

Sourcing Projects

Lessons from Startland EDU Teacher Accelerator Program

Think Locally

This means: Every educator, student, and school is already part of a network. Learning how to leverage an existing network is an entrepreneurial mindset skill! If you are looking for a client, then ask people you already know who they know. There is probably a colleague, neighbor or friend who knows someone who can help.

The process of finding a client is not limited to LinkedIn and Google searches. Even if your school has an employee whose job is to source clients, sometimes the best clients are only one or two degrees separated from local colleagues. Talk to colleagues about the need of a client for students with particular skill sets and learning goals. Leverage the personal and professional networks of colleagues.

Find the Win-Win

This means: The best kind of client-connected projects provide authentic value to all stakeholders, especially the client. When students are meeting a real need for the client—rather than receiving charitable attention—it makes the ask easier and the chance for retaining the partnership greater.

Shared Pain Points

This means: Many students (and teachers) share lived experiences that can be improved upon. These small or large “pain points” are a great way to identify a potential project.

Interdisciplinary Approach

This means: Curricula are full of hypothetical situations that could be turned into real CCPs and flexible standards that can be retrofitted to a wide variety of project tasks and topics. Instead of classes and projects always operating independently, existing CCPs occurring in other classes and co-curriculars can provide great, collaborative access points to CCPs and more salient learning for students.

Key Insights

1. District as a Client
2. Ask District Vendors
3. Ask Parents

Key Insights

1. Meet a Real Need
2. Student Voice
3. Authentic

Key Insights

1. Solve a community need
2. Solve a district need



Quick Start Guide

Building Lasting Relationships with Employers

What does your system look like?

Who is responsible for recruiting, retaining, and engaging employers?

RWL
Coordinator

Teacher/
Educator

Other



RECRUIT

What does recruitment look like? What is your workflow? What is your feedback loop?



RETAIN

How are you currently tracking, retaining, and celebrating your employer partners?



ENGAGE

Who are your employer partners and how are you engaging with them?

Quick Start Guide

Building Lasting Relationships with Employers

What does your system look like?

Identify whose role it is at your school for recruiting, retaining, and engaging

RWL
Coordinator

Teacher/
Educator

Other



- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Collect parent employment data. Ask parents to engage as professionals. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Canvas the employers in a five-mile radius of each building in the district. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Ask your vendors and suppliers. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Develop a relationship with your local chamber of commerce or EDC. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Find existing groups to extend RWL asks (e.g., PTO, Boosters). |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Look inside the district and other organizations providing services to your students. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Don't count your students out! Enable them to create their own opportunities. |



RECRUIT

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Manage contacts with a spreadsheet or CRM system. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Create a process to measure effectiveness and gather feedback Measure satisfaction of students/employers/teachers. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Recognize partners. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Encourage referrals and network building through existing partners. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Tell those student success stories EVERYWHERE! |



RETAIN

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Build a relationship and understand their business before you ask. Listen for what you know matches your needs. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Articulate engagement options (see RWL engagement menu). |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Start small, keep it simple and always have a specific ask to support what you know is needed. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Identify timing cycles (e.g. if client is an accountant, avoid tax season). |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Create opportunities for employers to co-create with teachers and students. |



ENGAGE

Quick Start Guide

Building Lasting Relationships with Employers

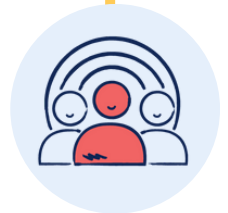


Recruit

- Collect parent employment data. Ask parents to engage as professionals, Canvas the employers in a five-mile radius from each building in the district,
- Ask your vendors and suppliers.
- Develop a relationship with your local chamber of commerce or EDC.
- Find existing groups you can extend RWL asks (e.g. PTO, Boosters).
- Don't count yourself out! Look inside the district and other organizations providing services to your students.
- Don't count your students out! Enable them to create their own opportunities.

Retain

- Manage contacts with a spreadsheet or CRM system
- Create a process to measure effectiveness and gather feedback
Measure satisfaction of students, employers and teachers.
- Recognize partners
- Encourage referrals and network building through existing partners
Tell those student success stories EVERYWHERE!



Engage

- Build a relationship and understand their business before you ask. Listen for what you know matches your needs.
- Start small, keep it simple and always have a specific ask to support what you know is needed.
- Articulate engagement options (see [RWL engagement menu](#))
- Identify timing cycles (ie. don't ask an accountant to visit during tax season or turn away someone who only wants to come in during state testing).
- Create opportunities to bring employers together to co-create with teachers and students.

