



accenture

Trails Youth Initiatives

SROI 2.0 Final Report

March 24, 2026





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Executive Summary, Scope & Approach

Accenture conducted a 5-week **Social Return on Investment** Analysis measuring the impact of Trails over the cost to deliver.

Scope of Analysis



Based on Trails Impact Framework

Evaluated impact using Trails Outcomes Model and Theory of Change, measuring outcomes within Physical & Mental Health, Education & Skills Building, Economic Mobility, Civic Responsibility & Contribution, Social Well-Being & Belonging, and Environmental Stewardship.



Improvements from SROI 1.0

- Deadweight – greatest impact on SROI multiplier (updated from 0% to **5-37%**)
- Attribution (updated from 90% to **50-90%**)
- Displacement (updated from 10% to **5-10%**)
- **20%** drop-off consideration
- Inflation rate adjustment **1.25%**
- Introduction of new outcomes
- Stronger data and tighter logic building
- Program level benefits to Trails

Approach & Data



Rooted in SROI Standards

SROI framework used is consistent with global standards, using publicly available data and conservative estimates to approximate financial value.



Based on Data & Evidence

- Trails data (e.g., annual report) – Accenture is not verifying internal data collected by Trails used in calculating SROI results / dollar values.
- Stakeholder interviews & working session
- National and Global data



Built Through Assumptions

- Benefits created based on available Trails data
- Online available details for a proxy equivalent
- Conservative in places where representative data is not available

Risks

- There is risk of SROI overestimation driven by assumptions made around control variables, i.e., **deadweight, displacement, and attribution**, in the absence of collected datapoints.
- To improve accuracy, future iterations should strengthen the monitoring and evaluation framework by incorporating additional data sources (including participant and stakeholder surveys) and clear verification methods to better capture and validate impact. The data used in this analysis was provided by Trails and was not within Accenture’s scope to independently validate.

Analysis Results

Scenario	Deadweight	Displacement	Attribution	SROI
High	5%-50%	5%	90%	17.5 - 27.2
Medium	5%-50%	10%	77%	14.2 - 21.5
Low	5%-50%	10%	50%	9.2 - 14

Disclaimer: SROI estimates follow standard practice of presenting a lower bound, best estimate, and upper bound. The upper bound reflects additional value that may be generated but is not yet fully supported by evidence. These estimates are subject to uncertainty and may be overstated due to assumptions related to control variables (e.g., deadweight, displacement, attribution) in the absence of sufficient primary data. Accuracy can be improved over time through strengthened monitoring and evaluation, including additional data sources and verification methods.

For every \$1 invested, **Trails generates a return of up to \$27** in Physical & Mental Health, Education & Skills Building, Economic Mobility, Civic Responsibility & Contribution, Social Well-Being & Belonging, and Environmental Stewardship.

Comparison

- Pathways to Education Canada \$24:1
- Outward Bound Canada \$13:\$1
- Outward Bound International \$9:\$1
- Duke of Edinburg \$3.2:\$1

Social Value : Investment

SROI measures the estimated health, education, social, economic, civic, and environmental value that Trails delivers through its programming, to the cost to deliver, based on operating costs.

Currency-Agnostic as a Ratio

SROI of up to \$27 return for \$1 invested is a ratio, and, as such, can be marketed in any currency.

Our Big Question

How might we move from Trails' impact story to a credible, decision-ready SROI 2.0 model - co-designed with Trails, and structured to generate funder-grade evidence and a repeatable impact measurement engine?

The Context

Trails' mission is to help young people become healthy, contributing members of society through long-term outdoor experiential learning, mentorship, and skill development. Currently, Trails has powerful qualitative evidence of outcomes, but impact proof isn't consistently quantified in a way that's easy to defend with funders and corporate partners.

- Trails completed an SROI ~5 years ago and calculated an estimated **1:18 return**—a strong signal of impact, but it now needs a refresh that reflects today's programming, data maturity, and stakeholder expectations.
- Data and evidence are fragmented across program delivery, follow-ups, and partner inputs—**making it hard to consistently connect “what we do” to “what changes” to “what it's worth.”**
- Stakeholders need a clear, credible methodology (assumptions, attribution, deadweight, displacement, drop-off) that can stand up to scrutiny and be refreshed year over year.
- We're at an inflection point where design discipline matters: we need to lock scope, align on outcomes + indicators, and create a pilot that can be scaled.

The Objective

To lead a structured, human-centered process that translates Trails' impact into a credible SROI blueprint—**bringing ROI-level credibility to the social impact sector**, where funders and partners increasingly expect the same rigor commercial clients expect in value cases.

This will result in a toolkit Trails can actually run with a repeatable **approach to quantify and communicate impact, strengthen fundraising and partnership conversations**, and support confident decision-making.

The Opportunity

Target outputs will be:

1. Impact Framework Mapping:

1. North Star statement
2. Stakeholder map
3. Draft outcomes inventory
4. Interview synthesis
5. Updated framework
6. Data gaps & proxy needs list

2. Refreshed SROI Model : finalized inputs, validated assumptions; scenarios & sensitivity; community impact multiplier

3. Final Report & Narrative Pack: donor-ready SROI summary; impact story pack; toolkit (PPT/PDF)

SROI 2.0: Methodology & Refresh Approach

A structured, top-down approach to refresh Trails’ SROI, by linking mission and vision to measurable outcomes and defensible social value

OVERVIEW

OUTPUTS



Explore

Purpose: Align on what long-term change Trails exists to create

- Reviewed existing SROI 1.0, impact narratives, and program documentation
- Identified priority stakeholders and value pathways to anchor the refresh
- Established guardrails for scope, time horizon, and conservatism

- **North Star statement**



Collect and Assess

Purpose: Anchor impact logic in lived experience and available data

- Reviewed internal program data, historical SROI inputs, and financials
- Conducted stakeholder interviews for qualitative insights
- Identified data gaps and proxy needs; addressed through additional data request and secondary research

- **Stakeholder value propositions**
- **Interview synthesis**
- **Evidence inventory (quant + qual)**



Build

Purpose: Make the causal logic explicit and testable

- Developed a Theory of Change linking inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact
- Mapped Trails’ programs across a consistent Impact Framework
- Defined outputs, outcomes, and indicators of change for each impact category

- **Theory of Change**
- **Impact Framework**
- **Assumptions**



Combine

Purpose: Convert outcomes into conservative, funder-grade value estimates

- Built the SROI model using validated outcomes and indicators
- Applied financial proxies from third-party sources
- Adjusted for deadweight, displacement, attribution, inflation rate, and drop-off
- Modeled value over a defined time horizon and tested sensitivity

- **Refreshed SROI model**
- **Community impact multiplier**



Report

Purpose: Enable Trails to communicate and reuse the results

- Synthesized findings into a clear, defensible narrative
- Developed a donor-ready SROI narrative and GTM package
- Documented methodology for repeatability and iteration
- Highlighted priorities and future recommendations

- **SROI 2.0 model (Excel)**
- **GTM package**
- **Final Report**

2022

Impact Framework Mapping

2022

Theory of Change

	What Happens	What This Demonstrates
Problem Statement	Youth from underserved communities face barriers (income constraints, unstable supports, limited access to structured enrichment, and reduced opportunities to build confidence, belonging, and future pathways).	Long-term, consistent support is needed; one-off interventions are less likely to create durable change.
Mission	To challenge and equip vulnerable youth from at-risk areas to become contributing members of the community.	
Core Activities	<p>Program 1: <i>Four Seasons, Four Years</i>: Youth (starting at age 12) participate for a minimum of four years: two weeks each summer and one weekend per month during the school year with the same peer group. Multi-year, nature-based experiential education (seasonal cycles + repeated group engagement), focusing on socio-emotional learning, leadership, resilience, wellbeing, and practical life skills</p> <p>Program 2: <i>Trails for Life (Alumni Support)</i>: Continued engagement beyond graduation. Post-secondary scholarships. Alumni mentorship (AIM). Career connections and job preparedness. Emergency financial support. Ongoing community connection.</p>	<p>Structure, commitment, and trust over time. Development of confidence, resilience, leadership skills, non-violent communication, and belonging.</p> <p>Lifelong commitment. Reinforces gains from the four-year program. Supports transition into post-secondary education and employment.</p>
Inputs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funding 2. Staff expertise and facilitator capacity 3. Program logistics (transport/food/access supports where applicable) 2. Alumni network and mentor time 	Inputs are structured to reduce barriers and enable sustained participation.
Outputs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth complete multi-year participation. 2. Secondary school credits supported. 3. Post-secondary scholarships 2. Alumni engaged in mentorship and career programming. 5. Youth access barrier-removal supports (transport/food/in-kind) where needed 	Sustained engagement. Educational progression and alumni connection remain active. Outputs demonstrate reach + intensity + continuity
Short-Term Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪During Program: Improved confidence and self-worth, Stronger peer relationships and sense of belonging, Improved emotional regulation and resilience, Improved communication, collaboration, and leadership behaviors, Improved wellbeing (mental and physical health habits) 	Youth remain engaged in school and demonstrate personal growth
Mid-Term Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪Transition Years: Sustained engagement in school and goal-setting, Increased readiness for post-secondary and/or employment, Continued connection to supportive adults (mentors), Increased employability skills and networks, Postsecondary enrollment/retention support 	Successful transition into adulthood with education and career pathways in place.
Long-Term Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪Participants: Higher lifetime earnings potential, reduced poverty risk, improved long-run well-being, 	<p>Government / Society: Higher tax contributions, reduced justice involvement costs, reduced reliance on social services, reduced healthcare burden, increased civic contribution/volunteering.</p> <p>Youth become contributing members of society.</p> <p>Social and economic value accrues over participants' lifetime</p>
Impact	Long-term transformation of life trajectory for vulnerable youth through sustained support from adolescence into adulthood.	<i>Stable participation in society, improved quality of life, and broader societal benefit.</i>

Assumptions

- Youth remain engaged and complete the full four-year program.
- Consistent, high quality facilitator relationships are maintained over time.
- Outdoor experiential learning translates into transferable life skills beyond the program.
- Improvements in confidence/belonging contribute to school and future pathways
- Alumni supports (mentorship, scholarships, career guidance) sustain gains after graduation.
- External factors (family instability, school system constraints, economic shifts) may reduce outcomes; the model accounts for this via conservative deadweight/attribution assumptions.

Stakeholder Value Propositions Map

Stakeholder	Value Proposition (Current)	Value Proposition (Future)*
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belonging • Confidence • Life skills (self-regulation, communication, etc.) • Exposure beyond neighbourhood • Trusted adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belonging • Confidence • Life skills (self-regulation, communication, etc.) • Exposure beyond neighbourhood • Trusted adults • Exposure to more opportunities for self development beyond Trails • Mental health resources • Greater focus on service • Even more support from Trails family • Continued connection with peer group beyond Four Seasons, Four Years • Natural supports for future • Social capital • Clear understanding of aim of program and able to point current participants towards desirable future state

* Purple bullet points indicate the value propositions added by Trails during the Working Session held on March 13, 2026.

Stakeholder Value Propositions Map

Stakeholder	Value Proposition (Current)	Value Proposition (Future)*
Alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term support • Enhanced impact on high school graduation through mentorship • Post-secondary funding • Career resources • Post-secondary mentorship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term support • Enhanced impact on high school graduation through mentorship • Post-secondary funding and mentorship • Enhanced career resources • Increased awareness and understanding of Trails resources and desire to support • Financial literacy tools • Increased opportunities to act as mentors • More mentorship tools • Additional mental health resources • Additional opportunities for community building
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced family stress • Safe weekend and summer environment • Financial and emotional support • Improved communication • Mentorship for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced family stress • Safe weekend and summer environment • Financial and emotional support • Improved communication • Mentorship for children • Clear understanding of aim of program and able to point current participants towards desirable future state • Ability to aim at intergenerational mobility/altruism

* Purple bullet points indicate the value propositions added by Trails during the Working Session held on March 13, 2026.

Stakeholder Value Propositions Map

Stakeholder	Value Proposition (Current)	Value Proposition (Future)*
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved attendance, confidence, engagement Alternative pathway for students who struggle in traditional settings Trails as a partner in student success Leadership emergence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved attendance, confidence, engagement Alternative pathway for students who struggle in traditional settings Trails as a partner in student success Leadership emergence Greater sense of Trails within the school culture - something kids are asking about and looking forward to applying to
Trails Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skill-building in experiential education Strong culture Meaningful impact Ability to focus on real youth development beyond the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skill-building in experiential education Strong culture Meaningful impact Ability to focus on real youth development beyond the classroom Pressure cooking of learning Measurable impact of their commitment (cohort tracking) Clear understanding of aim of program and able to point current participants towards desirable future state Aligns with values of nature Community of peers Self development

* Purple bullet points indicate the value propositions added by Trails during the Working Session held on March 13, 2026.

Stakeholder Value Propositions Map

Stakeholder	Value Proposition (Current)	Value Proposition (Future)*
Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident, articulate, values-aligned talent • Well-spoken youth with resilience, accountability, intelligence, drive and interpersonal skills • Willing and able to contribute • Individuals who strive to improve themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni have access to larger support network • Reliable, intelligent, loyal • Trails partner to offer additional supports if alumni struggling • Strong reflection and interpersonal skills • Strong team players, can work through conflict • Employees inclined towards leadership • Alumni led employee mentoring • Employees who understand self-advocacy
Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong stewardship • Credible leadership • Proven outcomes (high school and post-secondary graduation) • Impact narrative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact measurement • Giving back • Clear, shareable story • Jobs • Truly levelling the playing field

* Purple bullet points indicate the value propositions added by Trails during the Working Session held on March 13, 2026.

Stakeholder Value Propositions Map

Stakeholder	Value Proposition (Current)	Value Proposition (Future)*
Corporate Sponsors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong stewardship and multiple access points (\$, volunteer, events) • Proven outcomes (high school and post-secondary graduation) • Impact narrative • Reliable strong investment • Low risk partner • Meet CSR social responsibility target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong stewardship and multiple access points (\$, volunteer, events) • Proven outcomes (high school and post-secondary graduation) • Impact narrative • Reliable strong investment • Low risk partner • Meet CSR social responsibility target • Impact measurement • Brand alignment/exposure • Jobs
Major Foundation Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven outcomes (high school and post-secondary graduation) • Strong stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven outcomes (high school and post-secondary graduation) • Strong stewardship and multiple access points (\$, volunteer, events) • Strong governance • Meet CSR social responsibility target • Impact narrative • Impact measurement – proven outcomes • Duplicatable model • Low-risk partner • Reliable, strong investment

* Purple bullet points indicate the value propositions added by Trails during the Working Session held on March 13, 2026.

Stakeholder Value Propositions Map

Stakeholder	Value Proposition (Current)	Value Proposition (Future)*
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced burden on social services• Civic contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced burden on social services• Civic contribution• More ability to help others in need (non-Trails)• More brain, less drain• Less welfare more tax revenue• Stable people more likely to have families, contribute 2 children to population growth• Better physical health (nutrition & health active living)• No cost• Support of aging family members• Model for success in non-profit sector that can be adapted for government programs

* Purple bullet points indicate the value propositions added by Trails during the Working Session held on March 13, 2026.

Impact Framework (1/2)

Impact Categories	Physical & Mental Health	Education & Skills Building	Economic Mobility
Output	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New participants enrolled annually (intake) 2. 4-year participant persistence / retention 3. Time spent in outdoor activities 4. Total developmental exposure hours 5. Hours spent receiving mentoring 6. Mentees served through mentorship programs (AIM, CARE, Scholarship) 7. 520 program hours annually per participant 8. Lessons in boundaries and understanding of risk 9. Over 100 home-cooked meals annually 10. No phones 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth reached through core participant program 2. New participants enrolled annually (intake) 3. 4-year participant persistence / retention 4. Total developmental exposure hours 5. Mentees served through mentorship programs (AIM, CARE, Scholarship) 6. LIT participation 7. Certifications 8. Scholarship 9. Alumni serving as mentors (AIM / structured mentorship) 10. Reduced (or improved ability to deal with) stress and issues from school, finances, relationships, etc. 11. Professional skills and budgeting 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scholarship 2. Assistance Fund 3. TIP participation (youth in internships) 4. Career-support delivered through Career Connections 5. Alumni returning as facilitators 6. Alumni Association - remain connected and networking 7. CARE mentoring 8. AIM workshops focusing on job readiness, resume writing, etc.
Outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved physical well-being (self-reported) 2. Improved emotional well-being (self-reported) 3. Reduced healthcare burden (physical, mental) 4. Long-term commitment to recreation and healthy lifestyle 5. Improved awareness / exposure to recreational activities that support joy / mental health 6. Influence on family, friends, community of benefits of physical and mental health, nutrition 7. Increased lifespan and healthspan 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved leadership (self-reported) 2. Increased problem-solving skills – Improved decision-making skills 3. Improved conflict resolution skills 4. Greater interest in learning/further education & greater likelihood of academic success – Improved Successful at School 5. Greater interest and engagement in the workforce & greater likelihood of professional success – Improved Successful in Personal Life 6. Improved outbound & safety skills 7. Improved pro social skills and self awareness 8. Improved financial literacy and ability to direct one's own life (and contribute to others) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High school graduation – higher taxes contributed, lower unemployment benefit 2. Post-secondary enrolment & completion – higher taxes contributed, lower unemployment benefit 3. Better prepared for life's transitions/employment – Improved Stress Management 4. Feel supported by their Trails family in getting employed and financially stable 5. Alumni with desirable soft-skills, i.e., communication, goal setting 6. Pursue careers / jobs based on interests & skills 7. Securing internships apprenticeship or job 8. Access to our network

* Outcomes in purple font were not incorporated into SROI 2.0.

Impact Framework (2/2)

Impact Categories	Civic Responsibility & Contribution	Social Well-being & Belonging	Environmental Stewardship
<p>Output</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New participants enrolled annually (intake) 2. Youth reached through core participant program 3. 4-year participant persistence / retention 4. Youth volunteering as part of Four Seasons Four Years 5. Alumni serving as mentors (AIM / structured mentorship) 6. Alumni advisory board 7. Guest speakers 8. Volunteering outside of Trails 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alumni reached through ongoing support 2. Number of alumni overall 3. Alumni with desirable soft-skills, i.e., communication, goal setting 4. Increase in in-person interactions 5. Care mentoring 6. Long term sustained connections to peer group 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leave no trace training & practice 2. Wildlife awareness 3. Low impact wilderness travel 4. Climate-related discussions 5. Responsible campsite selection & restoration 6. Acts of service embedded in program 7. Fire safety 8. Education on ecosystems, wildlife & water 9. Waste management with pack in & pack out
<p>Outcome</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High school graduation – lower incarceration 2. Post-secondary enrolment & completion – lower incarceration 3. Greater participation in service to communities/ volunteerism – Improved Initiative 4. Increased sense of responsibility to others – Improved Responsibility 5. Youth take on leadership roles in school, home, community 6. Mentor younger participants 7. Advocacy of needs of self and group 8. Alumni as staff & board members 9. Demonstrate knowledge and advocacy of social justice 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved self-awareness – Improved Self-Regulation 2. Improved confidence and self-belief – Improved Self-Confidence 3. Greater social connectedness 4. Improved skills in working with others – Improved Collaboration 5. Improved communication skills – Improved Communication 6. Increase in skills proliferated throughout the community 7. Feel connected to and supported by Trails family: “I am not alone” 8. See peers as a part of support system 9. Reduced loneliness 10. Engage in events 11. Reduced funds diverted to "social diseases" like those impacted by loneliness, loss of connection, etc. 12. Increase in alumni to alumni engagement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased environmental awareness and concern 2. Stronger connection with nature and higher environmental consideration throughout life 3. Greater levels of environmental behavior 4. Demonstrated respect for plants, animals and natural habitats 5. Connection to nature 6. Identify themselves as protectors 7. Increased appreciation for natural environment 8. Model care to younger participants 9. Responsible behaviour in outdoors 10. See the benefits of the outdoors to their mental health / well being

* Outcomes in purple font were not incorporated into SROI 2.0.

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SROI 2.0 MODEL

AR

Social Return on Investment (SROI)

SROI is a monetary estimate of the social value a program generates compared to the cost to deliver that program.

SROI OVERVIEW

An SROI...

- Measures **social, environmental, and economic** outcomes
- Uses **monetary values** to quantify impact
- Is an **estimate**, it is not an academic assessment
- Measures both the immediate and **long-term impact** that a program delivers
- Provides a **tangible estimate** of the value a social intervention generates, and can help improve an organization's case for further funding
- Uses **financial proxies** to assign monetary value to outcomes
- Compares the estimated social value of a program to its "cost to deliver" to **calculate a Return on Investment** value
- Measures impact over a **defined period of time**

Core SROI Equation:

$$\frac{\text{Social Value} \text{ (Monetary estimate of positive impact on society)}}{\text{Investment} \text{ (Cost to deliver)}}$$

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Our SROI calculation is **grounded in the experience of an average Trails participant and alumni** - Our approach is intended to estimate the social return on the average Trails participant and alumni. To avoid overclaiming, we have based our calculation on data that is representative of the average participant and alumni. We have been conservative in places where representative data is not available
- To **ensure a consistent approach**, we have used 2025-2026 participant and financial data from Trails since they represent the best available data.
- We have used a **5-year time frame to estimate longitudinal impact**. Based on data gathered, we feel confident that Trails impact lasts at least 5 years, but reliable data does not exist to project the value of impact further. A 5-year time frame is standard across financial modeling and common in many SROI models with limited data given the uncertainty that exists in projecting out further.

KEY PRINCIPLES



Consistency



Agility



Honesty



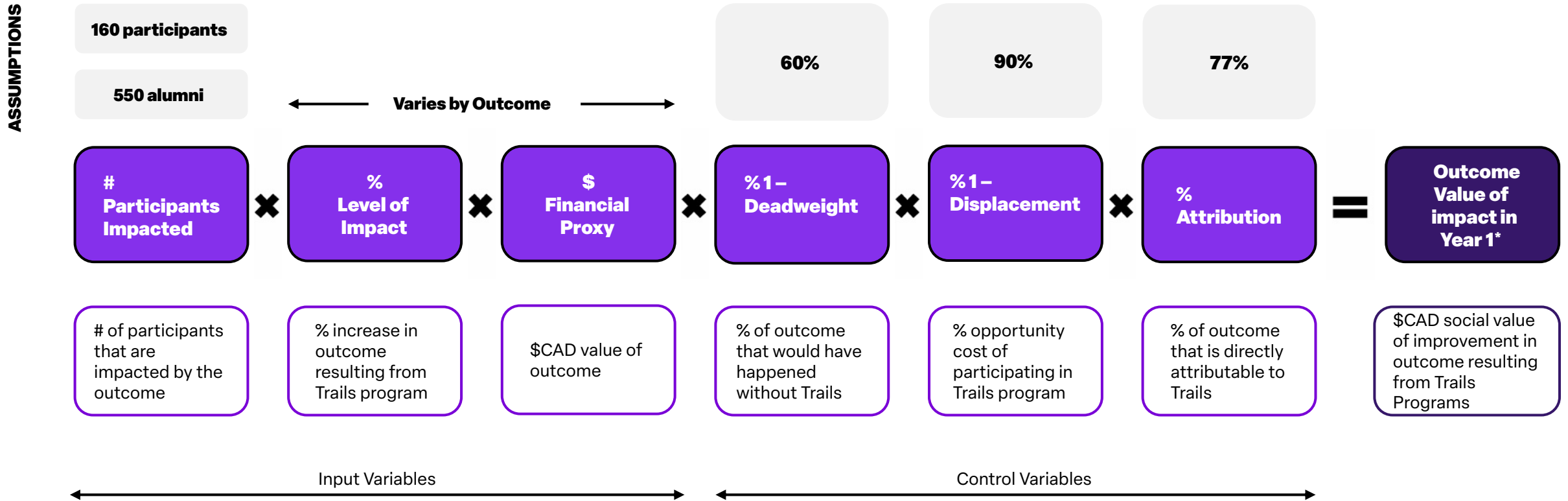
Transparency



Impact
Focus

Calculating Outcome Values for SROI

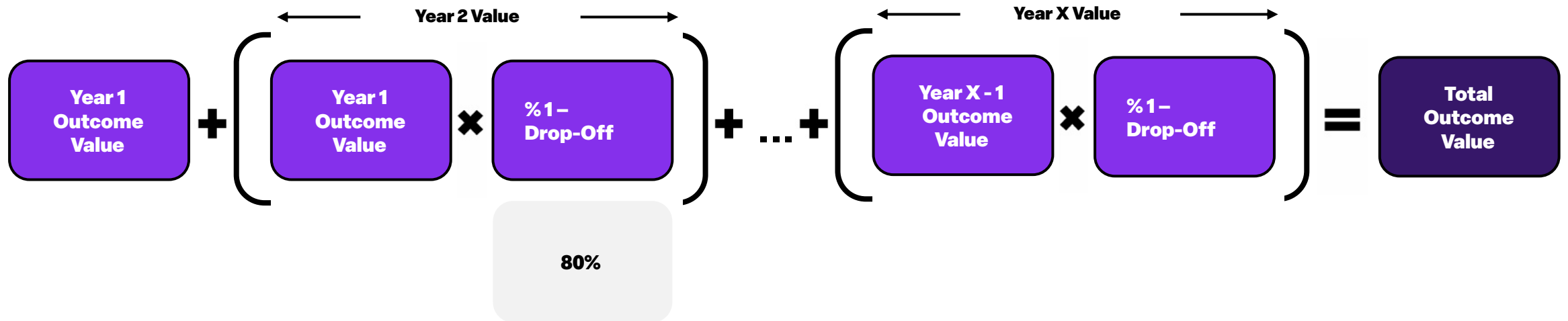
We evaluated each outcome based on the following equation:



* Year 1 refers to first year from which the SROI is calculated and not the first year of Trails programs.

Calculating Outcome Values for SROI

We evaluated each outcome over a 5-year period, incorporating a drop-off rate each year of 20%



Drop-Off Rate is the annual decline in outcome value due to external factors – taken at 20% which is a standard for financial models.

Physical & Mental Health

Trails' long-term, outdoor experiential model strengthens youths' physical, emotional, and mental well-being by building self-regulation, resilience, and healthy routines through consistent time in nature and trusted adult mentorship. These gains reduce long-term health risks while reinforcing confidence, stress management, and lifelong habits that support overall well-being.



Outcome

Improved mental health and wellbeing

Improved physical health and wellbeing

Financial Proxy

Per capita cost of mental health issues

Total per capita healthcare expenditure

Rationale / Assumptions

- Average mental health cost can be measured either in terms of cost to the individual, or cost to the overall economy of mental illness. Both provide a good baseline for measuring the value of a % improvement in a person's mental wellbeing.
- Regular physical activity can decrease the incidence of heart disease and diabetes, which can lead to healthcare savings for an individual. Any % increase in physical activity can be valued as a corresponding % reduction in those costs.
- Annual per capita economic cost of mental illness reflects total social value of improved mental health.
- Improved physical health and wellbeing will lead to a corresponding decrease in healthcare expenditure.

Education & Skills Building

Through sustained participation, Trails equips youth with transferable life skills, such as communication, leadership, collaboration, and decision-making, that directly support school engagement, graduation, and post-secondary success. Learning happens experientially, reinforcing responsibility, problem-solving, and self-direction in ways traditional classroom settings often cannot.



Outcome

Financial Proxy

Improved leadership skills

Cost of a two-day effective leadership course

Greater interest in learning/further education & greater likelihood of academic success

Share of median wages from increased academic performance

Note: Above list is non-exhaustive.

Rationale / Assumptions

- A comprehensive (multi-day) leadership course provides a consistent barometer for the value that Four Seasons/Four Years places on foundational leadership/management skills that are gained throughout a Trails experience
- Success at school can be tied to a lifetime increase in a person's income. The measured % increase in interest in learning/academic success can be valued as a corresponding % of that overall estimate of increased income
- Cost of a 2-day leadership program reflects the societal value of foundational leadership skills
- Assuming ratios from US study on high school GPA's impact on adult salary also applies to Canada

Economic Mobility

Trails supports young people in building stable pathways to employment and financial independence through scholarships, mentorship, career readiness, and access to lifelong financial aid and support network. By increasing employability and earnings potential, the program reduces reliance on social services and contributes to long-term economic stability.



Outcome

- Better prepared for life's transitions/employment
- Greater High School Education - higher taxes paid
- Greater Post Secondary Education - higher taxes paid

Financial Proxy

- Salary lost for median period of unemployment
- Benefit from higher taxes paid for a high school graduate relative to dropout
- Benefit from higher taxes paid for a post secondary graduate relative to high school graduate

Note: Above list is non-exhaustive.

Rationale / Assumptions

- The cost of career counseling is a barometer for the social value placed on preparedness for life's transitions/employment
- Trails ensures its participants complete high school education and supports post secondary education efforts which helps the participant be greater contributing members of society by calculating the additional taxes contribution
- Being better prepared for life's transitions/employment will reduce duration and incidence of periods of unemployment for participants
- Additional taxes paid towards society that would have not occurred if the participant didn't go to trails and complete high school education + post secondary education

Civic Responsibility & Contribution

By embedding service, leadership, and mentorship into its programs, Trails fosters a strong sense of civic responsibility among participants and alumni. Trails alumni give back as volunteers, mentors, staff, and community leaders, strengthening social fabric while reducing downstream justice and social service costs.



Outcome

- Increased sense of responsibility to others
- Greater participation in service to communities/ volunteerism

Financial Proxy

- Average annual individual philanthropic donation
- Value of median annual volunteer hours (based on median wage)

Rationale / Assumptions

- Increased responsibility to others can be valued as a % increase in the average per capita charitable donations.
- Increased participation in volunteerism can be valued as a % increase in the average per capita volunteer hours, with hours being financially valued at national minimum wage.
- Increase in sense of responsibility to others will lead to increase in philanthropic giving
- Hourly salary represents the value of an additional hour of volunteer work

Note: Above list is non-exhaustive.

Social Well-Being & Belonging

Trails creates a lasting sense of belonging by surrounding youth with consistent peers, mentors, and a “for life” community that continues beyond program completion. This deep social connection reduces isolation, strengthens support networks, and reinforces the belief that participants are valued, capable, and not alone.



Outcome

Improved self-awareness

Improved confidence and self-belief

Improved communication skills

Financial Proxy

Cost of two months of 1:1 life coaching sessions

Cost of a two-day self confidence development course

Cost of a two-day effective communication course

Note: Above list is non-exhaustive.

Rationale / Assumptions

- The value of ~8 hour long sessions, or weekly sessions for ~two months, with a life coach is a reliable metric of the value that Trails places on increasing self awareness & perseverance in an individual. Research suggests most life coaches require minimum commitments of 3-10 sessions - averaged to 7 sessions
- The cost of a comprehensive (multi-day) course in effective communication will provide a consistent barometer of the value placed in Four Seasons/Four Years on foundational communication skills
- Cost of 8-10 sessions of life counseling reflects the social value
- Cost of a 2-day effective communication course represents social value of foundational communication skills

Environmental Stewardship

Trails instills environmental responsibility by embedding outdoor ethics, conservation practices, and nature-based learning throughout its programs, helping youth develop a lasting connection to and respect for the natural world. By modelling stewardship through hands-on experience and leadership, participants carry these values forward—reinforcing responsible behaviours, environmental awareness, and care for shared ecosystems within their communities and beyond.

Rationale / Assumptions

- While environmental stewardship is a core component of Trails' experiential learning model, current program data does not yet fully support robust quantification for SROI modeling. 27
- As a result, this impact category is informed by directional estimates and proxy assumptions based on program design, participation intensity, and established environmental education practices.



Future Considerations

As Trails continues to strengthen its impact measurement capabilities, a future priority is to introduce targeted indicators and lightweight data collection (e.g., participant self-reporting, stewardship behaviours, and longitudinal engagement with nature-based practices) to enable more precise valuation and integration into future SROI iterations.

Additional **Observations**

- Program costs per youth is substantially higher than comparable organizations (e.g., Outward Bound), but this is reasonable given the structure and quality of Trails program and on-site support that is available.
- Below mentioned are the Trails direct contribution annually towards their participants and alumni.

Participants

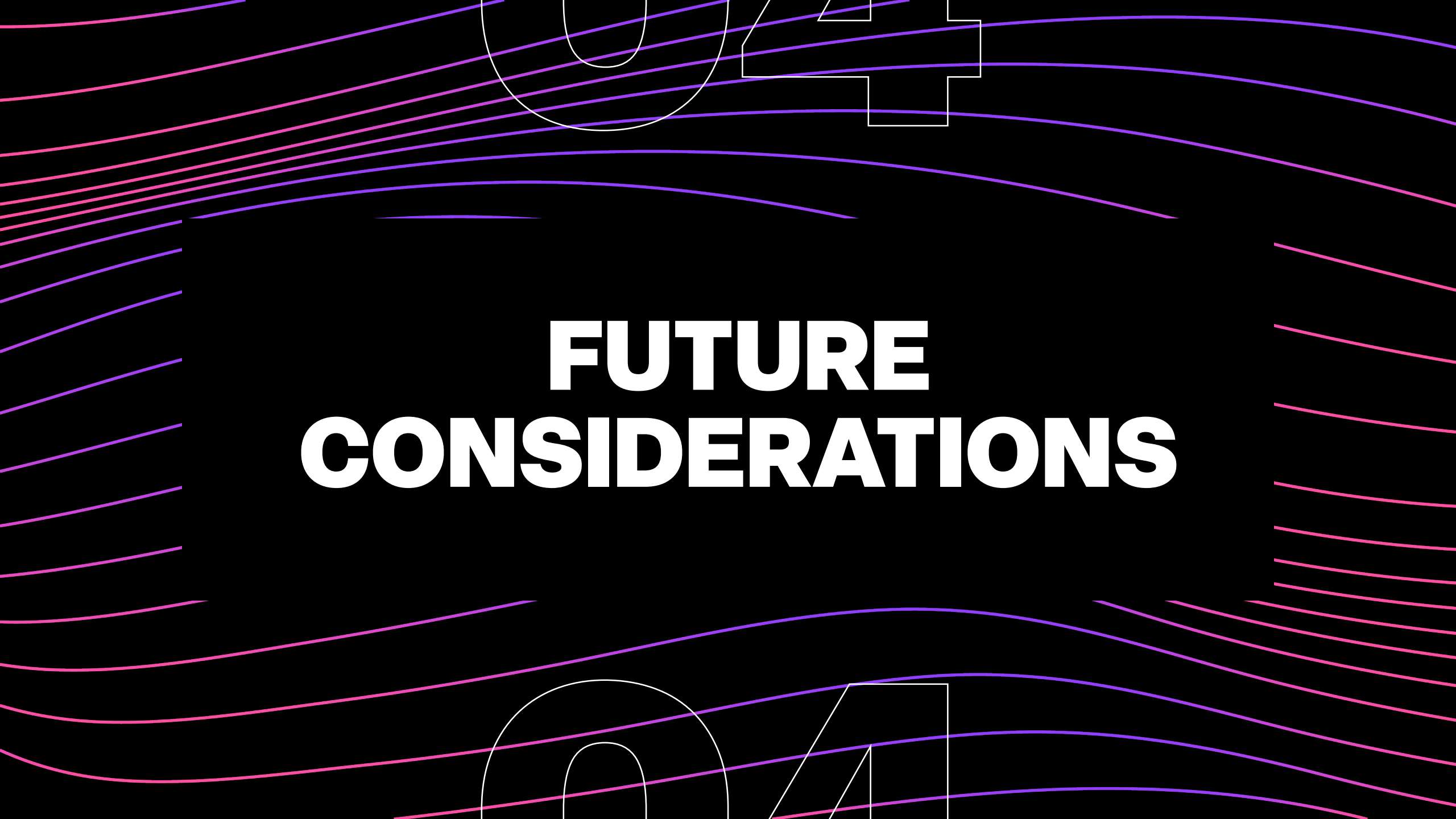
- Total rental cost saved for per participant annually which includes cost for swimming lessons, skating lessons, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing & camping \$1405 (\$224,800)
- Trails Internship Program (TIP) \$31,000
- Meals cost avoided per participant \$325 (\$52,000)
- Tutoring cost avoided per participant \$585 (\$93,600)

Alumni

- Total scholarship benefit provided to student for post-secondary education (\$277,765)
- Alumni salary as full-time staff (\$305,250)
- Alumni salary as facilitators – part time staff (\$72,000)

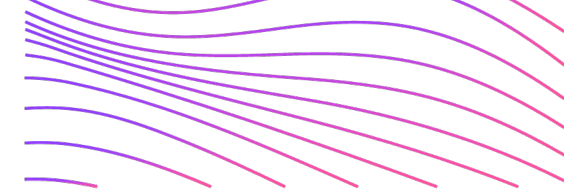
Participants and Alumni

- Short-term financial assistance (\$25,500)

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FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Future **Considerations**



01

ECOSYSTEM ALIGNMENT

- Create greater **alignment and clarity across the ecosystem partners (e.g., donors, corporate sponsors, schools)** around frameworks, theory of change, impact areas, outcomes and mission
- This can be done through the quarterly reviews with the board and through stakeholder engagement activities.
- A data governance strategy can help create a direct link between data and results.

02

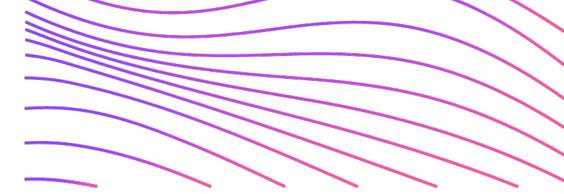
LONGITUDINAL DATA

- Track long-term impact by **repeatedly sharing out alumni surveys** consistently across the network to alumni post-participation (1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 15, etc. years after). This will help to inform impact around economic mobility, education & skills building, as well as civic contribution.
- Manage alumni contacts and database through LinkedIn
- Leverage demographic information from donors

03

DATA COLLECTION

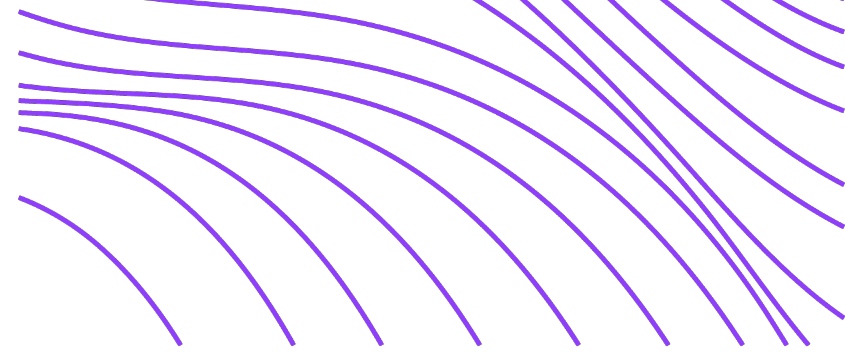
- In the surveys, include **targeted questions on tangible outcomes** (vs. perceptions) from impact framework (Education & Skills Building, etc.), e.g.
 - Did participants demonstrate improved perseverance?
 - Have participants felt more socially connected?
 - Have participants made efforts for and are more conscious about the environment?
 - Do participants feel a stronger connection with nature?
 - Have participants shown greater environment stewardship?
 - Do participants show a sustained level of physical activity even after Four Seasons, Four Years?



Potential **Survey Questions**

VARIABLE	POTENTIAL QUESTION	AUDIENCE	SURVEY TYPE
Deadweight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much do you feel that Trails is responsible for the outcomes that you have experienced? (Response: less responsible to more responsible) How valuable do you feel your Trails experience has been compared to other ways to spend your time? (Response: less valuable to more valuable) 	Four Seasons, Four Years graduates	Program satisfaction survey
Opportunity Cost / Displacement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What opportunities exist in your community that might allow you to have an experience similar the one you had with Trails? (Response: few opportunities to many opportunities) 	Four Seasons, Four Years graduates	Program satisfaction survey
Direct Attribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What extent do you feel your Trails experience has impacted your life? (Response: (Less/negative impact to more/positive impact) 	Four Seasons, Four Years graduates	Program satisfaction survey
Longitudinal Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does your Trails experience continue to have an impact on your life? (Response: no impact to significant impact) 	For Life	Alumni survey

Thank You from the Team



**DENISE
PINTO**

CLIENT INNOVATION
SENIOR MANAGER



**REGGIE A.
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ADVISOR



**BHARGAV
ASHOK**

SUBJECT MATTER
ADVISOR

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APPENDIX

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Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders List and Topics

Category	Name	Topics to cover
President	Melissa Millward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Why Trails? Why Now?” narrative • North Star and strategic growth priorities
Director of Development	Janelle Dayman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target donor segments and value propositions • Quantitative proof points (grad rates, alumni outcomes, retention)
Director of Education	Brandon McKinley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How TYI is different in practice, from an employee/staff perspective
Director of Alumni	Erin McLean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How TYI is different in practice, from an employee/staff perspective
Alumni / AIM	Rae Lorenz (AIM, alumni, donor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact story / lifelong narrative, how TYI made a difference to their life journey • Impact story / lifelong narrative from an Alumni mentors perspective
SROI Model SMA	Turner Tobin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SROI 1.0 Model design considerations, underlying assumptions and guiding principles
Teacher / School Partner	Julie Iafrate, Guidance Counsellor at Beverley Heights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact story from a teacher/school’s perspective especially in the prevention of school dropouts and justice-system involvement
Parent of Participant	Hong Lam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand broader program impact from the participants parents’ perspective
Donor / Board Member	Greig Clark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand why they give and what convinces them
Employer / Internship Partner (TIP)	CI Financial -Terry Krinsky	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value proposition/impact of TYI grads that appeals to the employer

Overview

Stakeholders

1. Participant / Alumni
2. Parent
3. Trails Staff
4. Donor
5. Employer
6. Teacher (School)

Key Areas of Focus

- Why Trails?
- “Elevator Pitch” for Trails
- Value Proposition by Stakeholder
- How Trails Shifts Youth
- Enablers of and Deterrents for Engagement
- Key Metrics
- Future Outlook

Why Trails?

Core Motivators Across Stakeholders

- Belief in long-term, relational impact vs. one-off interventions (Four Seasons, Four Years and For Life)
- Alignment with equity, opportunity, and youth potential
- Trust in leadership, staff quality, and values
- Personal connection to outdoor experiential learning and “family” culture

Core Motivators By Stakeholder

- **Participants / Alumni:** Sense of belonging, identity, and desire to “give back” to what shaped them.
- **Parents:** Safe, structured environment away from negative neighbourhood pressures; mentorship and relief/support for families.
- **Staff:** Purpose-driven work; ability to do youth development differently than classroom settings; deep relationships and visible growth over time.
- **Donors:** transparency and trust in stewardship of funds.
- **Employers:** Values alignment; evidence of confident, capable youth
- **Teachers / Schools:** Sustainable, long-term support for students who struggle in traditional classrooms; improved attendance, confidence, and engagement; strong partnership with Trails and families to reinforce student success.
- **Board:** Confidence in model effectiveness; desire to scale impact without losing quality; belief in Trails as a “second family” that changes life trajectories.

“Elevator Pitch” for Trails

Trails uses outdoor experiential education to support vulnerable youth over four seasons, four years, and for life —building confidence, life skills, and long-term outcomes like graduation, post-secondary success, and employment.

What Differentiates Trails

- Longitudinal model (not a camp, not a one-off program)
- High-touch, consistent adult relationships ³⁸
- Nature as a learning modality, not recreation
- “For Life” commitment through alumni, mentorship, and scholarships
- Focus on who youth become, not just what they achieve

Value Proposition by Stakeholder

Stakeholder	Value Proposition
Participants / Alumni	Belonging; confidence; leadership; life skills (self-regulation, communication); exposure beyond neighbourhood; trusted adults; long-term support
Parents	Safe weekend and summer environment; reduced family stress; improved communication; mentorship for children; financial and emotional support
Staff	Meaningful impact; ability to focus on real youth development beyond the classroom; strong culture; skill-building in experiential education
Donors	Proven outcomes (high school and post-secondary graduation); strong stewardship; credible leadership; impact narrative
Employers	Confident, articulate, values-aligned talent; well-spoken youth with resilience, accountability, intelligence, drive and interpersonal skills; willing and able to contribute; individuals who strive to improve themselves
Teachers / Schools	Improved attendance, confidence, engagement; leadership emergence; Trails as a partner in student success; alternative pathway for students who struggle in traditional settings

How Trails Shifts Youth

Observed Changes

- Confidence and self-advocacy (speaking up, leadership roles)
- Self-regulation and conflict resolution
- Sense of belonging and identity
- Optimism and future orientation
- Stronger communication with peers, family, and adults

Timeline of Changes

- Years 1–2: Belonging, engagement, fun, relationship-building
- Years 3–4/5: Noticeable increase in confidence, leadership, self-awareness
- Year 5+: Postsecondary navigation, career readiness, giving back

Supportive Indicators

- Youth avoiding drugs
- Decreased likelihood of getting involved with high risk / violent groups
- Students moving into leadership roles and staying engaged in school
- Completing post-secondary
- Becoming mentors
- Returning to Trails as staff

Enablers of and Deterrents to Engagement

Key Enablers

- Parental buy-in and logistical support
- Youth motivation and commitment ⁴¹
- Strong sense of belonging and fun
- Consistent, trusted staff relationships
- Teacher/school partnership

Primary Deterrents

- Low parent buy-in
- Family constraints (caregiving responsibilities, instability)
- Misaligned expectations (thinking Trails is a sports camp or short-term program)
- Competing commitments (e.g., work, sports)
- Behavioural needs beyond Trails' scope

Why They Matter

- Engagement drops when expectations are unclear or family support is inconsistent
- Youth stay when Trails feels like their community
- Staff consistency is repeatedly identified as mission-critical

Key Metrics

Core Metrics Referenced (non-exhaustive)

- Number of cohorts, participants, and alumni ⁴²
- Attendance (target ~90% per weekend)
- LIT (16 Four Seasons, Four Years participants on average per year, 5-8 Four Seasons participants in 2025)
- High school graduation rate (99%)
- Post-secondary enrollment and completion
- Alumni engagement
- Number of scholarship recipients per year and average scholarship amount
- Assistance Fund budget and coverage

Key Observations

- Job outcomes tracking is happening but not consistent
- Experiential metrics are largely qualitative (e.g., participant satisfaction, improvement in mental health)

Future Outlook

Long-Term Vision

- Program quality and Trails culture remain intact regardless of scale
- Trails remains a lifelong anchor, not just a program
- For Life becomes the primary lever for deepening impact
- Trails as a model others can learn from, not just scale directly ⁴³
- Moving beyond anecdotes to defensible, outcome-based metrics

What needs to be true to get there?

Foundational Requirements

- Staff continuity and succession planning
- Sustainable, unrestricted funding
- Clear impact measurement (with a focus on For Life outcomes)
- Strong data and management information systems along with a data governance structure
- Trust across youth, families, donors, staff, and schools

Potential Risks

- Loss of key staff or institutional knowledge
- Inability to demonstrate impact credibly at scale
- Dilution of culture or experience quality