

# **Learning While Doing Through Community-Based Impact Investing Curriculum Group**

## **1. Expanding and Sharing Curriculum Resources**

- Participants expressed strong interest in developing a **shared library of business cases** used across institutions.
- A **centralized database** was recommended to store and share:
  - Financial models (loan, equity, and grant-based)
  - Standardized deal documents
  - Templates for due diligence, term sheets, and impact reporting
- The database should support long-term knowledge transfer and reduce duplication of effort across programs.

## **2. Strengthening Experiential Learning Through Field Labs/Studies**

- Field labs and field-study engagements were widely viewed as essential tools both during the course and post-course for:
  - Pipeline development
  - Supporting investment closings
  - Enhancing portfolio management skills
- Several programs use live cases by inviting portfolio company CEOs to share updates, annual reports, and real-time challenges.

## **3. Enhancing Reflection, Assessment, and Student Development**

- Institutions noted the value of incorporating team and individual reflections, including 360° evaluations, to assess:
  - Learning progress
  - Team dynamics

## **4. Course Design Considerations**

- Many programs may benefit from a multi-course sequence, such as:
  - A primer/foundations course (investing, community development, finance basics)
  - A deeper, experiential course focused on due diligence and investment execution
- An alternative model: spreading content across two quarters or semesters to allow more time for engagement with community partners and founders.

## **5. Integrating Subject-Matter Expertise**

- **Panels and external experts**, including investors, legal practitioners, founders, and policy partners are widely used to deepen understanding of both sector-specific and capital-structure challenges.

## **6. Advancing Impact Measurement Skills**

- Strong interest in adding impact measurement tools to the shared database:
  - What works?
  - How do organizations gather reliable community-level data?
  - How can we ensure investees can report measurable impact?
- A collaborative effort to align impact frameworks across institutions was recommended.

## **7. Leveraging Returning Students and Alumni**

- Programs reported significant value in:
  - Returning students supporting learning as TAs, mentors, or guest presenters
  - Alumni advisory groups that maintain engagement, provide networking support, and connect incoming student teams with additional resources

## **8. Building Cross-University Partnerships**

- Several participants highlighted the importance of partnerships across schools—law, public policy, social work, business to bring multidisciplinary insight to community-based investing.

## **9. Strengthening Community and University Ecosystems**

- Institutions are exploring inter-referral pathways, allowing:
  - Student-recommended businesses to receive additional support through consulting courses
  - Founders to become investment-ready and better positioned for capital
- Campus-wide collaboration accelerates pipeline development and improves outcomes for community partners.

## **10. Experiential Site Visits**

- **Field trips to business sites and community service areas** were strongly encouraged to:
  - Ground students in local context
  - Strengthening understanding of community needs
  - Build relationships with founders and CBOs