



This menu presents a range of engagement opportunities designed to connect your organization with university talent, expertise, and resources. Each option includes a description, time commitment, resource considerations, and expected outcomes.

QUICK ENGAGEMENTS (1-3 MONTHS)

Guest Speakers, Expert Panels, and Case Studies

Send a representative to speak in classes, student organizations, or special events. Send a case study or story to use as classroom motivation or project backgrounds.

Time Commitment: 2–3 hours per event including preparation **Resource Level:** ★ (Low)

For Industry Partners:

- Increased brand awareness among students
- Introduction to potential talent pipeline
- Opportunity to share industry trends and real-world challenges

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Raise awareness about community issues and needs
- Recruit student volunteers and advocates
- Share mission and impact with future professionals

Site Visits and Field Experiences

Host student and faculty groups at your location to showcase operations, impact, and opportunities.

Time Commitment: Half-day to full-day per visit

Resource Level: ★ (Low)

For Industry Partners:

- Direct interaction with potential recruits
- Showcase company culture and facilities
- Identify potential collaboration projects

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Educate students about community needs and assets
- Build understanding of service delivery models
- Create immersive learning experiences

Professional Skills Workshops

Provide experts to conduct resume reviews, practice interviews, or specialized skills training

Time Commitment: 3–4 hours per event

Resource Level: ★ (Low)

For Industry Partners:

- Direct talent assessment
- Early recruitment pipeline development
- Showcase company expertise and values

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Development for underserved populations
- Build understanding of nonprofit career paths
- Highlight transferable skills gained through community work

MEDIUM ENGAGEMENTS (3-6 MONTHS)

Challenge Competition

Present a real organizational challenge for student teams to solve through a competition format

Time Commitment: 10–15 hours spread over 1–2 months (kickoff, midpoint check, final presentations)

Resource Level: ★★ (Medium)

For Industry Partners:

- Multiple innovative solution approaches
- Identification of promising student talent
- Fresh perspectives on persistent business challenges

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Creative approaches to resource constraints
- Increased capacity for program development or evaluation
- Enhanced visibility within the university community

Course Project Integration

Integrate an organizational challenge into an existing course, with students working on solutions as part of their coursework.

Time Commitment: 10–20 hours over a semester (project definition, check-ins, final presentations)

Resource Level: ★★ (Medium)

For Industry Partners:

- Customized solutions to defined problems
- Extended student interaction for talent evaluation
- Faculty expertise applied to company challenges

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Additional capacity for program development or evaluation
- Academic rigor applied to community challenges
- Cross-disciplinary perspectives on complex issues

Data & Assessment Projects

Description: Provide data or research questions for analysis, visualization, and insight generation by students with faculty supervision

Time Commitment: 8–12 hours (initial briefing, mid-project review, final presentation)

Resource Level: ★★ (Medium)

For Industry Partners:

- Fresh analytical approaches and insights
- Cost-effective data exploration
- Identification of analytically skilled talent

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Program evaluation support
- Evidence-based improvement recommendations
- Support for grant applications and reporting
- Data visualization for stakeholder communication

Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE)

Integrate authentic research questions from your organization into course curriculum, enabling a full class of students to conduct coordinated research

Time Commitment: 15–25 hours over a semester (project scoping, class visits, data sharing, final presentations)

Resource Level: ★★ (Medium)

For Industry Partners:

- Multiple parallel experiments or analyses addressing your challenge
- Structured research with faculty expertise and quality control
- Scaled approach to exploratory research questions
- Early identification of students with research aptitude

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Large-scale data collection or analysis not possible with limited staff
- Multiple approaches to program evaluation or community assessment
- Documentation of community needs with academic rigor
- Research findings for advocacy, fundraising, and program development

Mentorship Program

Match professionals with students for structured mentoring relationships

Time Commitment: 1–2 hours per month per mentee for a semester

Resource Level: ★★ (Medium)

For Industry Partners:

- Deep connections with promising students
- Development of company ambassadors on campus
- Professional development for employee mentors

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Increased student awareness of community needs
- Leadership development for future community advocates
- Expanded network for organization's mission

SUBSTANTIAL ENGAGEMENTS (6+ MONTHS)

Capstone Project Sponsorship

Sponsor a comprehensive senior-level project where student teams address a substantial challenge.

Time Commitment: 30–40 hours over 6–9 months (definition, regular check-ins, final presentation)

Resource Level: ★★★★★ (High)

For Industry Partners:

- In-depth solutions to complex challenges
- Sustained interaction with top students
- Implementation-ready deliverables and recommendations

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Strategic planning support
- Comprehensive resource materials or toolkits
- Multi-faceted approaches to complex community issues

Research Collaboration

Partner with faculty experts and undergraduate research teams on applied research projects that advance both academic knowledge and organizational goals

Time Commitment: Varies based on project scope (typically 40+ hours over 6–12 months)

Resource Level: ★★★★★ (High)

For Industry Partners:

- Access to specialized academic expertise
- Evidence-based solutions to complex problems
- Potential for innovation and intellectual property

- Rigorous evaluation of programs and services
- Evidence to support advocacy efforts
- Scholarly documentation of community assets and needs
- Data for fundraising and stakeholder communication

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

Skill-Building Workshops

Collaborate on creating and delivering skill-building workshops in areas of organizational expertise

Time Commitment: 8–16 hours for preparation and delivery

Resource Level: ★★★ (Medium)

For Industry Partners:

- Skill development aligned with company needs
- Talent identification in specific capability areas
- Enhanced visibility in specialty areas

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Increased awareness of community needs and assets
- Skills for effective community engagement
- Cultural competency and inclusion practices
- Volunteer development for students

Internship/Service–Learning Program

Develop structured work or service experiences for students that align with organizational needs and student learning goals

Time Commitment: Significant supervision time plus program management (varies by # of students)

Resource Level: ★★☆☆ (High)

For Industry Partners:

- Extended talent evaluation and development
- Increased productivity on specific projects
- Potential for full-time conversion after graduation

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Expanded service capacity
- Fresh perspectives on program delivery
- Potential future staff recruitment
- Increased awareness of organization's mission

Collaborative Innovation Space

Description: Create a dedicated physical or virtual space for ongoing collaboration between your organization, faculty, and students

Time Commitment: Long-term commitment with regular engagement

Resource Level: ★★★★★ (Very High)

For Industry Partners:

- Continuous innovation pipeline
- Dedicated access to faculty expertise
- Preferred access to student talent

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Ongoing community-based research hub
- Multi-year initiatives addressing systemic issues
- Sustained partnership with multiple university departments
- Enhanced capacity for innovation and adaptation

Innovation Infrastructure for Startups

Access university laboratories, equipment, and technical expertise for product development and testing

Time Commitment: Varies based on project complexity and equipment needs

Resource Level: ★★ to ★★★★★ (Medium to High, depending on facilities used)

For Startups and Small Businesses:

- Access to equipment too expensive to purchase (analytical instruments, prototyping tools, etc.)
- Technical expertise from faculty and trained students
- Ability to conduct proof-of-concept research without major capital investment
- Potential for specialized testing and validation services
- Option to embed student teams within your innovation process
- Pathway to longer-term research partnerships as company grows

Customized Training Program

Description: Co-develop specialized training for your staff, constituents, or student talent pipeline

Time Commitment: Significant planning time initially, then varies by program

Resource Level: ★★☆☆ (High)

For Industry Partners:

- Tailored skill development for specific needs
- Credential or certificate opportunities for employees
- Enhanced employee retention and development

For Community/Nonprofit Partners:

- Professional development for staff and volunteers
- Capacity building for community members
- Leadership development for community advocates
- Skills training for program participants

Collaborative Funding Support Program

Description: Co-develop grant proposals that your company/organization may be eligible for through collaboration with Valpo. Note that potential funding opportunities will need to be aligned with Valpo's mission and priorities.

Time Commitment: Significant planning time initially, then varies by funding opportunity

Resource Level: ★★☆☆ (High)

For Industry Partners and Community/Nonprofit Partners::

- Tailored grant searching for specific needs, with grant writing and submission support
- Increased eligibility for funding opportunities through federal, state, local and private foundation funding sources
- Additional revenue streams and connections with new funding sources