

# Identifying Impact + Value Guide



## Purpose

Guide to investigate and show the impact and value of an initiative to your institution and key stakeholders

## Who this is for

- Project Leads

## When to use

Researching and learning

Proposing the initiative

Planning and scoping the initiative

Considering renewal or scaling

Introduction

Tangible Impact Guide

Intangible Impact Guide

## Introduction

### Why is this toolkit important?

Any initiative is an institutional investment and must “prove” its value in ways that align with institutional goals as explicitly as possible if it is to be sustained and funded. Demonstrating impact can be challenging, especially with small or underrepresented student populations, making it crucial to broaden the concept of return on investment. This toolkit helps build a strong narrative for budget discussions with departments and boards.

### Key actions

- Start by understanding your institution’s key performance indicators (KPIs) and how they translate to specific strategic goals
- Make short and long-term initiative plans based on impact and value goals, including go/no-go assessment milestones

### How to use this toolkit

There are two starting points for using this guide. Before you begin, determine which applies to your situation to ensure proper alignment and adaptation of the process.

If you already **have a clear idea of your initiative** (e.g. statewide initiatives), use this guide to align your project goals with the broader impact you aim to achieve. Map out how your initiative contributes to institutional KPIs and strategic goals, ensuring it adds measurable value to the institution.

If you're in **the early planning stages**, start by identifying the desired impact. Use the guide to explore how your initiative can positively influence institutional KPIs, helping you design a project with clear, measurable outcomes from the start.

Once your approach is clear, consider ROI in two ways: tangible/direct, which ties directly to the institution's bottom line, and intangible, which is harder to measure but equally important for driving institutional transformation. When making a case for your initiative, think broadly about its value and impact. Consider what types of arguments will be most persuasive to your key stakeholders and think about the institutional culture around qualitative and quantitative data.

### Tips

Estimating financial ROI often involves educated guesses based on imperfect data, so it's essential to consult institutional experts (IR, Finance, etc.) to build the strongest possible case for your initiative's value.

It's often beneficial to conduct these reflection activities, especially for intangible impacts, in a group to capture a wide range of perspectives.

## Tools overview

There are 2 tools in this toolkit. They can be used together or individually.

### Tangible Impact Guide

Explore your institution's funding model to determine your initiative's quantitative and direct impacts.

[Go to tool →](#)

### Intangible Impact Guide

Explore the qualitative impacts of your initiative.

[Go to tool →](#)

## Related

### Next steps

- Assessing and prioritizing initiatives ensures your team focuses on the most impactful efforts for student success. Learn how to evaluate and prioritize your initiatives here: [Assessing and Prioritizing Initiatives](#).
- Encourage your teams to explore problems from different angles, leading to deeper insights and innovative solutions. Start your team's problem exploration here: [Team Brainstorm](#).