



CENTER FOR
**STRATEGIC
ENTREPRENEURSHIP**
COPPIN STATE UNIVERSITY | COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

EXCELLENCE **IN** ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING **DATA COLLECTION** RESEARCHER GUIDE



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EXCEL Research Project

Dear Researchers,

On behalf of Coppin State University's Center for Strategic Entrepreneurship and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, we extend a warm welcome to you as valued contributors to the EXCEL research project. We are thrilled to have you on board to collect data for this important endeavor.

The EXCEL research project represents a significant collaboration between our university and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Both organizations have committed substantial investments to foster the youth and young adult entrepreneurial ecosystem in Baltimore City. This partnership builds upon the Casey Foundation's previous investments in 2017, which led to the publication of the influential report, "Reshaping Workforce Development in Baltimore: Ensuring Community Voice and Expertise Guide Us." The report highlighted the strong desire for entrepreneurship among individuals aged 16 to 29 in Baltimore City, as well as the need for equitable access to resources that can empower them to create businesses with positive community impact.

With your expertise and dedication, our aim is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the current formal entrepreneurship learning opportunities available to young individuals in the age group of 16 to 29 in Baltimore City. By thoroughly evaluating the existing landscape of entrepreneurship education, we hope to identify areas where improvements can be made and uncover opportunities for growth and development.

The findings of this research project will play a crucial role in informing future initiatives and interventions that are designed to strengthen the youth entrepreneurial ecosystem in Baltimore City. We want to ensure that young people in our community have the necessary resources, support, and opportunities to start and grow their businesses successfully. Your contribution to this project will help shape the future of entrepreneurship education and create a positive impact on the lives of countless young individuals.

We are immensely grateful for your commitment to this research project and your willingness to contribute your expertise to our shared goals. Your dedication and efforts will be instrumental in shaping the future of entrepreneurship education in Baltimore City.

Thank you for being a part of this transformative research initiative.

Sincerely,
Ronald C. Williams, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator

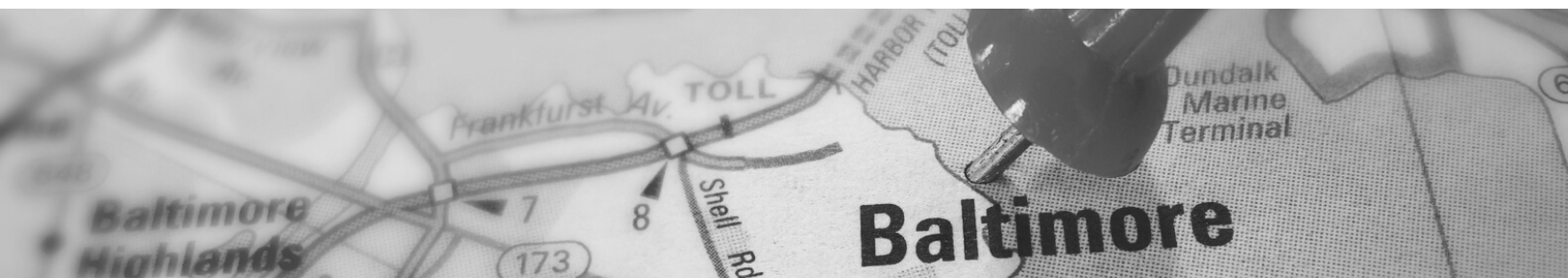
Communications Overview for EXCEL Research Project

With the valuable support of Coppin State University and the collaboration of Annie E. Casey Foundation's communications team, we are excited to present the communications strategy for the EXCEL research project. Our strategy will be phased throughout the project, focusing on key milestones and events to effectively disseminate information, engage stakeholders, and create awareness about our findings and initiatives.

Phase 1: Project Kick-Off and Launch of Data Collection

During this phase, our primary objective is to generate interest and participation in the data collection process. We will employ various communication channels to reach our target audience and encourage their involvement. The key activities include:

1. **Project Announcement:** We will issue a press release and direct communication to announce the launch of the data collection phase, emphasizing the significance of the research project and its potential impact on the youth entrepreneurial ecosystem in Baltimore City.
2. **Social Media Campaign:** Leveraging social media platforms, we will run a targeted campaign to spread the word about the research project, engage with the community, and encourage individuals to participate in the data collection process.
3. **Collaborative Partnerships:** We will collaborate with local community organizations, educational institutions, and youth-oriented initiatives to expand our reach and encourage their support in promoting the research project.



Communications Overview for EXCEL Research Project Cont.

Phase 2: Transition to Analysis - Sharing Preliminary Findings

After the data collection phase, we will transition to the analysis of the collected data. We aim to share preliminary findings to generate excitement and engage stakeholders in discussions. The key activities include:

- 1. Open House:** The Center for Strategic Entrepreneurship will host an open house event in September 2023. This event will serve as a platform for stakeholders, including researchers, community members, policymakers, and entrepreneurs, to come together, share insights, learn the progress of the project and provide valuable feedback.
- 2. Urban Manufacturing Alliance Gatherings:** The Urban Manufacturing Alliance will be hosted in the new College of Business on October 10th, 2023. This gathering will bring together manufacturers, industry experts, entrepreneurs, makers, and policymakers. At this event, we will discuss the preliminary findings.
- 3. Global Entrepreneurship Week:** In November 2023, during Global Entrepreneurship Week, we will organize a series of events and activities to showcase the research project's progress and create awareness about the youth entrepreneurial ecosystem in Baltimore City. These events will include panel discussions, workshops, and networking opportunities.

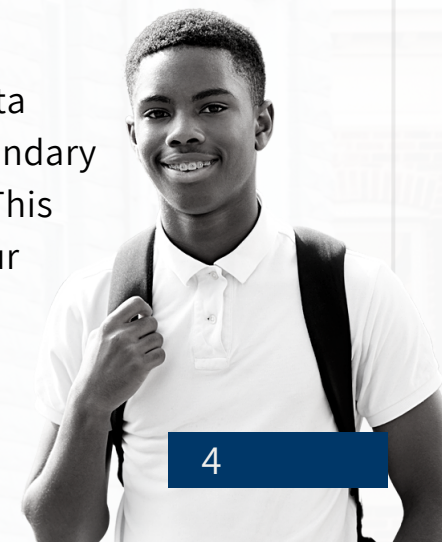
Throughout the project, we will maintain an active and consistent presence on various communication channels, including social media, press releases, website development and updates, and email newsletters, to keep stakeholders informed about the project's developments, milestones, and opportunities for engagement.

By implementing this comprehensive communications strategy, we aim to maximize the reach and impact of the EXCEL research project, foster collaboration, and ensure that the findings inform future initiatives to strengthen the youth entrepreneurial ecosystem in Baltimore City.

Data Collection Overview for EXCEL Research Project

The data collection process for the EXCEL research project will involve a combination of interviews, surveys, focus groups, and data collection from various sources. This comprehensive approach will enable us to gather both descriptive statistical and qualitative data to gain a holistic understanding of the current landscape of entrepreneurship learning opportunities for individuals aged 16 to 29 in Baltimore City. Here is a brief overview of each data collection method:

- **Interviews:** We will conduct one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders. These interviews will provide in-depth insights into youth programs and their experiences, challenges, and perspectives on entrepreneurship learning in Baltimore City. The interviews will be semi-structured, allowing for flexibility to explore relevant topics and gather rich qualitative data.
- **Surveys:** To gather descriptive statistical data and reach additional participants, we will design and distribute surveys. The surveys will be tailored to capture information about entrepreneurship learning experiences, access to resources, barriers faced, and aspirations among young adults in Baltimore City. We will utilize online survey platforms and collaborate with community partners to maximize participation and ensure diverse representation.
- **Focus Groups:** Conducting focus group discussions will enable us to engage in interactive conversations with small groups of individuals. These sessions will provide an opportunity for participants to share their experiences, exchange ideas, and generate insights collectively. The focus groups will be designed to include diverse perspectives and demographics, ensuring a comprehensive representation of the target population.
- **Data Collection from Various Sources:** In addition to primary data collection methods, we will also gather relevant data from secondary sources such as existing reports, publications, and databases. This will help provide context, comparative analysis, and support our findings and recommendations.



Data Collection Overview for EXCEL Research Project Cont.

Throughout the data collection process, we will adhere to ethical guidelines, ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of participants. All data will be securely stored in SharePoint and analyzed using appropriate statistical methods and qualitative analysis techniques.

The collected data will be analyzed systematically to identify common themes, patterns, and trends. We will employ multiple data collection methods to triangulate data, ensuring a comprehensive and robust analysis of the entrepreneurship learning landscape in Baltimore City.

The insights and findings derived from the data collection process will form the foundation for our subsequent analysis, recommendations, and initiatives aimed at strengthening the youth entrepreneurial ecosystem in Baltimore City. We are committed to conducting rigorous and comprehensive data collection to ensure the integrity and generalizability of our research.

By utilizing a combination of interviews, surveys, focus groups, and data collection from various sources, we will gather a wealth of information to facilitate evidence-based decision-making and drive positive change for young entrepreneurs in Baltimore City.



Scheduling Process for Interviews

To ensure efficient and effective scheduling of interviews for the EXCEL research project, we have established the following set of processes:

Identification of Interview Slots:

- The project team will identify available time slots for interviews, considering the availability of the researchers and participants.
- Interview slots will be allocated in 45-minute to one-hour increments, allowing for sufficient time for the interview itself, as well as preparation before and debriefing after each meeting.

Interview Scheduling Coordinator:

- Participants will select and schedule interviews in response to an email invitation to sign up. A follow-up to the initial invitations will be assigned to either Jan, Alzariyat, or Kirsten from the research team.
- The assigned coordinator will handle the logistics of ensuring that schedules are synchronized and managing any necessary rescheduling.

Virtual or In-person Interviews:

- Based on the preferences and feasibility of both the researchers and participants, interviews can be conducted either virtually or in person.
- The interview scheduling coordinator will take into account any specific requirements or preferences when arranging the interview format.

Invitation and Reminder:

- The administrative team will send reminders to interview participants, including the date, time, and interview format details.
- A reminder will also be sent closer to the scheduled interview date to ensure that participants are adequately prepared.

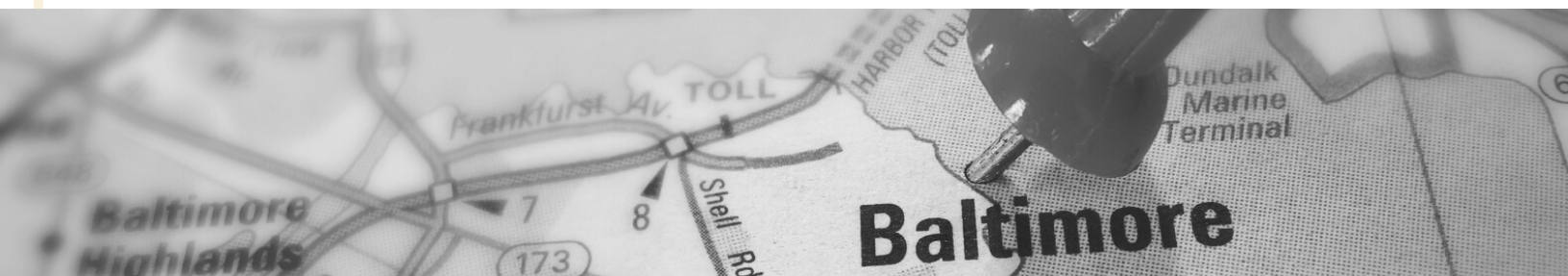
Scheduling Process for Interviews Cont.

Researchers' Calendar Management:

- Each researcher is encouraged to maintain their own calendar and set personal reminders for upcoming interviews.
- This will help researchers stay organized and ensure that they are well-prepared for each interview session.

By following these processes, we aim to streamline the interview scheduling process, minimize conflicts, and maintain clear communication with the participants. This approach will enable us to maximize the efficiency of the research team's time while ensuring that interviews are conducted smoothly and without any scheduling issues.

If any changes or adjustments are required during the scheduling process, the interview scheduling coordinator will promptly address them and communicate any necessary updates to all stakeholders involved.



Interview Expectations Script

We would like to establish a trusting and comfortable environment for open and honest conversations during the interview process. To ensure a productive and meaningful interview experience, we have set the following expectations:

1. **Trust Building:** We encourage a collaborative and trusting relationship between the interviewer (practitioner) and interviewee. This will help create an atmosphere conducive to open dialogue and sharing perspectives and experiences.
2. **Conversational Tone:** The interviews will be conducted in a conversational tone rather than a formal or rigid style. We want to create a relaxed atmosphere where participants feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and ideas freely.
3. **Privacy and Confidentiality:** All interviews will be conducted privately, and the information shared will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. No names or direct identifying information associated with responses will be shared.
4. **Recording consent:** Permission to record the interview will be asked before and after the recording begins. This is to ensure that information is accurately documented. The recording will not be shared for public use.

By setting these expectations, we aim to create a safe and trusting space for participants to share their thoughts and experiences openly, knowing their privacy will be respected. We appreciate your willingness to contribute to this research project and value the insights you will provide.

Script

1. **Greeting:** Hello, [Participant's Name]. Thank you for taking the time to participate in our research project. My name is [Your Name], and I am a researcher with the EXCEL research project at Coppin State University.
2. **Purpose:** This interview aims to gather insights and perspectives on entrepreneurship learning opportunities for individuals aged 16 to 29 in Baltimore City.
3. **Confidentiality:** Your responses will be kept confidential and only used for research. Your personal identifying information will not be shared without your explicit consent.
4. **Recording:** For the purpose of capturing accurate data, we will record this interview. Do I have your consent? Once the recording begins, I'll ask again for your permission.

Researcher Tips:

During the interviews, it is essential to create a conducive environment for open and productive discussions. Here are some tips for researchers to keep in mind during the interview process:

1. **Gentle Redirection:** If a participant goes too far off on a tangent or deviates from the main topic, gently redirect them back to the focus of the interview. Politely steer the conversation back to the key points and objectives of the research.
2. **Collect Key Points:** As the interview progresses, make sure to actively listen and collect key points or important insights shared by the participant. Take notes or mark these key points for later reference during the analysis phase.
3. **Be Curious:** Maintain a genuine curiosity and interest in the participant's perspectives and experiences. Ask follow-up questions to delve deeper into their responses and uncover valuable insights that may not be immediately apparent.

Closing Out the Interview:

4. **Closing Questions/Statements:** Before concluding the interview, ask closing questions or make statements that may lead to additional data collection opportunities. For example, if a respondent mentions an annual report that could support documentation collection, inquire further or express interest in obtaining a copy for reference.
5. **Extending Data Collection Opportunities:** Seek opportunities to extend data collection beyond the interview itself. Explore possibilities for follow-up observations, documentation collection, or even participation in focus groups. This helps gather diverse data sources to enrich the research findings.
6. **"What Next":** If an interviewee would like to know what happens next please share that all data collected will be reviewed for themes and reporting. Updates regarding the research will be posted to the designated website.

Post-Interview Data Collection Documentation:


7. **SharePoint System:** After each interview, ensure that the data collected is promptly added to the provided SharePoint system within 24 hours. This helps maintain an organized and centralized repository of data for analysis and reference.



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Researcher	
Interview Date & Time	
Interviewing Organization	
Interviewing Contact	
Interview Link	

Organization Background:

Interview Considerations:

