

# Measuring and Evaluating Impact

Future Skills Centre (FSC)'s Community of Practice (CoP) is a pan-Canadian network for skills and workforce development stakeholders across diverse sectors and industries to connect, share, and learn from each other. As part of the CoP, Research Impact Canada, in collaboration with FSC and Magnet, is piloting themed Peer Learning Groups to facilitate an open discussion among peers in an informal and safe shared space.

The three-session Peer Learning Group Pilot will help organizations share best practices, resources, and tips in three areas: influencing public policy and connecting with policymakers, telling compelling stories of change and impact, and measuring and evaluating impact. This pilot will also help FSC determine how to continue improving these peer learning offerings so they better fit the needs of service providers.

The third session of the three-part series took place on Zoom on September 8, 2022 from 1:00pm - 2:30pm EST. We invite you to explore some of the ideas and resources from the session below.

We would also encourage you to join FSC's Community of Practice by [signing up for a free account](#) on the Community of Practice Platform to access news, events, resources, and networks, and to continue engaging with professionals in the skills and workforce development sector.

## GRAPHIC SUMMARY



# WHAT WE HEARD: BIG CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR ACTION

## 1. Quantifying (and Qualifying) Impact

"How do we effectively communicate impact when the nature of products and services make it difficult to measure or capture?"



### Proposed Strategies:

- Clearly define what kind of impact you want to capture. Think about what outcomes you will want to measure and communicate
- Choose an evaluation approach that makes sense for the data you are trying to collect - there are many different approaches and some may be more appropriate than others
- Determine what metrics can be quantified, and include qualitative metrics where possible
- Be flexible in how you communicate impact. Balance capturing the impact on people you serve while also satisfying metrics of funders and what they value
- Focus on the stories of impact as they can be quite compelling



### Resources:

- [Choosing Appropriate Designs and Methods for Impact Evaluation](#)
- [How to measure impact in people-focused services](#)

## 2. Constraints on Capacity and Resources

"How can we effectively capture impact when there are constraints due to time, resources, or funding?"



### Proposed Strategies:

- Set realistic expectations about what you can measure with the time and resources that are available to you. Consider that you may only be able to capture shorter term outcomes rather than long term impacts
- See if there are existing evaluation models, frameworks or templates that you can use to save time. There's no need to reinvent the wheel if you can use existing resources to save time!
- Triangulate data from multiple sources to demonstrate impact from different angles - comparative data can be extremely helpful in making sense of the 'bigger picture'
- Look for opportunities to develop partnerships with other organisations and share and obtain data that would be relevant to your project

### Resources:

- [Starting to measure your impact: resources on measuring, understanding, and improving your impact \(New Philanthropy Capital\)](#)
- [Impact planning and evaluation \(National Council for Voluntary Organisations\)](#)

## 3. Contributing to Collective Impact

"How can we contribute to larger-scale impacts if we are working to address a small part of a big problem?"

### Proposed Strategies:

- Learn from others who have developed models and best practices
- Facilitate opportunities to connect and share products/resources that can be useful to others and help them accelerate impact
- Participate in local networks to connect with others who are working on similar challenges
- Learn to tell your story and mobilise your knowledge to reach others who may be impacted by your work

### Resources:

- [What is Collective Impact](#)
- [Knowledge Mobilization Planning Template](#)

## JOIN US!

To learn more and participate future Peer Learning Groups, check out our [website](#).

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### [Impact and Engagement Case Study Guidelines](#)

This tool was developed to help you collect and communicate the evidence of the impact of your research beyond academia. It includes guidelines on how to use the tool to collect and describe evidence of the impact, an interview guide to help you collect evidence of the impact from stakeholders, and a case study template to help you describe the impact of the research/evidence/project.

### [Guide to Impact Planning](#)

This guide to impact planning details various tools for research in the field of social science and humanities, most applicable at the beginning stage of the research process. Social science and humanities researchers and policymakers may find this especially useful with easy-to-understand explanations and a broad range of actionable tools.

### [Impact Literacy Workbook](#)

This workbook helps you understand how impact works and how to connect research work in meaningful ways. It focuses on integrating impact at any stage of the research process, and may be most applicable for scientists, applied researchers, graduate students, or non-academic partners.

### [Knowledge Engagement Impact Assessment Toolkit](#)

The University of Calgary's Knowledge Engagement team developed a Knowledge Engagement Impact Assessment toolkit that equips researchers with tools, and training to support them in assessing, generating data, and reporting on the impact of their knowledge engagement work.

### [Broader Impacts Wizard](#)

This article provides a series of infographics that shows organizations how to strategically leverage influence on policy, build relationships, and plan for engagement.

## CONNECT WITH US!

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