



Saïd
Business
School

Skoll Centre
for Social
Entrepreneurship



Impact Report

The Skoll Scholarship (2004 – 2021) and Impact Lab (2018 – 2021)

Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship, Saïd Business School, University of Oxford

Foreword

In the first years of this decisive decade, the world has changed irrevocably. The Covid-19 pandemic, yawning inequality, the climate crisis, racial injustice all herald an era of systemic disruption. The future of our children, and generations to come, depend on how we respond. Can we summon the moral imagination to shift course? In short, we need social entrepreneurs – and socially entrepreneurial leaders – now more than ever.

For nearly two decades, the Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship has been investing in the change leaders of the future. Our flagship programme, the Skoll Scholarship, has supported proven and promising social entrepreneurs since 2004. Our Scholars have not only gone on to exceptional accomplishment, they have nurtured a vibrant network that remains the beating heart of the Skoll Centre.

As the Centre and the impact ecosystem at Saïd Business School grew, increasing numbers of MBA students have come to Oxford looking to develop impact careers. We started the Impact Lab in 2018 to meet this growing demand, and to address the

shifting skills needed to drive change in an interconnected world.

This report summarises a detailed study that aimed to understand and articulate how the Skoll Scholarship and Impact Lab have affected the trajectories and impact of our extraordinary alumni. The retrospective study was conducted independently by Openwell. Measuring and attributing impact is challenging under the best of circumstances, not least when assessing the long-term impact of an educational programme. Our goal is to learn, share, and continuously improve.

Many thanks to my extraordinary colleagues at the Skoll Centre – past and present – whose passion and creativity make the Centre a magnet for changemakers around the world. Bronwyn Dugtig has shaped and led the Impact Lab since its inception. Claire Joubert, and Breanne Svehla previously, has done a remarkable job of supporting and diversifying the Skoll Scholar community. Lydia Darley literally makes it all happen, and Georgia Rafferty amplifies the voices of this remarkable community.

And to our broader collective of faculty, affiliates, alumni and partners – dozens of whom contribute to these programmes each year – we are immensely grateful.

I'd like to offer special thanks to our friends at the Skoll Foundation, who have been with us every step of the way for nearly two decades, and whose support and thought leadership continues to make this important work possible.

I hope you draw insights and inspiration from this report, and that you'll join us in cultivating the next generation of changemakers and entrepreneurial leaders.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Drobac". The script is fluid and cursive.

Peter Drobac

Director, Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship
Senior Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship
Saïd Business School, University of Oxford

Contents

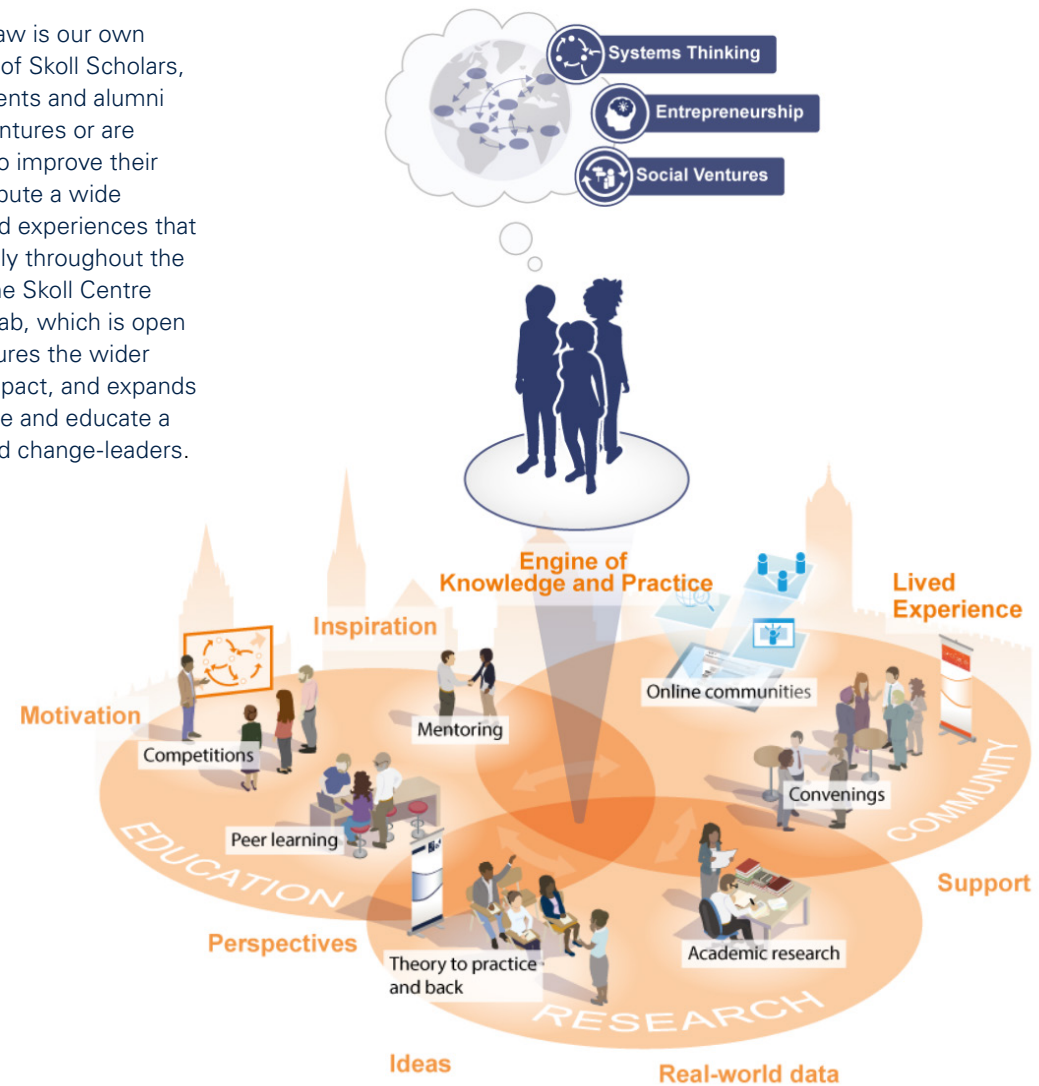
Investing in talent for social impact	4
The Skoll Scholarship and the Impact Lab	5
Executive summary	6
Our impact study	7
Who did we talk to?	7
The alumni community	8
Programme experience	9
Value of the Skoll Scholarship and Impact Lab on applications	9
Activities and initiatives during the programme	11
Alumni careers	16
Promoting societal impact	19
Sustainable Development Goals	20
Channels	22
Skills transfer	24
Career achievement	26
The 'Skoll Experience' and alumni impact careers	28
Skoll Scholar Network	29
Impact Lab Alumni Network	30
Looking ahead	31

Investing in talent for social impact

The world needs more social entrepreneurs: the determined and creative people who do not accept the status quo, but combine existing resources in innovative ways to address social and environmental problems. We need them working in large corporations, governments, and institutions, and starting and scaling new enterprises. And we need them collaborating with others across sectors and geographical boundaries to effect positive, systemic change.

The Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship is uniquely placed to develop these talented and impact-driven individuals. As part of Saïd Business School it draws on cutting-edge research and thought-leadership both from the business school itself and across the wider, interdisciplinary university. At the same time, through the Skoll Foundation, it connects with a large, global community of practice: social innovators and investors from across the world who share knowledge and ideas and collaborate to transform systems.

The third piece of the jigsaw is our own exciting and diverse body of Skoll Scholars, current Oxford MBA students and alumni who have set up social ventures or are working in organisations to improve their social impact. They contribute a wide variety of perspectives and experiences that enrich discussions, not only throughout the MBA cohort, but within the Skoll Centre community. The Impact Lab, which is open to all MBA students, captures the wider interest in careers with impact, and expands the community to embrace and educate a broader range of dedicated change-leaders.



[Click to see the Skoll Centre's theory of change diagram](#)

The Skoll Scholarship and Impact Lab



The **Skoll Scholarship** is a competitive scholarship for incoming MBA students pursuing entrepreneurial solutions to address urgent social and environmental challenges. Established in 2004, the Scholarship provides tuition for entrepreneurs who have set up or have been working in entrepreneurial ventures with a social purpose and wish to improve their knowledge of market-oriented practices to be more effective in their subsequent social change pursuits.

The Scholarship is given in recognition that the MBA may represent a significant financial burden, particularly for those who have chosen to work in social ventures rather than the commercial or public sectors or those coming from less advantaged backgrounds.

In addition to financial support, the Scholarship also provides mentorship and exclusive opportunities to meet with world-renowned entrepreneurs, thought-leaders and investors. Beyond the MBA, a robust community of Skoll Scholar alumni maintain active engagement and meet annually in Oxford. As part of the Skoll Foundation's global community of change leaders, Scholars regularly participate in the Skoll World Forum for Social Entrepreneurship.



Impact Lab is a co-curricular impact leadership development programme. This year-long pathway of carefully curated programmes and offerings complement the Oxford MBA programme for students who are committed to or already have an impact-driven career.

Launched in 2018, Impact Lab brings together a customised set of interwoven activities, including masterclasses, workshops, peer learning activities, and personal development retreats. Much of the content developed and designed for Impact Lab is student-driven and can be co-created with practitioners and external thought leaders.

- A series of Masterclasses by thought leaders and practitioners, co-created with Impact Lab students.
- An Impact Investing Bootcamp (open to non-Lab MBA Students).
- Action learning sets and peer coaching.
- Student-led lunchtime sessions for non-Lab MBA students.
- Retreats in Winter and Summer terms.

One of the most valuable aspects of the Impact Lab is the community it fosters. The Lab aims to cultivate future change leaders and a strong network of like-minded individuals who will be connected for life.

Executive summary

This Impact Report is based on a study designed and undertaken by Openwell¹. It explored how the Skoll Scholarship programme and Impact Lab, including engagement with their respective alumni networks, affect alumni careers and contribute to wider societal impact.

Both the Scholarship programme and Impact Lab were shown to play important roles in attracting and nurturing talent, and, by extension, amplifying societal impact.

Attracting talent

Most alumni had applied to the MBA in order to learn the skills they needed to enhance their careers. The combined credibility of the Oxford and Skoll brands ensured that Saïd Business School was seen as offering the best programme available for pursuing an MBA with a social impact focus.

The financial aspect of the Scholarship (it provides full funding plus a living stipend to complete a MBA at Saïd Business School) is important in attracting the experienced and proven social entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs. It allows them to develop

their impact careers without having to divert their attention towards paying off debt. They are able to devote all of their energies towards continuing their impact careers and addressing some of the world’s biggest problems.

71% of Scholars said that, without the Scholarship, they would not have applied to Oxford or they would not have pursued an MBA at all.

Nurturing talent

The Skoll Centre’s Formal social impact programmes and activities, including Map the System and GOTO, provide important learning opportunities and are part of a rich ecosystem of different social impact programmes and communities within Saïd Business School. Work on systems thinking, in particular, was identified by alumni as being influential in their impact-driven careers.

Impact Lab is distinctive as a formal space ‘outside the MBA’ where students can have open and honest conversations about impact. Many alumni in the study said that it

was the only space within the MBA where they felt comfortable enough to have these conversations.

The Skoll community, including alumni networks and events such as the Skoll World Form and Skoll Scholar Summit, has a continuing role in nurturing talent, providing access to personal support, knowledge, and resources, and encouraging collective responsibility and motivation for social impact.

Amplifying societal impact

Most Scholars and Impact Lab alumni today work in roles connected to achieving social impact through the private sector, either as founders of social enterprises or as ‘impact professionals’: i.e. working in a role that has sustainability or social impact as its focus. Between them, Scholarship and Impact Lab alumni were working towards all 17 of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals.

Over time there has been an increase in the numbers of alumni who have moved to the private sector from the non-profit

sector (NGO, Civil Society Organisation, or Philanthropy). This may reflect the growing number of impact professional roles in private sector companies, including social enterprises and those with B-Corp certification.

Alumni contribute to social change both through their formal roles, which are focused on impact, and through sharing skills and experiences – within their own organisations, between organisations, publicly, and with individuals. This sharing of skills, particularly ‘soft’ skills such as empathy, understanding power and privilege, self-reflection, and purpose, is also a way in which the Skoll Centre’s approach to social entrepreneurship and impact may be amplified by ‘spilling over’ into other sectors.

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¹ <https://openwell.co/>

The Skoll Scholarship and Impact Lab Impact Study

Who did we talk to?

75% of the total Scholar alumni population

57 alumni participated in the Scholars' survey, representing 75% of the total Scholar alumni population. The survey responses were evenly distributed by year group and by gender. 18 Scholars (almost a quarter of all Scholars) participated in focus group discussions and individual interviews.

41 Impact Lab alumni participated in the Impact Lab survey, accounting for 49% of the total Lab alumni network since 2018. 63% of responses were from the 2019–20 cohort, and 37% from 2018–19. Survey responses by gender were 76% female, and 22% male (2% did not complete this section). The gender balance of the survey responses broadly reflected the wider gender ratios across Impact Lab. 12 Impact Lab alumni participated in interviews.

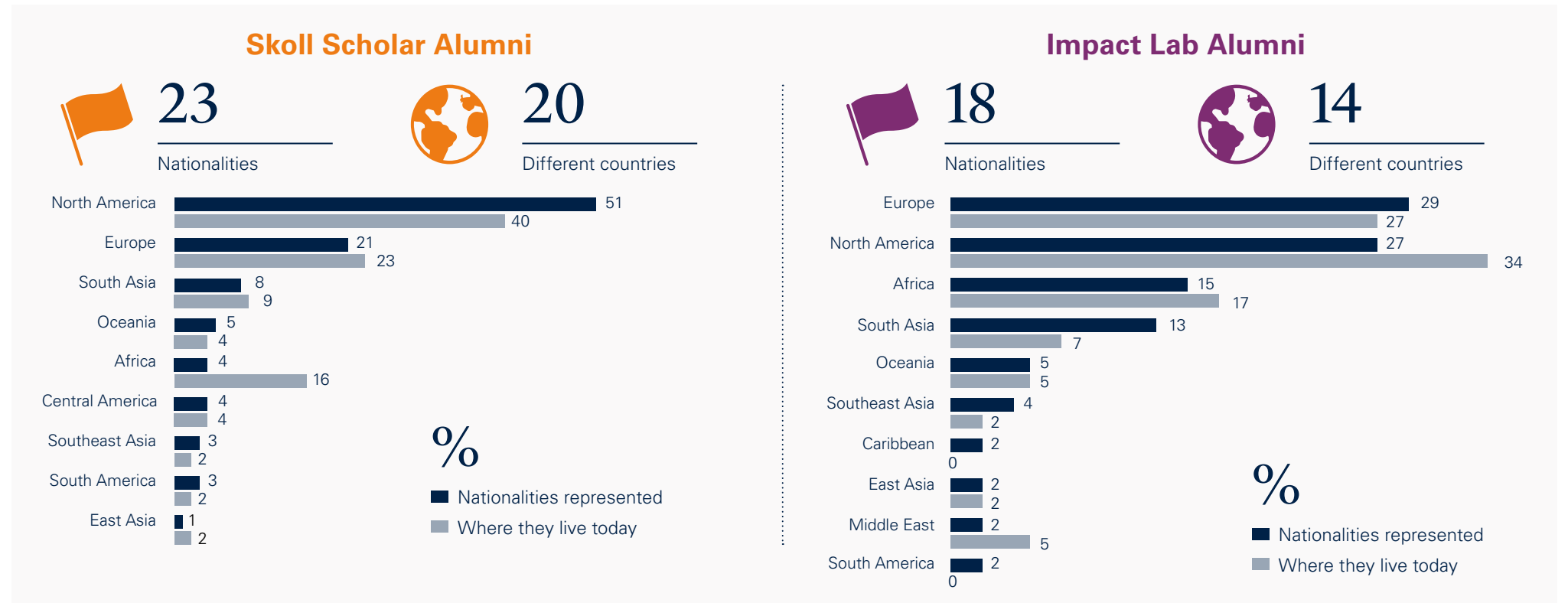
Three non-Lab alumni participated in anonymous informal interviews about their social impact experiences at Oxford. These interviews were focused on contextualising the social impact experiences of others within the MBA and business school, and qualifying the insights shared by Impact Lab alumni.

Our impact study was designed and undertaken by Openwell¹. It aims to understand better how the Skoll Scholarships programme and Impact Lab affect alumni careers, and how the transfer of individual benefits may be contributing to wider societal impact. It included an investigation into how Scholars use the Skoll Scholar Alumni Network, and the effects of this engagement on them and their wider networks.

We used a mixed-methods approach, incorporating surveys and interviews (focus group discussions and individual interviews) and conducting inductive analysis of the personal reflections of the Scholars and Lab alumni. The interviews were used to cross-validate the answers and reflections shared among alumni. We also carried out a number of anonymous interviews with other Oxford MBA graduates who were neither Scholars or Lab alumni to help qualify some of the main findings.

¹ <https://openwell.co/>
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The alumni community



Where Alumni live today:

	Skoll Scholars	Impact Lab
High income economies*	67%	73%
Upper-middle income economies	7%	10%
Lower-middle income economies	24%	17%
Low income economies	2%	

Programme experience

Value of the Skoll Scholarship and Impact Lab on applications

Skoll Scholarship

71 % of Scholars said that, without the Scholarship, they would not have applied to Oxford or they would not have pursued an MBA at all.

The financial aspect of the Scholarship is key to attracting applications from social entrepreneurs or those working in the non-profit sector, where salary potential is usually lower. Alumni also said that, by relieving them of the responsibility to pay off student debt, the Scholarship freed them to pursue immediately the types of impact careers they wanted.

Most alumni viewed an MBA as the best way of learning the skills they needed to enhance their careers, and the Oxford MBA was seen as the best programme available for pursuing an MBA with a social impact focus. The presence of the Skoll Centre at Oxford was seen to provide additional credibility to the social impact focus of the Oxford MBA and Saïd Business School.



Alumni also applied to the MBA and Skoll Scholarship because they saw it as the best opportunity:

- To upskill to take their social ventures to the next level
- To understand the types of sustainable and scalable business models which help scale impact
- To disrupt 'business as usual' in the sectors they were in and work closer to private sector solutions to global challenges
- To take their impact-focused experiences and skillsets in to the private sector and move more firmly into the world of social entrepreneurship
- To study and work with people who had aligned social impact values

'I graduated with every option on the table, including starting my own business, or working for a charity... I didn't have any loans, so I didn't have anyone to pay back. There was no compromise to what I could have done.'

Louis Dorval (MBA 2009)

'I was running a social business but knew very little about business management. I wanted to understand business but specifically in the context of social change. The Oxford MBA/Skoll Scholarship was the only programme I applied to.'

Daniela Papi (MBA 2011)

Impact Lab

Alumni said that the reputation of Saïd Business School and its social impact focus were among the principal reasons they applied to Oxford. The presence of the Skoll Centre at the Business School gave credibility to the Oxford MBA and reaffirmed their decision to apply.

Reasons that Impact Lab alumni gave for having applied to the MBA programme included:

- They wanted to develop the skills and experiences to transition into a new sector or role
- They wanted to 'skill up' and return to their previous sector better equipped or to start or grow an existing venture

They expected that the MBA would build their confidence in business and/or social impact; develop the skills needed to make their career transitions; help them gain new perspectives; and allow them to learn more about social entrepreneurship.



Programme experience

Activities and initiatives during the programme

Skoll Scholarship

In the early years of the Scholarship there were few formal social impact programmes or activities at the Business School. Before 2010, Scholars explored social impact during the MBA predominantly through informal relationships and mentoring involving Skoll Centre staff and some Faculty; this supported them in gaining access to internships, research experiences, and networks.

These relationships and early engagements were crucial for creating the foundations of a strong Skoll Scholar alumni community.

Scholars themselves established societies and communities within the business school that focused on social entrepreneurship and

that helped draw others from across the MBA into these conversations.

Initiatives started or supported by Skoll Scholars include:

- Skoll Venture Awards
- Oxford Seed Fund
- TEDx Oxbridge
- Oxford Entrepreneurs
- Entrepreneurship Project (part of the MBA curriculum)
- Oxford Foundry
- Silicon Valley Comes to Oxford

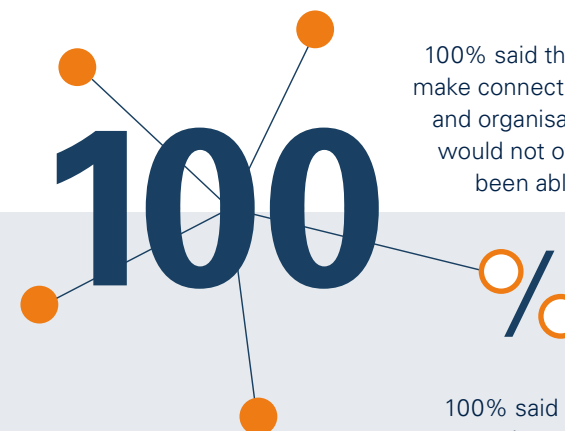
More recently (since 2013) the Skoll Centre and the business school have provided an increasing number of formal social impact programmes and activities. Those highlighted by alumni included Map the System, GOTO, Leading for Impact, Social Impact Venture Competition, MINT, Creative Destruction Lab, and Impact Lab.

'The monthly dinner nights at Pamela's (previous Director of the Skoll Centre) house will forever be etched in my memory – where each of us Skollars could bring a new friend each month. Sometimes she would surprise us with a special VIP guest who was visiting Oxford. Movements are created this way...'

Grace Sai, Skoll Scholar (MBA 2009)

86%

86% said that their experiences and questions relating to social entrepreneurship and social impact were adequately explored during their time at Oxford.

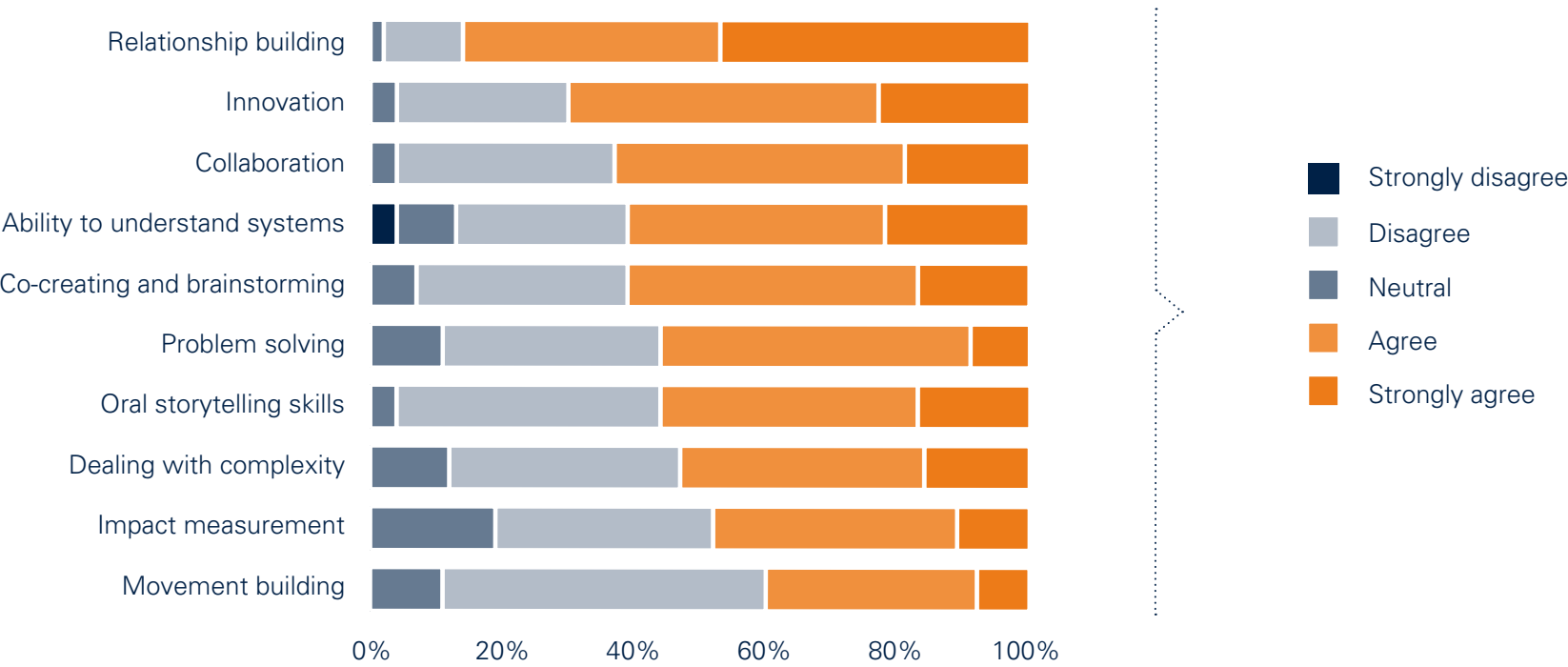


100% said they were able to make connections with people and organisations that they would not otherwise have been able to make.

100% said that they have accessed a network of people who influence or have positively influenced their careers

Skills developed through engagement with the Skoll Centre

Scholars were already highly skilled professionals coming into the MBA, but of impact skillsets they reported developing most through the Skoll Centre were:



Impact Lab

Of the range of different learning opportunities provided by Impact Lab, alumni said that the most useful and informative were the peer-learning activities and opportunities to co-create content. 82% said that the co-created content during the Lab provided 'a unique way of experiencing social impact' within the MBA and Saïd Business School. The most popular activities were the Retreats, Storytelling Café, and Active Learning Sets.

66 % of alumni said that Impact Lab was the main space in which they honed their social impact education during the MBA

Alumni honed their social impact education throughout the Business School, and communities such as the influential Social Impact Oxford Business Network (SI-OBN) were regarded as important spaces where alumni developed their social impact knowledge and networks.

The Skoll Centre has played a pioneering role in shaping the social impact experiences for alumni and others within the Business School. Programmes like Map the System and GOTO were reportedly more influential to alumni on content like systems thinking than Impact Lab, but Impact Lab was still regarded as a primary

space for most alumni during the MBA to explore social impact. Alumni said that Impact Lab was distinctive as a formal space 'outside the MBA' where they could have open, vulnerable, and honest conversations about impact. While there is overlap between the communities and activities associated with Impact Lab, for example, Social Impact Oxford Business Network (SI-OBN), Map the System, GOTO, and Impact Lab, many alumni said that Impact Lab was the only space within the MBA where they felt comfortable enough to have these conversations.

Impact Lab plays an important role in promoting social impact conversations within the wider School community, either by bringing a critical mass to events, or by hosting events and conversations. 76% of alumni agreed or strongly agreed that the Impact Lab community was a key hub for social impact conversations across the School and for bringing external social impact experiences into the School. Skoll Centre programmes such as Impact Lab and GOTO remain among the primary mechanisms for diffusing wider social impact learning and knowledge, and this is a key route through which the Centre sustains its soft power within the School.

'We had black and white South Africans in the class and there was a very deep conversation around the place of race in social constructs, and things like that. Just to have that level of openness to talk about very sensitive things, and the safety that Impact Lab provided for some of these conversations remain among the highlight of my time.'

Samuel Darko (MBA 2019)

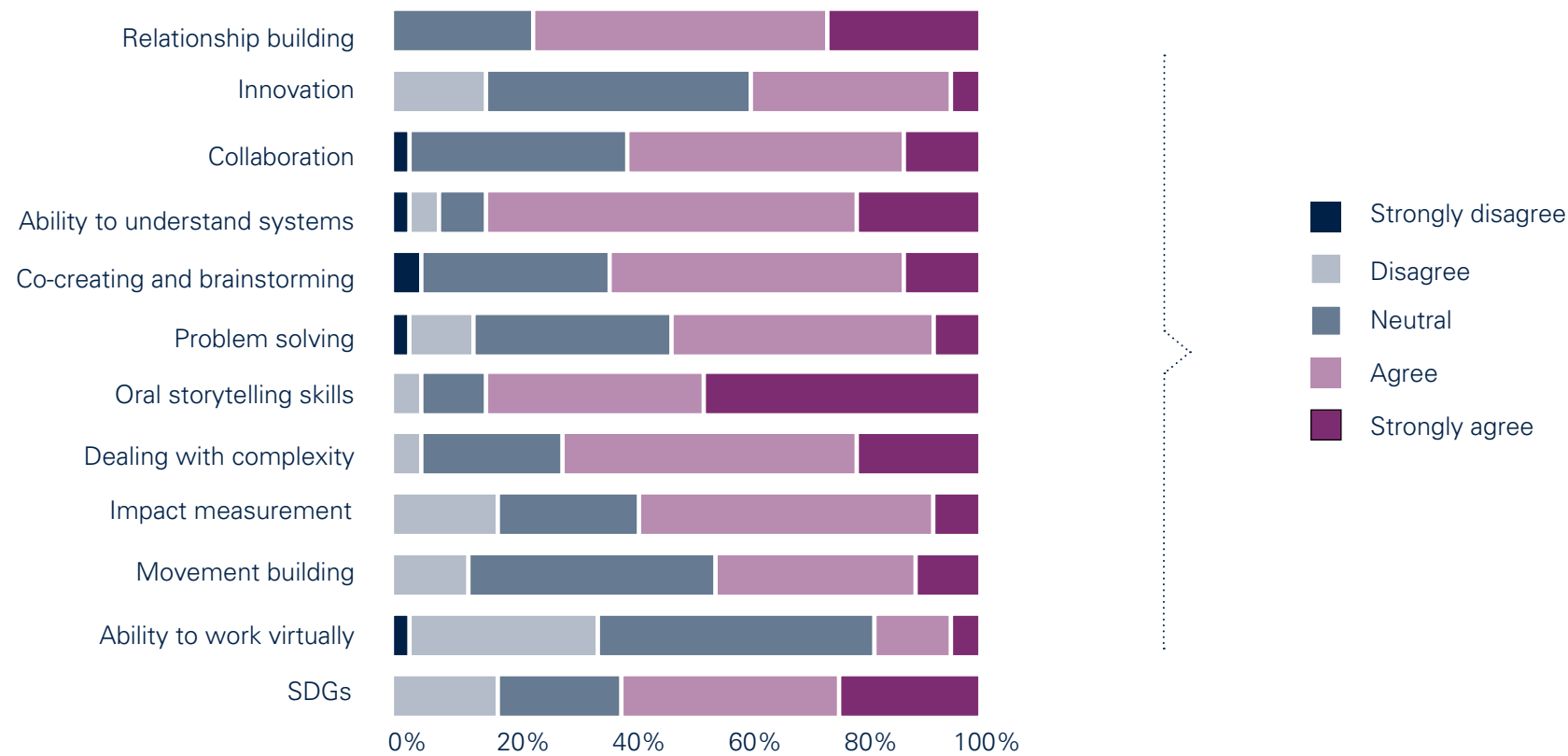
'As a white male, I was definitely in the minority, and it felt like a space which was genuinely diverse. [Impact Lab] felt instantly like a different group of people, which I think was really empowering and interesting. But at the same time, kind of challenging because it curated a different slant – you wouldn't have the same voices you might have in your section that would always speak up.'

Oliver Pollard (MBA 2018)



Skills developed through engagement with Impact Lab

Impact Lab alumni were already skilled professionals coming into the MBA, but of impact skillsets they reported developing most through the Skoll Centre were:



CASE STUDY

Pioneering in
pay-as-you-go
energy:

the M-KOPA
story



Jesse Moore
CEO and Co-Founder
of M-KOPA Solar
(MBA 2006)



David Damberger
Managing Director
of M-KOPA Solar
(MBA 2011)



Nikhil Nair
Former Director International
Expansion of M-KOPA
(MBA 2014)

M-KOPA is the world's leading provider of 'pay-as-you-go' energy services for off-grid customers. It began in early 2010 when the business model was first sketched out by its founders on a whiteboard. The idea was to combine the power of digital micropayments with IoT (Internet-of-Things) connectivity to make financing more accessible, and solar was just the start.

M-KOPA pioneered and kick-started the wider pay-as-you-go (PAYG) solar market and since then, M-KOPA have built one of the world's most advanced connected asset financing platforms. M-KOPA have used the platform to provide nearly \$400 million in financing that has enabled 1 million customers to access solar lighting, energy-efficient televisions and fridges, smartphones, cash loans, and more.

M-KOPA has been supported by the Skoll Centre and Network since its founding. M-KOPA's founders include a Skoll Scholar alumnus, and the **Skoll Centre and Skoll Network provided early introductions** to

the type of people and organisations who might back a business-like M-KOPA. These connections were critical to M-KOPA's initial fundraising. During its growth M-KOPA has also recruited other Skoll Scholars, including David Damberger and Nikhil Nair, who have played key roles in supporting the success and expansion of its mission.

M-KOPA Solar was co-founded by Jesse Moore, a Skoll Scholar in 2006-07. After graduating from the MBA, Jesse went to work for Vodafone and the GSM Association on mobile money solutions targeting unbanked consumers. And in 2010 Jesse moved to Kenya to start M-KOPA. Jesse has overseen the company's growth from scratch to a business with over 400 employees and 100,000 customers in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

David Damberger is a 2014-15 Skoll Scholar, currently the Chief Strategy Officer and head of R&D of M-KOPA Solar but has been responsible for many positions including Chief Data and Performance Officer and

Head of International Expansion, product management, the platform, market research, new product development, and Managing Director of Tanzania and Uganda. His time as a Skoll Scholar helped him to grow his network, which was how he connected with Jesse Moore and M-KOPA.

Nikhil Nair is also a 2014-15 Skoll Scholar. He joined M-KOPA shortly after graduating from Oxford where he worked for approximately five years. He held roles including Director of Commercial and Sales, and Director of International Expansion. In February 2020 he started his own company (called Ohm Mobility) to help increase the adoption of Electric Vehicles in emerging markets. He said he would never have had the confidence to do this if he had not done the MBA or received the Scholarship (as he would be paying student loans), and the rich experience of working at M-KOPA has helped his transition to Founder.

Alumni careers

Most Scholars and Impact Lab alumni today work in roles connected to achieving social impact through the private sector, either as founders of social enterprises or as what we refer to as 'impact professionals' in a role that has sustainability or social impact as its focus.

Comparing the pre- and post-MBA careers of both Skoll Scholars and Impact Lab alumni over time, there is a marked increase in the numbers of alumni who have moved from the non-profit sector (NGO, Civil Society Organisation, or Philanthropy) to the private sector. In particular, there is an increase in the number of alumni working as

impact professionals: that is, working in the private sector in a role that has sustainability or social impact as its focus. These include a few alumni who had previously been founders of social enterprises.

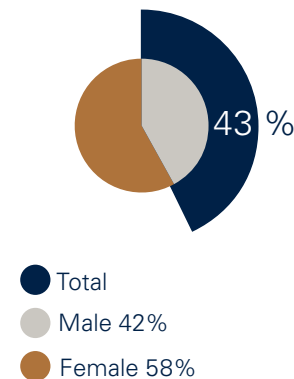
This movement away from the non-profit sector may reflect the growing number of impact professional roles in private sector companies, including social enterprises and those with B-Corp certification. It is also worth noting that a sizeable minority of alumni described themselves as working in more than one organisation, sometimes straddling sectors.

'Prior to the MBA, I thought about non-profit or social enterprise work, but the MBA/Impact Lab made me realise that my biggest impact contributions could be in the private sector'.

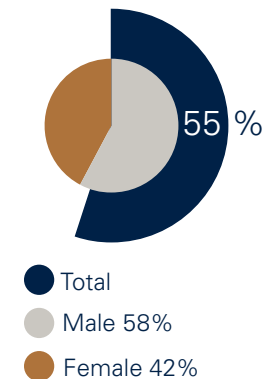
Valerie Aguiar (MBA 2018)

Skoll Scholars Impact careers (type)

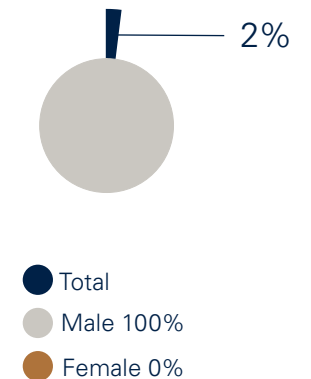
Impact professional



Social entrepreneur

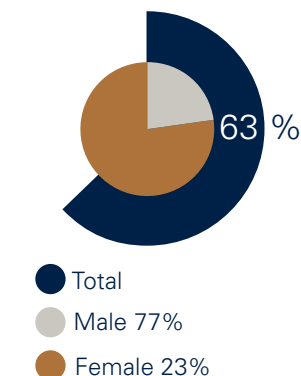


Impact curious

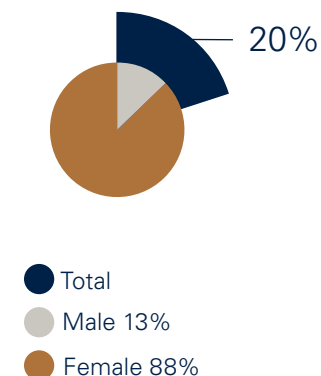


Impact Lab alumni impact careers (type)

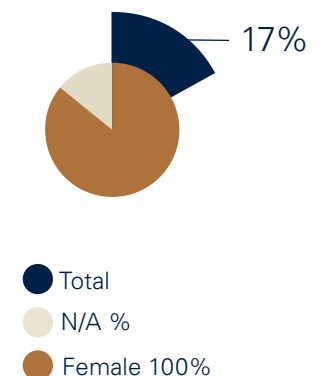
Impact professional



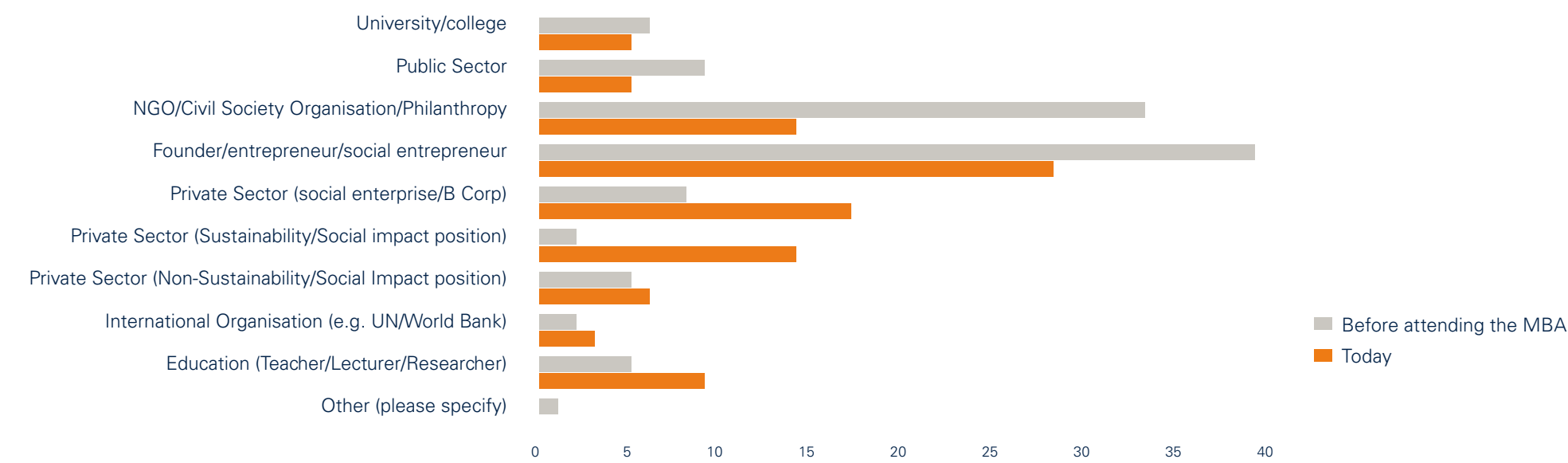
Social entrepreneur



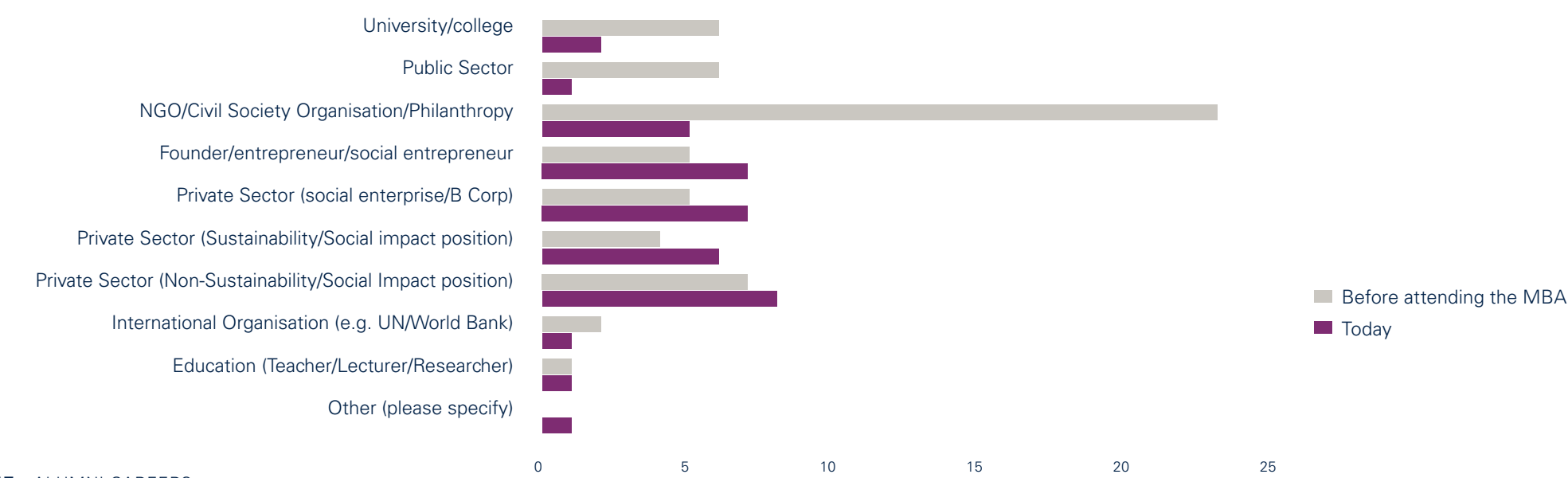
Impact curious



Skoll Scholars careers (by sector)



Impact Lab alumni career (by sector)



CASE STUDY



Sehr Tejpar
Impact Lab (MBA 2019)

From impact
professional
to social
entrepreneur:

Sehr Tejpar's
story

I came into the MBA as an impact-driven professional. Now, 8 months after graduation, I plan to start my own venture.

Bold Philanthropy – my new project – is a philanthropic advising collective created to encourage bespoke approaches to climate philanthropy for corporates, foundations, and family offices. The mission is to encourage moonshot philanthropy and enable funding to go where it is most needed and doesn't currently flow. At present, funding for climate comprises less than 2% of the global philanthropic pie.

The Skoll Centre's systems-thinking lens allowed me to step back and see the larger problem I wanted to engage with and then

to find a systems solution. The venture I am now proposing would not be possible without a systems lens to the issue of financing climate action.

Without Oxford Saïd and Impact Lab I would not have pivoted into climate, would not be working with corporates and the private sector, and would not be planning my own entrepreneurial venture! All of these changes are incredible additions to my career that make me feel that achieving my own career purpose and impact is within my grasp.

'The systems-thinking lens the Skoll Centre offers allowed me to step back and see the larger problem I wanted to engage with and then to find a systems solution.'

Promoting societal impact

We asked alumni to describe what they are doing in their careers to promote societal impact: how are they contributing to the transformation of systems or practices in order to address complex problems? We matched their activities to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

We also sought to assess how alumni share their skills and experiences through different channels. This analysis helps to distinguish the different ways in which alumni affect social change as well as identify how benefits from the Scholarship and/or Impact Lab activities can be transferred. The four channels are:

- Within organisations
- Between organisations
- Publicly
- Between people

This section focuses predominantly on Skoll Scholar alumni. Impact Lab alumni graduated from Oxford only in the last two years and are establishing their careers, we felt it is too early to explore the longer term social impacts that may materialise in their careers but we look forward to hearing more from them in the future.



Prior to join the MBA, Libby McCarthy (MBA 2020), was Senior Product Manager at Proximity Designs, an ag-tech business that helps to increase the incomes and well-being of Myanmar's smallholder farmers.

Sustainable Development Goals

Priority SDGs for Skoll Scholars



21



19



18

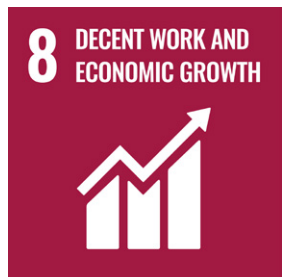


17



17

Priority SDGs for Impact Lab Alumni



16



12



11



11

1 NO POVERTY 	Skoll Scholars are working on	17	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	Skoll Scholars are working on	9	13 CLIMATE ACTION 	Skoll Scholars are working on	19
Impact Lab Alumni are working on	6	Impact Lab Alumni are working on	1	Impact Lab Alumni are working on	8			
2 ZERO HUNGER 	Skoll Scholars are working on	8	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	Skoll Scholars are working on	21	14 LIFE BELOW WATER 	Skoll Scholars are working on	5
Impact Lab Alumni are working on	2	Impact Lab Alumni are working on	16	Impact Lab Alumni are working on	3			
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	Skoll Scholars are working on	18	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	Skoll Scholars are working on	7	15 LIFE ON LAND 	Skoll Scholars are working on	5
Impact Lab Alumni are working on	12	Impact Lab Alumni are working on	10	Impact Lab Alumni are working on	1			
4 QUALITY EDUCATION 	Skoll Scholars are working on	11	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	Skoll Scholars are working on	11	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	Skoll Scholars are working on	3
Impact Lab Alumni are working on	7	Impact Lab Alumni are working on	11	Impact Lab Alumni are working on	7			
5 GENDER EQUALITY 	Skoll Scholars are working on	17	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	Skoll Scholars are working on	10	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	Skoll Scholars are working on	8
Impact Lab Alumni are working on	11	Impact Lab Alumni are working on	5	Impact Lab Alumni are working on	6			
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 	Skoll Scholars are working on	7	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 	Skoll Scholars are working on	11			
Impact Lab Alumni are working on	0	Impact Lab Alumni are working on	10					

Channels

Within organisations (including their own ventures)

91% of Scholars have directly established a new initiative, project, or venture in response to or that has contributed to addressing a complex challenge, and 72% have also generated funding that has contributed to supporting social impact initiatives.

Alumni have also been involved in leading strategic social change projects within organisations, including strategy development and developing policies.

Between organisations

Nearly 70% of alumni have created or strengthened links within or between organisations. Two-thirds also said that they have helped to facilitate consensus across diverse teams or groups (66%) and build coalitions that champion social change.

A majority of alumni reported using the Alumni Network as a key resource for sharing lessons and trouble-shooting problems they faced in their own careers, organisations, or ventures related to social impact (70%).

Publicly

Alumni are active in sharing their experiences at public forums, particularly through speaking engagements and the media. 74% of all alumni have spoken about social impact at conferences or events not connected to the Skoll Centre, and 42% of Scholars have promoted social change through publishing articles for news or research organisations. Scholars have also contributed to academic and policy conversations on social impact: for example, 25% of alumni have contributed to key policy papers or documents, and 15% of alumni reported that they have published research in an academic journal.

Between people

Over half of all alumni have actively contributed to nurturing inclusive environments within organisations that support social impact. For example, 55% of scholars said they had been involved in establishing organisational ethics and values that promote greater inclusion. Almost half have worked to promote gender equality across their organisation and 62% have been mentors and coaches. Scholars also contribute to social change in other ways, including, for example, in governance roles.

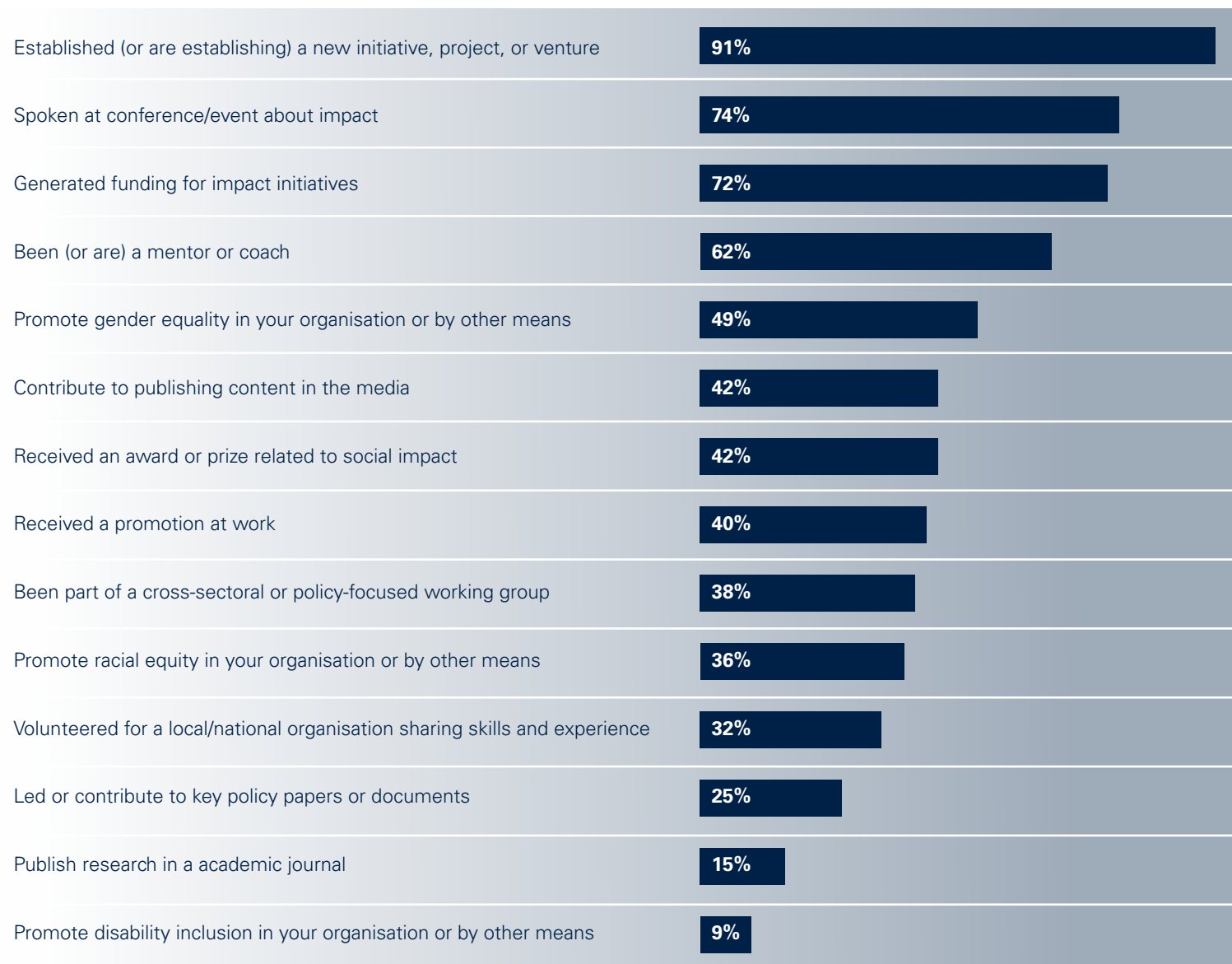
91%

of Scholars have directly established a new initiative, project, or venture in response to or that has contributed to addressing a complex challenge

74%

of all alumni have spoken about social impact at conferences or events not connected to the Skoll Centre

How alumni promote societal impact



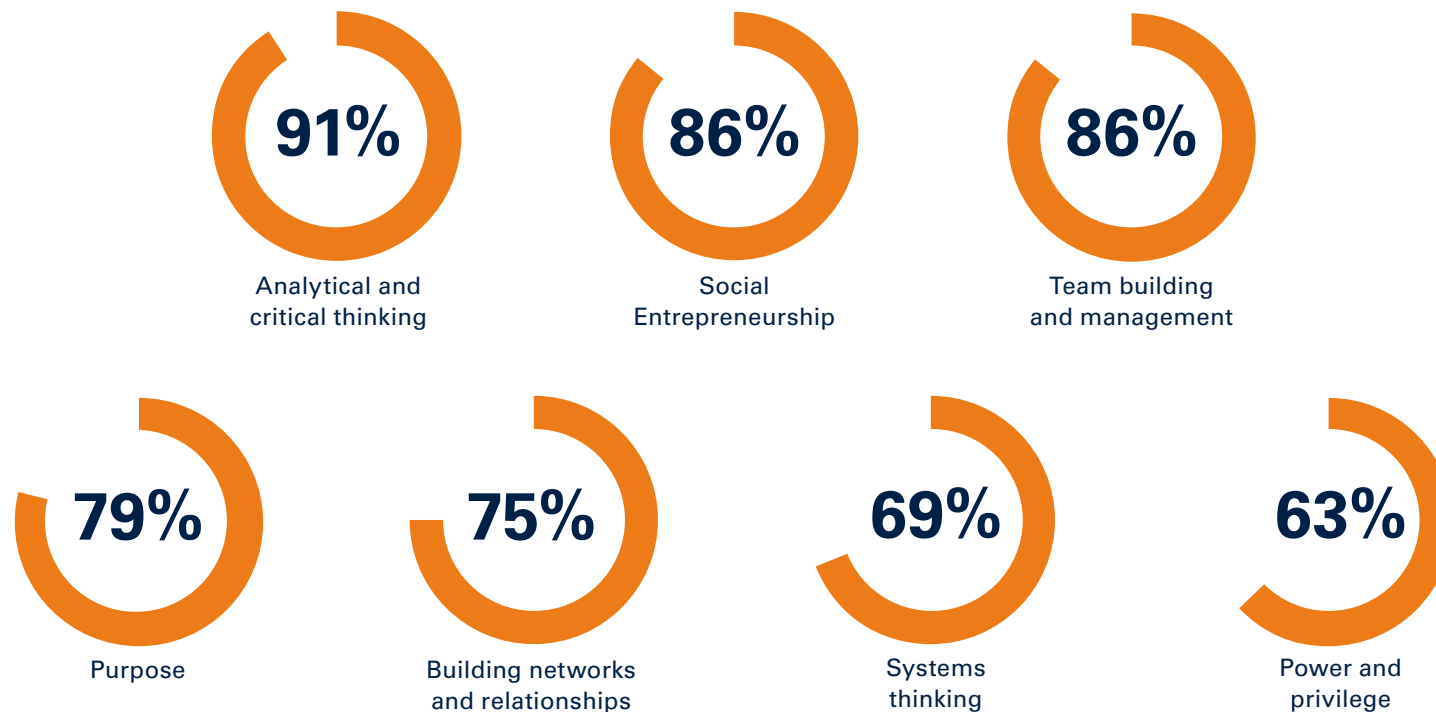
Skoll Scholar Alumni skills transfer

The impact of the Skoll Scholarship and Impact Lab increases when alumni live out and transfer their knowledge and skills to individuals and organisations, thereby contributing to wider social change. This demonstrates one way in which our approach to social entrepreneurship and social impact may be spilling over into other sectors.

More than two-thirds of alumni said they had transferred soft skills such as empathy, understanding power and privilege, self-reflection, and social purpose onto others. These skills are essential for promoting social entrepreneurship and systems leadership models focused on other people and not on the individual entrepreneur (i.e. avoiding the trap of the 'heropreneur'¹).

More than two-thirds of alumni transferred practical skills such as analytical and critical thinking, storytelling, impact measurement, and systems thinking.

The top skills transferred to individuals and organisations by Skoll Scholar Alumni:



'Though the Scholarship did not change my career trajectory significantly (I work in medicine), it changed my impact as well as my role and my choice of specialty within medicine. [...] because of the Skoll Scholarship, the world has gained an emergency room physician who [thinks systemically].'

Lara Vogel (MBA 2009)

¹ Tackling Heropreneurship is a study conducted by Skoll Scholar Daniela Papi-Thornton (MBA 2011). Find out more at tacklingheropreneurship.com

CASE STUDY



Nicholas Andreou
Impact Lab (MBA 2018)

From Impact Lab to TEDx:

Nicholas Andreou's story

During my time on Impact Lab I taught a session on Impact Measurement and I received overwhelmingly positive feedback from my Impact Lab classmates. As a result, a classmate later nominated me to give a keynote at our Responsible Business Forum and this subsequently led me to deliver my first TEDx. In fact, one of my classmates submitted an application to TEDx on my behalf!

I came into Impact Lab with a lot of experience in impact so I found the networking and relationship side of it more useful than the knowledge/skill development. Impact Lab helped me to understand a way in which I add value to the world: speaking and teaching. The overwhelming encouragement that I got from the cohort to do more of that has been

the defining reason why this is now a part of my life. The sense of community I got from my time on Impact Lab was something that stood out for me during the MBA, and the people I met and built relationships with have been instrumental in helping me move forward in my career.

The systems change and systems thinking pieces are probably one way of viewing the world that I didn't have so strongly before the MBA. An example of how I have used this thinking in my career today would be how it affects my work at Big Society Capital (BSC). At BSC I work on our venture team, and at BSC one of our missions is to change market systems that we invest into – we're essentially trying to change the way that venture capital works.

There are so many different levers that you have to pull: mindset practices, the way that power and resources work in the system, and much more. We are using the frameworks that I learnt at Oxford both in analysing the problem and actually trying to solve it. BSC has now joined up with the Skoll Centre and we are a part of Systems Change Observatory (SCO).

'The people I met and built relationships with have been instrumental in helping me move forward in my career.'

Career achievement

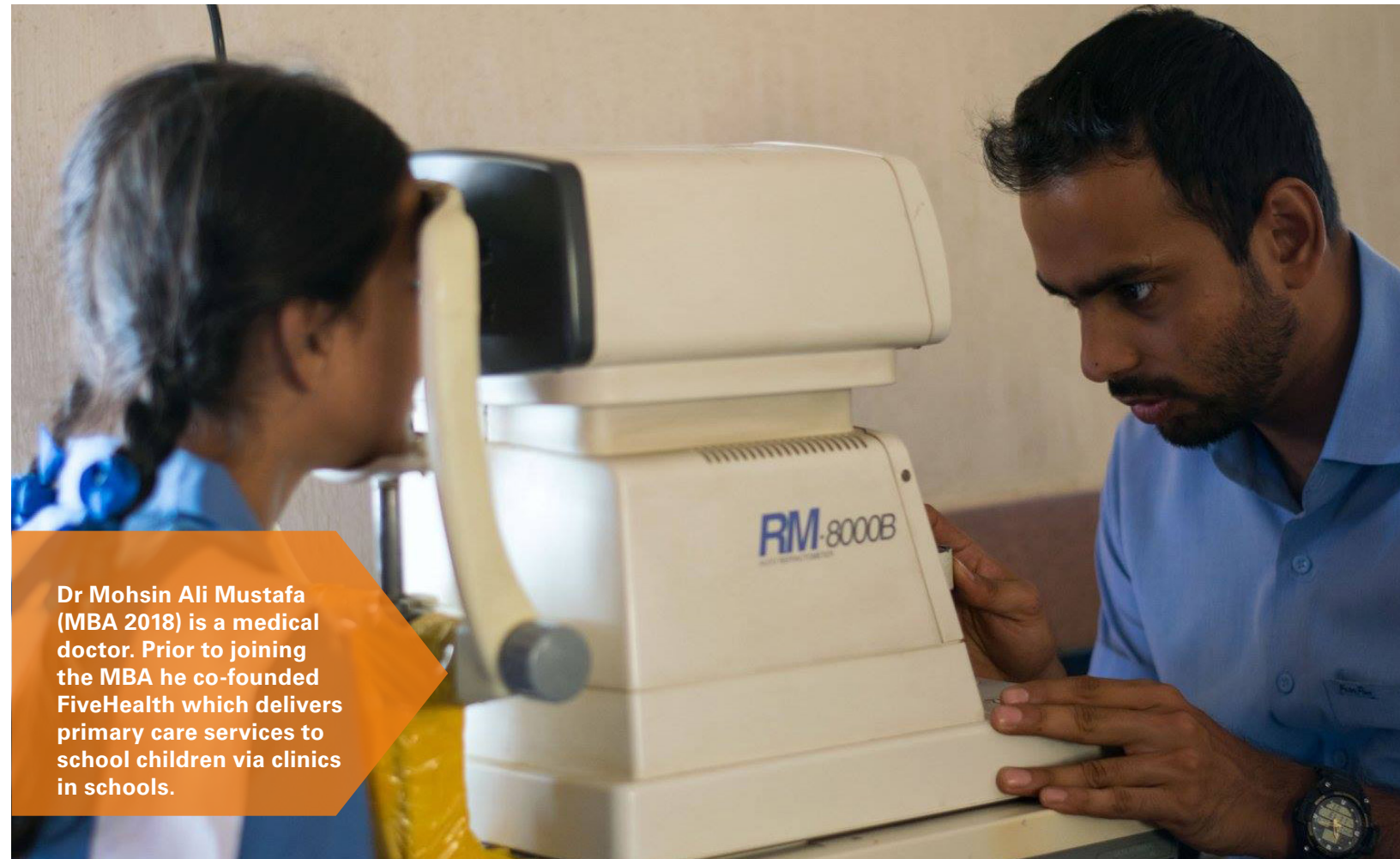
Skoll Scholarship

91% of Scholars said that the MBA has had a positive influence on their career plans and career opportunities, and 64% said that the Skoll Centre activities they attended also influenced their career plans and goals.

71% of Scholars said that they would not have been able to achieve their career goals without attending the Oxford MBA. And 78% of Scholars said that the Skoll Centre programmes and activities contributed to their career milestones.

Many alumni joined the School with pre-set expectations of what they wanted to get out of the MBA and what they wanted to do after they graduated. They did not expect these plans to be influenced significantly by the activities they undertook. However, some alumni reported making significant career shifts as a result of the MBA as well as Skoll programmes.

Most Scholars report that they remain actively engaged with the Skoll Alumni Network today, and that the Network remains one of the main resources for supporting them in their impact careers.



Dr Mohsin Ali Mustafa (MBA 2018) is a medical doctor. Prior to joining the MBA he co-founded FiveHealth which delivers primary care services to school children via clinics in schools.

Career achievement

Impact Lab

Having graduated recently, a significant number of alumni said that they are still exploring and testing possible impact career paths, deciding where and how they can have most impact.

This suggests that, even at this early stage, Impact Lab is influencing the career transitions alumni are making, and the changes in personal and professional approaches in how they pursue impact in their work. Overall, 71% of alumni reported that the Lab had increased their confidence to pursue impact careers, and 83% said they felt more confident in becoming impact leaders. However, there remains a gap in supporting alumni actually to make their transitions into impact career opportunities.

Alumni described the main ways in which Impact Lab influenced their impact careers as:

- Improving their confidence and motivation to pursue impact in their careers
- Enabling them to explore new ways of having impact
- Using different frameworks from the Lab to advance their impact
- Working more empathically with others and as leaders

‘Impact Lab provided me with a community of people dedicated to similar work with whom I could collaborate, ask questions, and navigate the job search process with. These relationships have been essential to trouble shooting the impact job market and helping me to move through the application and interview processes.’

O’Mara Taylor (MBA 2019)

‘There are so many things in the world that need to be re-imagined, and we need to sit down and have a space to be intentional about doing this. It requires courage, perseverance, community, empathy and openness. And the Lab did that for us in the MBA. The MBA is academic and very busy and can be quite transactional in what you get out of the experience. The Lab gave us the space to slow down and have complex conversations in safe environments, applying it to the MBA... The experiences I received from the Lab, particularly the Active Learning Sets, helped me to become self-reflective and to listen to others and solve problems. It taught me so much that I am actively motivated and working to embed these practices into the policy and culture as I build my new venture in Liberia.’

Marvin Tarawally (MBA 2019)



The 'Skoll Experience' and alumni impact careers

Skoll Scholar alumni said that pursuing an Oxford MBA had a direct, immediate effect on most of their careers, as well as a longer-term, indirect effect on their careers and their social impact.

The MBA gave them a significant boost in their early careers and was an important 'stepping stone' for going into the careers they wanted post-graduation. The skills that they developed on the MBA come in useful at different points during their careers, from trouble-shooting problems in their current jobs to helping them move from one career into another.

The credibility associated with being an Oxford MBA graduate has a lasting effect on alumni careers by opening up opportunities, such as networks and agency.

Without the Scholarship many alumni would not have pursued the MBA or been in the careers they are in today. The financial aspect of the Scholarship freed alumni to pursue impact careers without the burden of compromising their career choices. But alumni also felt that they benefited from the

cachet associated with the Skoll brand, and from the knowledge and training provided by the Skoll Centre.

The Skoll community, including events such as the Skoll World Forum and Skoll Scholar Summit, has added continued benefits to alumni impact careers.



Skoll Scholar Network

The Skoll Scholar Network comprises all former Skoll Scholars and is a direct source of value-creation for alumni's social impact.

84% of alumni connect through online platforms initiated by the Skoll Centre (e.g. Scholar Whatsapp groups and other online forums). 55% said that attending Skoll-curated events (such as the Skoll Summit and Skoll World Forum) was an important way in which they connect with others. Importantly, there is also a high degree of self-organisation among alumni, with 77% reporting that they have arranged informal meetings independently of Skoll-curated activities.

The network holds both significant intrinsic and instrumental value for Scholars, and this is exemplified in the rich diversity

of their interactions, roles and functions the network offers. Scholars described adopting and observing roles including mentor, mentee, coach, role model, counsellor, advisor, business partner, investor, friend, family, active listener, and champion. Scholars also take on different responsibilities within the network over time, with many of the established Scholars informally mentoring and advising younger graduates – while still actively engaging with the network as a resource for their own impact careers. Particularly, Scholars seek out careers advice as well as information and resources that can support new and existing ventures. A number of longstanding Scholars still use the network to 'tap into' others' experience and expertise to understand what is going

on in other systems that affect their own space. This is important for two reasons: firstly it demonstrates an equity in the parts that Scholars play in value-creation across the network (i.e. it is not just top-down), and, secondly, that the network remains an important resource for Scholars' impact careers over time.

Nearly a third of all alumni said that the network has directly helped them secure a new job; change careers; start a new venture, or recruit staff. Scholars described the network as a "family" in which alumni are joined together by shared experiences (such as the Skoll Scholarship and Skoll events) and shared missions (social impact).

'I engage with other Skoll Scholars because they inspire me [...] Personal trust and support is the primary reason mostly (why I engage with them and the community) and I know they come from the same "heart space" as me: that is like gold dust in the work we all do! ... Often, I come to the Skoll Summit tired and leave utterly refreshed, supported, and inspired to go back into the world. [...] The community gives you a sense of duty and expectation to go away having impact.'

Tamsin Jones (MBA 2011)

It is a source of:

Personal support: Scholars use the network for emotional, social, and moral support.

Collective responsibility and motivation for social impact: Scholars use the network as a source for (re) inspiration and motivation keep addressing global challenges.

Access to knowledge, networks, and resources: Scholars use the network to access knowledge, people, capital, find business partners, recruiting staff.

The **Skoll Scholar Summit** and **Skoll World Forum** provide spaces for alumni to discuss personal and professional issues, maintaining the network's relevance for Scholars as they navigate their impact careers. The Summit is a significant contributor to the social capital and cohesion of the network, and thus the value produced from it.

Impact Lab Alumni Network

As most Impact Lab alumni graduated within the last two years. It is therefore not yet possible to evaluate the longer-term effects of the network.

However, 21% of the alumni we interviewed have already used the network to help them change careers or start a new project or initiative. The Impact Lab community was a central space for navigating impact careers both before and after graduation.

In particular, alumni use the network to exchange knowledge and information in relation to building their careers and social impact through:

- Scoping and troubleshooting transitions into impact careers
- Ideation and incubation of business ventures or career paths
- Developing moral imagination
- Access to subject matter specialists

Currently, alumni interactions appear to be fairly siloed in their Impact Lab cohorts. Just 32% of alumni reported having some form of interaction with Lab alumni from other cohorts. However, the example of the Skoll Scholar Network suggests that this can be improved with continuing investment and support for the network, yielding benefits in the long term for alumni and fostering greater social impact.



Looking ahead



Dr Peter Drobac

Director, Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship
Senior Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship
Saïd Business School, University of Oxford

The insights from this impact study are extremely heartening and reinforce the Skoll Centre's core mission of being a global leader in social impact education. It is the Skoll Scholar and Impact Lab community who give me hope in these uncertain times. We've already incorporated several lessons learned from this report into our plans for the 2021/22 academic year. Looking ahead, we'll aim to broaden the impact of our education portfolio in three important ways.

First, we aim to strengthen the curriculum, measurement, and longitudinal value of both programmes continually. This year we will be engaging with our faculty colleagues in a broad review of the Impact Lab curriculum, aiming for a rigorous and differentiated approach that will keep us on the leading edge of impact education. We will complement

this retrospective impact study with a longitudinal prospective evaluation that assesses the goals and competencies of incoming students and follows their careers for years into the future to understand better how engagement with the Skoll Centre influences and accelerates their impact career trajectories. The Skoll Scholar community has taught us the value of nurturing a vibrant lifelong alumni community, and we'll work to grow this network with our Impact Lab graduates also.

Second, widening access. Knowledge Equity – the elevation of lived and practiced experience, along with learned expertise – has become a core pillar of the Centre's work. We believe that diversity, conceived broadly, is a moral imperative and key to innovation. We have embedded a

Knowledge Equity approach into our Skoll Scholar recruitment pipeline, targeting high-potential individuals from diverse, underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds both globally and close to home.

Finally, expanding our impact. Whilst demand for the Impact Lab and Skoll Scholarship far outstrips our current resources, we recognise the opportunity to engage emerging change leaders across the University of Oxford and beyond. This year, we are excited to be opening the Impact Lab to post-graduate candidates across the University of Oxford. We believe that disciplinary diversity will enhance the experience for MBAs and post-graduates alike and broaden the Centre's positioning as a University hub for social innovation and entrepreneurship. Over the medium

term, we are exploring opportunities to expand our impact education programming beyond Oxford through digital and executive education, aiming to influence a global generation of changemakers.

We hope you can join us on this important and urgent journey. If you have ideas, connections, or interest in supporting our work, We'd love to hear from you. Get in touch at skollcentre@sbs.ox.ac.uk.

In solidarity,

Dr Peter Drobac

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Drobac".



Saïd Business School

Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford blends the best of new and old. We are a vibrant and innovative business school, yet deeply embedded in an 800-year-old world-class university. We create programmes and ideas that have global impact. We educate people for successful business careers, and as a community seek to tackle world-scale problems. We deliver cutting-edge programmes and ground-breaking research that transform individuals, organisations, business practice, and society. We seek to be a world-class business school community, embedded in a world-class university, tackling world-scale problems.

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Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship

The Skoll Centre is a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning community of academics, practitioners and students from around the world.

We pioneer global learning in Social Entrepreneurship, Systems Change and Knowledge Equity.

We achieve this through world-class education programmes, action-centred research and catalytic collaborations.

Through this, we are playing our part to develop the next generation of systems leaders to transform unjust systems and help address the world's greatest environmental and social challenges.

All information is correct at time of going to press please check our website for most up-to-date information.

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