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# Help Students Set Ambitious Learning Goals By Measuring SROI

## What is SROI?

Social Return On Investment is a measurement of the social value generated by a project or organization.

In contrast to the direct financial benefits measured by traditional ROI (return on investment) calculations, SROI takes into consideration a web of indirect benefits that a venture can generate. For example, a breakfast program at a school may not generate any direct revenue, but it can encourage low-income students to come to school, decrease drop-out rates, and therefore increase employability in the long term.

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### THE GROWTH OF SOCIAL INVESTING

Creating and measuring social benefit is becoming big business. Launched in 2013, the SVX is an exchange system (like the TSX - Toronto Stock Exchange), specifically for companies with a social mission. Learn more about it here: [www.svx.ca/](http://www.svx.ca/)

## Why is it Valuable?

Measuring SROI is a highly effective way of setting and assessing goals because it is:

- **Comprehensive:** it investigates multiple ways that the project/organization can generate value.
- **Measurable:** it establishes clear, observable criteria on which to assess that value.
- **Participatory:** success criteria are developed in collaboration with the people who are running the project/organization.
- **Improvement-oriented:** it measures **impact** based on the change that the project/organization is able to effect over time.

These same benefits can be applied to the way students establish and measure their learning goals.

## SROI in Your Classroom

Use the SROI chart on the reverse of this page to introduce a project or unit.

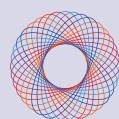
- This activity encourages students to consider the multiple ways they can both receive and generate value through the project/unit.
- By measuring the social return on their investment of time and effort, students come to understand that the value of the project/unit extends far beyond the acquisition of marks.

Use the SROI chart with your students to co-create success criteria for a project.

- This invites students to participate as investors who have a personal stake in the project.

Have students conduct research on social investing.

- Social investing is rooted in the fact that value cannot be fully understood by numeracy alone (i.e. profit). You can use this trend in finance to draw parallels to school, where the value of education cannot be expressed through marks alone.
- Here are some keywords to guide preliminary research: Centre for Impact Investing, SVX, Social Finance, B Corp.



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# Sample SROI Chart

The chart below is a simple way of helping your students focus on the broader value generated by a project or unit of study. Fill it in as a class to co-create success criteria and establish goals at the beginning of a project/unit.

Introduce this exercise by asking the following questions:

**What do we hope to accomplish with this project/unit?**

**How will we know when we are successful?**

SAMPLE CATEGORIES & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

HOW WE WILL CREATE VALUE	WHAT WE WILL LOOK FOR	WHAT WE WILL MEASURE
<p><b>1 Valuable Products:</b> What is being created in this project/unit? What would make these creations most valuable/useful for me, my teacher, and my peers?</p> <p><b>2 Valuable Skills:</b> What are the transferable skills to be learned through this project/unit? What can we do to maximize their usefulness?</p> <p><b>3 Valuable Partnerships:</b> What role will collaboration play in this project/unit? What can make this collaboration most valuable for the people involved?</p>	<p><b>1 Pride and Excitement:</b> What would make you proud enough of your work to share it with others? What would make you excited about this project/unit?</p> <p><b>2 Widespread Application:</b> What skills from this project/unit will you use in other classes? What skills will you use outside of school?</p> <p><b>3 Increased Collaboration:</b> Are classmates helping each other outside of the project/class? Did partnerships formed during the project encourage this extra collaboration? Why?</p>	<p><b>1 Project Impact:</b> What do you want the project/unit to change? (ex. opinions, behaviours, understanding...) How will you measure this change?</p> <p><b>2 Skill Development:</b> What new skills will you develop in this project/unit? What skills will you improve? What will indicate when your skillset has changed?</p> <p><b>3 Group Participation:</b> To what extent did your participation in class increase or decrease throughout the project/unit? How will you measure your participation level?</p>

## What Success Looks Like

### Both you and your students make ongoing reference to your SROI chart

- Post the chart somewhere in your class. Routinely ask your students whether or not they are seeing the “look fors” you came up with. Have them investigate why certain “look fors” are absent.

### Students explicitly discuss the value of their work beyond marks

- When discussing the results of their projects, students offer comments about how they plan to use the products, skills, and partnerships they have acquired through the project.

### You modify project and lesson plans based on the results of this activity

- If you or your students have difficulty identifying the value created by a project or unit, consider ways you can change it.