

# IN-WORK

## Methodological Guideline for Stakeholders Engagement (D.2.3)

2022-1-IT02-KA220-HED-000087184



## What will you find in this document?

This document is a guide for stakeholder engagement in Work Integrated Learning projects for students with special needs and disabilities. Throughout the document, you will encounter three symbols.



This first symbol represents tips that can assist you in understanding and applying concepts and strategies.



This second symbol summarizes stories drawn from our practical experience. We have included these stories to help you visualize the guide's content. Please note that names and locations have been modified from reality and adapted for illustrative purposes in the story.



This third symbol represents questionnaires that you are free to use and adapt to the needs of your projects. You only need to reference the source:

In-Work Project (2023). Methodological Guidelines for Stakeholders' Engagement (D2.3). Inclusive Communities at Work (2022-1-IT02-KA220-HED-000087184). Retrieved from <https://www.in-work-project.eu/>

Enjoy the reading and enjoy the learning!

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## 1. Project Description - Inclusive Communities at Work (IN-WORK)

The IN-WORK project aims to explore the university's role in fostering an inclusive culture. This takes place by developing and testing an intervention model that emphasizes the relationships between the university and its external environment while actively engaging relevant stakeholders. This project adopts the work-integrated learning approach, encompassing work-based learning such as internships and traineeships, to facilitate meaningful learning experiences for individuals with special needs within the realm of work. The project's activities take place both within and outside the university setting. Within the university, the goal is to encourage the inclusive use of work-integrated learning pedagogies by educators, utilizing online technologies as well. The project seeks to promote an inclusive culture beyond university, by involving businesses in the design and development of learning experiences. The objectives of the project are the following:

- Strengthen community ties by pursuing short-term objectives like co-designing learning experiences and medium-term goals such as promoting an inclusive culture.
- Support the idea that the university is an educational institution for everyone, not just students, by collaborating with stakeholders to co-design extracurricular activities. The university also serves as a host institution for traineeships for youths with special needs from the reference communities.
- Provide training for internal staff to design, develop, and implement work-integrated learning activities. This ensures the integration of these methods into the regular university curriculum, ensuring project sustainability.
- Validate the effectiveness of the approach and intervention model through real-world testing during a regular semester of the academic year. This hands-on experience allows for adjustments and refinements as necessary to better cater to the needs of the target group in the future.



<https://www.in-work-project.eu>

## 2. Introduction: Contextualization, Stakeholder Engagement and Objectives of the Guide

Work-integrated learning (WIL) is a dynamic educational approach that bridges the gap between academic knowledge and real-world practice. It empowers students to gain valuable hands-on experience while fostering collaboration between educational institutions and organizations. In this evolving landscape of education, it is imperative to recognize and address the diverse needs of students, including those with special needs. This guide aims to provide a comprehensive methodology for effectively engaging stakeholders in WIL initiatives tailored to these students' unique requirements.

### *Context of a WIL Program*

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) represents an educational approach that integrates theory and practice, offering students the opportunity to apply classroom learning in real-world work settings. It fosters a dynamic synergy between academic institutions, employers, and students, ultimately enhancing the educational experience. Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) can be implemented either within specific courses or integrated into entire academic programs (CEWIL, 2018). The implementation of Work-Integrated Learning entails the creation of educational objectives that are closely tied to enhancing employability, personal agency, and life-long learning (CEWIL, 2018). McRae et al. (2018) propose the Work-Integrated Learning Quality Framework that has four key components- Pedagogy, Experience, Assessment, and Reflection- identified with the acronym P.E.A.R. McRae et al. (2018) underline that these are the four pillars of high-impact experiential learning. Pedagogy refers to the integration of WIL into the overall curriculum, while the Experiences acquired throughout the programme need to be meaningful and substantial. In addition, meaningful assessment closely linked to the curriculum is needed to support learning outcomes (McRae et al., 2018). Finally, critical reflection is a very important component as it facilitates the learner's understanding of their skills, knowledge, characteristics, and ability to contribute to the workplace (McRae & Johnston, 2016).

WIL has gained considerable traction in recent years, aligning with the evolving demands of the job market and the need for graduates who possess practical skills and industry-specific knowledge. However, when considering students with special needs and disabilities, the WIL landscape becomes more complex. While Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) provides valuable chances for students to apply their academic knowledge in practical workplace settings, facilitating a smoother transition from university to the workforce, students that belong to diverse groups (as students with disabilities), are systematically excluded from these opportunities (Itano-Boase et al., 2021). These students often face additional challenges, making it crucial to adapt WIL programs to their unique circumstances. The challenges they face may be facing physical and/or attitudinal (Cocks & Thoresen, 2013). In line with this, Dolinger et al. (2022) point out that students with disability face significant obstacles to securing and completing WIL placements. The findings of Dolinger et al. (2022) study showed that while many students are motivated to participate in WIL, they have concerns about how their

disability, medical or mental health condition(s) will be accepted by the organisations and whether their requests for accommodations will be facilitated without judgement from supervisors. Literature underlines that current policies and practices in WIL need to change as they do not adequately support diverse students (Dolinger et al., 2022) and do not provide equal opportunities for all, reproducing this way social inequality (Itano-Boase et al., 2021).

### *Significance of stakeholder engagement in WIL for special needs and disability students*

Stakeholder engagement plays a pivotal role in the success of WIL programs, especially those catering to students with special needs and disabilities. It is through collaboration and partnership among various stakeholders that inclusive, supportive, and effective learning environments can be created. The positive impact of WIL extends not only to the students themselves but also to educational institutions, employers, and the broader community.

The stakeholders involved in WIL programs encompass a wide spectrum, including educators, students, employers, disability service providers, and government agencies. Each of these stakeholders has a vested interest in the program's success and contributes uniquely to its outcomes. This guide aims to elucidate strategies for enhancing their engagement and creating a more inclusive WIL ecosystem that ultimately benefits everyone involved.

As we delve into the intricacies of stakeholder engagement in the context of WIL programs for students with special needs and disabilities, we invite you to explore the comprehensive insights, practical tips, and actionable steps provided throughout this guide. Together, we can pave the way for an educational landscape that truly leaves no one behind.

### *Objectives of the guide*

- *Comprehensive guidance:* This guide offers a holistic approach to stakeholder engagement in WIL programs, catering specifically to students with special needs and disabilities.
- *Inclusive learning environments:* The guide emphasizes the creation of inclusive learning environments that foster the active participation and success of all students, regardless of their abilities or challenges.
- *Effective communication:* Effective communication is at the core of successful stakeholder engagement. The guide offers strategies for facilitating open, transparent, and accessible communication channels among all stakeholders.
- *Strategic planning:* Stakeholder engagement must be strategically planned to ensure that the diverse needs of students with special needs and disabilities are met. This guide outlines methods for setting clear goals and allocating resources efficiently.
- *Assessment and adaptation:* The guide provides insights into assessing the specific needs of students with special needs and how to adapt resources and learning environments.
- *Continuous improvement:* Monitoring and evaluation are vital components of successful stakeholder engagement. The guide helps you establish key performance indicators and procedures for continuous improvement.
- *Value added by WIL:* Recognizing the value that WIL brings to stakeholders, this guide explores how to demonstrate the tangible benefits and outcomes for all involved parties.

Now, before moving forward, practice with these pitches to begin understanding how to gain acceptance for your WIL project.



### **Practice with these pitches to understand the benefits for stakeholders**

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#### ***A pitch for teachers and staff***

*Ever thought about the incredible benefits WIL can bring to our educational institution?*

*WIL offers a comprehensive educational approach that merges academic knowledge with practical skills, boosting our reputation for producing well-rounded graduates. It also promotes inclusivity and diversity, creating an equitable learning environment for all students. Graduates who've gone through WIL often show improved employability, reflecting brilliantly on our educational quality and outcomes.*

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### ***A pitch for students***

*Discover some amazing benefits that can truly transform your academic journey:*

*Boost your employability: WIL enhances your competitiveness in the job market by providing practical skills and real-world experience highly valued by future employers.*

*Unleash your potential: WIL is all about inclusivity, helping you tap into your full potential. This enables active contributions to the workforce and society.*

*Personal and Professional Growth: Through WIL, you'll gain not only professional skills but also confidence and adaptability, setting you up for future career success. It's a win-win for personal development and career readiness!*

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### ***A pitch for business and external organizations***

*Ever thought about how WIL can benefit your Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts?*

*WIL opens doors to a diverse talent pool. It aligns with your CSR strategies, enriching your workforce with fresh skills and perspectives.*

*But that's not all. WIL transforms your hiring practices. It makes them more inclusive and adaptable to diverse talents. It's a win-win strategy.*

*Here's the kicker - effective diversity management. WIL isn't just about learning; it's about creating an inclusive culture. It's not just about talking diversity; it's about doing it to achieve excellence.*

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### 3. Stakeholders identification, roles and involving strategies

Stakeholders play a pivotal role in the success of WIL activities. Their active participation and collaboration are essential for creating meaningful and enriching experiences for students. In this section, we will explore the key aspects related to the involvement of stakeholders in the WIL process.

#### 3.1. Main Stakeholders

Identifying the stakeholders within the context of WIL is the first step towards effective collaboration. Stakeholders encompass a wide range of individuals and entities (Figure 1).

**FIGURE 1. MAIN STAKEHOLDERS IN THE CONTEXT OF WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING**



The stakeholders include:

- *Educational institutions*: These institutions, such as universities, colleges, and vocational schools, are pivotal stakeholders responsible for designing and overseeing WIL programs.
- *Students*: Students themselves are key stakeholders, as their learning experiences and future career prospects are directly impacted by WIL activities.

- *Business companies, NGOs and third sector players:* Organizations who provide opportunities for students to engage in practical work experiences are essential stakeholders. They contribute to shaping the learning environment and can directly influence students' skill development.
- *Faculty and instructors:* Educators who facilitate and supervise WIL activities play a critical role in guiding students and ensuring the alignment of academic goals with practical experiences.
- *Support services:* This category includes counsellors, disability support services, and career advisors who offer guidance and support to students throughout their WIL journey.
- *Social and health bodies supporting youths with special needs.* They include non-profit organizations, government agencies, or community-based groups that offer services and resources to support young people with special needs in areas related to their social and health well-being. These services may encompass educational support, counselling, medical assistance, vocational training, and other forms of assistance.
- *Regulatory bodies:* In some cases, regulatory bodies and accreditation agencies may have a vested interest in the quality and outcomes of WIL programs. For example, in the field of healthcare, the Medical Board of a health care institution can serve as a regulatory body overseeing the quality and standards of WIL programs for medical students. They will ensure that these programs meet the required educational standards and produce competent health care professionals. Another example could be labour unions. In some educational environments, when a mandatory internship is added to the vocational education curriculum for every student, negotiation processes with the labour unions are necessary.

### 3.2. Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

Understanding the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder group is vital for effective collaboration. Clear delineation of these roles ensures that everyone contributes to the success of WIL activities (Figure 2).

**FIGURE 2. STAKEHOLDERS’ ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Stakeholders	Roles & Responsibilities
Educational institutions	They are in charge of program design, curriculum development, student selection, and monitoring the overall quality of WIL experiences.
Students	They actively engage in WIL activities, meet learning objectives, seek guidance when needed, and reflect on their experiences.
Business companies, NGOs and third sector players	They provide a supportive and inclusive work environment, offer meaningful tasks, provide mentorship, and feedback on students' performance.
Faculty and instructors	They design WIL curricula, supervise students, offer guidance, and facilitate reflection on the practical experiences.
Support services	They assist students with special needs with their career development, and any challenges that may arise during WIL activities.
Social and health bodies supporting youths with special needs	They assess individual needs, create personalized care plans, and coordinate various services, including therapy and education. They also advocate for the rights of these youths, offer emotional support, and collaborate with relevant stakeholders to provide comprehensive assistance.
Regulatory bodies	They set standards and guidelines for WIL programs, ensuring their alignment with educational and industry standards.



## The role of Diversity Support Units

At a university level, Diversity Support Units or Services address the diverse needs of students, including those with disabilities, unique learning requirements, and various backgrounds, to ensure their academic and personal success. These units conduct comprehensive needs assessments to identify the specific challenges faced by students from diverse backgrounds. It offers personalized support, encompassing academic advising, accessibility services, and accommodations. These accommodations may include extended testing time, alternative course materials, or assistive technologies, with a particular focus on ensuring accessibility in both physical and digital spaces.

Additionally, Diversity Support Units play a pivotal role in advocating for students, assisting them in navigating administrative processes, and addressing any instances of discrimination or bias they may encounter. They can also offer counselling and mental health services to support students' well-being and provides training and awareness initiatives to promote a culture of inclusion throughout the institution.

Collaboration with other university departments is vital for a holistic approach to student support, encompassing academic advising, career services, and student affairs. Continuous evaluation and improvement of services are conducted to adapt to evolving student needs, with feedback from students actively sought and integrated into service enhancements.

Ultimately, the Diversity Support Unit strives to create a sense of belonging and community among diverse student groups and ensures that all students have an equitable opportunity to excel academically and personally.



### Stories to inspire you

In the urban setting of a vibrant city, there is a non-profit organization, Bright Readers. Its mission is to elevate the reading proficiency of elementary school students. The organization comprises passionate educators and committed volunteers. They understand that early intervention is critical to providing these young learners with the requisite tools for future academic and personal success.

Bright Readers collaborates closely with the School of Education of a higher education institution to create an innovative WIL program. The objective of this program is to deliver tailored reading support to students experiencing reading difficulties.

### *Key actors*

Alex. A student with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) seeking to develop practical skills and gain workplace experience.

Teachers. Committed educators aiming to create an inclusive and enriching learning environment.

Bright Readers. A non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the reading skills of elementary school students.

### *The collaboration*

Personalized planning. Alex works closely with his educators and the WIL organization to plan his experience. This includes identifying tasks that align with his learning style and establishing time management strategies.

Reasonable accommodations. Educators and the WIL organization adjust work activities to accommodate Alex's ADHD-related needs. This could involve tasks with flexible deadlines and the implementation of reminders and to-do lists.

Training and awareness. Educators provide training to Alex's peers at the WIL organization on how to effectively interact with Alex and support his needs. This fosters a deeper understanding and collaboration among all involved.

Monitoring and evaluation: Throughout the WIL experience, both educators and the WIL organization monitor Alex's progress and collect continuous feedback from him and his co-workers. This allows for real-time adjustments to ensure his success.

### *The outcome.*

As Alex progressed through the WIL experience, he proved to be an invaluable resource within Bright Readers. His ability to overcome ADHD-related challenges and make substantial contributions not only enriched his own learning but also enhanced the culture of the organization.

## 2.3. Strategies for Involving Stakeholders

Effective involvement of stakeholders requires strategic planning and communication. The strategies for involving stakeholders are presented below (Figure 3):

FIGURE 3. STRATEGIES FOR INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS

# Strategies for Involving Stakeholders

- 
**Clear communication channels**  
 Establish transparent communication channels among stakeholders to facilitate the exchange of information, expectations, and feedback.
- 
**Regular evaluation**  
 Implement mechanisms for ongoing evaluation and feedback collection to identify areas for improvement and best practices.
- 
**Collaborative planning**  
 Encourage collaborative planning sessions that involve all stakeholders to align WIL goals and outcomes.
- 
**Inclusive practices**  
 Promote inclusive practices that consider the unique needs of all students, including those with special requirements, within the WIL framework.
- 
**Training and development**  
 Provide training for stakeholders, particularly employers and faculty, to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to support students effectively.
- 
**Acknowledgments by the educational institution**  
 These acknowledgments serve as tokens of appreciation and recognition for the invaluable contributions made by stakeholders in our inclusive Work-Integrated Learning initiatives.



### Planning for success

Tips for clear communication among stakeholders:

*Establish transparent channels:* Create clear and accessible communication channels that all stakeholders can easily access. This includes using digital platforms, regular meetings, and open



forums for discussions. Ensure that important information is disseminated through multiple channels to reach everyone effectively.

*Use plain language:* Avoid jargon and complex terminology. Use plain, straightforward language that is easily understandable by all stakeholders. This reduces the risk of miscommunication and ensures that everyone comprehends the key messages.

*Active listening:* Encourage active listening among stakeholders. When others are speaking, ensure that they have your full attention. Ask clarifying questions and seek feedback to confirm understanding. Active listening fosters a culture of open and effective communication.

#### Tips for proper planning:

*Set clear objectives:* Begin with a clear definition of what you want to achieve. Establish specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) objectives for your project or initiative. These objectives provide a roadmap for planning and measuring progress.

*Involve stakeholders early:* Engage stakeholders in the planning process from the outset. Their insights and perspectives can help identify potential challenges, opportunities, and alternative solutions. This collaboration enhances the quality of the plan and promotes buy-in.

*Risk assessment and contingency planning:* Identify potential risks and uncertainties that may affect your WIL program's success. Develop contingency plans and risk mitigation strategies to address these challenges proactively. Having a plan for unexpected setbacks ensures that you can adapt and continue moving forward.



#### Stories to inspire you

This scenario illustrates the critical importance of clear planning and effective communication among stakeholders in ensuring the success of WIL experiences for students with special needs. In this case, the initial miscommunication had a lasting impact on Sarah's internship, highlighting the need for improved coordination and collaboration in similar situations.

#### *The scenario*

Sarah is an enthusiastic university student pursuing a degree in computer science. Sarah's passion for software development drives her to seek practical experience in the field. However, there were significant planning and communication challenges that affected Sarah's WIL experience.



### *Key actors*

The University. Represented by faculty members and WIL coordinators.

The hosting company. The organization where Sarah completed her WIL internship.

Sarah. The student with a visual impairment.

### *Collaboration steps and challenges*

*Identifying Sarah's needs:* While the university engaged with Sarah to understand her specific needs, there was a miscommunication that led to an incomplete assessment of her requirements. Sarah's need for specific screen-reading software and accessibility tools was not fully documented.

*Communication with the hosting company:* There was a lack of clarity regarding the extent of Sarah's special requirements. The company was aware of her needs but was not informed about the specific accommodations, as the need for a computer equipped with the necessary software.

*Adapting digital resources:* Due to the miscommunication between the university and the company, there were issues in ensuring that all digital resources were accessible to Sarah's screen reading software. Some coding platforms, documentation, and communication tools remained incompatible, making her work challenging.

*Training for Sarah:* Sarah did receive training on using the screen-reading software, but the training did not fully align with the specific coding environments and tools used at the hosting company. This disconnect affected her ability to work effectively.

*Orientation at the company:* While the company provided Sarah with an orientation, it did not consider her visual impairment comprehensively. The workplace environment, including office layout, safety measures, and emergency procedures, did not account for her unique needs.

*Regular support and monitoring:* Sarah did receive support from both the university and the company, but the initial miscommunication affected her experience. The lack of alignment between the two stakeholders resulted in occasional gaps in support.

*Continuous improvement:* Feedback was collected from Sarah, her mentor, and the university during and after the internship. However, the challenges stemming from the initial planning and communication issues were not fully addressed, leading to a less-than-optimal experience for Sarah.

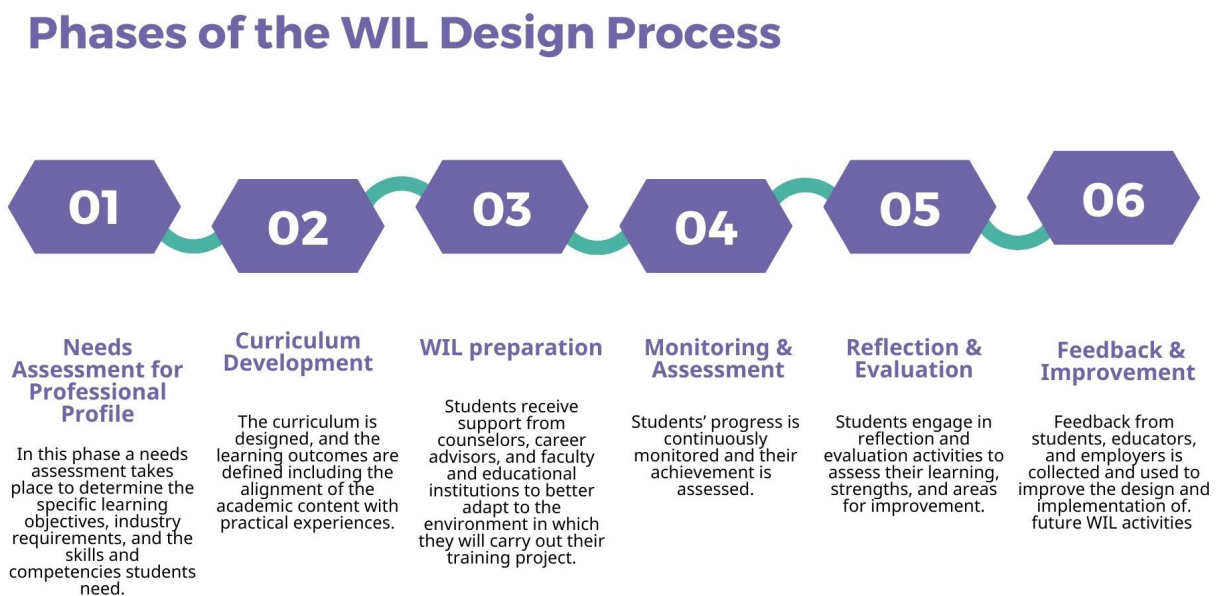
### 3. Engagement through the design of WIL activities

The design of WIL activities is an effective tool for stakeholder engagement. It requires careful planning, execution, and a lot of communication and teamwork. In this section, we explain the key aspects of designing effective WIL activities to build a strong network.

#### 3.1. Phases of the Design Process

The design process of WIL activities typically involves six phases (Figure 4). These phases provide a systematic approach to ensure the successful integration of practical experiences into the curriculum:

**FIGURE 4 PHASES OF THE WIL DESIGN PROCESS**



- *Needs assessment for professional profile design:* The first phase involves conducting a comprehensive needs assessment to determine the specific industry requirements, and the skills and competencies students need to develop. In this phase, educational institutions, business companies, NGOs, faculty, and regulatory bodies can collaborate to achieve quality results.
- *Curriculum development:* This phase focuses on designing the curriculum and defining the learning outcomes, including the alignment of academic content with practical experiences. Usually, educational institutions, faculty, and regulatory bodies lead this phase. The active participation of employers is important to incorporate their needs and gain acceptance.

- *WIL preparation:* In this phase, students receive support from support services, including counsellors and career advisors, along with faculty and educational institutions. The active participation of the hosting organization is important to be able to adapt the environment in which students will carry out their training project.
- *Monitoring and assessment:* During the WIL activity, placement or internship phase, continuous monitoring and assessment of students' progress and achievements take place. Faculty, instructors, and workplace supervisors must work together.
- *Reflection and evaluation:* After the practical experience, students engage in reflection and evaluation activities to assess their learning, strengths, and areas for improvement. Faculty and educational institutions may also be involved in guiding this process.
- *Feedback and improvement:* Feedback from students, educators, and employers is collected and used to improve the design and implementation of future WIL activities (see section 6.2, Templates and tools and for planning and evaluation, for some examples of evaluation questionnaires). Educational institutions, faculty, and support services collaborate to enhance the design and implementation of future WIL activities, ensuring their effectiveness.

In summary, one of the best ways to build stakeholder engagement is to encourage their active participation in all phases of a WIL activity design.



### **Defining a job profile**

#### *Industry requirements definition for WIL*

Industry requirements for WIL refer to the specific standards, qualifications, and expectations set by the relevant sector or profession where students will engage in practical, on-the-job experiences. These requirements are established by the industry to ensure that students are prepared to meet the demands and standards of the workplace. Industry requirements may include compliance with legal and ethical standards, adherence to industry-specific regulations, demonstration of technical skills and competencies, understanding of safety protocols, and alignment with the values and culture of the organization or field.

### *Skills and competences definition for WIL*

Learning objectives for WIL represent the specific educational goals that students aim to achieve during their practical work experiences. These objectives focus on the knowledge and understanding students seek to gain through real-world application of their academic studies. Learning objectives may include gaining insight into industry practices, deepening understanding of workplace dynamics, and aligning academic knowledge with professional contexts.

## 3.2. Planning and Organizing Activities

Effective planning and organization are essential to ensure that WIL activities run smoothly and align with educational objectives and external organizations requirements. In each phase of the process, interaction among different stakeholders is a necessity to achieve quality results.

- *Establishing learning objectives:* Educational institutions, in collaboration with industry partners and faculty, play a key role in clearly defining the learning objectives that students should achieve during their WIL experiences. They consider the input of industry partners to align these objectives with industry needs.
- *Matching students to opportunities:* This task involves educational institutions, faculty, and career advisors who work together to match students with suitable placements or internships. They take into account students' skills, interests, and career goals to ensure a good fit. They should also consider students' special educational needs (SEN) and/or disability, ensuring this way an inclusive and supportive approach.
- *Workplace integration:* Workplace supervisors, in collaboration with educational institutions, are responsible for integrating WIL activities into the daily operations of the workplace. They provide students with authentic experiences by aligning tasks with learning objectives.
- *Supervision and mentorship:* Educational institutions and workplace supervisors collaborate to assign qualified supervisors or mentors to guide students. They provide feedback and support throughout students' practical experiences, ensuring their development and success.
- *Resource allocation:* Educational institutions allocate necessary resources, including time, personnel, and materials, to support the successful execution of WIL activities. They work in tandem with industry partners to ensure students have the required resources for a productive learning experience.

However, before planning and organizing, it is important to have a pool of organizations and teachers willing to participate in WIL experiences. Below, we provide an example of how to build and consolidate a network of stakeholders.



Stories to inspire you



**IMAGE 1. SOCIAL MARKET AT URV, COURSE 2022-23**

An example of success is the URV's social projects market<sup>1</sup> in which entities, students, and professors participate. It is a market that help students find WIL opportunities. In this social market, different entities offer service-based learning projects. Year after year, more entities are added, offering a brief explanation of their needs. With this information, teachers, students, and entities can initiate a fruitful learning experience based on solving real-world problems. Creating an annual catalog of entities is a way to build a solid network to consolidate WIL experiences.

#### *Social market outcome*

Over the course of a decade, several key aspects of the program experienced remarkable growth<sup>2</sup>. Firstly, the number of courses offering service learning opportunities increased by 50.00% from the academic year 2012-13 to 2021-22. Student involvement witnessed significant growth, with a remarkable 186.24% increase during the same period. Faculty engagement also soared, experiencing a 747.83% increase, reflecting a heightened commitment to the program from educators. Moreover, the number of participating social entities surged by an impressive 170.97%, indicating an expanding network of community partners. Perhaps most notably, there was an astounding 2,217.89% growth in the total service hours provided by students, underlining their dedicated service efforts from the academic year 2012-13 to 2021-22. These growth rates underscore the program's substantial impact and increasing commitment to Service Learning over the past decade.

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<sup>1</sup> More informationa at: <https://ja.cat/SocialProjectMarketplace>

<sup>2</sup> Source: URV (2023). APS en xifres. Available at: <https://ja.cat/APSDData>

### *How the organizations present themselves*

In the catalog (a PDF document), the entities explain who they are, the profile of the students they are seeking, and what they need, as described below

#### *Case. Design and planning of a touristic route to the watchtowers of Tarragonès<sup>3</sup>*

##### Possible Degrees

- Bachelor's in Architecture
- Bachelor's in Geography, Territorial Analysis, and Sustainability
- Bachelor's in Tourism and Hospitality Management
- Bachelor's in Audio-visual Communication
- Master's in Tourist Destination Management
- Master's in Territorial Planning, Governance, and Leadership

##### The hosting organization

Tourism Office of the Department of Enterprise and Labour (Catalonia Government). The tourist offices affiliated with the Catalonia Tourist Office Network provide comprehensive guidance and support to tourists. Their mission is to manage and disseminate information about Catalonia's own tourist resources in the context of modernization and information improvement, in order to offer comprehensive guidance services to users of tourist services.

##### What?

The Tourism Office wants to promote the design of a tourist route to the watchtowers of Tarragonès (Sant Simplicí Tower, Pastoret Farmhouse, Creu Farmhouse, Sorder Farmhouse, Grimau Farmhouse, Cusidó Farmhouse, Marqués Farmhouse, Mora Tower, Segur Farmhouse). The objective is to highlight the historical heritage of these buildings and promote sustainable tourism.

##### How?

The project is interdisciplinary and open to students from different fields of study. Some of the tasks to be carried out include:

- Cultural and heritage valorisation of the buildings.
- Construction characteristics and materials used.
- History of the towers and their purpose.
- Georeferencing of the towers and route establishment.
- Production of audio-visual materials to promote the route.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: URV (2023) Catàleg de projectes socials de la Universitat Rovira i Virgili, p. 20. Available at: <https://ja.cat/URVSocialProjectMarket>



### 3.3. Adaptation to the Special Needs of Students

Adapting WIL activities to accommodate the special needs of students is a critical aspect of creating an inclusive learning environment. In the case of students with special needs, collaboration between stakeholders will always be closer since, beyond the curriculum, there is a need to work on adapting the learning environment to the students' special needs. This collaboration can be observed in all stages of the process.

- *Individualized accommodations.* Identify and provide individualized accommodations based on students' specific needs, which may include accessible workspaces, assistive technology, or flexible schedules.

To implement individualized accommodations, educational institutions collaborate closely with students with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities to identify their specific requirements. Additionally, they work with disability support services, faculty, and workplace supervisors to ensure accessible workspaces, assistive technology, and flexible schedules are provided as needed. Support services, faculty, and workplace supervisors should try to accommodate students' needs. For example, in the case of deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) these accommodations may be simple and cost little or nothing, such as rearranging furniture so that the person with hearing loss can see others better in the workspace or using e-mail or text messaging in place of telephone calls (Punch, 2016). In addition, task swapping among colleagues can be a simple and effective way to surpass some challenges (Punch, 2016).

When it comes to people with visual impairments, they may need some assistive or accessible technology or materials at the workplace, including screen readers (or text-to-speech software) that can convert written text on a computer screen into spoken words or a braille display (ADA, 2023). People with visual impairments may also need optical character recognition (OCR) technology that can create documents in screen-readable electronic form from printed ones, including an optical scanner (desktop, handheld, or wearable), and OCR software (ADA, 2023). In addition, employees with visual impairments might find useful to use systems with audible, tactile, or vibrating feedback, such as proximity detectors, which can alert them if they are too close to an object or another person (ADA, 2023). Accommodations for the employees with visual impairments may also include website modifications for accessibility and written materials in more accessible or alternate formats, such as in large print, sans serif fonts, braille, a recorded format, or an accessible shared document format, including those provided via QR code (ADA, 2023).

As far as people diagnosed as having Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are concerned, they may need some adaptations at the workplace design regarding the lighting, acoustic, olfactory, and spaces/crowding conditions (Zwilling & Levy, 2022). For instance, the workplace design should make use of natural light; avoiding direct sunlight and glare; providing shaded spaces. Sound-absorbing flooring, ceilings, and walls should be created, while plants should be used to separate environments devoted to different functions (Zwilling & Levy, 2022). The plants

should be fragrance-free (Zwilling & Levy, 2022). In addition, multifunctional and ambiguous areas should be avoided to reduce sensory confusion (Zwilling & Levy, 2022). Several factors require consideration when students with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities are preparing to enter the workforce. The foremost aspect entails identifying their unique requirements and aligning them with suitable job roles.

- *Clear communication.* Maintaining open and clear communication involves educational institutions, students, and support services. Educational institutions engage with students to understand their unique support preferences and requirements. They also foster communication between students and support staff, such as counsellors and disability support services, to ensure effective support provision.
- *Training.* The training of staff and colleagues in the workplace is a joint effort between educational institutions and employers. Educational institutions may provide guidance and resources for workplace supervisors and colleagues on creating an inclusive atmosphere. Employers play a crucial role in implementing this training and ensuring sensitivity to the needs of students with special requirements. Collaboration between educational institutions and employers is key to the success of this phase.
- *Regular monitoring and feedback.* Educational institutions take the lead in regularly monitoring students' progress and well-being, collaborating with faculty and workplace supervisors to make necessary adjustments. Students themselves actively engage in providing feedback, while employers and workplace supervisors also contribute to the feedback loop.



**A checklist for inclusive apprenticeship (and job) design**

To facilitate the alignment between the student needs and the job place, the following checklist adapted from Heron (2005) can be used:

<b>A. General Questions</b>			
1. Does the job involve lifting and carrying?	Yes	Sometimes	No
2. Does the job involve concentration?	Yes	Sometimes	No
3. Does the job involve multitasking?	Yes	Sometimes	No
4. Does the job require changes to the employees' daily routines or habits?	Yes	Sometimes	No



5. Is there any available support while on the job?	Yes	Sometimes	No
6. Is there any supervision provided while on the job?	Yes	Sometimes	No
7. What is the work pace fast?	Yes	Sometimes	No
8. Which tools and equipment are necessary for the job?	(please, specify)		
<b>B. Workplace design and conditions</b>			
1. Is the workplace easily accessible?	Yes	Sometimes	No
2. Is the temperature in your workplace typically within a normal range?	Yes	Sometimes	No
3. Is the level of noise in your workplace usually at a normal level?	Yes	Sometimes	No
4. Is poor lighting frequently an issue in your workplace?	Yes	Sometimes	No
5. Do you occasionally encounter excessive dust in your work area?	Yes	Sometimes	No



### Stories to inspire you

#### *Case. Facilitating WIL for a Student with Developmental Disorder*

##### Stakeholders and roles

- Sarah. Sarah, a university student with a developmental disorder, sought to undertake an internship in environmental science.
- Lisa. Lisa served as the university's WIL coordinator. Her role was pivotal in facilitating the integration of students into the workforce and ensuring a positive learning experience.
- Hosting organization. It was responsible for offering Sarah an internship opportunity and adapting their work environment to accommodate her unique needs. Their role encompassed providing resources, guidance, and a supportive workplace.
- University accessibility services: This department specialized in supporting students with special needs. They conducted assessments, devised tailored support plans, and offered training to enhance Sarah's skills.

## Interactions and actions

*Initiation:* Sarah expressed her desire for an internship, revealing her challenges in comprehending complex documents.

*Collaboration kick-off.* Lisa initiated collaboration between the university, hosting organization, and Sarah to address her needs effectively.

*Document adaptation.* The hosting organization worked with HR, the University Accessibility Services and Sarah to adapt documents into accessible formats, ensuring her comprehension.

*Accessibility plan.* University Accessibility Services developed a customized plan for Sarah, including training sessions.

*Starting internship.* Sarah began her internship, with the hosting organization already having adapted materials. *Supportive manager.* Sarah's manager at the hosting organization, David, played a critical role by offering guidance and maintaining open communication.

**Outcome:** Sarah not only gained practical experience but also improved her document comprehension skills. This case demonstrated how coordinated efforts between the university, hosting organization, and the student could create inclusive opportunities for students with developmental disorders.

## 4. Promoting Joint Development

Effective collaboration and joint development between educational institutions and the organizations involved in work-integrated learning (WIL) activities are crucial for creating a seamless and enriching experience for students. In this section, we explore the key strategies for promoting joint development.

### 4.1. Collaboration with Involved Organizations

Collaboration with organizations offering WIL opportunities is essential for aligning educational goals with practical experiences. Key considerations for successful collaboration include:

- *Partnership agreements*: Establish clear partnership agreements that outline the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of both educational institutions and organizations (see section 6.1, Template for agreements, to see an agreement template).
- *Shared objectives*: Ensure that the objectives of WIL activities align with the needs and goals of the participating organizations, creating a mutually beneficial relationship.
- *Regular communication*: Maintain open and consistent communication channels between educational institutions and organizations to address challenges, share insights, and celebrate successes.

Communication between educational institutions and organizations is an ongoing process, structured around a series of three key meetings (either online or on-site). Initially, there will be an initial meeting held before the commencement of WIL activities. This meeting serves to establish clear learning objectives, define tasks, and determine any necessary accommodations for the participating student. A second meeting is scheduled during the second week of the WIL activity to assess the student's initial progress and ensure a smooth start. Adjustments to learning objectives, tasks, or accommodations are made if deemed necessary. Lastly, a third meeting takes place at the conclusion of the WIL activity. During this session, the focus shifts to evaluating the students' learning outcomes. Organizations can reflect on the benefits and challenges encountered during the activity. Suggestions for future WIL activities are also welcomed to enhance the overall experience. Additional meetings can be scheduled, depending on their needs, to offer ongoing support to the participating organizations and students.

- *Feedback mechanisms*: Implement feedback mechanisms that allow organizations to provide input on curriculum design, student performance, and the overall quality of WIL experiences (see section 6 for quality questionnaires evaluation).

## 4.2. Staff Training and Development

Training and educational courses serve as a means to build networks and foster collaboration among stakeholders. Equipping staff, including educators and workplace supervisors, with the necessary knowledge and skills is essential for facilitating successful WIL activities. Strategies for training and development include:

- *Orientation and training:* Provide orientation sessions and training programs for educators and workplace supervisors to familiarize them with the goals, expectations, and best practices of WIL.
- *Continuous learning:* Encourage ongoing professional development opportunities to stay updated on industry trends, pedagogical advancements, and strategies for supporting students with special needs.

The training program developed by the IN-WORK project is an example of this training. You can access free educational resources through the web page on the IN-WORK project.

## 4.3. Establishing Support Networks

Effective support networks play a pivotal role in creating a collaborative and nurturing environment that enhances the success of WIL activities. These networks involve a diverse group of stakeholders, including educational institutions, employers, students, and support services, all working together toward a common goal: facilitating meaningful and impactful practical experiences. Key elements of establishing support networks include:

- *Peer networks:* Encourage the creation of peer networks among stakeholders participating in WIL activities, allowing them to share experiences and insights.
- *Mentorship programs:* Implement mentorship programs where experienced students or professionals mentor newcomers, providing guidance and support.
- *Supportive resources:* Make available resources such as counselling services, disability support, and career advisors to offer assistance when needed.
- *Community engagement:* Engage the broader community, including alumni and industry professionals, in supporting students' growth and development.

In essence, establishing and nurturing these support networks is not just about connecting stakeholders; it is about fostering a culture of collaboration, continuous improvement, and shared responsibility. When these elements come together harmoniously, the result is a thriving ecosystem that enhances the quality and impact of WIL activities.



## Creating a mentorship program

The "Pathway Mentors" program exemplifies how collaboration between educational institutions and local businesses can lead to meaningful mentorship experiences for students with special needs.

### Overview

The "Pathway Mentors" program is a collaborative initiative between a local university and several prominent businesses in the community. Its primary aim is to provide guidance and support to students with special needs as they embark on WIL programs. The program pairs students with dedicated mentors from these companies, creating a nurturing environment that helps students navigate the challenges and opportunities of their WIL experiences.

### Program Details

1. Student selection. Students eligible for the "Pathway Mentors" program are those enrolled in WIL activities who have disclosed their special needs. The university's disability support services work closely with these students to identify their unique requirements and aspirations.
2. Mentor recruitment. Local businesses express their interest in participating as mentors for the program. They nominate employees who are passionate about mentorship and supporting students in their professional growth.
3. Matching process. The university's coordinators carefully match students with mentors based on factors like the student's career goals, interests, and the mentor's expertise. This ensures a meaningful and productive mentoring relationship.
4. Orientation and training. Before the program begins, both students and mentors attend an orientation session. This session covers program goals, expectations, and effective mentorship practices. The university also provides resources on accommodating students' special needs.
5. Ongoing support. Throughout the WIL experience, mentors offer guidance on workplace etiquette, professional development, and specific tasks related to the students' roles. They also assist in creating inclusive work environments that consider the students' unique requirements.
6. Regular check-Ins. Mentors and students schedule regular check-in meetings to discuss progress, address concerns, and set goals. These meetings help build a supportive relationship and ensure that the student's needs are being met.
7. Networking opportunities. The program organizes networking events and workshops where students can interact with their peers and other professionals. This helps students expand their professional network and gain exposure to various industries.

8. Evaluation and feedback. At the end of the WIL experience, students, mentors, and university representatives meet to evaluate the program's effectiveness. Feedback is collected and used to improve the program for future participants.

Outcome:

By bringing together students, mentors, educational institutions, and businesses, this mentorship program creates a dynamic learning ecosystem where stakeholders work together towards common goals. This engagement strengthens relationships, builds trust, and promotes a sense of shared responsibility among all participants. As a result, the mentorship program becomes a catalyst for stakeholder engagement, facilitating ongoing dialogue, learning, and collaboration that can lead to more inclusive and supportive educational and professional environment.

## 5. Value Added by WIL for Stakeholders

In this section, we delve into the concept of value added by WIL programs for stakeholders, particularly focusing on students, educational institutions, employers, disability service providers, government agencies, and the broader community. We will explore how to define, measure, demonstrate, and showcase the benefits and outcomes of WIL involvement to foster more meaningful stakeholder engagement.

Host organizations stand to gain numerous benefits from engaging in Work-Integrated Learning (WIL), including boosted work capacity, a positive influence on workplace culture, improved recruitment prospects, staff development opportunities, and strengthened ties with educational institutions, as noted by Fleming et al. (2023). Nevertheless, it is essential to acknowledge that risks also accompany these advantages. These risks encompass issues related to confidentiality, student engagement, and behaviour. Of particular concern is the behaviour of students in disciplines where they interact directly with clients, patients, or the general public (Fleming & Hay, 2021). In the following section there are some suggestions on how to define and measure the added value of WIL for Stakeholders.

### 5.1. Defining and Measuring the Added Value of WIL for Stakeholders

Defining and measuring the added value of WIL for stakeholders is a multifaceted endeavour. It requires a comprehensive understanding of the diverse expectations and outcomes sought by each stakeholder group. Here are steps to help guide this process:

- *Identify key metrics.* Begin by identifying key metrics and indicators that align with the goals and objectives of each stakeholder.
- *Data collection and analysis.* Implement robust data collection and analysis mechanisms to track progress and measure the value added by WIL. This may involve surveys, interviews, feedback mechanisms, and performance evaluations.
- *Benchmarking.* Compare the outcomes of WIL programs to benchmarks and best practices. Benchmarking can provide valuable insights into the program's effectiveness and its impact on stakeholders.
- *Cost-benefit analysis.* Assess the financial investments made in WIL programs and compare them to the tangible benefits realized by stakeholders. This cost-benefit analysis can provide a clear picture of the value added.



## Defining some key metrics

Below, we present some metrics that can serve as a foundation for understanding how to measure the added value of a WIL program for different stakeholders.

### Educational Institutions

*Inclusive Education Index.* Measure the level of inclusivity in the educational institution by conducting regular surveys among students, faculty, and staff. Evaluate factors such as the availability of accessibility services, the promotion of diversity and inclusion in curricula, and the overall sense of belonging among diverse student groups.

*Graduate success rate.* Measure the success rate of WIL program graduates in terms of securing employment in their field, promotions, or significant career advancements within a specified timeframe after graduation.

*Quality of educational programs.* Assess improvements in educational program quality based on feedback and insights gained from WIL experiences, enhancing the institution's curriculum and teaching methods.

### Students

*Employment rate.* Measure the percentage of students who secure employment in their field of study within a specified timeframe after completing a WIL program, reflecting the program's impact on students' career prospects.

*Skill development.* Evaluate the acquisition of specific skills during the WIL experience through pre- and post-program assessments, showcasing the skills gained.

*Enhanced learning experience.* Survey students to gauge how WIL has enriched their overall learning experience, contributing to personal and professional growth.

### Business companies, NGOs, and third sector players:

*Project outcomes.* Evaluate the tangible outcomes of projects or work completed by WIL participants, such as the launch of new initiatives, increased revenue, cost savings, or social impact.

*Talent impact.* Measure the effectiveness of WIL programs in building a talent pipeline for organizations by tracking the number of former WIL participants hired for full-time positions.

*Inclusive workplace culture index.* Measure the inclusivity of the workplace culture by conducting regular surveys among employees. This metric helps the company gauge the effectiveness of its efforts in fostering an inclusive culture and can guide ongoing initiatives and improvements.



## Faculty and Instructors

*Curriculum enhancement.* Evaluate the impact of WIL experiences on curriculum enhancement, including the integration of real-world examples and industry insights into courses.

*Student satisfaction.* Measure the impact of educators on enhancing student satisfaction compared to their baseline satisfaction level at the beginning of a course.

*Faculty professional development.* Assess the professional development opportunities provided to faculty and instructors through involvement in WIL programs, including training and skill development.

## Support services

*Accessibility and accommodation effectiveness.* Evaluate the effectiveness of accommodations and accessibility measures provided to students during WIL programs, ensuring equitable support.

*Student progress.* Monitor the progress and outcomes of students with special needs participating in WIL, including their skill development and employment outcomes.

*Student satisfaction.* Gather feedback from students regarding the quality and effectiveness of support services during their WIL experiences, ensuring continuous improvement.

## Social and health bodies supporting youths with special needs

*Program impact.* Assess the impact of WIL programs on the social and health outcomes of youths with special needs, including improved skills, independence, and well-being.

*Client satisfaction.* Conduct satisfaction surveys among the students supported by these bodies to measure their satisfaction with WIL programs and services.

*Collaboration level.* Evaluate the level of collaboration and partnership between social and health bodies and WIL programs, ensuring alignment with support goals.

## 5.2 Demonstrating the Benefits and Outcomes of WIL Involvement

Demonstrating the benefits and outcomes of WIL involvement is essential for building stakeholder confidence and commitment to these programs. Here is how to effectively showcase the positive impact:

- *Report generation.* Create detailed reports that highlight the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of WIL involvement. These reports should be tailored to each stakeholder group and should clearly articulate the benefits realized.
- *Case studies.* Develop case studies that showcase specific examples of successful WIL experiences. Highlight how these experiences have positively affected students, educational institutions, employers, and the community.
- *Testimonials and endorsements.* Gather testimonials and endorsements from stakeholders who have directly benefited from WIL programs. Personal stories and endorsements can be powerful tools for illustrating value.
- *Visual representations.* Utilize visual representations such as infographics, charts, and graphs to convey complex data and outcomes in a more accessible and engaging manner.
- *Annual reports.* Consider creating annual reports dedicated to WIL programs' impact, complete with testimonials, success stories, and statistical data. These reports can be shared with stakeholders and the wider community.

## 5.3. Showcasing Success Stories and Impact for Stakeholder Engagement

To foster stakeholder engagement, it is crucial to not only demonstrate the value added by WIL but also to actively showcase success stories and the program's broader impact. Here are effective ways to do this:

- *Success storytelling.* Share success stories of individual students who have thrived in WIL environments, highlighting their personal and professional growth. This humanizes the impact of WIL.
- *Impact on career development.* Illustrate how WIL involvement has positively affected students' career development, showcasing examples of students who secured meaningful employment opportunities as a result.
- *Community engagement.* Emphasize how WIL programs contribute to the local community. Showcase initiatives or projects undertaken by students that have made a tangible difference in the community.

- *Engagement events.* Organize engagement events, such as seminars, panel discussions, or conferences, where stakeholders can share their experiences and insights related to WIL involvement.
- *Interactive platforms.* Create interactive online platforms or social media channels where stakeholders can engage with success stories, share their own experiences, and connect with others involved in WIL.



### Stories to inspire you

In this case study, we show you the impact of a WIL initiative that has brought positive transformation to students, educational institutions, employers, and the community.

#### The program

This pioneering WIL initiative, known as the "Tech Innovators for Community" program, was established through collaboration between a local university, several technology companies, and community organizations. Its primary mission is to empower young individuals with visual impairments who face low employment rates. The program centers on engaging these young adults in Accessible App Development (AAP) projects aimed at enhancing the independence and quality of life for individuals with visual impairments.

#### Positive outcomes

##### Students

**Enhanced skills.** WIL participants acquired practical skills directly applicable to their careers, significantly boosting their competitiveness in the job market.

**Personal growth.** Students reported substantial improvements in self-confidence, adaptability, and problem-solving abilities as they tackled real-world challenges.

**Career opportunities.** A remarkable number of WIL participants secured job offers from partner companies even before graduating, breaking barriers to employment for individuals with visual impairments.

##### Educational institutions

**Enhanced reputation:** The University's reputation as a hub for experiential learning and community engagement experienced a substantial boost.

**Improved learning:** WIL programs elevated the overall quality of education by providing students with a comprehensive and hands-on learning experience.

**Increased enrolment:** The program's resounding success attracted a surge in enrolment for related courses, further expanding access to education for those with visual impairments.

### Employers

**Skilled workforce.** Partner companies gained access to a talented and motivated pool of individuals proficient in industry-relevant technologies.

**Innovation.** WIL participants injected fresh perspectives and innovative ideas into the workplace, revitalizing corporate culture.

**Community engagement.** Employers received recognition and goodwill from the community for their active involvement in youth development, solidifying their commitment to corporate social responsibility.

### Community

**Economic growth.** The program ignited economic growth by creating employment opportunities, fostering local business growth, and attracting investments.

**Empowered youth.** Young individuals in the community gained access to educational resources and mentorship, cultivating a sense of hope and aspiration.

### Conclusion

This case study serves as a testament to how a well-structured WIL program can act as a catalyst for positive change. By empowering students with essential skills, enhancing the reputation of educational institutions, providing employers with top-tier talent, and enriching the community, WIL initiatives create a symbiotic win-win-win scenario that empowers individuals and transforms societies.



### Share your results

Don't miss the opportunity to share your WIL stories with your audience through your social networks.



✨ Exciting News! 🚀 Our Accessible App Development program has added incredible value to the community. 📱 👤 Students with vision impairments + Tech companies + Community Orgs = Transformative Tech Solutions! 🌐

Discover how we are making a difference. Join us! #InnovationForAll #WIL

## 6. Resources and Tools

In this section, we provide a model of educational collaboration agreement and questionnaire templates that can serve as a foundation for evaluating the WIL experience from the perspective of various stakeholders.

### 6.1. Template for agreements

Above you can find an example of an educational cooperation agreement.



#### **Adapt the template to your needs**

**Educational cooperation agreement between [insert educational centre name], [insert host organization name], and [insert student name] for the implementation of an educational project. Parties present**

On the one hand, Mr /Mrs. [insert the name of the person responsible for the educational institution].

On the other hand, Mr./Mrs. [insert the name of the person responsible for the external entity] and the student [insert student name], a student of [insert student's degree program], hereinafter referred to as "the student."

#### DECLARE

1. This agreement is governed by [insert references to the legal framework in your geographical area], which regulates the terms and conditions for the inclusion of individuals participating in training programs.
2. The collaborating entity is interested in cooperating with [insert the name of the educational institution] and recognizes the need for students to gain practical experience in the workforce. Therefore, they consider mutual collaboration to be in the best interest.

#### AGREEMENT

1. The purpose of this agreement is to establish the terms of collaboration for the student [insert the student's name] to carry out curricular or extracurricular internships at the facilities of the collaborating entity.
2. The completion of these internships does not establish any employment relationship between the collaborating entity and the student. Students who have an existing contractual relationship with the collaborating entity are not eligible to undertake internships with them.

3. The collaborating entity may provide the student with financial assistance in the form of a stipend or scholarship. In the event of such an agreement, the amount and payment method shall be specified in the training project.

If the student receives compensation in the form of a stipend or scholarship, the company shall comply with the applicable regulations [include, if applicable, references to the legal framework in your geographical area].

4. The collaboration under this agreement is outlined in an educational project, which must be attached as a separate document. The educational project must be verified and signed by the responsible parties for student internships from each side, as well as by the student.

The educational project, which has the same duration as the internship period, should include provisions for the protection of the student's personal data, a confidentiality agreement between the collaborating entity and the student, the student's insurance coverage, and information regarding the collaborating entity's safety and occupational risk prevention regulations.

5. Academic Tutoring. The student will have as their academic tutor at [insert the name of the university tutor], responsible for effective supervision of the educational project, providing support to the student in preparing the report, and conducting the assessment process of the internship.
6. Tutoring at the Collaborating Entity. The collaborating entity will appoint, from among its professionals, a tutor who will be responsible for guiding and supervising the student's work, providing information on the organization and functioning of the collaborating entity, establishing the work plan, and issuing the final evaluation report of the internship in accordance with the university's model.
7. Monitoring Plan and Evaluation Criteria. Academic grading will be the exclusive responsibility of the academic tutor. However, upon completion of the educational project, and in accordance with the model provided by the University, the tutor from the collaborating entity will issue a final evaluation report on the generic and specific competencies outlined in the educational project. Evaluation criteria will be specified in the educational project, taking into account the nature of the educational project.
8. Early Termination. The student agrees to notify the collaborating entity, with a minimum of 15 days' notice, of their intention to terminate the educational project before the scheduled end date.
9. Student Leave Policy. The student may be absent for the necessary time due to academic obligations or participation in university governance and representation bodies, health reasons, or other cases agreed upon with the collaborating entity and the university.

10. Termination Causes. The possible causes for the termination of this agreement are as follows:
- i. Expiration of the end date.
  - ii. Termination of the academic relationship between the student and [insert the name of the educational institution].
  - iii. Mutual agreement of the parties.
  - iv. Non-compliance with the obligations assumed by the parties in this agreement.
  - v. General causes established by applicable legislation.
11. Student Expulsion Causes. The grounds for student expulsion shall include:
- i. Serious breach of the obligations established in clause seven of this agreement.
  - ii. Improper conduct by the student.
12. Discrimination or Harassment Situations. Educational projects must be carried out based on principles of equality, non-discrimination, and a zero-tolerance approach to harassment.
13. Intellectual and Industrial Property Rights. The student has rights to the intellectual and industrial property of the tasks, research conducted, or results obtained, in accordance with the relevant legislation.
14. Agreement Duration. This agreement shall take effect on the day of its signing and shall have a duration of [insert the duration of the educational project]. However, before its expiration, the parties may expressly agree to its extension under the conditions they consider appropriate and within the framework of applicable legislation.
15. Legal Framework and Conflict Resolution. Any differences and disagreements that may arise in the interpretation and application of this agreement, as well as any other aspect of the relationship initiated between both institutions not provided for in this agreement, shall be resolved jointly by the parties. If this is not possible, it shall be submitted to the jurisdiction of administrative litigation.

The interested parties sign this agreement at the location and on the date mentioned below.

## 6.2. Templates and tools for planning and evaluation

Having access to the right resources and tools is instrumental in the successful implementation of WIL activities. In this section, we consider feedback surveys to collect feedback from students, educators, and organizational partners to gauge the effectiveness of WIL experiences and identify areas for improvement. Collecting feedback from various stakeholders involved in WIL programs provides valuable perspectives and insights. Without this feedback, it is impossible to detect areas for improvement and build lasting relationships over time.

Consider these approaches for gathering feedback:

- Student surveys. Administer surveys to students to capture their experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improvement during WIL activities.
- Educator and supervisor feedback. Seek feedback from educators and workplace supervisors regarding students' performance, engagement, and areas for growth.
- Organizational partner feedback. Solicit input from organizational partners to assess the alignment of WIL activities with industry needs and expectations. The educational institutions are in charge of collecting feedback from the business companies and NGOs where students engaged with the WIL activities





### Questionnaire for students (example)

Thank you for agreeing to evaluate our WIL program. Your feedback will help us to improve the quality of our program and ensure that it meets participant needs.

Please answer the following questions based on your evaluation of your experience

1. How relevant do you feel the WIL activities are to your current or future career aspirations?

Not relevant	Somewhat relevant	Moderately relevant	Highly relevant	Extremely relevant
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

2. To what extent do you feel that the WIL activities helped you acquire knowledge and skills that are relevant to help you enter the labour market?

Not relevant	Somewhat relevant	Moderately relevant	Highly relevant	Extremely relevant
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

3. How well did the WIL activities align with your learning style and preferences?

Not at all well	Somewhat well	Moderately well	Very well	Extremely well
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

4. To what extent did the WIL activities align with the stated learning outcomes and objectives?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Completely
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

5. How consistent were the WIL activities in terms of delivering the expected learning outcomes and objectives?

Not consistent	Somewhat consistent	Moderately consistent	Very consistent	Completely consistent
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

6. How flexible and adaptable were the methods and tools used in the WIL activities to ensure equal access to your needs?

Not at all flexible and adaptable	Somewhat flexible and adaptable	Moderately flexible and adaptable	Very flexible and adaptable	Extremely flexible and adaptable
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

7. How would you rate the effectiveness of pre-WIL training and orientation sessions in preparing you to address the specific challenges related to your disability?

Very Ineffective	Ineffective	Neutral	Effective	Very effective
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

8. How satisfied were you with the overall WIL experience?

Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

9. To what extent do you feel that the WIL activities helped you develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of diversity and inclusion in the workplace?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

10. How likely are you to recommend the WIL activities to others?

Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neutral	Somewhat likely	Very likely
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

11. What aspects of WIL do you find particularly helpful or challenging? Please describe.

12. How could we improve WIL to better meet your needs and be more effective?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your feedback as an external evaluator is valuable to us, and we appreciate your input.



**Questionnaire for teachers, staff and external organizations (example)**

Thank you for agreeing to evaluate our WIL program. Your feedback will help us to improve the quality of our program and ensure that it meets participant needs.

Please answer the following questions based on your evaluation of your experience

1. How relevant do you feel the WIL activities are to students with special needs in their current or future career aspirations?

Not relevant	Somewhat relevant	Moderately relevant	Highly relevant	Extremely relevant
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

2. To what extent do you feel that the WIL activities help students with special needs acquire knowledge and skills that are relevant to help them enter the labour market?

Not relevant	Somewhat relevant	Moderately relevant	Highly relevant	Extremely relevant
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

3. How well does the WIL activities align with different learning style and preferences?

Not at all well	Somewhat well	Moderately well	Very well	Extremely well
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

4. To what extent did the WIL align with the stated learning outcomes and objectives?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Completely
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

5. How consistent are WIL activities in terms of delivering the expected learning outcomes and objectives?

Not consistent	Somewhat consistent	Moderately consistent	Very consistent	Completely consistent
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

6 How flexible and adaptable are the methods and tools used in the WIL activities to ensure equal access to students with special needs?

Not at all flexible and adaptable	Somewhat flexible and adaptable	Moderately flexible and adaptable	Very flexible and adaptable	Extremely flexible and adaptable
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

7. How would you rate the collaboration and communication between educators and employers in implementing adaptations and support for students with special needs?

Very poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very good
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

8. How satisfied are you with the overall WIL experience?

Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

9. To what extent do you feel that the WIL help to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of diversity and inclusion in your institution?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

10. How likely are you to recommend the WIL activities to others?

Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neutral	Somewhat likely	Very likely
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>

11. What aspects of WIL do you find particularly helpful or challenging? Please describe.

12. How could we improve WIL to better meet the needs of students with special needs and increase WIL effectiveness?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your feedback is valuable to us, and we appreciate your input.



### Stories to inspire you

Below, we show the utility of the previous survey in detecting issues that impact stakeholder engagement. It is not a real case.

#### The case

The University of Mars analyses the WIL program survey results to identify issues and opportunities. Fifteen companies have participated in the survey assessing their experience.

#### Survey results

In response to Question 1, about 80% of participating companies find the WIL activities highly relevant to students with special needs. For Question 2, approximately 75% of companies believe WIL activities effectively help students with special needs acquire knowledge and skills. Companies perceive the alignment with diverse learning styles favourably, with over 60% rating it as "Very well" or "Extremely well".

In response to Question 4, approximately 70% of surveyed companies found strong alignment between WIL activities and learning outcomes and objectives. Question 5 showed that about 65% of respondents indicated program quality. Moreover, in Question 6, roughly 70% of companies viewed the methods and tools used highly flexible and adaptable. However, Question 7 yielded mixed opinions on collaboration and communication between educators and employers, with

20% offering positive ratings and 40% suggesting room for improvement. Lastly, Question 8 revealed overall positive satisfaction and.

Problem detected: Low satisfaction with collaboration.

#### Explanation

The survey results highlighted a significant issue in the form of low satisfaction with collaboration and communication between educators and employers, with approximately 40% of companies rating this aspect as "Neutral." This indicates potential challenges in establishing effective communication channels and collaboration efforts within WIL program.

#### Impact on Stakeholder Engagement

Inadequate communication and collaboration between educators and employers may hinder the successful integration of students into the workplace and affect the quality of the learning experience. This, in turn, can lead to reduced stakeholder engagement, as both parties may become less motivated to participate actively.

#### Recommended Action

To address the issue of low satisfaction with collaboration, different actions can be implemented. For example:

- Enhanced communication with regular meetings and feedback sessions.
- Organize training sessions for educators and employers to improve their understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities.

By taking these recommended actions, the WIL program can enhance collaboration between stakeholders, leading to improved program outcomes and increased stakeholder engagement.



## 7. Conclusion

Throughout this guide, we have embarked on a journey to unravel the intricacies of stakeholder engagement within the context of WIL programs for students with special needs and disabilities. Our shared objective has been to foster a more inclusive and accessible WIL ecosystem that empowers all individuals to thrive. In doing so, we have set forth several key takeaways that underscore the significance of our endeavour:

1. *Holistic guidance.* This guide has provided comprehensive guidance, recognizing the unique challenges and opportunities presented by WIL programs for students with special needs and disabilities. It serves as a roadmap for creating meaningful, transformative experiences that leave no one behind.
2. *Inclusivity as a cornerstone.* We have emphasized the pivotal role of inclusivity in shaping learning environments where all students can actively participate and succeed.
3. *The power of effective communication.* Successful stakeholder engagement relies on effective communication.
4. *Co-design for success.* Throughout our exploration of stakeholder engagement in WIL programs for students with special needs and disabilities, we must emphasize the fundamental role of co-design. Co-design is not just a practice; it is the very foundation upon which successful engagement is built.
5. *Demonstrating tangible value.* Lastly, we have explored the value added by WIL programs for all stakeholders. These programs are transformative, offering benefits that extend beyond the realm of education. This guide encourages you to display the tangible outcomes and benefits that WIL involvement brings to educators, students, employers, and the community at large.

In closing, we extend our deepest appreciation for your commitment to enhancing the educational landscape for students with special needs and disabilities. As you embark on your journey to implement the strategies and insights shared in this guide, we invite you to consider the profound impact your efforts will have on the lives of these students and the broader community.

Together, we are architects of change, creators of opportunity, and champions of inclusivity. As you move forward, may this guide serve as a valuable resource, and may your dedication to stakeholder engagement in WIL continue to shape a brighter, more inclusive future for all. Your work is not only significant, it is transformative, and it holds the promise of a world where every individual can thrive, regardless of his or her abilities or challenges.

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Authors: IN-WORK project

Contact: info@in-work-project.eu

*Citation:* IN-WORK project (2023). Methodological guidelines for stakeholder engagement (D2.3). Inclusive Communities at Work (2022-1-IT02-KA220-HED-000087184). Retrieved from <https://www.in-work-project.eu/>



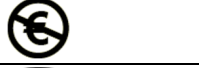
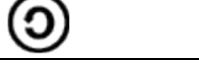
This paper is only electronically available.

This publication is based on the results of the project IN-WORK – Inclusive Communities at Work. It is co-funded with support from the European Commission.

IN-WORK-project n° 2022-1-IT02-KA220-HED-000087184.

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



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