

# BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT STAKEHOLDERS WHEEL

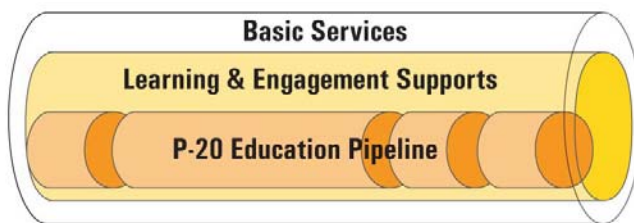
## IDENTIFYING BUSINESS LEADERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

### PURPOSE

Business leaders play a crucial role in community efforts to ensure that all youth are ready for college, work and life. Many business leaders are eager to make an impact across the workforce readiness pipeline, from cradle to career. They want to ensure that their roles help contribute to better outcomes for youth and families. As key intermediaries, community nonprofit organizations have the opportunity to recognize the needs of youth and recommend how business may be best able to use their assets to meet those needs.

#### Workforce Readiness Pipeline

Developed by The Forum for Youth Investment



To engage business, nonprofits should have a strategy to ensure that they identify the right business partners, to utilize the strengths of those partners and to take the steps necessary to ensure successful long-term collaborations. It can be difficult for nonprofits to identify all of the local businesses and business organizations in the community to begin executing this strategy. *The Business Engagement Stakeholders Wheel* lists different business organizations and business leaders who could partner, as well as information on the roles business can play to ensure all youth are ready for college, work and life.

### STAKEHOLDERS WHEEL OVERVIEW

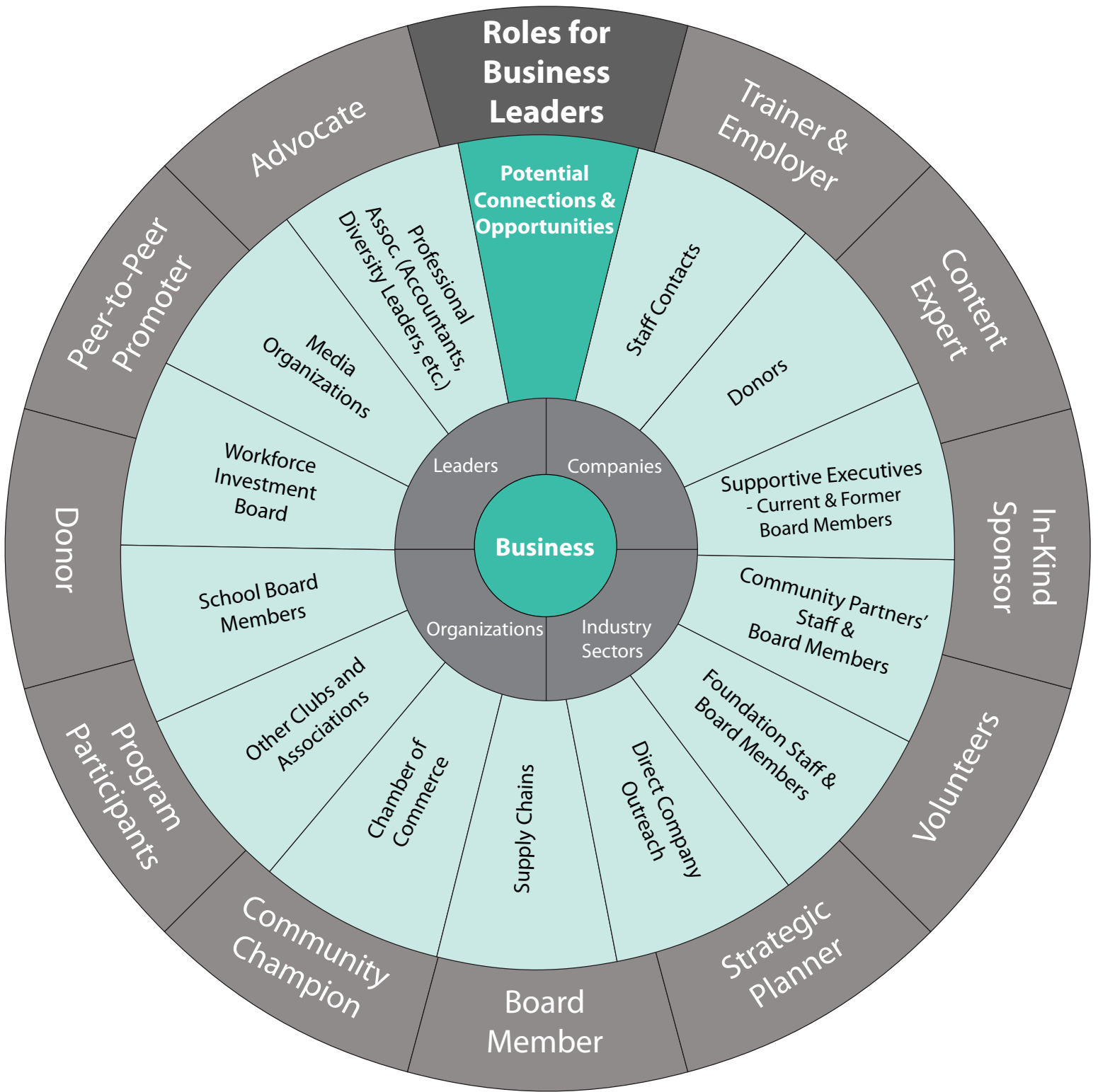
The Business Engagement Stakeholders Wheel provides nonprofit leaders insight on business organizations and individuals that could be in their community. Use the Stakeholders Wheel to begin a local business engagement strategy or to assess current efforts to connect with the right business leaders in the community. The wheel contains a variety of business organizations of different sizes and scopes. Please note that not all of these organizations will be found in every community.

The wheel has three rings. The inner ring shows **categories** of outreach that exist in the business world, through individual leaders, companies, business organizations and industry collaborations. The middle ring, *Potential Connections and Opportunities*, shows **avenues** of outreach for a nonprofit. The outer ring, *Roles for Business Leaders*, lists **ways** business can support a nonprofit's work. The rings of the wheel turn to allow nonprofits to visualize the different roles their business partners could play. Use the wheel to create business outreach strategies and to analyze the roles business partners are currently playing. Additional information on each of the wheel's rings and definitions of the items listed in the Stakeholders Wheel are provided in this document.

### Strengths Nonprofits Can Gain from Business

Developed by the Council on Competitiveness

- **Knowledge** - information about the critical skills and competencies that young people need to be successful in the workplace.
- **Planning and operational expertise** - helpful in program design, implementation, and marketing.
- **Relationships and credibility** - can be leveraged in seeking financial support, promoting programs with other business and policymakers, and in recruiting of participants.
- **Access to resources** - employees as volunteers, space at facilities, equipment or other in-kind items nonprofits or their clients can use and financial resources.
- **Organizational culture** - business' entrepreneurial viewpoint and skill for emphasizing action can enhance the ability to take calculated risks, which can create new opportunities.



## USING THE WHEEL

**Business Categories** - Here are four categories of outreach that exist in the business world. These will guide a nonprofit's business engagement efforts by providing focus areas to target outreach.

**Leaders** – Business owners and executives are leaders in various ways, through their roles in their companies, within their fields or industries and in their communities. Business leaders who are already involved in the community should be at the top of any outreach list.

**Companies** – Companies come in various shapes and sizes. Successful engagement strategies will include not only large corporations, but also mid- and small-sized organizations, such as local restaurants and gas stations.

**Industry Sectors** – Some communities have the advantage of hosting a number of companies within the same industries (e.g. healthcare, information technology, manufacturing, etc.). Every industry has unique opportunities and challenges, specifically in regards to the skills they require of their employees. Identify prominent industries in the area and reach out to their coordinating organizations to learn about their workforce needs.

**Organizations** – Business organizations, such as professional associations and chambers of commerce, provide a platform for business leaders to come together to strategize on finding qualified talent, ensuring economic growth and finding ways to give back to the community. Presenting to one of these organizations is an effective way to reach many business owners and executives in the community.

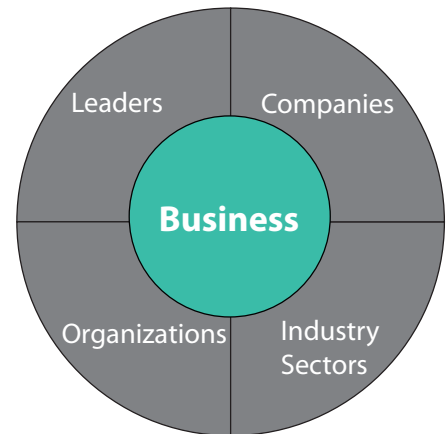
**Potential Connections & Opportunities** - Building a successful business engagement strategy is all about making connections. Every organization is connected to business leaders through various relationships - the key step is to identify them. The following **avenues** of outreach can assist a nonprofit in discovering their business connections by providing a listing of potential targets.

**Staff Contacts** – All nonprofit staff members should identify the business leaders they work with – both in their day-to-day work through volunteer coordination, community partnership meetings, communicating with suppliers, etc. and in their personal lives through their children, religious centers, neighborhoods, etc.

**Donors** – Donors can take various forms. Individuals or organizations can provide financial resources both with general funds and those for a specific event or project and in-kind support including office space, supplies, transportation, catering, etc. Do not forget to reach out to those who have sponsored in the past, but are not currently engaged.

**Supportive Executives** – These individuals include those who have been or are on the board of directors; work for previous and current corporate sponsors; have attended events; have spoken out on workforce readiness issues or are involved with other youth organizations in the community.

**Community Partners Staff & Board Members** – Most nonprofits work with other organizations in the community. Identify those partner organizations and research their staff and boards of directors. Remember to be respectful of the relationships with other organizations and identify partnership opportunities to leverage each other's strengths.



## USING THE WHEEL CONTINUED ...



**Foundation Staff & Board Members** – Identify foundations that give to youth programs in the community, regardless if they are a current donor. Research their staff and boards of directors for possible connections.

**Direct Company Outreach** – What companies are currently supporting workforce readiness issues in the community? Reach out to their leadership directly with brief organizational information and how it connects to their company with a request to meet to brief them in further detail.

**Supply Chains** – Businesses continuously receive and sell goods both to and from individuals and other businesses. This supply chain of materials directly links a large number of organizations. An opportunity exists to use a current business partners’ supply chains to connect with this larger network.

**Chamber of Commerce** – The chamber of commerce can hold tremendous influence over the issues business leaders are passionate about and can influence local and state policymakers. Presenting to the local chamber is an opportunity to inform a large group of business leaders and move youth issues forward on their agenda.

**Other Clubs and Associations** – These organizations, such as Lions, Rotary and Kiwanis, focus on giving back to the community. Many members are long-time residents and understand the community’s challenges. This is an excellent platform to explain how youth issues connect to the organization’s initiatives and the community’s goals.

**School Board Members** – School Board members have a direct link to the community’s education system. They understand the challenges facing youth in the community and some play dual roles as business executives.

**Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs)** – WIBs are local and state entities tasked with directing workforce programs. They oversee One-Stop Career Centers, which provide job seekers with employment and training opportunities and connect with employers across a region. Fifty percent of WIB members must be from private businesses. These individuals have a stake in the community’s workforce issues and should be identified for outreach.

**Media Organizations** – Leaders of media organizations are usually active in community affairs. Add newspaper editors and publishers and radio and TV station general managers to the outreach list.

**Professional Associations** – These organizations are composed of members from a particular profession or population. Examples include women business owners, diversity leaders, corporate social responsibility executives, accountants, journalists, etc. Research the leadership and active members of these groups and schedule meetings with them.

## USING THE WHEEL CONTINUED ...

**Roles for Business Leaders - Ways to Get Involved** - Successful long-term business partnerships provide multiple types of opportunities for engagement. Provide business leaders with a menu of options for their involvement. The following partnership options can provide the base for that menu.

**Trainer & Employer** – Businesses can provide career experiences through internships and job shadowing, which will impact the skills, knowledge and work habits students will need to succeed in professional life.

**Content Expert** – Business executives can provide information on their company's future workforce needs, assist in the development of curricula and provide faculty for courses.

**In-Kind Sponsor** – Potential in-kind contributions include: pro-bono services, loaned executives, meeting/office space, transportation, furniture, and computers.

**Volunteers** – Business leaders can reach out to their employees. These individuals can provide a large and dedicated volunteer base. Most company philanthropic programs will include a volunteerism component.

**Strategic Planner** – Businesses hold internal expertise that could be shared with community organizations including: nonprofit staff professional development training and strategic and financial planning.

**Board Member** – Business executives can bring their knowledge directly to a nonprofit by sitting on their board of directors. They can use their relationships with other executives and community leaders to encourage them to join the board as well.

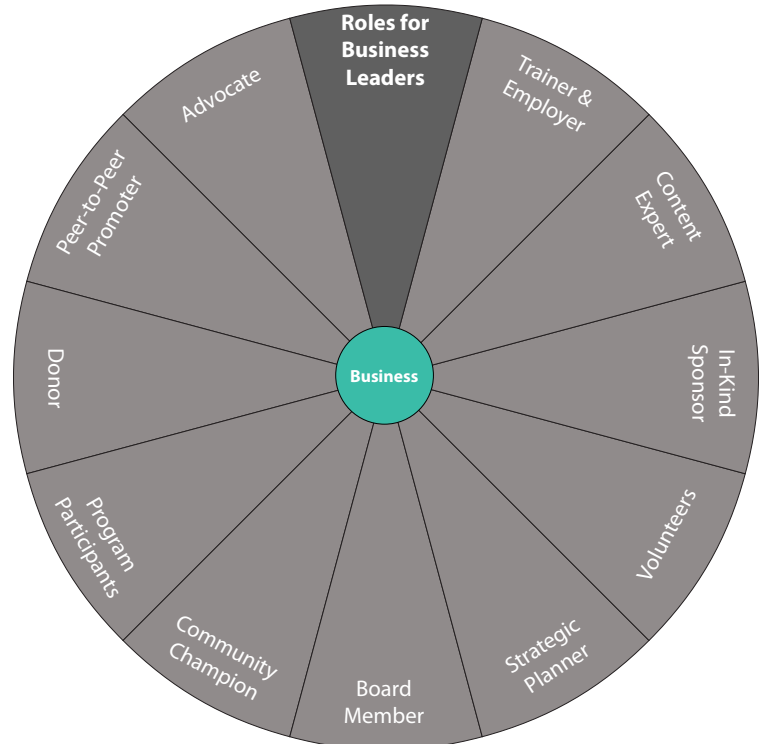
**Community Champion** – Business leaders can provide visibility to nonprofit organizations by presenting at various community events and promoting the program in various media outlets including newspapers, online publications and television. Build relationships with a company's public relations team, who can expand a nonprofit's communications network and keep them apprised of upcoming events.

**Program Participants** – By providing information to their employees, business leaders can influence individuals to participate in community programs.

**Donor** – Financial donors can provide both short- and long-term funding.

**Peer-to-Peer Promoter** – Use business leaders' connections with other organizations and provide them with the information necessary to discuss workforce readiness issues and the importance of investing in youth from cradle to career to a variety of audiences.

**Advocate** – Businesses' can advocate for youth in front policy leaders. Educate partners on current events in legislative bodies so that the importance of youth issues is heard from multiple constituencies.





## CONCLUSION

Business leaders want and need to be involved in improving the lives of youth in their communities. This tool gives nonprofit leaders a good start in identifying the business organizations in their community and potential roles those organizations can play. Corporate Voices is dedicated to activating the business sector around the entire workforce readiness pipeline. Through the creation of a series of tools and resources, including *Supporting the Education Pipeline: A Business Engagement Toolkit for Community-Based Organizations*, *Common Goals Unique Strengths: Education and Business Partnerships* and *Call to Action: Ready by 21 Business Engagement Menu*, Corporate Voices is supporting the creation of sustainable, long-term business and community partnerships. For these tools and others please visit [www.corporatevoices.org](http://www.corporatevoices.org).

## RECOGNITION

Corporate Voices would like to credit the Forum for Youth Investment for their original creation and development of the Stakeholders Wheel, which was the inspiration for this document.

### ABOUT CORPORATE VOICES

[www.corporatevoices.org](http://www.corporatevoices.org)

Corporate Voices for Working Families is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders. To create bipartisan support for issues affecting working families, we facilitate research in areas spotlighting the intersecting interests of business, community and families: workforce readiness, family economic stability, flexibility in the workplace, and work and family balance. Collectively our 50 partner companies, with annual net revenues of more than \$1 trillion, employ more than 4 million individuals throughout all 50 states.

### ABOUT READY BY 21

[www.readyby21.org](http://www.readyby21.org)

Ready by 21 is a set of innovative leadership capacity-building strategies developed by the Forum for Youth Investment. The national experts at the Forum have decades of youth policy experience which they leveraged to make the Ready by 21 strategy the most effective way to help communities improve the odds that all youth will be ready for college, work and life. The Ready by 21 strategy recognizes that effective leadership is the critical lever to improving health, educational and social outcomes for children and youth. The Ready by 21 strategy is flexible enough to meet leaders where they are and helps focus them on goals and the systems needing to be addressed; challenges them to create a shared vision and agenda; helps leaders build broader partnerships, set bigger goals, use better data and implement bolder strategies, and asks how all stakeholders, including youth, can deliver solutions.

### ABOUT THE FORUM FOR YOUTH INVESTMENT

[www.forumfyi.org](http://www.forumfyi.org)

The Forum for Youth Investment is a nonprofit, nonpartisan “action tank” dedicated to helping communities and the nation make sure all young people are Ready by 21: ready for college, work and life. Informed by rigorous research and practical experience, the Forum forges innovative ideas, strategies and partners to strengthen solutions for young people and those who care about them. A trusted resource for policy makers, advocates, researchers and program professionals, the Forum provides youth and adult leaders with the information, connections and tools they need to create greater opportunities and outcomes for young people.

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