New Entrepreneurial Learning Phase I Evaluation

Final Report

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Policy Research

NEL Phase I Final Report
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the first annual report for the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation's evaluation of the New Entrepreneurial Learning initiative, which currently encompasses the FastTrac and 1 Million Cups (1MC) programs, and which may include a peer-learning platform in the future. The programs employ different methodologies, but each possesses the same objective: to help entrepreneurs start and grow their businesses. FastTrac is a course, taught primarily by program affiliates, that seeks to train entrepreneurs in the foundational concepts of business development. 1MC is a free, educational event where entrepreneurs receive resources and training to pitch their business idea and garner feedback on that idea over coffee.

Although each program was analyzed independent of the other, performance measures were similarly focused on perceptions and usage of the programs. Key performance measures for the FastTrac program included the number of affiliates planning to use the FastTrac course in the future and the number of FastTrac participants who are "promoters"–individuals who were highly satisfied with the FastTrac program. While there are many other potential measures, we believe these two in particular speak to the experiences people have had by engaging with the program. For 1MC, the key performance measure was defined as the percentage of presenters, attendees, and organizers who found the program diverse and inclusive and felt that it fostered a sense of connectedness. Based on a rigorous and objective analysis of both programs, we identified the following results:

FASTTRAC KEY FINDINGS

- **89%** of participants said the program helped their business
- The cumulative net promoter score for the year was **+58**.
- **99%** of affiliates will continue to offer a FastTrac course in the future

1 MILLION CUPS KEY FINDINGS

- **79%** of presenters and **78%** of attendees said the program helped their business
- Attendees, presenters, and organizers scored the program highly in terms of supportiveness (4.7), diversity (4.6), and inclusiveness (4.7) on a 5-point scale.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Data were collected from four main sources: surveys, administrative data, site visits, and interviews. 1MC attendance data were also collected from a texting pilot and photo counting application. A detailed description of the data is outlined in the Appendix.

FastTrac

Survey data include responses from 1,090 participants, 74 facilitators, and 147 affiliates. Information on online course usage was collected by Extension Engine. In addition, 6 FastTrac affiliates and 3 participants were interviewed by phone.

1 Million Cups

Survey data include responses from 114 organizers and 1,128 participants (of whom 470 were attendees and 658 were presenters). To measure event attendance, 12 communities participated in a photo pilot, 49 communities participated in a texting survey pilot, and 49 communities completed the attendance survey. Four 1MC communities were visited to collect additional qualitative data. Focus groups were conducted at each visit and included 27 participants overall.

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Though successful in accomplishing programmatic objectives, the Kauffman Foundation could consider implementing changes to FastTrac and 1MC based on affiliate, participant, and community feedback. Suggestions that reflect survey responses and qualitative data include the following:

FASTTRAC PARTICIPANT SUGGESTIONS

- Develop a facilitator's instruction manual.
- Simplify the online platform interface to make it more user friendly.
- Generate a broad and varied set of examples to use in modules.
- Ensure printed and online materials contain the same information (to the extent possible).

1 MILLION CUPS PARTICIPANT SUGGESTIONS

- Provide community organizers with resources on how to effectively market events.
- Systematize attendance-collecting mechanisms across all communities.
- Share attendance information with organizers to increase buy-in.
- Improve the use of online resource-sharing platforms where community organizers can share tips and resources in order to continue cultivating a sense of community and connectedness across communities.

Next steps

The New Entrepreneurial Learning Evaluation will continue with a second phase beginning in February 2019. During Phase II, we will continue the ongoing analysis of performance measures, in addition to conducting new analyses related to the impact of the programs. Moving forward, we will be shifting the evaluation focus to collecting data on business starts, revenue growth, and increased knowledge and skills among entrepreneurs.

CONTENTS

Part 1: FastTrac Program

OVERALL PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Based on our review of the FastTrac program over the last four quarters, we identified three central themes:

1. The majority of participants had a positive outlook on FastTrac. For example, 89% of FastTrac entrepreneurs reported that the program helped them grow their business. FastTrac affiliates also had positive impressions of the program, with most planning to offer courses again in the near future.

2. Many participants articulated that the marketing and financial planning modules were particularly useful.

3. Despite participant satisfaction with course content and course facilitation, many FastTrac affiliates reported that the lack of a facilitator's manual detracted from the overall quality of the program.

As measured by the surveys, we observed that:

- Performance generally held steady across the year. The notable exception is the net promoter score (NPS), which has declined over the course of the year.

- Overall, most FastTrac users continued to report that FastTrac helped their business. Respondents also continued to report that they are applying the new knowledge gained from FastTrac to their businesses.

- FastTrac is not meeting its targets on several measures; in particular, the program only reached 6% of its registered users target.

- Although a majority of affiliates reported that they will continue offering FastTrac, they did not offer conclusive opinions on how FastTrac should be delivered, with many stating that they had no clear preference between online and offline content.

NET PROMOTER SCORE FOR ENTREPRENEURS

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a measure of customer satisfaction and loyalty. It is interpreted as an individual's willingness to promote the product to others. NPS can range from -100 to 100, and it is calculated by subtracting the % of individuals giving the product a 0–6 rating from those assigning it a 9 or 10. A positive NPS is generally considered good; it means more respondents were satisfied than were unsatisfied.
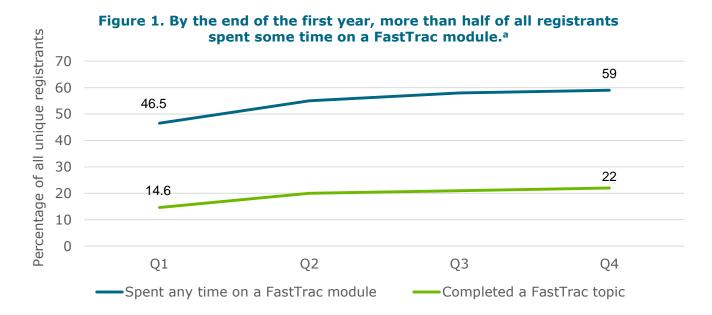
Cumulative NPS**: 58**

FINDINGS FOR ENTREPRENEURS

Enrollment and engagement increased across all quarters.

Since the program began accepting entrepreneur participants in July 2017, 8,028 unique participants registered for FastTrac by the end of the fourth quarter, an increase of 163% since the first quarter. Of

these, as shown in Figure 1, 4,724 users (59%) spent at least some time on a FastTrac module and 1,798 users (22%) completed a FastTrac topic. Both of these measures have consistently increased over the last year. The rate of new registrations, however, has slowed.

Figure 1. By the end of the first year, more than half of all registrants spent some time on a FastTrac module.[a]

ªQuarterly measures represent cumulative amounts; i.e., Q2 represents the total percentages across registrants in both Q1 and Q2.

Entrepreneurs report positive perceptions of the program.

Participants found the FastTrac program to be a valuable resource. One participant declared, "For a program that's what you'd call 'out of the can'…it covers a lot of the basic information. It covers enough information to get you to where you can go concentrate on what your specific niche is...it gets you started and gives you a lot of ideas on how to network." Irrespective of geographic location, business industry, and stage of business development, most participants reported that FastTrac helped their business.
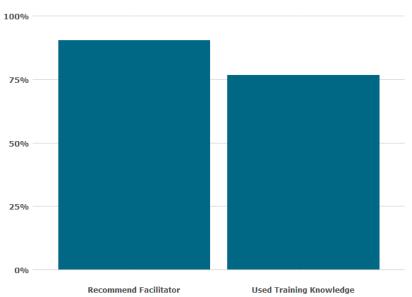
POSITIVE IMPRESSIONS

Entrepreneurs who responded to the post-survey had positive impressions of FastTrac:

- **89%** said that FastTrac helped their business

- **91%** expressed satisfaction with the FastTrac materials

- **86%** reported increased knowledge after taking FastTrac training

FastTrac participants identified the business plan and marketing modules as being especially helpful in their business growth. One participant with more than 20 years of experience running and managing small businesses stated, "I've learned more about social media. That's what I went to learn when I went to the class…I asked [the facilitator] what he knew about social media and he said, 'We have a module for that.'"

Regarding the relationship between facilitators and participants, as depicted in Figure 2, 90% of those who participated in classes with facilitators said they would recommend their facilitator to others. As one participant mentioned, "[The facilitator] opened himself up for people…he made the program." The facilitator recommendation measure was similar across quarters.

Seventy-five percent of participants reported that they are applying the skills learned in the FastTrac program to their business or business idea. One possible reason this percentage is not higher is that the needs of some participants fall outside of the scope of the FastTrac program. Some participants remarked that their main challenges, both before and after the time of enrollment in the FastTrac program, pertained to raising capital. One participant said that while he found the course content helpful, he was still struggling to raise the necessary funds to operate his business and would not be well positioned to apply the skills he learned in the FastTrac course until he was able to do so. The net promoter score has also been positive, with a high of +84 during the first quarter, and a cumulative year end value of +58.

Figure 2. Most respondents would recommend their facilitator, and most have already applied knowledge from the FastTrac training.

NET PROMOTER SCORE WAS POSITIVE

The FastTrac NPS among entrepreneurs was **+58**, with **70%** (119 of 171) being promoters. This score has been decreasing over the course of the year.

A key theme among those with low promoter scores interviewed for our analysis was their dissatisfaction with the online course content. While most participants had little to suggest in terms of overall course improvement, many with low scores specifically noted that the online content, though helpful, contained an overwhelming amount of irrelevant and repetitive information. They cited that many of the examples and videos were not pertinent to their specific business needs, and therefore felt unsure of how to extract the key takeaways from a given module. As one participant articulated, "The videos did not hit home." This might explain, at least in part, participants' preferences for using the printed, hard-copy FastTrac program materials rather than the online content.

There are certain traits that we might think are associated with greater entrepreneurial success. These include risk preference, extroversion, sympathy, self-discipline, calmness, and openness to new experiences. However, there were no statistically significant changes in risk preference or other personality traits of interest from the beginning to the end of the course (see Appendix A). Changes in these traits may be hard to detect due to the short period of time over which an individual engages with the FastTrac course; we might expect that changing personality traits would require a

NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET OBSERVED

There was no statistically significant evidence that participating in FastTrac changed traits such as risk preference, extroversion, sympathy, self-discipline, calmness, and openness to new experiences.

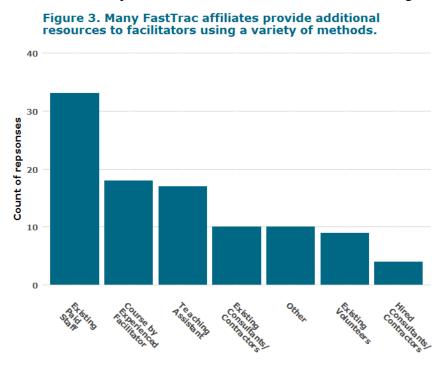more in-depth and lengthy program targeted toward making such a change.

FINDINGS FOR AFFILIATES

Affiliates report a need for additional instructional support.

FastTrac currently has 142 active affiliates, 70 of which are currently teaching a course. There are 155 active FastTrac courses, meaning many affiliates are teaching multiple courses. All of the affiliates interviewed for this report noted that their target class size was between 15 and 20 students, with most aiming toward the lower end of that range. The average participant-to-facilitator ratio of 14:1 is close to this target range.

The majority of facilitators are full-time employees of the affiliate. In order to prepare facilitators to teach these classes, 51% of 105 affiliates provide new facilitators with additional resources, as shown in Figure 3. These resources can include trainings facilitated by paid program staff, contractors, consultants, or program volunteers; access to the online facilitator guide course; opportunities to observe course delivery by an experienced facilitator; and opportunities to serve as a "teaching assistant" with an experienced facilitator. Still, an overarching theme from the affiliate interviews was the need for additional instructional support from the Kauffman Foundation to coach facilitators on how to teach FastTrac courses in the most effective way possible.
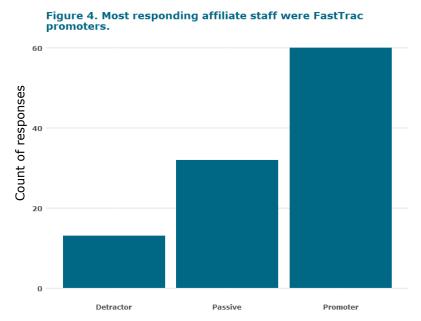
Several affiliates emphasized the importance of having a facilitator manual—a guidebook that provides a detailed description of how facilitators should be structuring their FastTrac course. One facilitator spoke in depth about the void that was created following the transition from the old to the new FastTrac system, which occurred before this evaluation began. Based on conversations with affiliates, it seems that one of the biggest differences between the two systems is the level of instructional support given to affiliates. In describing his opinion of the new system, this facilitator exclaimed, "There was no hand-holding for affiliates." This need for a guidebook was echoed by several others interviewed for this report.

Figure 3. Many FastTrac affiliates provide additional resources to facilitators using a variety of methods.

Affiliates report positive perceptions of the program.

Figure 4. Most responding affiliate staff were FastTrac promoters.

On a scale of -100 to 100, affiliate staff's average NPS is +45, which is considered a positive score (see Figure 4). Yet this figure does not explain why almost all respondents (99%)—including those with lower NPS—reported that they will continue to use FastTrac and will offer another course within the next year. Each affiliate interviewed in our analysis—even the most vocal detractors—plan on offering a FastTrac course in the future. Therefore, the discrepancy between the percentage of net promoters and the percentage of affiliates who intend to offer a FastTrac course in the future may be driven by external factors such as limited availability of alternative or comparable entrepreneurial programs. Alternatively, some affiliates based their decisions about whether to offer a future FastTrac course on market demand. As one promoter of the program stated, "The reason we're going to three classes is we've found way more demand in [our city] and we've also had another city that has requested our services…now we're doing a class in [a second city] about an hour away." However, apparent support masks a wide range of affiliate attitudes about the program. For example, affiliate staff's opinions on how FastTrac should be delivered are not consistent. Seventy percent reported they have no strong preference for whether FastTrac is delivered in print or online, and 4 of the 7 affiliates interviewed for this analysis offered blended courses. We found that many affiliates are modifying how the course is delivered either out of dissatisfaction with the FastTrac curriculum or to better align with their own training or expertise.

Eighteen percent of affiliate staff prefer the online version of FastTrac (initially piloted in summer 2017), and 11% prefer the print version (see Figure 5). One affiliate staff declared, "We're not very happy with the online FastTrac program. I tell [participants to] utilize the online FT website…as a resource rather than guiding our class on that."
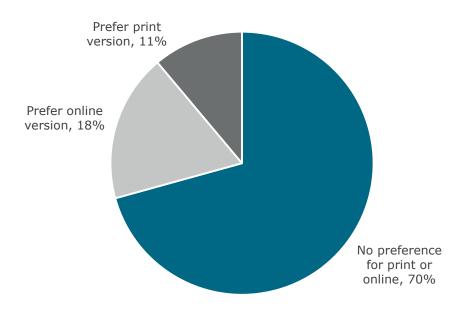
Figure 5. Most FastTrac affiliates have no preference for print or online.

Prefer print version, 11%

Prefer online version, 18%

No preference for print or online, 70%

SUGGESTIONS FOR ONLINE EXPERIENCE

Ensure printed and online materials contain the same information (to the extent possible).

Simplify the online platform interface to make it more user friendly.

Part 2: 1 Million Cups

OVERALL PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

The 1 Million Cups (1MC) program seeks to connect existing or aspiring entrepreneurs through weekly meet-ups within 180 communities around the country. This free event functions as an educational space for entrepreneurs to learn how to pitch their ideas, engage with peers, and receive feedback on their business idea or plan.

For 1MC, we analyzed attendance patterns across communities, survey feedback on the 1MC experience, qualitative data from site visits, and additional feedback collected during a focus group at the 1MC Organizer Summit. As with the FastTrac program, we calculated the percentage of people who reported that 1MC helped them start or grow their business. We also report the percentage of people who found the program to be diverse, inclusive, and supportive, and felt that it encouraged feelings of connectedness as the central performance measures.

Overall, we documented the following progress on key performance indicators:

1. We estimate that, over the course of the year, 1MC events included approximately 149,000 attendees. Attendance was highest at weekly events in the Midwest and West.

2. Most presenters and attendees reported that 1MC helped them to start or grow their business. 1MC met their target Net Promoter Score for attendees, but fell short among presenters and organizers.

3. Presenters, attendees, and organizers generally reported high scores on the diversity, inclusiveness, and supportiveness indicators (on a scale of 1 to 5).

4. Approximately 40% of attendees reported attending 1MC events for the community engagement.

Attendance patterns across communities vary by geography and meeting frequency.

Our goal was to analyze the attendance data collected from a small sample of communities and use that information to make inferences about the attendance patterns of the broader 1MC program. Attendance data was sourced in several ways. First, 20 communities were invited to participate in a photo pilot during February and March 2018. Initial attendance estimates were generated using facial recognition software. However, we found this software to be unreliable when we validated a sample of individual photos through manual counts. Then, 167 communities were invited to participate in a texting pilot in May 2018. Attendance estimates were generated by asking attendees to text a unique short code for the community and then counting the number of texts received for each code. Finally, a survey was sent to 1MC organizers in fall 2018 to ask them to report the number of attendees at their events.

We combined attendance data from the texting pilot and survey data in order to develop statistical estimates for total annual attendance across all 182 communities. Data from the photo pilot were excluded due to reliability concerns. Based on this estimation, we determined that the 1MC program

hosted approximately 149,000 attendees over the course of the year. This estimate does not reflect unique participants, because people frequently attended multiple events. Information on geographic region and meeting frequency were used to improve the precision of estimates across communities (see Appendix B).

Approximately 32% of communities responded to the attendance survey, and 29% responded to the texting pilot. The low response rates across data collection efforts indicate minimal buy-in from organizers. Based on feedback collected at the Organizer Summit, it is reasonable to expect that there could be greater buy-in for attendance data collection activities, and that the previous issues with buy-in during the photo and texting pilots may stem from the fact that data are not being shared with organizers in a meaningful way. A number of organizers noted the importance of collecting attendance data for their own planning and evaluation purposes, and said that they often use their own systems to collect this information because they are not able to access attendance data collected through the 1MC smartphone application. The organizers use these data for tracking total attendance and new members, for providing feedback to presenters, and for providing required information to venues. If data sharing practices were established with organizers, it is likely they would provide more complete and consistent attendance data.

We recognize there are limitations to our analysis due to the lack of complete attendance data and seek to improve upon these estimates in Phase II of the project. The data collected from many communities were often episodic due to a reliance on self-reporting and completion by local organizers. As a result, our margin of error around the total attendance estimate is quite large. Additional information regarding our methodology and perspectives on data limitations is contained in Appendix B. We are confident that in the next iteration of this project, we can generate more precise measures of attendance based on stronger data.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ATTENDANCE TRACKING

Systematize attendance-collecting mechanisms across all sites.

Share attendance information with organizers to increase buy-in.

Community engagement is a primary motivation for entrepreneurs attending 1 Million Cups.

Consistent with the mission of 1MC, the reason most often given for coming to a 1MC event, as depicted in Figure 6, was an interest in community engagement (40%). This indicates that individuals who actively engage in their local 1MC chapter benefit by closely aligning themselves with the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem, not just individuals seeking to learn more about running a business.

More specifically, focus group participants identified connecting with peers as a central motivation to participate in meetings. One participant explained why people continue to come to the events, stating, "Nobody comes here for entertainment's sake. It's made pretty obvious that if you're coming to participate, you're coming to give back. It's a great [relationship-building] opportunity."
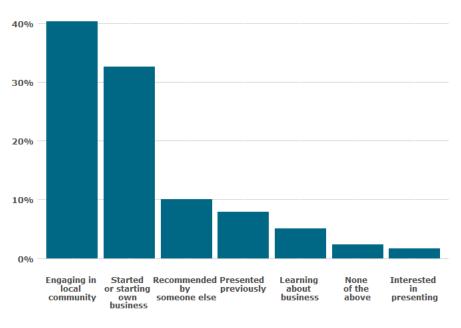
Figure 6. Most 1 Million Cups attendees attended to engage with the local community.

Relationship-building was not the only reason people gave for attending 1MC events. As one participant mentioned, "[Attending] allows me to show support for people who are new in business. They should know people care." Similarly, another participant remarked, "I come for the education."

These sentiments were mirrored at the 1MC Organizer Summit, where respondents discussed motivations such as wanting to connect people, having positive experiences with and ties to the 1MC community, and wanting to build the entrepreneuria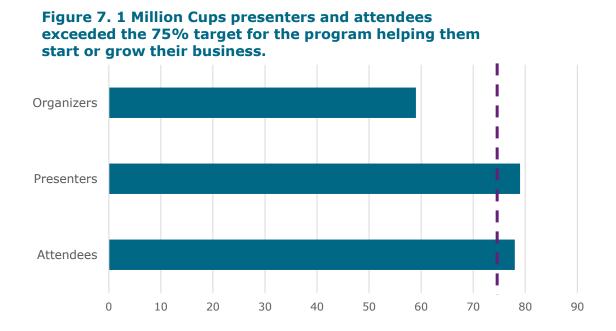l ecosystem. One organizer was motivated by "that moment of helping people solve a problem and seeing them open themselves up in front of a group." Organizers also discussed the importance of being passionate about the mission of 1MC and described this as the "why," meaning the purpose of the program.

Peer connections resulting from participation in 1MC, among other factors, has allowed presenters and attendees to support their business. More precisely, 78% of attendees reported that the program helped their business, which may have contributed to positive impressions of the program. As one attendee mentioned, "It's useful to hear how startups here are working through their problems in a generative way."

1 Million Cups exceeded its goals with presenters but fell short with attendees and organizers.

The majority of presenters, attendees, and community organizers felt they were able to accomplish their goals and had positive opinions of the 1MC program, which helps explain why they continue to frequent program events.

Both presenters and attendees exceeded the metric target of 75% in reporting that 1MC is helpful to their business (see Figure 7). We found that 79% of presenters and 78% of attendees felt that 1MC was somewhat or very helpful for their business development. In response to support and coaching for business development, one presenter noted: "It's extremely helpful when someone guides you through that process." Only 59% of organizers, however, felt that the program was helpful for their business. Responses across all groups appeared to vary slightly by community size and region (see Appendix B).

Figure 7. 1 Million Cups presenters and attendees exceeded the 75% target for the program helping them start or grow their business.
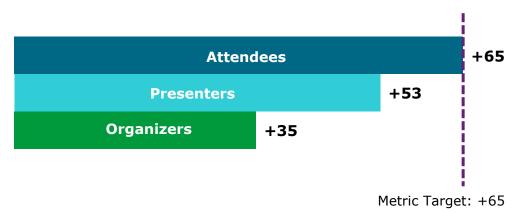

Community organizers, while generally supportive of 1MC, were more critical of the program than were presenters and attendees. For example, presenters and attendees were more likely to be net promoters of the program compared to organizers. Based on our Net Promoter Score metric summarized in Figure 8, presenters (+53) and attendees (+65) viewed 1MC more favorably than organizers (+35). NPS appeared to vary slightly by community size and region (see Appendix B). Several organizers described facing challenges with raising money to host events, gaining more sponsorship, and facilitating events with little instructional guidance from the Kauffman Foundation. At the Summit, organizers discussed a lack of training, communication challenges,

NET PROMOTER SCORE WAS POSITIVE

Scores were highest among presenters (+53) and attendees (+65) but much lower for organizers (+35). The target NPS for all groups was +65, and was only met for attendees.

Figure 8. 1 Million Cups Net Promoter Scores are highest among _attendees_ and _presenters_, but are much lower for _organizers_.

Metric Target: +65

perceived unintentionality in launching new chapters, and an inability to track key performance indicators. They sought greater connection to other organizers through mediums such as Slack and in-person gatherings, and more tools for onboarding new organizers, ongoing support, and progress

monitoring for chapters. As such, organizer sentiments often contrasted with those held by presenters and attendees.
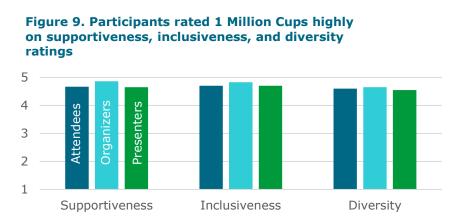
Additionally, the organizers' relatively low NPS score may be attributed to difficulties with marketing and attendance for individual communities. Many communities expressed concern over decreasing attendance and wanted information on the attendance rates at other communities. A number of organizers noted their focus on event advertising, through social media platforms, as an attempt to increase attendance. However, many remarked that because some types of advertising are expensive, they are unable to sustain this type of marketing approach. As a result of this diminished advertising presence, communities are reporting declining attendance.

> **SUGGESTION FOR ORGANIZER EXPERIENCE**
> Provide community organizers with resources on how to effectively market events.

Participants found 1 Million Cups to be supportive and inclusive, with some need for improvement in diversity.

The 1MC program received consistently high scores from attendees, presenters, and organizers with regard to providing a supportive, diverse, and inclusive environment (Figure 9). Responses were similar regardless of whether the respondent was from an underrepresented group. Those in the underrepresented group include individuals who identify as Black or African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or American Indian or Alaskan Native. Despite how well communities scored across these three indicators, the diversity in most 1MC communities is not representative of the level of diversity in the surrounding areas, namely in terms of race. Conversations revealed that some respondents may be thinking of diversity in terms of business type—rather than race, gender, or age—which may partially explain the high ratings. In addition, ratings of supportiveness and inclusiveness may be higher due to homogenous groups within 1MC, which may make it more likely for someone to feel supported and included.

Figure 9. Participants rated 1 Million Cups highly on supportiveness, inclusiveness, and diversity ratings

Most 1MC communities do not reflect the racial diversity of their surrounding areas. Overall, of those surveyed, approximately 86% of attendees, 79% of presenters, and 86% of organizers are white. Many organizers, attendees, and presenters we spoke to in a given location were aware of these trends. For example, based on US Census Data, the surrounding area at one community is 22% African American and 35% Hispanic, but that diversity is not reflected in the event attendance, which is exclusively white during most weekly meet-ups. During the focus group at this location, one organizer stated, "There's a lack of racial and ethnic diversity." When probed, some respondents noted that there are similar events targeted to specific races or genders and that people may be more comfortable or inclined to attend those events, rather than 1MC. One respondent suggested that the marketing for 1MC may not be as culturally relevant to other groups

and therefore implies that the event is for white entrepreneurs. In response, this community and many others are exploring different avenues and strategies to increase diversity.

There is evidence that communities perform better in terms of age and gender diversity. The aforementioned organizer who noted a lack of racial and ethnic diversity went on to remark, "there are a good number of women business owners." For example, while the majority of attendees and presenters are male (61% and 57% respectively), women are slightly more likely to work as organizers (58%). However, some organizers and attendees have expressed concerns around gender inclusivity. For example, some participants and organizers noted that the morning timing conflicts with child care responsibilities often left to women.

Regarding diversity in age, most 1MC communities consist of community members of all ages (see Table 1).

Table 1. 1 Million Cups meeting attendees, by age group

Age group	Percentage of attendees
20–34 years old	20%
35–44 years old	21%
55–64 years old	24%
>65 years old	8%

Similar trends emerge across presenter and organizer groups. One notable distinction is that 13% of organizers are over the age of 65. Some organizers and attendees noted that representation among younger participants may lag due to conflicts with attending an event during work hours. Younger entrepreneurs may be employed in more traditional jobs and have less flexibility around their work hours.

Despite the mixed overall performance across diversity indicators, countered by strong representation in gender and age diversity, most 1 Million Cups members have a positive outlook on diversity, inclusion, and supportiveness at their community. 95% of organizers agreed that ensuring their 1MC community included entrepreneurs with different backgrounds and experiences was a priority. While speaking about the positive nature of having a community with diverse professional backgrounds, one participant said, "It's so interesting how many different types of businesses there are that people aren't aware of."

Because of this, many communities are actively working to recruit presenters and attendees from more diverse backgrounds. These efforts include reaching out to various community groups and professional associations that predominantly serve African American and Hispanic communities. Some communities are also considering advertising in Spanish in order to reach entrepreneurs with limited English proficiency.

Organizers are intentional about providing opportunities for attendees to connect.

Helping entrepreneurs learn from each other and cultivating a sense of connectedness is at the heart of the 1MC program. Attendees, presenters, and organizers are committed to engaging in that process both during and after events. For example, 86% of attendees and 80% of presenters agreed that other 1MC attendees taught them new concepts.

Speaking to the dynamism and interconnectedness of the 1MC community, one attendee stated, "I like [1 Million Cups] because of its high-level view…it helps one entrepreneur at a time. What I've seen [at] some of the other startup programs or events is that it's more for mass…but [here] it's really about helping one entrepreneur at a time."

Communities employ various strategies to facilitate peer-to-peer learning opportunities. For example, many organizers feel that requesting presenters and attendees to wear name tags leads to increased relationship-building among participants. Other organizers purposely arranged seats in a circle to create a more egalitarian and inclusive environment. Elaborating on the effect of this seating arrangement, one organizer commented, "It's so much more intimate and you feel like you have a seat at the table no matter who you are. And I think that's great for the inclusivity piece. You have a seat at the table, but you also have a voice at the table too. You can just raise your hand and say something."

Organizers similarly noted the importance and value of connecting with each other. At the Summit, they noted a desire to hear about how other communities are solving problems. And, at multiple points, they discussed their support of new chapters in nearby communities. They showed interest in having cross-community collaborations, recommending presenters for other 1MC communities, and convening more regularly with support from regional representatives.

SUGGESTION FOR ORGANIZER CONNECTEDNESS

Improve use of online resource-sharing platforms where community organizers can share tips and resources in order to continue cultivating a sense of community and connectedness.

Conclusions and next steps

Our analyses indicate inconsistent progress towards program targets for the FastTrac and 1MC programs. While some indicators show positive perceptions of the program, others demonstrate that the programs are not meeting the expectations of the Kauffman Foundation.

Key findings about the FastTrac program

1. The majority of participants had a positive outlook on FastTrac. For example, 89% of FastTrac entrepreneurs reported that the program helped them grow their business. FastTrac affiliates also had positive impressions of the program, with most planning to offer courses again in the near future.

2. Many participants articulated that the marketing and financial planning modules were particularly useful.

3. Despite participant satisfaction with course content and course facilitation, many FastTrac affiliates argued that the lack of a facilitator's manual detracted from the overall quality of the program.

Participant suggestions for improving the FastTrac program

- Develop a facilitator's instruction manual.

- Simplify the online platform interface to make it more user friendly.

- Generate a broad and varied set of examples to use in modules.

- Ensure printed and online materials contain the same information (to the extent possible).

Key findings about the 1 Million Cups program

1. We estimate that, over the course of the year, 1MC events had approximately 149,000 attendees. Attendance was highest at weekly events in the Midwest and West.

2. Most presenters and attendees reported that 1MC helped them to start or grow their business. 1MC met their target Net Promoter Score for attendees, but fell short among presenters and organizers.

3. Presenters, attendees, and organizers generally reported high scores on the diversity, inclusiveness, and supportiveness indicators (on a scale of 1 to 5).

4. Approximately 40% of attendees reported attending 1MC events for the community engagement.

Participant suggestions for improving the 1 Million Cups program

- Provide community organizers with resources on how to effectively market events.

- Systematize attendance-collecting mechanisms across all communities.

- Share attendance information with organizers to increase buy-in.

- Improve the use of online resource-sharing platforms where community organizers can share tips and resources in order to continue cultivating a sense of community and connectedness across communities.

We will continue to evaluate program performance during Phase II of the New Entrepreneurial Learning project using survey and administrative data for both FastTrac and 1MC. In addition, we will pursue new methods for improving 1MC attendance estimates with in-person counts of attendees at a sample of communities, and will develop measures of business growth and success for both programs. These formative assessments will continue to provide insight into program successes and areas for improvement. As part of Phase II we will also conduct a summative assessment to determine the impact of the FastTrac and 1MC programs on new business successes, business growth, and knowledge of entrepreneurship.

Appendix A. FastTrac Data Collection, Analysis Methodology, and Findings

FASTTRAC DATA COLLECTION

We collected both quantitative and qualitative data in order to conduct our analysis of the FastTrac program. We relied primarily on quantitative data sourced from entrepreneur, facilitator, and affiliate organizer surveys (See Exhibit A.1). These surveys were administered by the Kauffman Foundation from October 2017 to November 2018. Data were also collected from interviews conducted by members of our qualitative research team between September and October of 2018. Research staff interviewed six FastTrac affiliates and three participants, representing six U.S. Southern and Eastern cities and towns across rural, urban, and suburban geographical areas. Interviews lasted one hour, on average, and interviewees responded to questions pertaining to their experiences as either affiliates or participants of the FastTrac program. We relied on the use of protocols created in partnership with RedBird Group, a marketing research firm hired by the Kauffman Foundation, to gather information across the following broad themes: local small business climate, quality of FastTrac topics and modules, feedback mechanisms, facilitator quality and facilitation style, degree of business growth both before course enrollment and following course completion, and overall value added.

Of the nine interviews conducted, all but one were recorded for note-taking purposes. Following each interview, members of our qualitative research team analyzed meeting notes to draw out pertinent themes for this report. In addition, quotes that we found to be exemplary were later added to the report to complement quantitative data findings.

Exhibit A.1. FastTrac survey sample sizes

Population	Sample size
FastTrac entrepreneur pre-survey	919
FastTrac entrepreneur post-survey	171
Affiliates	147
Facilitators	74

Findings in this report were calculated using administrative data collected from 7/1/2017 and survey data collected from 10/3/2017 through 9/30/2018.

RESPONSE RATES

919 entrepreneur pre-surveys and **171** entrepreneur post-surveys were submitted since October 2017. **67** entrepreneurs, less than half of respondents, completed both the pre- and post-surveys. Of these 67, **57** completed the risk questions on both surveys, and **56** completed the personality questions on both surveys.

116 affiliate surveys were submitted in the third quarter (the only quarter for which these were collected). **105** of those were complete.

QUALITATIVE DATA

6 FastTrac affiliates and 3 FastTrac participants were interviewed by phone from September to October 2018. Interviews lasted one hour, and interviewees were asked questions pertaining to their experiences in the FastTrac program, their opinions on the quality of the modules, their interactions with facilitators and guest speakers, and the feedback mechanisms.

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Of those who responded to the pre-survey demographic questions:

48% were female
47% were of color
17% were veterans

COST

The average cost per FastTrac participant was **$83**.

FASTTRAC DATA DASHBOARD

Exhibit A.2. Administrative data and survey responses from FastTrac participants

	Measures	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Percentage of target	Annual target
Entrepreneurs	Number of registered users	3,049	5,002	6,579	8,028	**6%**	125,000
	Registered users who completed (%)	NA	1.5%	2.0%	2.1%	**42%**	5%
	FastTrac helped their business (%)	100%	89%	90%	89%	**148%**	60%
	Satisfaction with materials (%)	100%	92%	92%	91%		
	Reported increase in knowledge (%)	96%	86%	86%	86%		
	Net promoter score	+84	+57	+62	+58	**89%**	+65
	Facilitator recommendation (%)	86%	91%	90%	91%		
	Used knowledge from training (%)	84%	76%	75%	77%		
	Average change in risk preference[a]	NA	+0.95	+0.26	+0.37		
	Average change in extroversion/introversion[b]	NA	-0.42	-0.49	-0.55		
	Average change in being critical/sympathetic[b]	NA	+0.47	+0.26	+0.30		
	Average change in being self-disciplined/disorganized[b]	NA	-0.37	-0.16	-0.34		
	Average change in being anxious/calm[b]	NA	-0.53	-0.07	-0.11		
	Average change in being open to new experiences/being conventional[b]	NA	-0.16	-0.30	-.023		
	Cost per participant[c]	$37	$39	$61	$83		

Note: Numbers in the Target column reflect the targets set by the Kauffman Foundation's program staff in the Entrepreneurship Dashboard; shaded cells indicate measures that do not have set targets. All numbers reported after Q1 are cumulative and reflect the current and preceding quarters.

[a]The risk preference reflects responses to three survey items, each scored from 1 to 5. The maximum risk preference score is 15. The values shown here are the change in scores between the pre-survey and post-survey.

[b]The personality measures are based on the Ten Item Personality Measure of the Big Five (or Five Factor Model) dimensions. Each set of traits is associated with two survey items, which are scored from 1 to 7 and then averaged. The values shown here are the change in scores between the pre-survey and post-survey.

[c]The cost per participant reflects the total costs for the FastTrac program, as provided by the Kauffman Foundation, divided by the total number of participants from the administrative data. This cost estimate is based on all unique FastTrac registrants regardless of their level of engagement with the course.

NA = not available.

Exhibit A.3. Administrative data and survey responses from FastTrac affiliates

	Measures	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Percentage of target	Annual target
Affiliates	Participant-to-facilitator ratio	NA	NA	13:1	14:1		
	% that will continue using FastTrac	NA	NA	99%	NA		
	Net promoter score	NA	NA	+45	NA		
	% providing additional training to facilitators	NA	NA	51%	NA		
	% prefer new version	NA	NA	18%	NA		
	% prefer old version	NA	NA	11%	NA		
	% no preference between new and old versions	NA	NA	70%	NA		
	Total number of affiliates	93*	117┼	126	142	**28%**	500
	Active affiliates	38	49	56	70		
	Total number of courses	91	98	124	167		
	Total number of active courses	62	82	111	155		

Note: "Active" refers to courses and affiliates that were operational in the fourth quarter. The number in the Target column reflects the target set by the Kauffman Foundation's program staff in the Entrepreneurship Dashboard; shaded cells indicate measures that do not have set targets. All numbers reported after Q1 are cumulative and reflect the current and preceding quarters.

*Data source was affiliate report downloaded on January 8, 2018

┼ Data source was affiliate report downloaded on April 6, 2018

FINDINGS FROM FASTTRAC QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Data were collected from interviews conducted by members of our qualitative research team. Interviews took place between September and October of 2018. Research staff interviewed six FastTrac affiliates and three participants, representing six U.S. Southern and Eastern cities and towns across rural, urban, and suburban geographic areas. This appendix provides a summary of all qualitative findings from this data collection.

Course recruitment

- The range of courses offered by interviewed affiliates ranged from one to more than six. All affiliates we interviewed aim for class sizes of 15 to 20 students, with most aiming toward the lower end of that range. All these affiliates, regardless of whether their class is active yet, have plans to offer at least one FastTrac course in the future.

- Participant recruitment generally involves some level of marketing or outreach. Marketing strategies include billboards, promoting at public speaking events, outreach teams, websites, or email blasts. Participant recruitment usually involves partnerships and referrals from local institutions, universities, and legal and financial services professionals. Two affiliates received referrals from bankers, loan officers, or attorneys. Three affiliates recruit with the support of colleges and universities. Other affiliates work with their local chamber of commerce. In response to these outreach and marketing strategies, one participant stated, "I started working on ways to get out of the public relations business and into senior wellness… I went to a conference that Broward County was doing and that's how I learned about the FastTrac program." Another participant noted that they first heard about the FastTrac program through their connections with the Small Business Development Center where the affiliate was also working.

> "As far as the history, you know in this region, there's always been entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, I just don't think people called it that. They called it 'getting by.'
>
> You know, for years with other groups like ours across the region, we've really led a lot of the efforts to build a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem and really connect different stakeholders, whether it be local government or universities or the entrepreneurs themselves or all the professionals that support them. The point is, there've always been people who have been dreamers who are doing a lot and creating things with their hands and being industrious around ways to make money out of necessity…"
>
> -FastTrac organizer

- FastTrac participants reported that their decision to take the course was driven by a need to develop marketing strategies, in addition to learning how to run a business more broadly. One respondent stated, "I had been working on a business plan and had been struggling. I didn't really know where I was going with it and I couldn't get budgets together and I had been working on this for over a year."

- Cost did not seem to be a major factor influencing enrollment. Most affiliates reported charging low-cost tuition ($25 or less) or no tuition at all. One community offered, "We typically have always charged the minimum amount we negotiated for with our partners on the ground, and that usually ends up being around $25. But we'll let people know [the classes are] easily worth $350 as a value point so that people will have a vested stake in their own development, an enterprise, and idea. We've never really charged market rate, and fortunately we raise enough subsidy through the

grants we get to operate. However, when we offered 1 or 2 courses when it was the traditional, classroom-based content, it cost a lot more money. The cost has come down, and since then we've been able to triple or more the amount of courses we can deliver because it's less costly."

Course implementation

- Four affiliates have only one facilitator; two affiliates have more than one facilitator. Three of the six affiliates we interviewed are expanding or looking to expand soon. One affiliate hires consultants who are later trained to work as facilitators. That affiliate noted, "We hire consultants regularly and pay for one-to-one technical assistance. We usually already have a pretty big pool of consultants that we're working with. And a couple of them have shown interest in being a facilitator. That's usually the pool we've drawn from. We've already vetted them to help with marketing or operations. They have experience in the industry and we've used them in other capacities." Affiliates noted a strong need for a facilitator's manual and instruction guidebook.

- Affiliates look to work with facilitators who have industry experience (that is, who have owned a small business) or who have experience in other related industries (such as academics). One individual offered, "The real-world experience brings another dimension to the class when someone is talking not just from a theoretical perspective, but can also bring some personal experience in and who can understand what it's like to be an entrepreneur. So to have a facilitator that's walked or is walking that path, I think, brings another means of connecting with the clients."

- Four affiliates offered blended courses or had some portion of the course content available online. This approach has helped or is expected to help some affiliates alleviate attrition and retention issues. Interviewees noted that the online platform is not user friendly and some participants struggled to access online content. Participants had little to suggest in terms of improvement, but many noted that online content, though helpful, contained an overwhelming amount of information and some examples were not relevant to their specific needs. Participants seemed to highly favor in-person content.

- There was broad satisfaction with modules and course content, but one affiliate expressed substantial dissatisfaction with the new FastTrac system and currently uses the old version. In addition, affiliates are modifying course content to suit their needs. Three affiliates have changed the FastTrac curriculum either out of dissatisfaction or because their own training/expertise allows them to approach content differently. One affiliate noted, "The reason why we're using the old system is that it has a proven track record with what we've been able to accomplish here. Of the 15 students we graduated, 13 of them submitted their business plans and are launching their businesses as we speak." FastTrac participants who were interviewed found the sections on writing a business plan and marketing to be especially useful, but they struggled with the financial section.

- Feedback was an integral part of FastTrac courses. Most affiliates distributed questionnaires or evaluations at the end of the course, and others solicited feedback throughout the duration of the course. One participant said, "There were always times to ask questions and to talk among ourselves. You know, we did small groups. [The facilitator] was very open and very available." Participants reported looking to facilitators for help outside of the FastTrac course.

Participant traits

- Most affiliates work with participants from diverse socioeconomic, gender, and racial backgrounds. One respondent said, "I think it is a good snapshot of what the greater [community] area looks like. It's multicultural. It's many, many languages."

- Participants bring decades of industry experience to their current small business ventures. Two FastTrac participants who were interviewed have owned or run small businesses for more than 20 years and are looking to FastTrac to help them start or grow their new businesses.

- Most affiliates work with participants whose businesses are still underdeveloped or have not started yet. One affiliate noted, "They're typically in the feasibility study area. They have a business concept. They have an idea. I'd say most are in that feasibility area or startup area, but not much further along than that. And typically when they start the class with that concept, when they're done with the class, they've changed it."

- Success after course completion varies among affiliates. Success, in this regard, is defined as the number of participants who are applying the skills learned in the FastTrac program to their businesses. One affiliate with a high success rate stated, "They are starting these businesses as a result of the FastTrac program we are providing because they're not in business when they start the class...They'll come into the class because they want to start a business and they don't know how and they want to get that crash course MBA, which is pretty much what [we] provide them."

Appendix B. 1 Million Cups Data Collection, Analysis Methodology, and Findings

1 MILLION CUPS DATA COLLECTION

Similar to the FastTrac evaluation, our evaluation of the 1 Million Cups (1MC) program involved both quantitative and qualitative data analyses. Data were extracted from surveys completed by program attendees, organizers, and presenters. Our quantitative research team collected data from 469 attendee, 113 organizer, and 658 presenter survey responses (see Exhibit B.1), including gathering information on attendee demographics (see Exhibit B.2.). Additionally, our research team gathered administrative and qualitative data.

Exhibit B.1. 1 Million Cups survey sample sizes

Population	Sample size
Organizers	113
Attendees	469
Presenters	658

Exhibit B.2. Demographic distribution based on 1 Million Cups attendee survey results, among respondents with nonmissing data

Region	Average age	% Female	% White
Midwest	49.0	36.9%	96.5%
Southeast	46.3	25.2%	79.2%
Southwest	47.2	52.8%	94.6%
West	49.8	27.4%	99.0%

Members of our qualitative research team conducted site visits and focus groups at four communities across the Eastern, Midwestern, and Western regions. Focus group interviews lasted one hour, on average, and were recorded for note-taking purposes. Each focus group was attended by community organizers, attendees, and presenters from the respective local 1MC chapter. Our research team queried focus group participants on three broad themes: roles and responsibilities, diversity and inclusion, and connectedness.

Findings in this section were calculated using qualitative data collected during site visits from 10/17/2018 to 11/14/2018. Our attendance pattern analyses relied on data collected from a texting survey pilot, Google survey, and other administrative data. All survey data used in this analysis were collected from 10/3/2017 through 9/30/2018.

SITE VISIT FOCUS GROUPS

Four 1MC sites were visited by our research team between October and November 2018. Sites visited were located in the Eastern, Midwestern, and Western regions. The mean number of people who participated in the focus groups was **7**. Focus groups lasted one hour, on average, and participants fielded questions regarding roles and responsibilities, diversity and inclusion, and connectivity.

QUALITATIVE SURVEY DATA

Survey data were analyzed to determine the effectiveness of 1MC for organizers, attendees, and presenters. **658** unique presenters, **469** attendees, and **113** organizers were included in this analysis.

ATTENDANCE DATA

Complete data were available from **58** sites. We evaluated the relationship between community attendance patterns and geographical location, member demographics, and the year a community became active.

As with our methodological approach to the FastTrac program, our qualitative research team analyzed findings—drawing out quotes and central themes from the focus group. Qualitative findings were then layered on top of quantitative data in order to provide a more nuanced evaluation of the 1MC program.

1 MILLION CUPS ATTENDANCE ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

Methodology

We initially planned on using statistical models to impute missing attendance data based on other information collected about those communities that might be predictive of meeting attendance including:

- Demographics: percentage of whites, percentage of females, average age
- Periodicity/model type: weekly vs. monthly
- Region
- Launch date

However, after examining the distribution of these variables, we found that they were missing in conjunction with attendance data for two-thirds of the communities. Among 182 communities, 65 communities provided data on attendance from the various pilots, 154 communities have data on periodicity, 161 communities have data on launch date, and 66 communities have data on demographics. Only 58 communities have complete data on all relevant variables. After analyzing the available data, we concluded that region and periodicity were the only variables available for the large majority of communities that were also predictive of attendance rates.

We therefore decided to use a stratified weighting cell methodology. As a first step, we divided the communities into three groups: those that hold weekly meetings, those that hold monthly meetings, and those that have an unknown meeting periodicity. For each meeting periodicity, we then calculated the average attendance separately by subgroup based on region. To estimate total attendance per meeting for each subgroup, we multiplied the average observed attendance rate by the total number of communities in that subgroup.

Finally, to account for the frequency of the meetings when calculating total annual attendance, we multiplied the average single meeting estimates by 12 for the communities that meet monthly and by 48 for the communities that meet weekly (to account for some cancellations due to holidays). For communities with unknown periodicity, we assumed the communities with unknown periodicity are similar to the average community in their region and assigned the average attendance estimates to these communities according to the within-region averages across monthly and weekly meet-ups. The total annual attendance rates across all communities are calculated as the sum of the totals from the three periodicity groups. Results are shown in Exhibit B.3.

Findings

Exhibit B.3. Total annual attendance across 1 Million Cups communities, by meeting frequency and geographic region

Meeting frequency	Region	Communities	Respondents	Average single meeting attendance[a]	Total annual attendance
Weekly[b]	Midwest	29	10	31.8	44,208
	Northeast[c]	1	0	26.4	1,268
	Southeast	32	11	17.3	26,558
	Southwest	13	7	30	18,715
	West	20	14	26.6	25,603
	Subtotal	**95**	**42**		**116,353**
Monthly[d]	Midwest	16	4	17.5	3,360
	Northeast	5	2	22	1,320
	Southeast	11	2	18.5	2,448
	Southwest	15	2	22.8	4,104
	West	12	8	20.4	2,937
	Subtotal	**59**	**18**		**14,170**
Unknown[e]	Midwest	6	0		6,350
	Northeast	10	1		2,640
	Southeast	5	1		3,374
	Southwest	6	3		4,891
	West	1	0		890
	Subtotal	**28**	**5**		**18,145**
	TOTAL				**148,668**

[a]Average attendance was calculated using attendance data from the texting pilot and survey responses.

[b]Weekly single meeting averages were multiplied by 48 weeks to determine annual attendance.

[c]The single Northeast community in our sample did not report attendance data. Therefore, we took the mean of the average single meeting attendances across the remaining four regions and used it as an estimate of the average single meeting attendance for the Northeast region.

[d]Monthly single meeting averages were multiplied by 12 months to determine annual attendance.

[e]Attendance at communities for which the meeting frequency was unknown was calculated using averages and distribution of monthly and weekly communities for that region.

Exhibit B.4 shows how our observations of meeting attendance varied across regions. The largest meetings were held in the West and Midwest. Exhibit B.5 shows the variation in attendance by age. Younger communities have lower average attendance, perhaps because they need time to grow and attract new members.
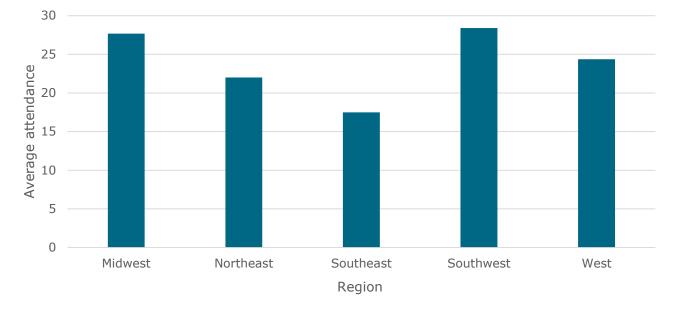
Exhibit B.4. Average attendance at 1 Million Cups events varies regionally

Note: The bars show average attendance by region using available data from both the region and the attendance variables.
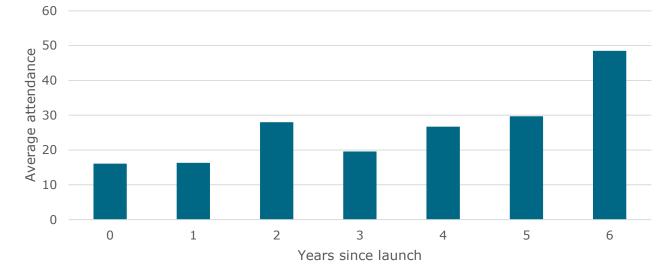
Exhibit B.5. Average attendance increases with the age of 1 Million Cups communities

Note: The line graph depicts the average attendance by years since the community launched.

1 MILLION CUPS DATA DASHBOARD

Exhibit B.6. Survey responses from 1 Million Cups attendees, presenters, and organizers

	Measures	Attendees	Presenters	Organizers	Annual target
Attendees, organizers, and presenters	Number of unique participants	469	658	113	
	1 Million Cups helped their business (%)	**78%**	**79%**	**59%**	75%
	1 Million Cups includes people with different characteristics (%)	91%	89%	NA	
	1 Million Cups includes people of different backgrounds and experiences (%)	93%	93%	NA	
	Comfortable receiving feedback at 1 Million Cups (%)	95%	NA	NA	
	Treated with respect at 1 Million Cups (%)	97%	97%	NA	
	Feel supported at 1 Million Cups (%)	89%	90%	NA	
	Organizers in community are open and approachable (%)	96%	94%	NA	
	I can be myself at 1 Million Cups	94%	93%	NA	
	1 Million Cups attendees value perspective (%)	NA	92%	NA	
	Net promoter score	**+65**	**+53**	**+35**	+65
	Often talk to other 1 Million Cups attendees at events (%)	90%	77%	NA	
	Met other entrepreneurs at 1 Million Cups events (%)	96%	NA	96%	
	Know at least one other person at 1 Million Cups whose advice is trusted (%)	87%	86%	NA	
	Have learned new things from 1 Million Cups attendees (%)	86%	80%	96%	

NA = not available

Exhibit B.7. Additional 1 Million Cups survey responses from organizers

	Measures	
Organizers	1 Million Cups community of people with different characteristics is a priority (%)	89%
	1 Million Cups community with people of different backgrounds and experiences is a priority (%)	95%
	1 Million Cups attendees treating each other with respect is a priority (%)	98%
	Creating a sense of community at 1 Million Cups is a priority (%)	97%
	1 Million Cups attendees teach each other new things (%)	95%

Exhibit B.8. Perceptions of 1MC by community size

Group	Community size	N	Net promoter score	1MC helped their business
Organizers	Small	60	76.7	68%
	Large	108	68.5	70%
Presenters	Small	87	58.6	81%
	Large	89	52.8	76%
Attendees	Small	12	25	67%
	Large	13	23.1	77%

Exhibit B.9. Perceptions of 1MC by region

Group	Region	N	Net promoter score	1MC helped their business
Organizers	Midwest	175	62.9	67%
	Southeast	165	64.8	66%
	Southwest	92	63	70%
	West	36	83.3	67%
	Northeast	1	100	100%
Presenters	Midwest	273	52.7	76%
	Southeast	154	53.2	77%
	Southwest	83	69.9	84%
	West	110	40	78%
	Northeast	37	56.8	76%
Attendees	Midwest	50	38	58%
	Southeast	23	56.5	52%
	Southwest	13	61.5	54%
	West	21	0	71%
	Northeast	6	-16.7	67%

Exhibit B.10. Diversity, inclusiveness, and supportiveness by race and ethnicity

Group	Ethnicity	N	Diversity	Inclusiveness	Supportiveness
Organizers	Underrepresented[a]	15	4.8	5	5
	Not Underrepresented	95	4.6	4.8	4.8
Presenters	Underrepresented	131	4.5	4.7	4.6
	Not Underrepresented	486	4.6	4.7	4.7
Attendees	Underrepresented	59	4.5	4.7	4.7
	Not Underrepresented	376	4.5	4.7	4.7

[a]Underrepresented groups includes those who identify as Black or African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or American Indian or Alaska Native.

FINDINGS FROM 1 MILLION CUPS ORGANIZER SUMMIT QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

A focus group was held during the 1MC Organizer Summit in Kansas City, co-facilitated by two members of the research team. The focus group included nine organizers who had been engaged with 1MC for at least three years and filled roles including local organizers, regional representatives, and Kauffman Foundation staff. Participants came from geographically diverse communities and represented communities of varying sizes and urbanicity.

Necessary characteristics for a 1MC organizer

- Respondents described a number of different characteristics that are necessary for success as an organizer. However, they agreed that any single individual would not encompass all traits; rather, these traits reflect what would be necessary in an organizing team. Key characteristics included the following:
    - o A level of **selflessness or altruism** that is reflected through wanting to be an organizer for the betterment of the community and not for the purposes of furthering one's own agenda or business. Respondents felt like this trait was crucial in building community trust. They frequently quoted the phrase "a rising tide lifts all boats," by which they meant that when an organizer supports the entrepreneurial community, they can also benefit and do not need to selfishly promote their own business. The philosophy of this is that a strong entrepreneurial community benefits all individuals in the community.
    - o Being **proactive and dependable** in meeting the needs of the community. Respondents described this as individuals who don't ask "What do I need to do," but rather assess needs proactively and take steps to meet them without being told to do something. This may also be thought of as having an "entrepreneurial spirit"—a willingness to do whatever it takes to make the community successful.
    - o Having a **passion** for creating the 1MC community. This was often referred to as the "why," which respondents described as a mission-aligned reason for organizing and a "hunger to develop their entrepreneurial ecosystem." They felt that individuals could have their own "why" within parameters for mission alignment and vision. They also felt that the vision for the program is something collective but is also understood and translated individually.
    - o Being both a **leader and a team player**. Respondents emphasized that organizers are part of teams, and they need to find the right team members to meet the needs of the community. They also discussed the importance of individuals creating a succession plan and supporting new organizers over time.

Motivation to become a 1MC organizer and perception of the role

Respondents discussed both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for serving as an organizer. Some organizers were extrinsically motivated and were initially paid, and/or continue to serve as an organizer through their employment with an incubator or similar firm. Respondents felt that those in paid positions sometimes lack the intrinsic passion that other organizers have, and this can lead to challenges. However, organizers in many of the older communities are paid or have organizational support, and this can provide a benefit of continuity. For organizers who are unpaid, the challenge is

sustaining a continued intrinsic motivation. One respondent asked, "How can the organizer role be sustainable for someone seeking to be a volunteer long-term?"

- Intrinsic motivations that were discussed mirrored the traits necessary for being a successful organizer and included the following:
    o Having a selfless desire to connect people and help them solve problems
    o Understanding and being passionate about the 1MC program
    o Identifying and wanting to address needs in the existing entrepreneurial ecosystem
    o Being connected positively to the existing organizing team and event

- With regard to finding and sustaining intrinsic motivation, respondents said that believing in the mission, and wanting to execute it, can be motivational. Some respondents noted that the 1MC mission wasn't immediately clear to them, but it was something they learned quickly, and it is something that keeps evolving.

Connectedness with other 1MC organizers

- Respondents were enthusiastic about finding opportunities to connect with other organizers. One respondent suggested that the regional team organize more opportunities to connect, such as through regional or local meet-ups. Another suggestion was that if a new chapter is starting, organizers should go visit other local chapters and "pull from the energy" of those chapters. They would need support from the Kauffman Foundation to make that happen. One organizer expressed concern about learning through the grapevine that a new community was starting in a nearby city, and indicated that they would have liked the Kauffman Foundation to tell them so they could be involved and help, and not feel like it was a competition. Regional representatives in the focus group confirmed that they see their role as supporting and connecting organizers.

- In addition to opportunities to connect in person, organizers discussed some of the existing mediums for connecting with each other, and their respective challenges. A major point of discussion was Slack, the platform currently being used to allow organizers to connect online through message boards. Many respondents felt the platform wasn't being used in any meaningful way, and that important communication is conveyed through email. Some of the respondents check Slack but reported that "it's crickets." Respondents proposed using Slack for more substantive communications to encourage others to check it regularly, and suggested investigating ways for deeper integration of Slack with other tools and practices. An important caveat that was raised is that some communities don't use any electronic platforms, including email and social media, and that those chapters may continue to be hard to reach.

- Respondents also discussed the benefits of connectedness. They felt that chapter connectivity helps with the presenter pipeline by increasing engagement, allowing them to nominate speakers to present elsewhere, and allowing areas to test the process. Connectivity for new chapters also helps with chapter health. Finally, respondents felt that greater connectivity allows them to share best practices and help all communities improve.

Communication with Kauffman Foundation/1 Million Cups program staff

- Overall, respondents felt that communication with Kauffman Foundation staff could be improved. Some respondents noted that they wanted more communication from the Kauffman Foundation, emphasizing that less communication and authority can create more burden for organizers. One

respondent discussed the usefulness of new organizer calls, and noted that the information provided on those calls is actually useful for veteran organizers as well.

- One respondent noted that the Kauffman Foundation was really involved in launching early chapters, building the culture of those chapters and giving the chapters more attention. Newer chapters have less communication with and support from the Kauffman Foundation, leading to questions about how to run the event.

- Some respondents felt that being a disconnected chapter can be beneficial because there's less friction between the organizers and the Kauffman Foundation. As one respondent noted, "the uniqueness of the communities is the beauty, but it makes it hard to stay [mission-] aligned."

Training opportunities

- A major topic of discussion was training and onboarding. Respondents noted that organizers who are not well trained aren't equipped to bring on new organizers. They felt that ongoing calls to help organizers continue learning and receiving up-to-date information would be useful. Other suggestions included making an FAQ available that anticipates sources of confusion. They also reported that it is important to let organizers know they can ask questions, and they should not be afraid that they are doing something wrong and might get in trouble.

- All respondents we spoke to agreed that organizer training and coordinated resources would be great. Some respondents noted that they have had to create their own materials locally, which reflects a challenge with knowledge management and knowledge sharing. Other respondents referenced their positive experience working for similar programs, such as Rotary and the Global Entrepreneurial Network, for which more extensive training materials and resources were provided. This has been improved with the regional representatives, but respondents felt there was still room for improvement.

- When reflecting on current resources, respondents said they sometimes felt the framing is so broad that it's restrictive. They felt that, because the field is still developing, the Kauffman Foundation needs a process for developing and disseminating answers, sharing best practices, and getting feedback from a broad group. Respondents noted that better tagging and identification of questions from organizers would be more efficient and would help to standardize the information people receive.

- Respondents noted that they don't receive information about other programs offered through the Kauffman Foundation, such as FastTrac. This is something they would like to learn more about so they can communicate that information to their communities.

Other key challenges

- A key challenge that was discussed is the need for performance metrics. Respondents discussed this in the context of the website and app, which collect information that users are unable to access. They would like to be able to look at old speakers and check in on them and track participant-level outcomes to look at impacts and success stories. Respondents noted that everyone needs attendance data and a mechanism for collecting data on attendance. Another point of discussion was how to define success for a community based on metrics, and the variation that comes from community diversity. One respondent noted that it is important to remember that 1MC is a community, not an event, and measures of success should reflect not just event success but also success in building and supporting a community.

- Another challenge that was discussed at length is launching new chapters, and the decision-making process therein. Respondents did not feel like they had a good understanding of how new communities are chosen and what they should expect in terms of communication about these launches.

- A final challenge, connected to launching new chapters, focused on capacity to support a 1MC community. Respondents discussed important factors that can impede capacity, such as size/population density, location, ability to connect with existing 1MC communities in the area, and the local presence of similar organizations (such as Toastmasters and SCORE). Respondents felt that the presenter pipeline and attendance might be stronger if communities were consolidated, if more market research were done before launching, and if potential organizers were required to provide more proof of sustainability.

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