

WIL Impacts Framework

Community Development and Economic Impacts Module



In this Module:

This Module explains the Community Development and Economic Impacts domain and provides detail regarding its three subdomains: community building, economic and post-graduation employment. Tools for measuring impacts are included, with survey questions for host organizations and post-secondary institutions as well as interview questions.

What are community development and economic impacts?

The community development and economic impacts domain refers to the contribution of WIL experiences to community building, economic, and post-graduation employment factors.

Why community development and economic impacts?

The impacts for host organizations are particularly relevant when working with organizations that have a community-impact approach and are interested in the community and economic impacts that go beyond their individual organizations.

Sub-domains of impact

Community building

This subdomain includes indicators on various types of potential community impacts.

Subdomain/Factor	Indicator	Detail	Associated literature
Community building	Community impact	How have WIL programs increased the organization's community impact (giving back to the community)	(Peters et al., 2014; Sattler & Peters, 2012)
	Community engagement	How much have WIL programs contributed to increasing the organization's community engagement	(Patrick et al., 2008)
	Increased engagement between PSIs and employers / community partners	How much has the interest in engaging PSIs increased or sustained due to WIL programs?	(Patrick et al., 2008; Sattler & Peters, 2012)
	Building of professional networks	How have WIL programs contributed to the building of professional networks? (for the employer, student, and the PSI)	(Fleming & Haigh, 2017; Jackson & Wilton, 2016)
	Perception of PSIs through WIL graduates	How do WIL graduates lead to a better perception of post-secondary education and an increase in public investment of money in the educational system	(OECD, 2017)
	Impact of WIL-induced innovation capacities in transforming local communities	How have innovation capacities resulting from WIL programs helped transform local communities?	(Rampersad, 2020)

Economic

This subdomain includes indicators of relating to broader macro-economic impacts.

Subdomain/Factor	Indicator	Detail	Associated literature
Economic	Student contributions to the economy through WIL employment	How has the WIL experience, and specifically the student's work, contributed to the broader local economy	(Government of Ontario, 2018; Patrick et al., 2008)
	Salary differential	Difference between the salary of WIL vs non-WIL graduates	Primary data
	Impact on student debt	How have WIL programs contributed to better student debt outcomes (students not incurring as much debt or students being in a better position to pay back because of WIL)	(Downey, Kalbfleisch, & Truman, 2002; Haddara & Skanes, 2007)
	WIL Program Fees	WIL program fees paid by students to participate in WIL	Primary data

Post-graduation employment

This subdomain includes indicators on the impacts of WIL in students' post-graduation employment.

Subdomain/Factor	Indicator	Detail	Associated literature
Post-graduation Employment	Success with post-graduation employment	What are the employment rates for WIL students? Compared to non-WIL students?	(Blicblau et al., 2016)
	Program-related post-graduation employment	What percentage of WIL graduates are currently employed in a program-related job (compared to non-WIL)?	Primary data

How to measure community development and economic WIL Impacts

This section will cover the different possible approaches to measuring impacts in this particular domain. It will provide tools to gather data and analytic best practices when implementing this talent development module.

The tools described below can be used as the main method of data collection to measure the indicators included in the above subdomains.

These tools are intended to be used by your WIL program to collect data from (1) your WIL host organizations (e.g., employers and community partners) and from (2) within your PSI (e.g., WIL offices, faculty, etc.)

Quantitative data tools

These tools will facilitate the collection of data that are quantifiable and comparable. They are constructed using the literature as a basis for operationalizing various community development and economic impacts criteria.

Measurements are based on Likert scale ratings: these scales measure attitudes, knowledge, perceptions, values, behavioral changes, among other concepts. A respondent will answer a Likert scale question by selecting from a series of statements that are ordered from most positive to least positive; e.g., strongly agree to strongly disagree, extremely important to not at all important, or always to never.

While Likert scales can range in the number of items in between the two extreme options, a four-point scale was selected for this tool to have a more marked division between positive and less positive responses by removing a middle or neutral option.

This section contains two series of questions: one for host organizations and one for PSIs. The two questionnaires are intended to be used together for comparison of findings. A questionnaire for host organizations and a questionnaire for PSIs are [available as part of this module](#). Some recommendations on implementation and analysis are included in the [Analytic Best Practices](#) module.

Host organization metrics

Question: In general, thinking about your experiences with students from work-integrated learning programs, please rate how impactful these experiences were in:

	Very impactful (1)	Somewhat impactful (2)	Not very impactful (3)	Not at all impactful (4)	I do not know (5)	Not applicable (6)
Increasing your organization's community impact	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing your organization's community engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing your organization's interest in engaging post-secondary institutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contributing to the building of professional networks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transforming communities through greater innovation capacities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contributing to the economy through the students' work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other: _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PSI metrics

Question: In general, thinking about the WIL programs at your PSI, please rate how impactful these programs were in:

	Very impactful (1)	Somewhat impactful (2)	Not very impactful (3)	Not at all impactful (4)	I do not know (5)	Not applicable (6)
Increasing the engagement between your PSI and employers/community partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contributing to the building of professional networks for the student	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contributing to the building of professional networks for your PSI	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contributing to a better public perception of post-secondary education and an increase in public investment in the educational system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contributing to the economy through the students' work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing the salary of WIL graduates (compared to non-WIL graduates)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contributing to better student debt outcomes (students not incurring as much debt or students being in a better position to pay back because of WIL)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contributing to WIL program fees to your PSI	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing the employment rates of WIL graduates (compared to non-WIL graduates)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing the percentage of WIL graduates currently employed in a program-related job (compared to non-WIL graduates)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other: _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Qualitative data tools

These tools will facilitate the collection of data that are open-ended and provide a more nuanced description that is not achievable through the quantitative tools.

The following questions can be used as part of a one-on-one interview or as part of a focus group discussion. These questions can be complemented with additional and follow-up questions based on the specific objectives of the data gathering as well as on the responses and conversations that emerge during interviews/focus groups.

These are considered semi-structured interviews in that there is a set series of questions that cover key research questions, while being open to emergent follow-up questions and themes that can arise through a given interview or focus group session.

Host organization interview guide

These questions are a starting point for conducting an interview to build on the quantitative data tool. Note that interviews are meant to be conversations and the interviewer should adapt questions based on the interviewee's responses and on the topics that emerge in each particular interview.

Additionally, and if multiple interviews/focus groups are being implemented, you can use rolling interview guides where the previous interview or focus group sessions inform changes to the questionnaires used for upcoming sessions. This is particularly useful if you want to follow up on emergent themes that are not initially included in your first interview guide.

Additional analytic best practices can be found [here](#).

1. Please share with us how your recent WIL experiences have impacted the community and economic impact of your organization.
 - Probe: think about your organization giving back to the community; your organization's engagements with the community; transformation of your local communities.
2. Why do you think these WIL experiences had this kind of impact?
3. How would you measure these impacts?
4. What are some ways in which WIL programs could contribute to help with your organizational needs in this area?