**Document 7 - Service-Learning Partnership Cost-Benefit Assessment**

**for Community Organizations**

**Step One: Identify the Costs of the Partnership**

Time

Calculate the amount of time staff spent training and supervising student service-learners.

\_\_\_\_\_ hours/week

Calculate the amount of time staff spend communicating with university personnel.

Face-to-face meetings \_\_\_\_\_ hours/month

Phone conversations \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week

Email \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week

Calculate time lost that could be spent meeting with other constituencies, such as board members, donors, public officials, that can be directly attributed to time spent on partnership activities. \_\_\_\_\_ hours/month

Financial Costs

Costs of new staff hired to support partnership activities, if applicable.

\_\_\_\_\_ month

(salary + benefits)

Costs of equipment, tools, and materials used to support service-learning activities.

\_\_\_\_\_ month

**Step Two: Calculate the Benefits of the Partnership**

Time

Calculate the staff time that is freed up by the service-learning:

Staff time freed up by students/campus partners, assuming organizational responsibilities.

\_\_\_\_\_ hours/week

Staff time freed up as a result of technical assistance/training from campus partners.

\_\_\_\_\_ hours/week

Calculate time spent with potential donors, public officials, etc. that can be directly attributed to the partnership.

\_\_\_\_\_ hours/month

Financial Benefits

Calculate the value added of student, faculty, and staff time contributed to the organization. (Hourly rate is based on Independent Sector’s 2012 value of volunteer time.)

\_\_\_\_\_ hours/week

x $22.14/hour

Calculate new revenue sources generated by the partnership, including grant dollars.

\_\_\_\_\_ month

Calculate the value of new equipment provided to the organization at no cost.

Total cost = \_\_\_\_\_

Calculate the value of facility space provided by the campus partner(s):

Square footage provided by campus partner(s) x average monthly lease cost per square foot in your area =

\_\_\_\_\_

**STEP THREE: COMPARE COSTS AND BENEFITS**

**Total costs: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Total benefits: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Difference: (+ or -): \_\_\_\_\_**

Of course, the hope is that the numerical benefits of the partnership will outweigh the numerical costs. Even if they do not, it may be possible that the total benefits—including intangible benefits such as enhancements in organizational capacity, staff morale, access to new sources of funds, influence, and prestige—may outweigh the total costs. Conversely, the intangible costs—adverse effects of the partnership on organizational identity and privacy, loss of focus on core mission, or negative impact on morale— may outweigh the tangible benefits.

Scheibel, Bowley, and Jones, 2005, pp. 78-83. Used by permission in B. Jacoby, *Service-Learning Essentials: Questions, Answers, and Lessons Learned*, Jossey-Bass, 2015.