



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

Access Strategy &
Partnerships Office

Access and Strategic Student Recruitment Practices

ASPO Fireside Chat 2024

Agenda

9:30-10:30

- Housekeeping
- Land & Ancestral Acknowledgements
- Opening Remarks & Introductions

10:30-11:30

- Panel and Q&A

11:50-12:20

- Lunch

12:20-12:40

- ASPO Updates

12:40-1:20

- Conversation Circles

1:20 – 1:30

- Closing Remarks

Land Acknowledgment



We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates.

For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

~The University of Toronto

Ancestral Acknowledgment



We wish to acknowledge all Treaty peoples – including those who came here as settlers – as migrants either in this generation or in generations past - and those of us who came here involuntarily, particularly those brought to these lands as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery. We pay tribute to those ancestors of African origin and descent.

~ The City of Toronto

Opening Remarks

Sandy Welsh

Vice-Provost, Students



Introduction to ASPO

The [Access Strategy & Partnerships Office \(ASPO\)](#) has a tri-campus mandate committed to supporting partners both internal and external to the University who support existing and prospective students to access and thrive in post-secondary education.



Helen Tewolde
Director



Anda Petro
Programs &
Pathways Officer



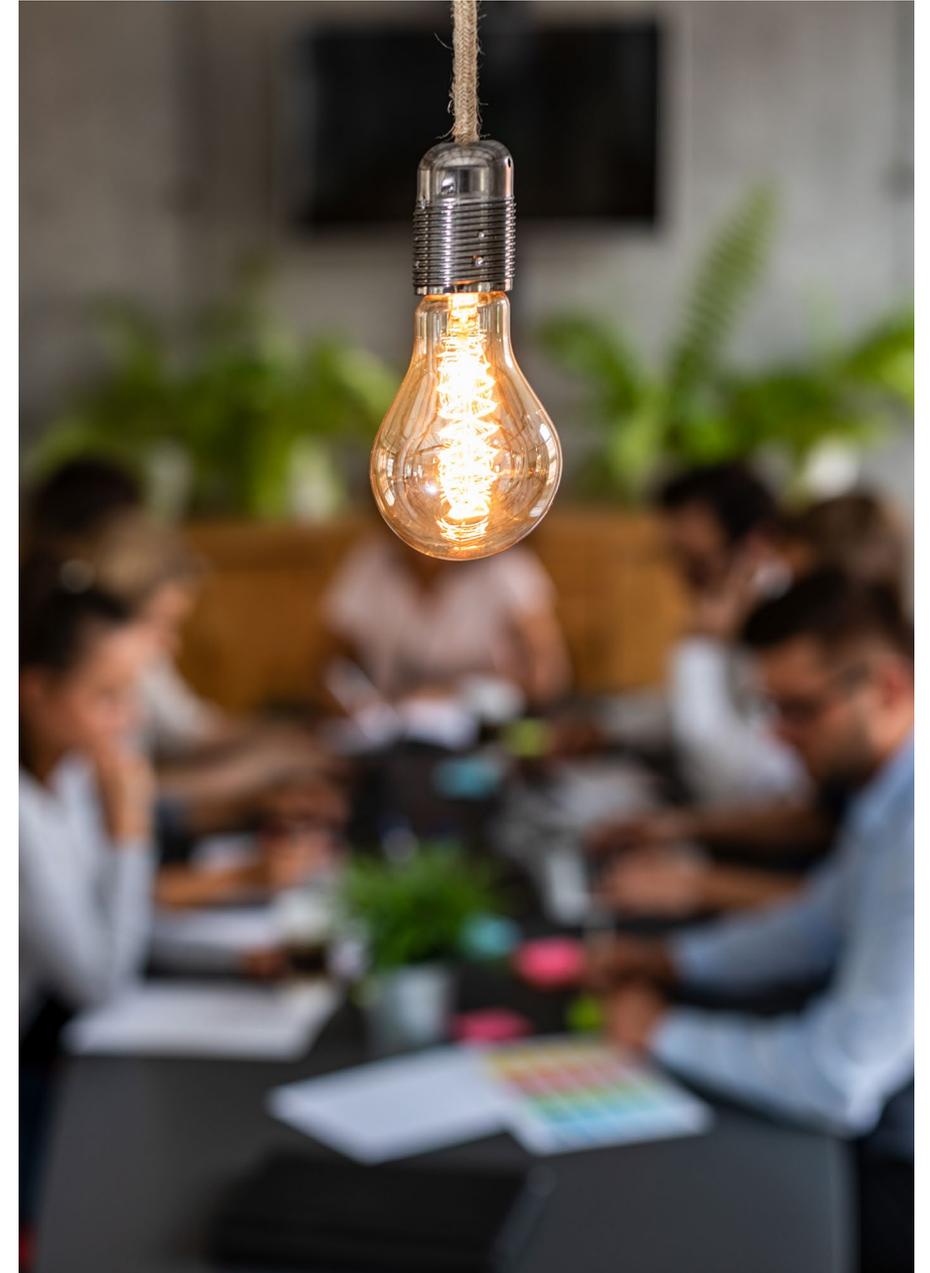
Chinelle McDonald
Partnerships &
Development Officer



Nancy Bakker
Executive Assistant
& Office Coordinator

ASPO Key Activities

- Administer the **Access Programs University Fund** to build, sustain and increase the capacity of partners to offer access and outreach programs.
 - **Did you know?** There are ~135 access and outreach programs at U of T. Close to 40% have been supported by APUF funding since 2019.
- Convene, facilitate, and support the development of **key partnerships** to enhance access goals and objectives
- **Infuse access principles** in existing University policies and programs and clarify access pathways through supporting research and evaluation on access to post-secondary education



About Today

▪ Who is in the room?

- Access programs community
- Recruitment and admissions colleagues

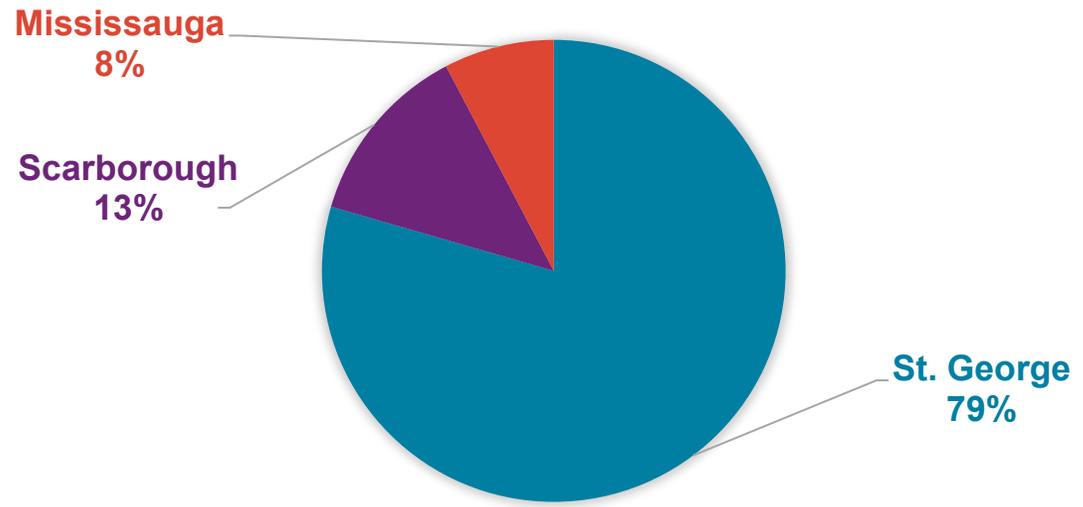
▪ What is the goal for our time together?

- Fostering collaboration and connection
- Hearing feedback and insight that will continue to inform our work

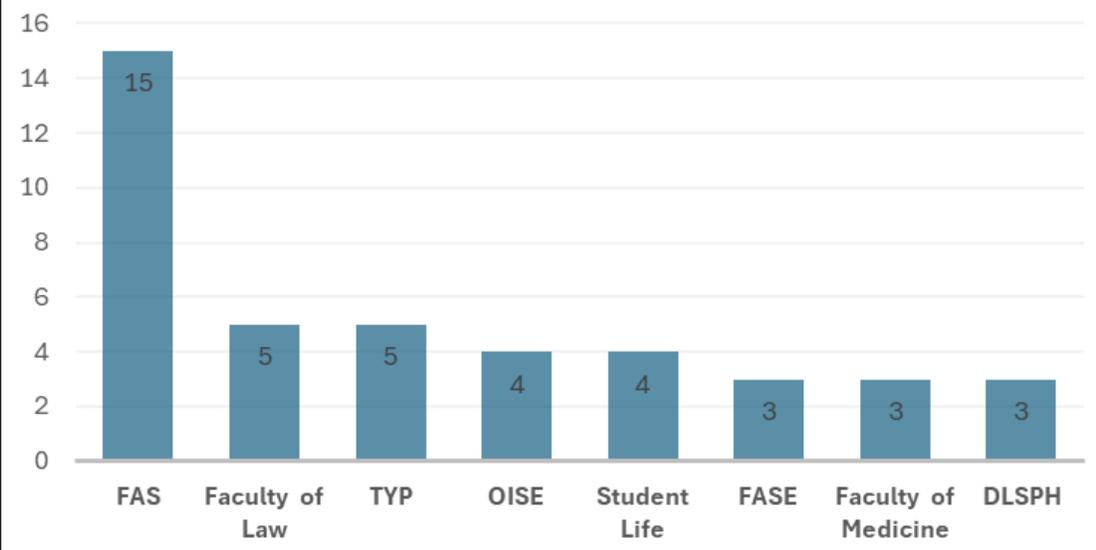


Who is in the room?

Campus (n = 78)

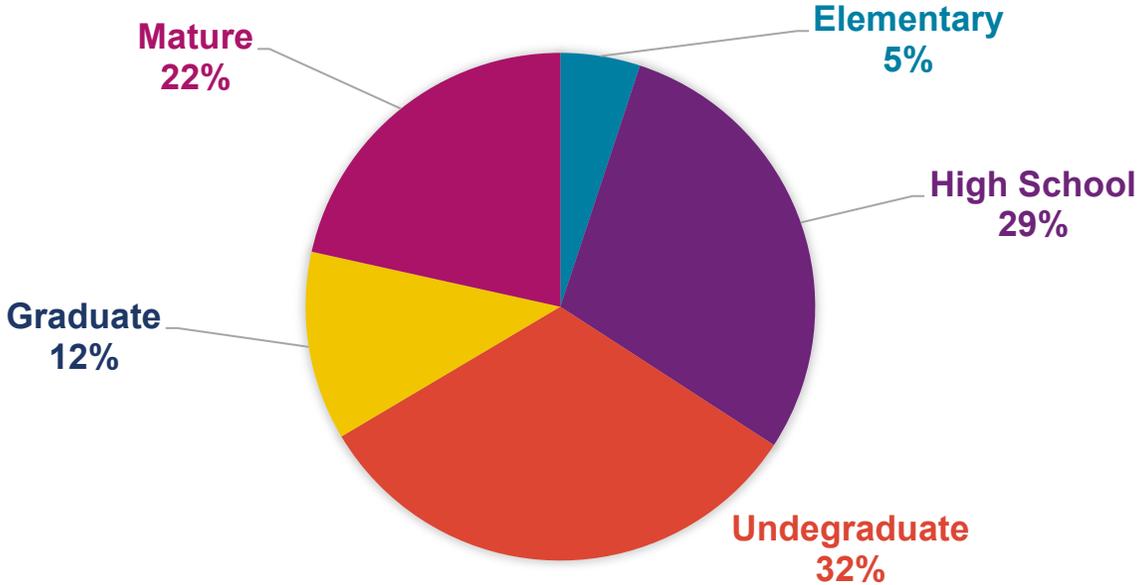


Affiliations (n=78)

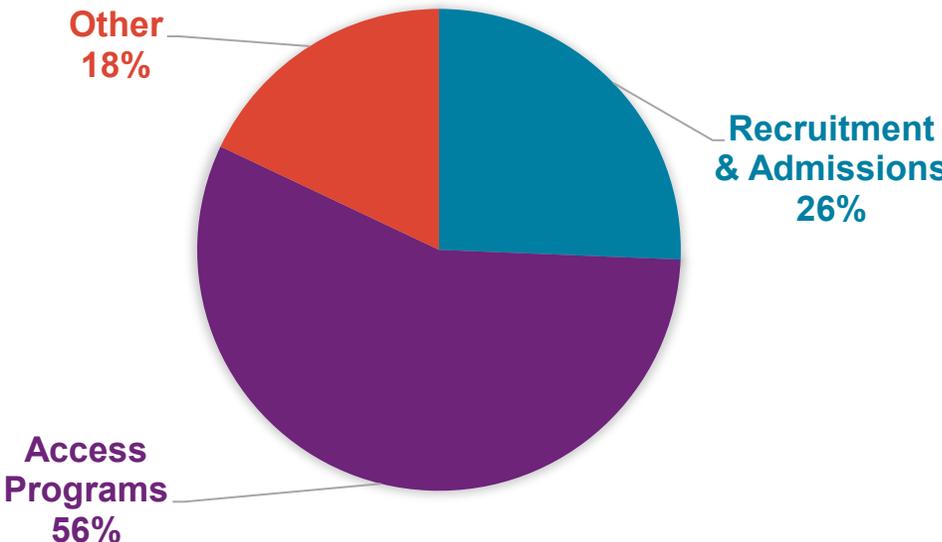


Who is in the room? (cont'd)

Student Demographics Supported



Scope of Work (n = 78)



ASPO Strategic Priorities (2022 – 2025)

1

Identify the structural barriers to access pathways in collaboration with institutional partners (internal) and community, postsecondary, school board and other partners (external).

2

Support and strengthen the capacity of U of T's access, engagement, and outreach community to serve students and prospective students.

What is the Student Equity Census

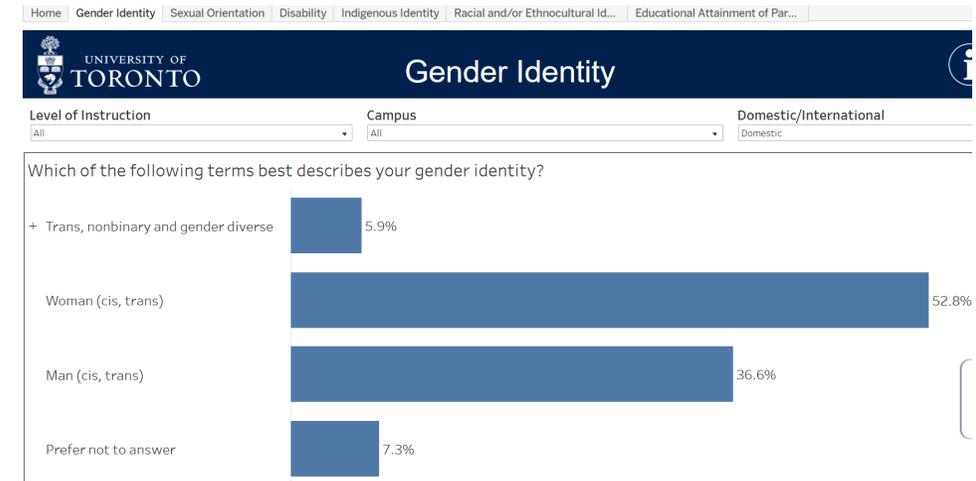
- Demographic data collection tool that captures responses from all registered students at U of T
- Census questions include **gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, Indigenous identity, race and/or ethnocultural identity, religious and/or spiritual affiliation or beliefs***, and **education attainment of parents or guardians**
- Connected to ACORN, the student information system, so can be matched to other categories (e.g., age, immigration status, campus/division/department)
- Census is always open - students can update their responses at anytime

*added August 2024

Data Sharing & Reporting

Office of the Vice-Provost Students (OVPS) responsible for facilitating the sharing of this data via the following:

1. **Online Public Dashboard (complete)** – includes three filter options: campus, level of study (grad and UG), and domestic/international. Updated annually.
2. **Internal Dashboard (in development)** – will have more drill down views, including divisional and departmental filters. Updated annually.
3. **Data requests (IRDG)** – ongoing via Common Review process





Panel

Access and Strategic Student Recruitment Practices

Moderated by: Helen Tewolde
*Director, Access Strategy and
Partnerships Office,
University of Toronto*



Panel: Access and Strategic Recruitment Practices



Kyomi Hastings-Duncan
Associate Registrar and Director
of Admissions & Student
Recruitment, UTSC



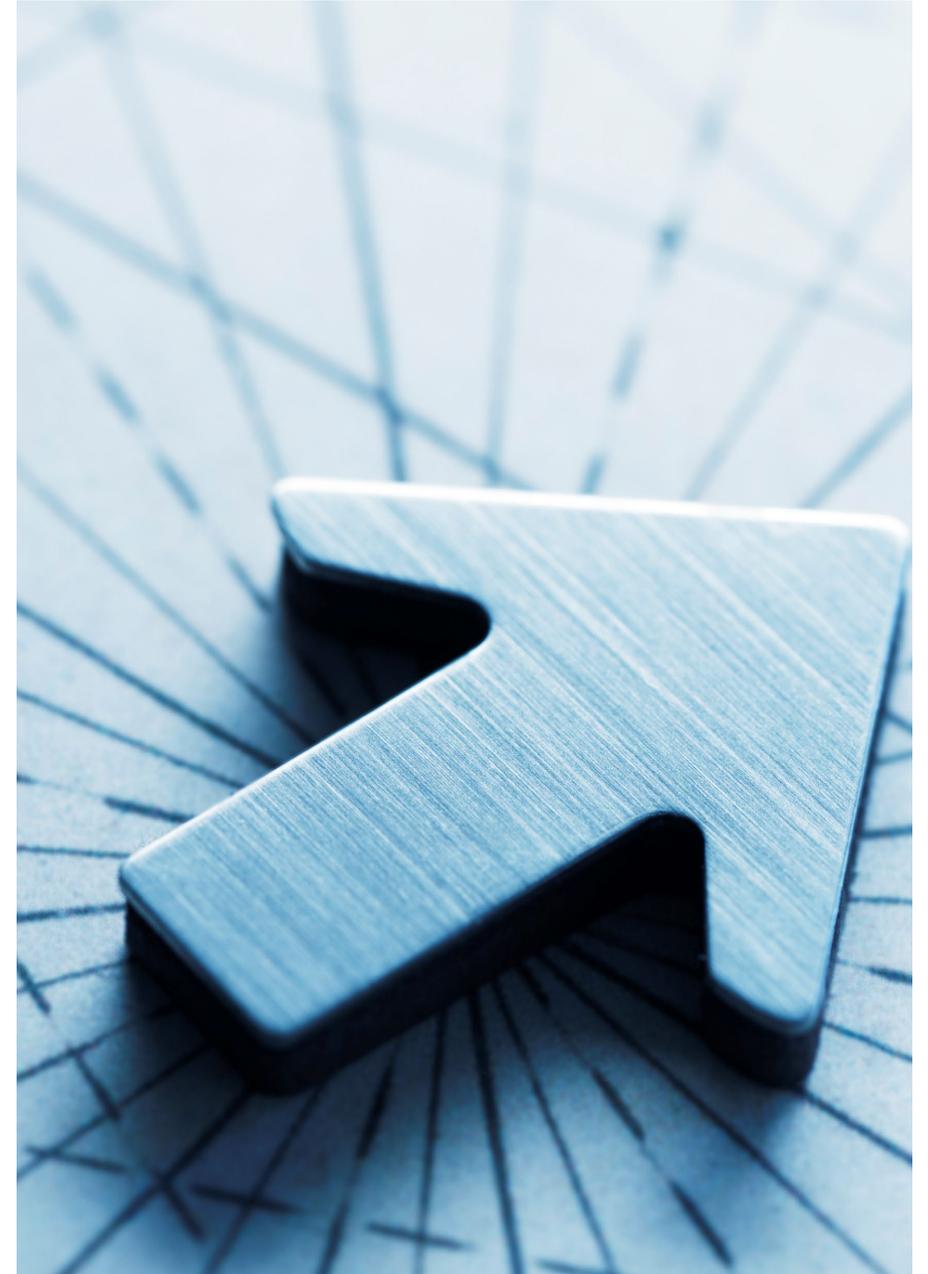
Ryan Hargraves
Executive Director, Student
Recruitment and Admissions



June Viglatzis
Coordinator of Academic
Supports, First Nations House

ASPO Updates

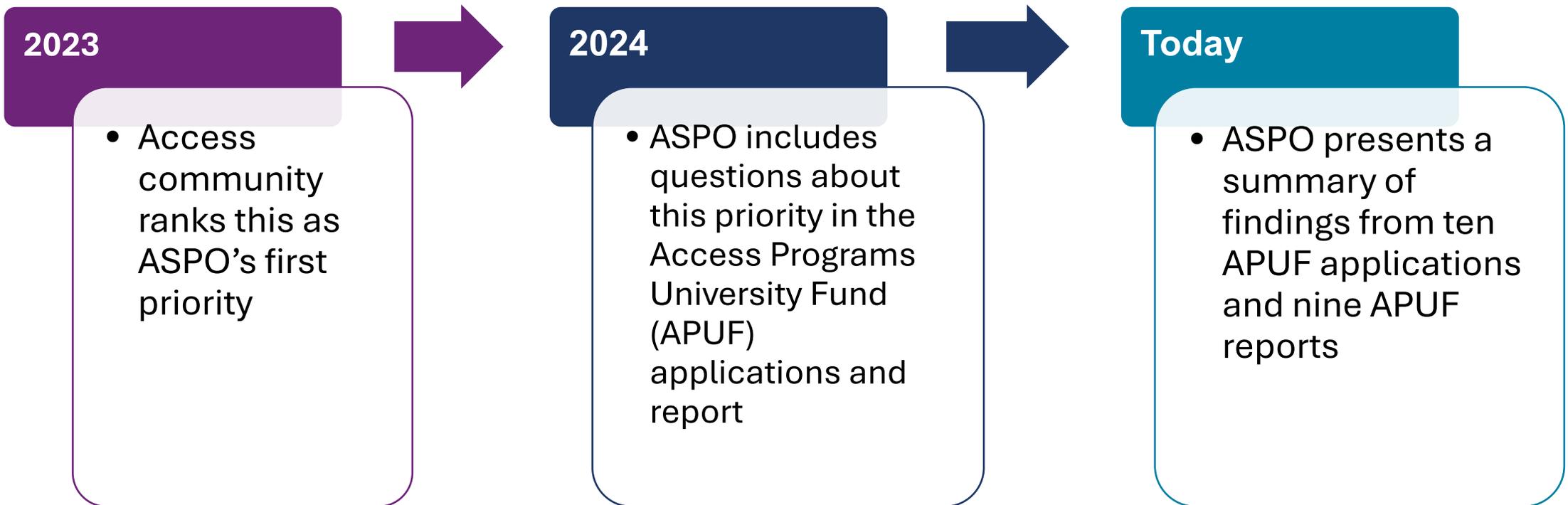
1. **Strategic Priority 1: Understanding Structural Barriers-**
Insight from Access Programs
2. **Strategic Priority 2: Strengthening Capacity**
Survey Findings
3. **Upcoming Resources**
4. **Partnership Updates**



Strategic Priority 1- Structural Barriers

Context

*ASPO Strategic Priority 1: Identify the **structural barriers** to access pathways in collaboration with institutional partners (internal) and community, postsecondary, school board and other partners (external)*



Structural Barriers to Post-Secondary Education

Insight from APUF Applications

- APUF applicants identified **structural barriers** that may be impeding **educational access** and that would be addressed by their initiative
- A total of **27 different barriers** were identified in the ten applications
- Responses cited research findings as well as professional experience



Structural Barriers to Post-Secondary Education: Insight from APUF Applications



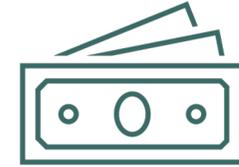
1. Lack of representation in the field and in post- secondary

*For example, mentors,
role models, faculty, staff,
and students*



2. Colonization and systemic racism in educational institutions

*Deficit thinking (e.g.,
underestimation of skills)
and institutional practices
(e.g., academic streaming)*



3. Socio-economic status at individual & community levels

*Limits access to
opportunities and
affordability of university*

Structural Barriers in Access Programs: Insight from Final APUF Reports

- APUF recipients identified **structural barriers encountered throughout their access programs**
- **13 different barriers** were identified in the final reports
- In some cases, respondents also identified promising practices they relied on to address the barriers



Structural Barriers: Insight from APUF Final Report



1. Participant outreach and engagement of Indigenous students and underrepresented students



2. External partner engagement at individual and institutional levels, especially TDSB

Partnership Challenges

“Planning substantial engagement with schools is challenging due to the **potential for teachers' assignments to change abruptly**, even up to the beginning of a semester.

[T]here were instances where **workshops and field trips we planned had to be canceled** because the involved teacher was reassigned or the class was discontinued.”

- *Access Partner*



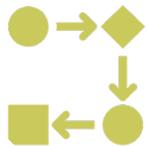
Structural Barriers: Insight from APUF Final Report



1. Participant outreach and engagement for Indigenous students and underrepresented students



2. External partner engagement at individual and institutional levels, especially TDSB



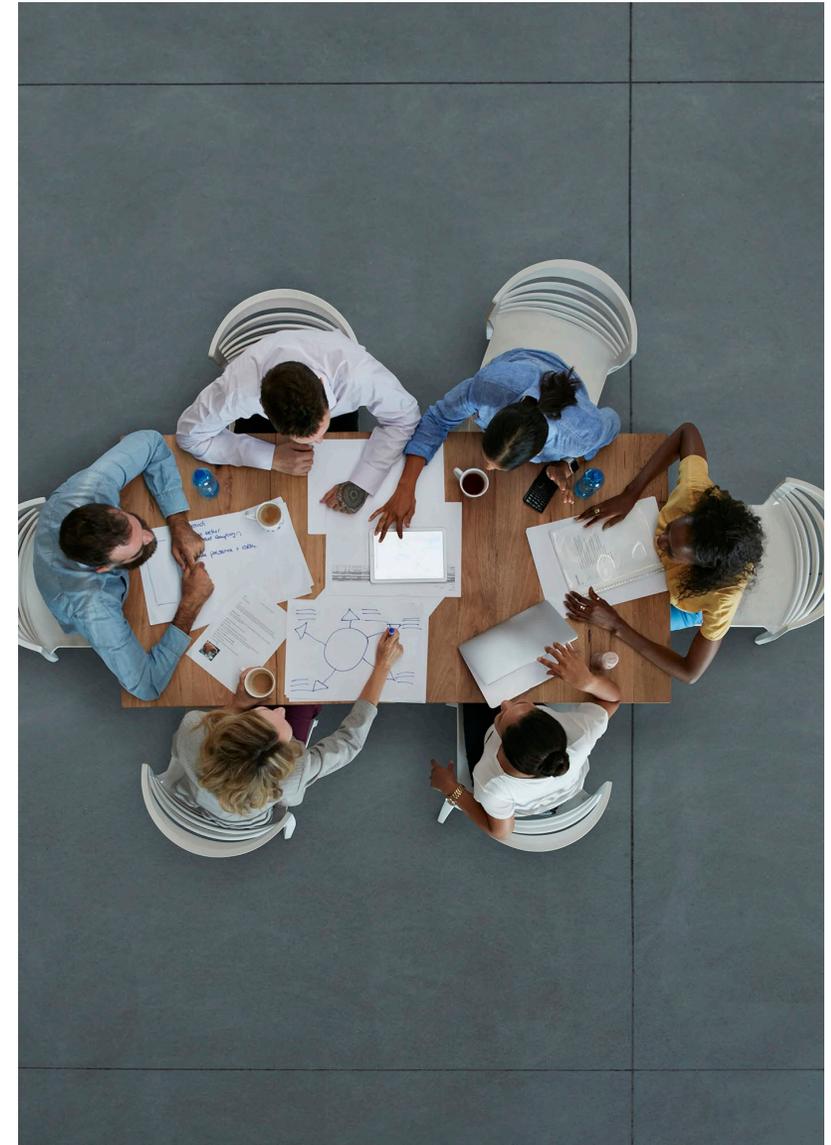
3. Internal funding and administrative hurdles (e.g., delays, workload issues)



4. Inadequate or inaccessible space (i.e., for programming) and place (i.e., commuting)

Structural Barriers: Conversation Circle Questions

1. If you have faced similar structural barriers in your work, what are some promising practices that have helped you address them?
2. Are there any other structural barriers that are top of mind your work and that were not discussed today?



Access Partners Survey: Context

ASPO Strategic Priority 2: *to support and strengthen the capacity of the [access] community to better serve current and future students*

▪ We will achieve this by:

- 1) **connecting** as a community
- 2) **learning** from and with each other

▪ To inform these opportunities, the survey asked:

*what is important to you as a community?
which access-related topics are top of mind for you?
how do you work with your partners?*



Survey Findings: About the Respondents

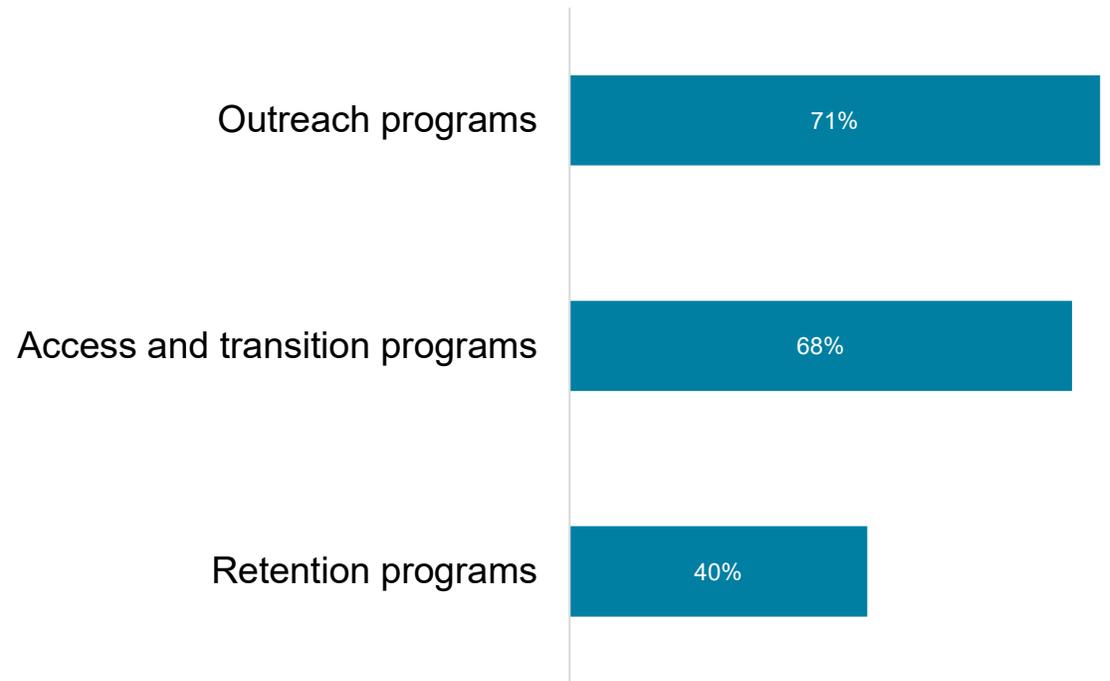
Respondents

- 80 respondents
 - St. George: 55
 - Mississauga: 15
 - Scarborough: 10

- 17% said that access was the “sole or primary” focus of their role

Types of Access Programs

What type(s) of access program(s) do you support?
(% of respondents)



Survey Findings: About the Respondents (cont'd)

50% of respondents engage in 5-7 of these activities in their roles



Survey Findings: Learning and Connection Preferences (cont'd)

Who

- Access partners who support **programs similar to mine**
- Access partners across the **tri-campus**
- Access partners on **my own campus**

What

- Small-group connections based on shared interests
- Special events
- Ad-hoc learning and professional development

Where

- Virtually
- In-person
- In-person (at my campus)

Why

- Collaboration and innovation
- Development of shared practices
- Learning and knowledge exchange

Survey Findings: Topics of Interest

Respondents indicated interest in all the identified access-related topics (listed in descending order)

1. Documentation and data collection

2. Partnership considerations & agreements (e.g., MOUs, waivers)

3. Program evaluation

4. External partner engagement (e.g., schools, community organizations)

5. Program development

6. Participant recruitment and engagement

7. Role of student-led groups in access program development

8. Sustainability planning (e.g., financial, operational)

9. Learning from APUF initiatives

10. Staff and/or volunteer training and capacity-building

11. Managing payroll, accounts and financial reporting

Upcoming Resources



Tri-Campus Access Programs Database

Searchable database of all access programs across the tri-campus



Access Resources Repository

Internal and external reports and publications, toolkits & guides, data & statistics, learning & conferences



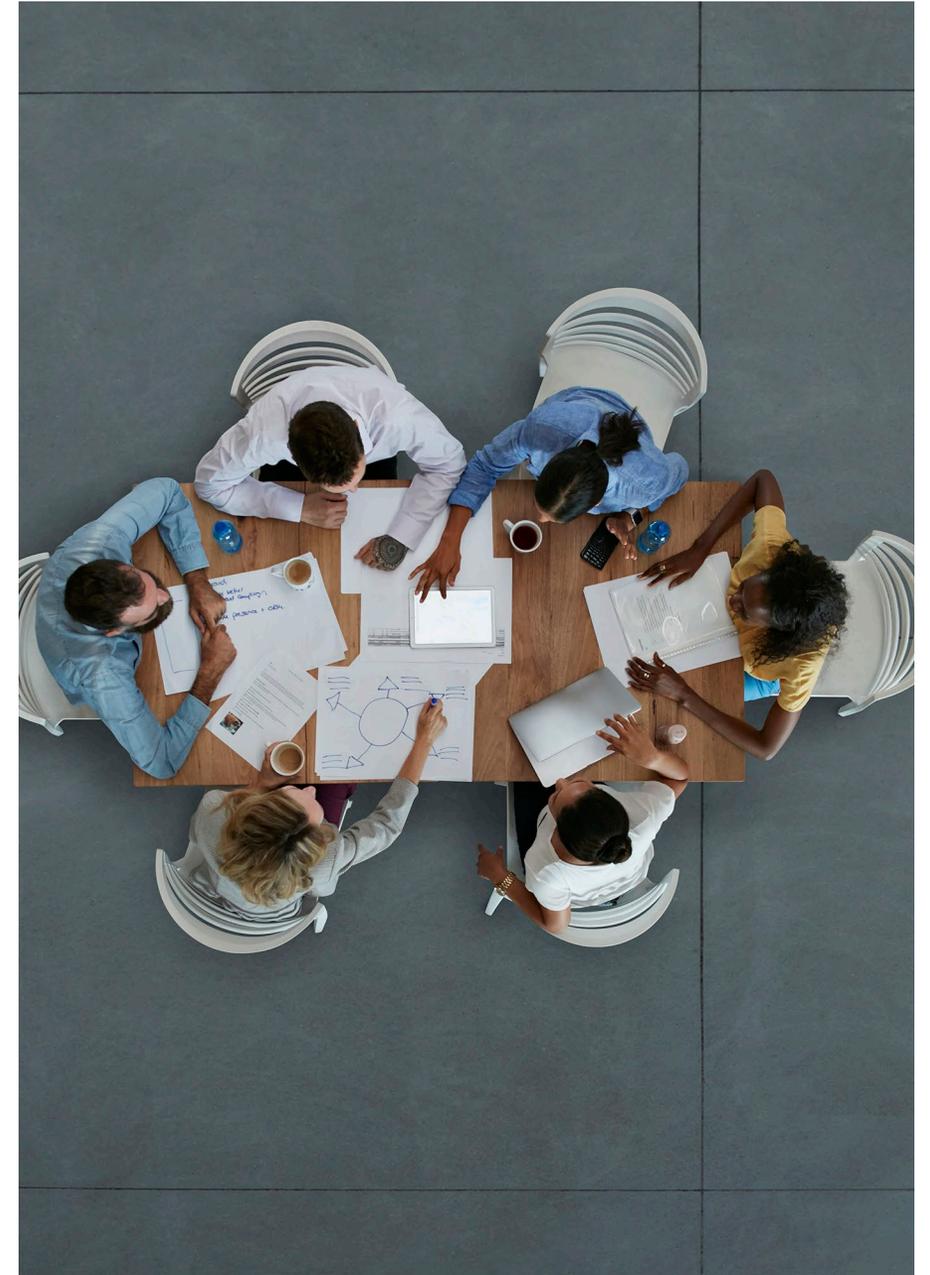
Learning & Connecting Opportunities

Learning and community-building opportunities informed by your feedback on the access partners survey



Learning & Connection: Conversation Circle Questions

1. Are there any factors were not discussed today but that you think should be considered in our upcoming learning and community-building opportunities?
2. Which topics would you prioritize for greater collaboration, innovation or developing shared practices as an access community?

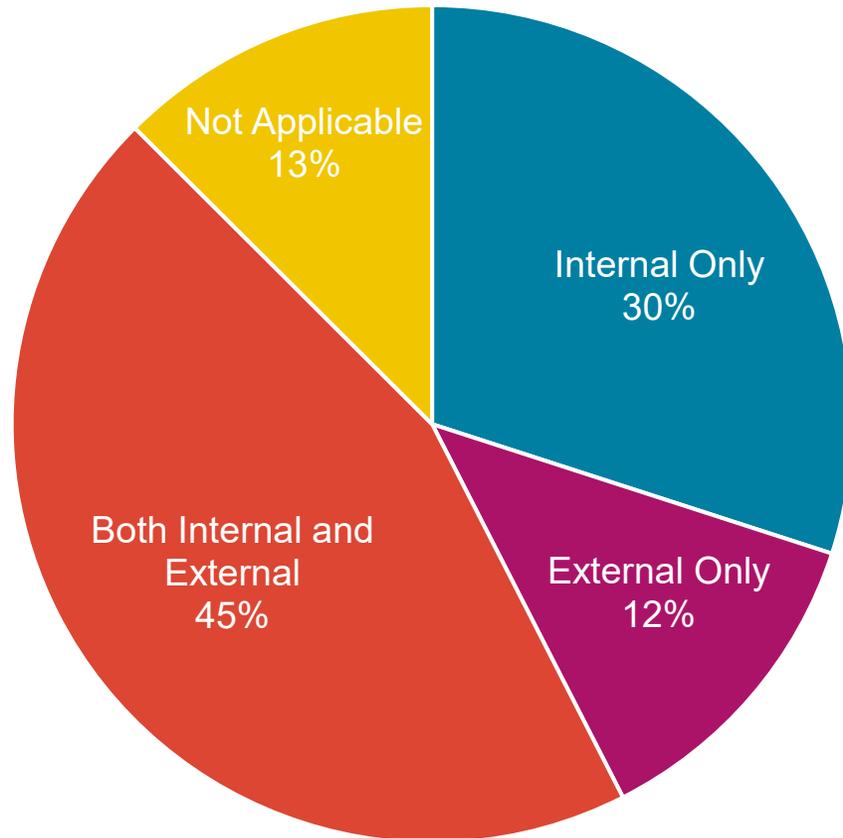


Partnership Updates



Survey Findings: Partnerships Snapshot

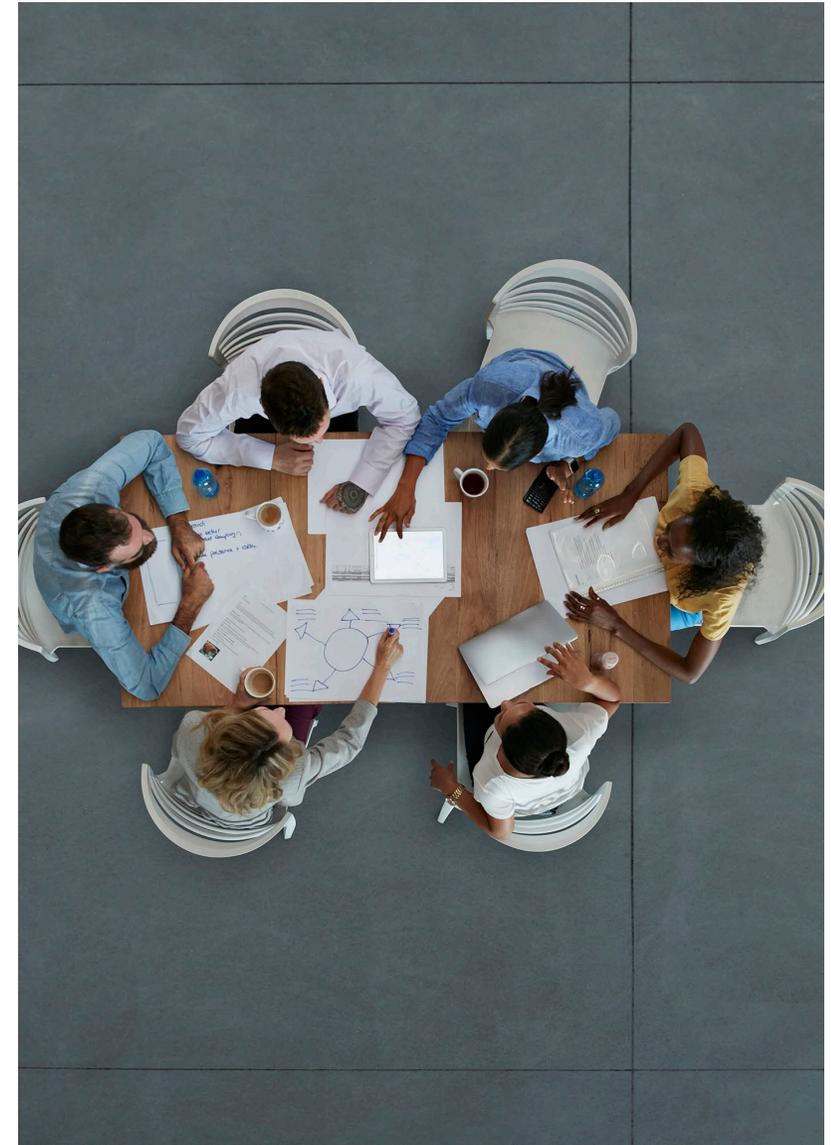
Partnerships Types



- Nearly 50% of respondents work with **both internal and external partners**. They also have a **variety of partnership agreements** in place.
- Most respondents who work with **external partners only** have **formal partnership agreements** in place.
- Most respondents who work with **internal partners only** have **informal and quasi-formal partnership agreements**.
- Most respondents who selected "**not applicable**" also indicated that **access is a small/good portion of their role**.

Partnerships: Conversation Circle Questions

1. Which **challenges**, if any, have you encountered in **building new or maintaining existing community partnerships**?
2. What are some of the practices that have been helpful for your program(s) in maintaining those partnerships?
3. What would you say are key considerations for access programs as they build and maintain **sustainable partnerships**?
4. Would a **partnership roadmap or toolkit** be helpful for you in your work? Are there any resources we should consider including that you think will be helpful in your work?



Closing Remarks

