multiplied times 10 employees per host site reporting a benefit of increased passion for employees, a figure calculated from the median number of connections students reported meeting during their internship period from BB2C data. A discount is taken for those reporting "some" increased passion for employees. No deadweight, displacement, attribution discounts are calculated for this outcome. Because the survey asks employers only about the increased passion during the hosting period, a drop off of 50% is taken to represent the semester-long hosting period, which lasts half a year.

Number of Stakeholders	Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Threshold	Drop Off	Final Value
9	11	\$208.08	50%	\$30,171.60
33% Host Sites reported increased passion for all employees	42% Host Sites reported some increased passion for employees	Benefit to health of positive work environment for workers	Discount for Host Sites reporting "some" increased passion	Change lasts during the hosting period - 6 months

Outcomes to Community Stakeholders

Value of More Programming combining K-12 Education and Businesses

This fiscal proxy uses benefit transfer to value the increased programming that stakeholders report was created as a result of BB2C's efforts from internship participation. This process takes the value that other entities are willing to pay for personnel to facilitate the process of connections between the school to the community partners. Entities such as BB2C, other non-profits, local ESCs, and even school districts themselves pay for personnel to build the similar programs which forge connections, both formal and informal, between schools and community and business partners. The cost of personnel to run a similar program is taken from BB2C's staff records and applied to the context of those businesses and community stakeholders reporting they too have created their own similar programs as a result of participating in the internship. Regardless of whether or not the business host sites or community stakeholders actually hired an additional person to increase connections, the value represented here captures the time, organization, and additional resources required to create similar programs to increase connections. Stakeholders credited the direct link between participating in the internship and thus creating their own, similar programs, despite the recent Ohio policy measures such as the institution of Business Advisory Councils and Office of Workforce Transformation that are seeking to catalyze similar programs across the state. Stakeholders maintain that the fact that all of the policy mandates have been unfunded stymied the growth of K-12 education and business programming, even when one or more parties desired more programming. Further, research confirmed the unfunded mandates has lead to lack of meaningful implementation and is unlikely to have a significant role in causing the robust program implementation reported by stakeholders of this study (Ramsey & Ricket, 2019). The lack of discounting for deadweight and attribution were member checked with questions such as: "How much of the increased programming was caused by something other than BB2C's internship?" and "What other activities could have contributed to the increase in programming that combines K-12 education and businesses?" Similarly, no drop off or discounts for displacement were necessary.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Final Value
14	6	\$39,691.93	\$571,563.79
50% Host Sites creating similar programs	30% Community Stakeholders creating similar programs	Cost of personnel time to facilitate similar program	

Outcomes to Community Stakeholders

Value of Retaining Students to Region.

The value of retaining students to the region is a value to the community that uses data from the student survey to report the impact of the BB2C internship on influencing students to find meaningful work in the region (n=9) instead of having to move elsewhere and a discounted value for the amount of students reporting they now know they could come back to the region and find meaningful work (n=43). The number of students who might be elsewhere in the country or finishing a degree, but who have not yet found meaningful work in the region are counted only as 50% of the per unit value to not overclaim the value to the region in the event that these students do not return. This practice of discounting is supported by practice in other SROI studies (Allpress et al., 2014; Think Impact, 2021; Watson, 2016).

The per unit valuation is calculated using benefit transfer. A study from West Virginia University (WVU) calculated the annual amount added to the state gross state product (GSP) per WVU graduate with a bachelor's degree (Bowen et al., 2014). This annual amount of \$28,566.89 is generated through economic modeling using the REMI PI+ model, an economic forecasting model used by economists to project the multiplier effect of earned income dollars spent and aggregated in the local, state-level economy (Bowen et al., 2014). This dollar amount is transferred to the context of Marietta, Ohio because of similarities in regional contexts. This study is a better valuation for benefit transfer for this study than a similar national study or other study which might be skewed toward higher earnings in urban centers or cost of living in coastal cities. The total value is a combination of the whole annual amount added to the gross state product of students who report already finding meaningful work in the area as a result of the internship and a discounted rate (60%) for those students who now know they could come back to the area if they wanted.

The steep discount rate for "homecoming" students is taken from USDA research by Cromartie et al. (2015) about the main reasons young adults from rural areas choose to move back home. The top reasons are family, ability to take a leadership role in the community, and ability to pursue outdoor activities (Cromartie et al., 2015). Not being able to find meaningful work was listed as the top barrier to being able to make the move back to one's rural homeplace, despite wanting to (Cromartie et al., 2015). Therefore, BB2C can only claim a portion of attribution for homecomers' ability to come home, should they want to move back; thus, the amount for those who may choose to come home in the future is significantly reduced by the number of reasons a young adult may choose to move home. In order to discount for deadweight, answers were extrapolated from the question students were asked: "If you were offered a position with your host site, would you have gotten that specific job without the internship?" 14.3% of students said "No" they would not have gotten a position without the internship and 57.1% said "Maybe," which suggests that some students may be retained to the region anyway, without the BB2C internship (Other students responded "Does not apply." Half of the value for those replying "Maybe" is used for deadweight. No drop off or displacement is calculated.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Deadweight	Attribution	Final Value
9	43	\$28,566.89	28.55%	60%	\$431,005.81
Students reported finding meaningful work in the area	Students reported they now could come back if they want to	Annual amount added to GSP per graduate	Students who "maybe" would have been retained to region without the Internship	Boomerang students who return for other reasons	

Outcomes to Community Stakeholders

Value of Stronger Communities

The phenomenon valued here was articulated by students, host sites, and community stakeholders as community-level "strength" and "trust." The outcome is articulated in the words of the stakeholders, as following the principles of SROI; however, the phenomenon described by participants is known to researchers as community social capital (Putnam, 2020/2000, 2015; Flora et al., 2016). Community social capital differs distinctly from individual social capital (i.e., personal connections that increase access to opportunity, support in emergency situations) because community social capital represents the overall connectedness, trust, and strength of the entire community instead of gains to the individual (Putnam 2020/2000; 2015). Community social capital refers to the strength of community networks, which has been shown to literally reduce the cost of doing business in a community (Agarwala & Zenghelis, 2021).

This fiscal proxy uses Hamilton et al.'s (2016) groundbreaking research with the National Bureau of Economic Research and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development that values social capital as a measure of per capital GDP. The relationship between social capital and GDP is now widely recognized because of increased willingness to collaborate, reduced costs of needs for litigious protection, and increased flow of information and access to resources (Agarwala & Zenghelis, 2021). Similarly, high community level social capital and strength has been proven to lead to more peaceful decision making which reduces costs of crime and other civic costs (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2016). Where trust and community strength is high, high levels of entrepreneurship and economic growth are also positively and statistically significantly correlated, even after controlling for a myriad other variables (Dasgupta 2014; Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2016). Furthermore, new research attending to income inequality has begun to show that where community trust is strengthened, the gap of income inequality is drawn more tightly together (Argarwala & Zenghelis, 2021; Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2016).

The proxy in this study uses the World Bank finding based off of Hamilton et al.'s (2016) work that "social trust is an important component of wealth in all regions [...] [comprising] 28 percent [of total wealth] in OECD countries" (Argarwala & Zenghelis, 2021). Total wealth is represented in this fiscal proxy by Ohio's 2020 Gross State Product, as a more regional and precise representation of the social capital or increased community strength as indicated by BB2C's internship program stakeholders. As with Hamilton et al.'s (2016) figures, this overall percentage of state wealth is then calculated on a per-capita basis. For host site stakeholders and community supporter stakeholders for whom this outcome was deemed material in the qualitative portion of the study, the full value is taken for those reporting the community is "extremely" strengthened as a result of the internship program and half of the value is taken for those indicating the community is "somewhat" strengthened.

According to Putnam's (2020/2000, 2015) work, community strength and thriving, community social capital, is on the decline in the United States. Using the social capital index, 86% deadweight discount is taken for current percentile of collective efficacy (United States Congress, 2018). BB2C's activities would add to this current level of collective efficacy. Stakeholders report no displacement or drop off, and no additional discounts are taken for attribution.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Deadweight	Threshold	Final Value
38	9	\$16,523.34	86%	50%	\$127,147.10
82% Host Sites and Community Stakeholders reported extremely strengthened	18% Host Sites and Community Stakeholders reported somewhat strengthened	Per capita valuation of social capital to gross state product	Current measure of collective efficacy	Discount for those reporting "somewhat" strengthened	

Outcomes to Community Stakeholders

Value of Increased Support in Other Areas of the Community.

The value of increased support in other areas of the community is calculated as direct financial benefit. This straightforward calculation uses the number of host sites and community members reporting they now financially support other organizations and BB2C as a result of participating in the internship or supporting the internship. The per unit valuation is taken from BB2C records of the average monetary donation to BB2C (Pamela Lankford, personal communication, 2022). No discounts for deadweight, displacement, attribution, or drop off are taken.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Discount	Final Value
3	3	\$1,313.41	0%	\$7,880.46
Community Stakeholders and Host Sites reported increasing financial support to other organizations	Community Stakeholders and Host Sites reported increasing financial support to BB2C	Average donation		

Value of Increased Social Capital for Host Sites and Community Stakeholders

Measuring social capital at an individual level, this fiscal proxy measures the increased civic participation of individuals from the host site and community stakeholder groups. Stakeholders were asked to report increased civic participation (on a number of measures) that increased as a result of the internship. This proxy is indicated by survey data on participation items (i.e., serving on boards and volunteerism) used by social capital researchers (Putnam, 2020/2000; 2015). This replacement costs monetary valuation attaches a fiscal amount to the median annual time, 52 hours per person, spent volunteering by individuals in volunteer community roles (Urban Institute, 2019). The per hour amount of the value of a volunteer hour, \$25.47, is an annual, state level value produced by The Independent Sector (2021). Their widely accepted methodology includes the average earnings of nonfarm and non-managerial private sector workers, with the assumption on "the cost (or value) of the services they provide" (Independent Sector, 2021, para 3). While this monetary value assumes a labor value for the value of a volunteer hour, this may be an underestimate of the true value of a volunteer hour, as many health and cognitive benefits to the individual are also derived from civic participation in addition to the labor capacity added by an hour's work from a volunteer. Therefore, this fiscal proxy, as a defensible measure of social capital is a conservative representation. Due to stakeholder feedback and wording of the survey indicator, no discount is taken for deadweight, displacement, drop off, or attribution.

Number of Stakeholders		Per Unit Monetary Valuation	Discount	Final Value
10	18	\$1,324.44	0%	\$370,840.32
Host Sites and Community Stakeholders reported serving on more boards	Host Sites and Community Stakeholders reported volunteering more	Value of annual volunteer hours		

SROI Calculations

During data analysis, this study found that for every \$1 invested in BB2C internships, \$13.07 of impact to social and economic systems was created. During the development of the fiscal proxies, care was taken to ensure each outcome valuations align with direct stakeholder input, reflect only those experiencing the change, and mirrors relative importance of outcomes to stakeholders. This process of developing valuations represents the highest level of rigor according to SVI (Richards & Nicholls, 2015).

System	Total Value
Economic	\$659,779.68
Social	\$2,457,705.90
Environmental	No impacts reported
Total Social Value Created	\$3,117,484.77

Value per Student	Value per Host Site	Community Stakeholder*
\$8,922.54	\$48,101.33	\$29,722.47

Total Input**	\$231,825.79
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*Community stakeholders includes Host Sites as Community Stakeholders (N=47). See discussion of qualitative analysis for details.

**The input figure (see page 16-17 of this report for additional information) is an average expenditure figure taken across 3 financial years. This is to reflect the scope of the evaluation.



So, when we invest in a student, it's not going to be tomorrow that they're going to be an employee, it may be five years down the road.



Drop-off

Drop off is “usually calculated by deducting a fixed percentage from the remaining level of outcome at the end of each year” (Social Value UK, 2019d). The logic behind this is that outcomes that materialized for stakeholders in program year 2017 would dissipate each year after participating in the program. However, evidence from stakeholders in this study and in data triangulated in this study suggests that counter to some programs which experience drop off of outcomes, contributors to the BB2C internship program actually experience an expounding or growth of outcomes after participating in the internship program.

For example, one host site participant in the qualitative portion of the study had not taken interns only for two years but expressed that the value of continuing to see the young people that were mentored at the host site continue to achieve and grow well beyond the growth experienced during the internship. As community members

as well as host sites, adults expressed that the connection forged during the internship meant they could participate in the continuing journey of young people as they grew into adults who then contributed to the community.

Similarly, students both in the survey and qualitative portion of the study indicated that the internship's cultivation of their development and career path was the beginning of exponential growth in their networks and steps in their career path that “gave them a head start” or “a real advantage.” As evidenced in other literature (Busette et al., 2020; Putnam, 2015), these impacts do, in fact, multiply in future years.



We got to look at it from a [selfless](#) point of view. It's about that holistic approach, right? What's it going to do for that student? What's that student going to do for our community in the future, in whatever field that they go into? And again, that goes back to what we're doing here [in the BB2C internship program]to grow, grow our own - grow our community, in whatever way that we can do that.



Sensitivity Analysis

Tests for the sensitivity analysis were guided by risks to the overall SROI ratio, consideration of alternate judgements made by researcher, and standard discounts for bias. These tests allow for the SROI ratio to be reported in a range while also examining the variability of valuations. The final SROI ratio was tested for sensitivity in the following ways:

Test 1

Adjusting for nonresponse bias. This study is limited by the response rate of the survey. The student stakeholder group, as primary beneficiaries, proved an especially difficult group to reach (Student response rate = 15.5%, n=7, N=45). Although the study compensated with triangulation of other data to verify survey data for the low response rate, the sensitivity analysis adjusts number of student stakeholders experiencing the change as a necessary and additional measure of transparency and mitigation of risk to the SROI ratio. This sensitivity test considers nonresponse bias or the possibility for those who volunteered to take the survey to have experienced change differently than those who did take the survey.

Test 1	Outcomes affected	SROI figure	New SROI figure	Difference
Reduce numbers of beneficiaries experiencing the change by 10%	All positive outcomes	13.07	12.89	-0.18
Reduce numbers of beneficiaries experiencing the change by 20%	All positive outcomes	13.07	12.71	-0.36
Reduce numbers of beneficiaries experiencing the change by 25%	All positive outcomes	13.07	12.62	-1.08
Increase numbers of beneficiaries by 10%	All positive outcomes	13.07	13.21*	+0.14

*Note: Increasing number of stakeholders experiencing the change by 10% in some cases would have increased the percentages to over 100% of stakeholders. For this reason, I was not able to adjust extent of change equally for all stakeholders. This part of the sensitivity analysis has therefore been left off of the range to conservatively represent the SROI ratio.

Test 2

Adjusting for optimism bias. This SROI additionally takes an overall discount for optimism bias. Optimism bias, which could include the tendency for participants to retrospectively overvalue positive outcomes or to bias responses in favor of positive outcomes for BB2C (Babbie, 1990; Pritchard et al, 2021), was compensated for following the standardized downward adjustment for optimism bias (15%) used by Pritchard et al. (2021). Table 46 shows the values and overall SROI ratio with the standard 15% optimism bias.

Test 2	Outcomes affected	SROI figure	New SROI figure	Difference
Total for economic system outcomes reduced by 15%	economic positive outcomes	13.07	12.66	-0.41
Total for social system outcomes reduced by 15%	social positive outcomes	13.07	11.53	-1.54
Total value reduced by 15%	All positive outcomes	13.07	11.11	-1.96

Test 3

In the final sensitivity test, researchers varied other aspects of the proxies that involved researcher judgement due to lack of literature to verify stakeholder feedback. In this sensitivity test, discounting is varied for some outcomes, valuation is varied for others, based on risk assessment of the fiscal proxy to the overall SROI ratio. Outcomes were tested individually first, then in aggregate.*

Outcome tested	Alteration made	Rationale	SROI figure	New SROI figure	+/-
Outcomes to Students					
All student outcomes except Ability to earn a wage	Attribution discounted for all outcomes at 47%	In a separate study on BB2C's internship program (Ricket et al, 2022), 47% of students indicated they had access to other networking opportunities, although it is unlikely those existing informal or familial networks would have provided the depth of change BB2C's program made.	13.07	12.24	-0.83
All student outcomes	Deadweight increased to 50%	To test for causality and to test the assumption that students may have achieved outcomes without BB2C's program, at least in part, deadweight for all outcomes was increased by 50%*	13.07	11.87	-1.20
Avoid spending time pursuing a career path or paying for college & Increased relationships with adults in the community	Per unit value reduced by half	Other verified SROI studies use this method of sensitivity analysis to test for variability in the highest valuations (i.e., SeBlonka, 2023). Because the U.S. lacks a common database for per unit values such as the HCAT database or the Manchester cost benefit database, which are not transferable to the US context, varying the top per unit values allows for an examination of the sensitivity of researched proxies.	13.07	12.53	-0.54
All outcomes	All above alterations in aggregate	To test the cumulative effect of judgements by researcher.	13.07	11.52	-1.55
*In some outcomes, this increased deadweight to over 100%. In this case, deadweight was left at exactly 100%					
Outcomes to Host Sites					
All host site outcomes	Reduce number of people experiencing the change by 20%	Host site response rate was 44.4%, which could lead to nonresponse bias, even with the study's triangulation of other data..	13.07	11.99	-1.08
All host site outcomes	Reduce number of people experiencing the change by 30%	Host site response rate was 44.4%, which could lead to nonresponse bias, even with the study's triangulation of other data..	13.07	11.17	-1.90
All host site outcomes	Increase attribution to 25%	Although stakeholders insisted that BB2C's program alone had contributed to the outcomes, it is possible that this is an overestimation.	13.07	11.71	-1.36
More work ready employees & Growth of ability to give back	Per unit value reduced by half	This process repeats the analysis for student outcomes: varying the top per unit values allows for an examination of the sensitivity of researched proxies.	13.07	10.53	-2.54
All outcomes	All above alterations in aggregate (50% reduction in those experiencing the change)	To test the cumulative effect of judgements by researcher.	13.07	9.05	-4.02

*Note: This study does not include drop-off in the sensitivity analysis because all outcomes are calculated at a duration of only 1 year. This is a limitation of the study, as students involved in qualitative and quantitative data collection were only one year post internship experience. Students were not asked to predict how long outcomes would last. Therefore, a conservative approach for duration of outcomes was taken.

Outcome tested	Alteration made	Rationale	SROI figure	New SROI figure	+/-
Outcomes to Community Stakeholders					
Retain students to region	Increased attribution to 60% for sub-group of students	9 students reported that the internship helped them find meaningful work in the region. For this group of students, a discount for deadweight was already taken. An additional attribution discount is taken in the sensitivity analysis to account for the fact that these students, similar to boomerang students, would have used other means to secure a job in the region, even if it meant having a job with less meaning.	13.07	12.52	-0.55
More programming combining K-12 education and business	Increased deadweight by 50%	Despite stakeholder optimism, it is possible that other programming was inspired, at least in part, by shifts in state policy and/or general employer needs. Further, BB2C, outside of the internship experience, has been involved in helping form programs that now exist in the community, so an increased attribution discount accounts for the fact that these programs may not have been inspired directly by the internship program, but by BB2C more generally.	13.07	11.42	-1.65
	Increased attribution by 50%		13.07	11.42	-1.65
	Increased both deadweight and attribution by 50%		13.07	10.59	-2.48
Retain students to region & More programming combining K-12 education and business	Per unit value reduced by half	This process repeats the analysis for student and host site outcomes: varying the top per unit values allows for an examination of the sensitivity of researched proxies.	13.07	10.52	--2.55
All outcomes	All above alterations in aggregate	To test the cumulative effect of judgements by researcher.	13.07	9.01	-4.06

With this sensitivity computation, the value of the BB2C internship program can then be stated in a range. For every \$1 invested in the BB2C internship program, between **\$9.01 - \$13.07** of social value is created.

Comparison of SROI Ratios of Other SROI Verified Reports. In an added measure of sensitivity analysis and transparency, BB2C's range of SROI was compared to other SROI Assured Reports on similar programs. To find similar programs, researchers used the filter on SVI's Assured Report Database to search for verified reports with topics in "employment and training" and "education," where the BB2C high school internship program would be situated. Only two SROI verified reports were available under the topic of "education" on the database for comparison (Chan Wai Ho, 2022; Batterjee et al, 2019), but neither report was programmatically close enough to BB2C's program for comparison. Five assured reports were available under the topic of "employment and training." Of the five in "employment and training," only two of them matched the exclusively teenaged/adolescent demographic as primary beneficiary and were deemed close enough for comparison (Norte Joven, 2022; SeBlonka, 2023). In the peer reviewed literature, one article published in *Education Sciences* applied SROI to a similar program aiming to address the lack of higher education aspirations for students in grades 9-12 in Australia. (Ravulo et al, 2019). A lack of exact program activity matches poses a difficulty in comparing overall ratios, so in the table that follows, explanation is given as to seeming disparities between studies.

Report	SROI Range	Defining Similarities or Differences
BB2C High School Internship SROI Evaluation (2023)	13.07 - 9.01 USD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program focused on bidirectional influence to holistic learning ecosystem Immersive, sustained engagement in program Rural context Employers and community system with stakeholder engagement and multiple outcomes
A Social Value Evaluation of the Program: "Generating Future by Connecting Training to Employment" An SROI Report (Norte Joven, 2021-2022)	1.47 - 2.28 Euro 1.61 - 2.49 USD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program demographic focused on dropouts from vulnerable backgrounds and second chance employment Urban context (Madrid, Spain) where more existing programming meant more deadweight and attribution were taken Certain KPI's were articulated prior to program start and guided SROI measurement. Outcomes to students in this program focused on foundational developmental aspects for primary beneficiaries such as "enhanced self confidence" and "increased motivation to study" Researchers also had difficulty reaching stakeholders after program implementation, and suggested without adjusting for low stakeholder engagement, the ratio would have been 4:1: "This report does not show the full value of the program" p. 268 Researchers were only able to engage 7-14% of host sites/companies to validate change, resulting in limited outcomes for companies
Forecast Social Value for 2022-2023, Routes to Impact: Understanding the social value of employability and skills interventions in the Third Sector (SeBlonka, 2023)	3.42 - 12.76 GBP 4.26 - 15.88 USD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main beneficiaries are persons aged 16-24 who are unemployed, underemployed, or not in education/training. Employers and society (UK Government and NHS) were included; However, only one outcome to employers was included (get more suitable candidates as employees) Increase in tax revenue was similarly counted in this study as in the BB2C outcome of retaining students to region. More outcomes attached to staff Most closely aligned to BB2C's SROI evaluation
Utilising the Social Return on Investment (SROI) Framework to Gauge Social Value in the Fast Forward Program (Ravulo et al, 2019)	5.73 AD 3.82 USD (not reported in range)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program not immersive in community setting, focused mainly on in school programming and "speakers," limited to about 16 hours of engagement a year. Limited outcome focus on inspiring students to attend an institution of higher education Community and Businesses were not included as stakeholders; included stakeholders were students, parents, program officers, and higher education supporting program staff



Verification

Addressing Risks and Limitations

Member checking is a key component of the SROI framework and was built in not only in the initial stages of the framework but also in the final stage in SROI: be transparent and verify the results (Nicholls et al., 2012).

- The quantitative instrument, designed to capture relative importance and value of each impact outcome to each stakeholder group was member checked by the focus group participants, specifically seeking input as to the wording of outcomes and question design in testing for deadweight, dropoff, attribution, and extent of change.
- The quantitative instrument was also triangulated with academic literature supporting the monetary valuations of each proxy and member checking of the final fiscal proxy formula for each outcome. The triangulation of this quantitative data addresses both the credibility of each fiscal proxy and the transferability considerations for others seeking to use SROI for their own ecosystem measurement (Miles et al., 2020).
- The fiscal proxies were member checked with a small group of Host Site stakeholders, BB2C staff, and BB2C board members before the final report, to ensure valuations and impact outcomes truthfully represent stakeholder perspectives.
- Initial findings were presented at a BB2C board meeting, which included student stakeholders, and findings confirmed prior to the publishing of this report.

Prior to the development of the survey instrument, all outcomes were verified by stakeholders to avoid over claiming and to ensure each outcome was distinct and separate.

For example, two outcomes to students seem as if they are counting the same thing:

- Avoid pursuing a career path and/or college major they will not use and do not like
- Defined career path for students, enabling them to take the next step

However, students insisted these were two separate and distinct outcomes of the program with two distinct values. The survey instrument (Appendix) was then designed to measure each as distinct to avoid overclaiming.

Recommendations

Recommendations for future SROI and evaluation work follow:

- As mentioned previously in this report, engaging students as primary beneficiaries will necessitate different personal data collection from BB2C. Maintaining relationships with students beyond the program structure might not only maximize the impact of the program but also aid data collection for subsequent SROIs and other evaluations.
- Parents never emerged as a subgroup of contributors or stakeholders during this study. In fact, parents were not mentioned by anyone in the qualitative phase of data collection or in follow-up member checking sessions. As parents and family feature prominently in the theory of ecological approaches to learning, the role and contributions of parents as a subgroup represents an important space for further investigation.
- Although long-term tracking of students, host sites, and impact on community stakeholders has multiple barriers in terms of time and resources, this report makes plain that those outcomes valued most by adults in the community (e.g., retain students to the area) might have considerable lag time to materialize. More specific and accurate long-term tracking has the potential to yield results that would interest many levels of stakeholders.

SROI in Rural United States

This SROI evaluation arose out of a need to show comprehensiveness of an educational innovation requiring an ecosystem to support and enact the process. The results of this SROI evaluation illustrate the effectiveness of using exploratory mixed methods to involve stakeholders in the identification and quantification of impacts that matter to those experiencing the change.

The SROI framework uncovered outcomes important to stakeholders and community systems not valued in other literature or in policy, but that remain nevertheless critical to participants.

The results of this SROI speak to a rural situation “critical to rural communities” (Biddle et al., 2019, p. 10). For policy makers and educational leaders, the findings from this case can speak across contexts. Solving community issues in a way that takes a community capitals approach in merging community development, workforce development, and human development requires an equally systemic approach to impact measurement, one that values what is important to the people in the systems who experience the change directly.

With these types of programs, regardless of the unique, local context, there is a need to measure outcomes to multiple systems with the input of stakeholders in a way that quantifies change to be communicated to often far-away state or national entities that could provide the substantial or braided funding opportunities to ensure programming reaches every student and permeates every aspect of the community.

The use of SROI to measure and monetize sometimes intangible, relational outcomes is a step in the direction of honoring the diverse, strength-based contributions of rural stakeholders alongside the outcomes to systems that those stakeholders prioritize as most important to their communities.

The language of SROI matches the language of these stakeholders who see their participation as “an investment in our future.” As researcher, community member, educator, and practitioner, I understand that **the power of SROI lies in articulating a narrative counter to the stories of extraction and lack repeated about our rural area: SROI frames our rural place as a regenerative place where local investment yields local riches.**

Narrow frameworks for measurements capture only narrow results, and preclude researchers, leaders, and policymakers from understanding the complete picture and importance to stakeholders of impact created by a program. SROI as innovative methodology has the capacity to communicate the values rural people place on the programs in which they participate. SROI as measurement framework and tool for maximizing impact also works to increase actions toward creating more value important to rural people living in a geographically contextualized community.

This SROI study illustrates that the process of SROI can be replicated to address the larger issue of measuring and communicating value for communities seeking a systems approach to community needs. The use of SROI in both sourcing changes to systems from the stakeholders themselves instead of imposing measures from standardizing or policy-making bodies is a democratic approach to research that expresses the values of the people both implementing and experiencing the changes. This method of sourcing and valuing outcomes that matter to stakeholders further invites responsiveness from the implementing agency (in this study, BB2C), as they are directly involved in the process of understanding and measuring the impact of their own initiatives. Further, findings from this study invites researchers to "consider the ways in which their phenomena of interest may be adequately contextualized, theorized, and studied using innovative methodologies" (Biddle et al., 2019, p. 10). This study indicates that SROI as a framework for measurement captures nonlinear impacts in a way that illustrates impacts across community systems.



About the Researcher

Dr. Allison L. Ricket



Allison L. Ricket leads the SROI and Impact Measurement team at the Voinovich School. Ricket works with social enterprises, impact investors, nonprofits, foundations, and impact funds to measure and maximize their social, environmental, and economic impact.

Ricket researches asset-based and strengths-based approaches to rural community building; social entrepreneurial ecosystems; and approaches to lean impact data, and systems thinking and holistic approaches to community well-being, with an emphasis on measures that reinforce and strengthen healthy community ecosystems.

Ricket has an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from Ohio University, an M.A. in Holistic Education from Ohio State University, and a B.A. from Ohio Dominican.

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Appendix

Focus Group Interview Guide

Phase 1: Focus Group Interview Guide

Step 1: Structured Peer-to-Peer Interviews

Step 2: Semi-Structured researcher-led whole group interview

Based on A Field Guide to Ripple Effects Mapping (Chazdon et al, 2017) and SROI Guide (Nicholls et al, 2012)

Step 1: Structured Peer-To-Peer Interviews

Questions -

1. Describe your role in the BB2C internship program.
2. What is a highlight, achievement, or success you had during the BB2C internship process?
What did this achievement lead to?
3. Is there anything that happened during the internship program or as a result of the program that you felt good about?
4. What new or deepened connections with others or other organizations have you made as a result of participating in the BB2C internship process? What did these connections lead to?
5. What unexpected or negative things have happened as a result of your involvement in the BB2C internship program?

Step 2: Semi-Structured researcher-led whole group interview

Questions -

1. Share a few of the stories during the peer-to-peer interview
2. How has your role and work in this program made a difference?
3. What are you doing differently as a result of this program?
4. What are others doing differently as a result of this program?
5. How is your contribution affecting other systems like the environment?
6. How is your contribution affecting other systems like the economy?
7. How is your contribution affecting other systems like other social systems?
8. Of the impacts and contributions discussed, which are the most important?
9. Who else should be here that isn't?
10. How much of the change can the program take credit for?
11. Who else might be contributing to the change?



Survey Questions Student

1. Please Select Your Role
Student
2. After your internship, were you offered a position with your host site?
Yes, Full Time Yes, Part Time Yes, Summer Job No
3. If you were offered a position with your host site, how long did you have that job with your host site?
Not offered a position
Not able to accept the position offered
Less than one year
Between one and one and a half years
Between one and a half years and two years
Two years or more
4. If you were offered a position with your host site, are you still currently employed there?
Yes No Does not apply
5. If you were offered a position with your host site, would you have gotten that specific job without the internship?
Yes No Does not apply
6. Did the internship help you choose your college major?
Yes, it confirmed my college major
Yes, and I added a certificate or additional study concentration because of my internship
Yes, I completely changed my college major because of the internship experience
No, but I learned other skills
Does not apply
7. How do you think the BB2C internship impacted the length of time it would have taken you to find a career path or college major/concentration you enjoy?
Because of BB2C internship, I found a major or career path I enjoy up to one year sooner than without the BB2C internship.
Because of the BB2C internship I found a major or career path 6 months/one semester sooner than without the BB2C internship
No Impact
The BB2C internship delayed me finding a major or career path by 6 months.
The BB2C internship delayed me finding a major or career path by one year.
I might never have found the right thing for me without the BB2C internship.
8. Was your internship paid?
Yes No
9. If your internship was paid, how much were you paid? (Please indicate if your answer is a per hour amount or the total for the entire internship)
10. How confident are you that you could get a job with the skills or connections you made as a result of the internship?
I could get a job easily with my skills or connections I made as a result of the internship
I could probably get a job with my skills or connections I made as a result of the internship
I could not get a job with my skills or connections I made as a result of the internship
11. Did the BB2C internship increase your awareness of other job opportunities available to you in your local area?
Yes No
12. To what degree did the internship help you grow as a person?
A significant amount Some amount Neutral Not much I did not grow at all
13. Without the BB2C internship, would you have experienced this same growth in personal development?
Yes No
14. To what extent did participating in the internship help you to imagine a career path for yourself?
Extremely helpful Somewhat helpful Neutral Not helpful Extremely unhelpful

Survey Questions Student

15. Which of the following next steps or actions did the internship help you take to make your career path goals a reality? (Select All that Apply)
- ☐ I used someone at my host site for a reference
 - ☐ I acted on advice someone at my host site gave me to select classes or coursework related to my career goals
 - ☐ I acted on advice someone at my my host site gave me about networking myself or contacting someone else who could help me with my career goals
 - ☐ Someone at my host site connected me to someone else who helped me with my career path
 - ☐ I was able to list the internship on my resume to help me with another job or position I used my experience in the internship on college applications or essays
 - ☐ I used my experience in the internship to apply for scholarships
 - ☐ I used my experience in the internship as examples in interviews for other jobs
 - ☐ I know I could contact my internship host site for help in the future if I needed it
 - Other:
16. Without the BB2C internship, would you have known what next step to take to make your career goal a reality?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe
17. Which soft skills or professional skills did you gain as a result of the internship?(Check all that apply)
- ☐ Communication skills
 - ☐ Responsibility
 - ☐ Time management
 - ☐ Ability to work in teams
 - ☐ Critical thinking skills
 - ☐ Application of knowledge in real world settings
 - ☐ Confidence
 - ☐ None of these
18. To what degree is the BB2C internship responsible for teaching you the skills you selected above?
- ☐ Extremely ☐ Somewhat ☐ Neutral ☐ Not very ☐ Not at all ☐ Did not learn any of these skills
19. Did the internship help you develop field-specific technical skills?
- ☐ Yes, quite advanced skills
- ☐ Yes, some beginning and advanced skills
- ☐ Yes, beginner skills
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ No, no technical
20. Did you gain mentors, people you can count on for advice, a reference, or other form of help as a result of the internship?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe
21. Without the BB2C internship, would you have been able to gain career mentors?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No
22. Did participating in the internship influence your decision to stay in the region as an adult? (Select all that apply)
- ☐ Yes, the internship helped me find meaningful work in the region
 - ☐ Yes, the internship showed me I have options for work in the region
 - ☐ I don't want to live in the region now, but the internship showed me I can come back if I want to
 - ☐ I did not want to live in the region before and the internship did not change that experience
 - ☐ I did not want to live in region before the internship or after, but the experience did help me assist my friends or family in finding a job in SEO.
 - ☐ The internship made me want to leave the region
23. Rank these outcomes from most important to least important.
- Obtain a job offer at the conclusion of the internship
 - Earn a wage during the internship
 - Avoid pursuing a career path and/or college major I will not use and do not like
 - Increased personal development
 - Defined career path, enabling me to take the next step
 - Increased soft skills
 - Increased technical skills

Survey Questions Host Site

1. Please Select Your Role
Host Site
2. After the BB2C internship, did you offer the intern a position or job with your organization?
Yes, Full Time Yes, Part Time Yes, Summer Job
No, but I would have if resources were available No
3. Did you create this position as a result of the BB2C intern doing good work for you?
Yes No, we. had existing open positions to fill Did not offer a position
4. Was the work your intern completed during the internship period valuable to the organization?
Yes, extremely Yes, a good amount Neutral No, not really No, not at all
5. Was the work completed by the intern valuable to the organization beyond the hosting period?
Yes, extremely Yes, a good amount Neutral No, not really No, not at all
6. Without the BB2C internship, what dollar amount per hour you have paid someone to do similar work that was completed by the BB2C intern? (Please provide a per-hour amount)
7. How much do you agree with the following statement: Watching a young person grow and develop through work with my organization is an important factor in my decision to host.
Strongly agree Agree Neutral Do not agree Strongly disagree
8. How much do you agree with the following statement: It is important to host an intern because it helps grow a workforce with basic skills employers need.
Strongly agree Agree Neutral Do not agree Strongly disagree
9. Did having an intern positively affect your employees?
Yes, extremely Yes, a good amount Neutral No, not really No, not at all
10. Do you believe hosting interns helps with building awareness about your business and jobs through word of mouth?
Yes, extremely Yes, a good amount Neutral No, not really No, not at all
11. Did you create new relationships with other businesses or organizations as a result of participating in the BB2C internship program?
Yes No
12. Did participating in the internship influence your decision to: (Select all that apply)
Serve on boards
Volunteer in the community
Create other programs
Participate in other, similar programs
Financially support other programs
Financially support BB2C
Other
13. Does participating in or supporting the internship experience help retain students to our area?
Yes, extremely Yes, somewhat Neutral No, not really No, not at all
14. Did participating in or supporting the internship experience increase communication between your organization and other organizations in the community?
Yes, extremely Yes, somewhat Neutral No, not really No, not at all
15. Do you believe the community is strengthened when businesses and organizations host high school interns?
Yes, extremely Yes, somewhat Neutral No, not really No, not at all
16. How much do you agree with the following statement: Participating in the internship program is an investment in the future of our community.
Strongly agree Agree Neutral Do not agree Strongly disagree
17. Rank these outcomes for hosting an intern from most important to least important
Able to hire employees after the internship in full or part time positions
Work completed by interns is used by employer
Developing basic skills employers need
Growth of ability to give back and watch a young person grow and develop through mentoring relationships
Increased passion for all business's employees
Increased talent recruitment in region through awareness building and word of mouth



Survey Questions Community Stakeholders

1. Please Select Your Role
Community Stakeholder
2. Did you create new relationships with other businesses or organizations as a result of supporting the BB2C internship program?
Yes No
3. Did supporting the internship influence your decision to: (Select all that apply)
Serve on boards
Volunteer in the community
Create other programs
Participate in other, similar programs
Financially support other programs
Financially support BB2C
Other:
4. Do you believe the community is strengthened when businesses and organizations support high school interns?
Strongly agree Agree Neutral Do not agree Strongly disagree
5. Did participating or supporting the internship experience increase communication between your organization and other organizations in the community?
Yes, extremely Yes, somewhat Neutral No, not really No, not at all
6. Does participating or supporting the internship experience help retain students to our rural area?
Yes, extremely Yes, somewhat Neutral No, not really No, not at all
7. How much do you agree with the following statement: Supporting the internship program is an investment in the future of our community.
Strongly agree Agree Neutral Do not agree Strongly disagree
8. Rank these outcomes from most to least important.
Increased business support in other areas of the community
Retain interested students as workforce in the rural community
Deepened connections to other organizations in the local community
Increased community strength and thriving
Increased connection of school to community and business partnerships