



COMMUNITY PARTNER PERSPECTIVES: Informing strategic planning and engagement

In winter 2026, UW Bothell administered a strategic planning survey to community partners to help inform the development of our next campus-wide strategic plan and to gather broader input on how the University can better serve as a regional partner.

The survey provides valuable insights into UW Bothell's strengths in community engagement efforts, while also identifying opportunities to expand experiential learning, strengthen workforce alignment, and address challenges that may hinder successful partnerships.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Partner Assessment of UW Bothell Performance

- Preparing students with professionalism and soft skills: **84%** Good/Excellent
- Building partnerships that are mutually beneficial: **84%** Good/Excellent
- Preparing students with technical skills: **81%** Good/Excellent
- Supporting the social and civic well-being of the region: **77%** Good/Excellent
- Supporting the environmental health of the region: **63%** Good/Excellent
- Responding to regional workforce and economic needs: **57%** Good/Excellent

Lower ratings in workforce responsiveness point to a need for stronger alignment between academic preparation and evolving employer and regional workforce needs.



SURVEY PARTICIPANT PROFILE

**78 community partners
completed the survey.**

Sectors

Nonprofit: 27

For profit: 20

Educational institutions: 16

Government: 7

Other: 6

65% of partners interact with
UW Bothell several times per
year or more.

Partnership involvement

- Student learning experiences: **87%**
- Campus or school-level councils or advisory boards: **24%**
- Employer/career events and engagement: **23%**
- Hiring UW Bothell students and/or graduates: **23%**
- Research or innovation collaborations: **21%**
- Special events: **20%**

Partnership Value and Reciprocity

Partners report the greatest value in relationships where students are directly engaged, particularly through hands-on learning experiences, internships, and in collaborative work that supports organizational goals. Areas less connected to student engagement, such as employee professional development, are perceived as offering lower value.

Challenges to Partnership

- Faculty and staff capacity constraints: **45%**
- Geographic or logistical accessibility challenges: **32%**
- Difficulty navigating institutional processes: **30%**
- Academic calendar (quarter system) misalignment: **30%**
- Gaps in student quality or graduate readiness: **20%**

Impact of Student Contributions

- Partnerships support talent pipelines and expand organizational capacity through applied student work.
- Students contribute directly to program development, service delivery and innovation efforts.
- Partnerships help build future workforce connections by exposing students to real-world environments and organizational needs.

Priorities for regional impact

- Increase collaboration with partners on research, innovation and community-based learning opportunities: **61%**
- Expand internships, practicums and applied student projects: **54%**
- Align academic programs more closely with workforce needs: **42%**

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2031: Partner Perspectives

Partners' open-ended recommendations were highly aligned with the survey's top-rated strategic priorities. The most common themes focused on strengthening employer and community partnerships, expanding student applied learning opportunities, and prioritizing workforce preparation. Want to see how your input shaped the direction of our strategic plan, follow updates here:

www.uwb.edu/chancellor/strategic-plan



Community partners at the 2026 Partner Appreciation Breakfast and Academic Showcase Launch

Looking ahead to 2031, what is one action or strategy that you believe would most strengthen UW Bothell's impact for students and alumni?

"Building further connections with local businesses and allowing for more in-services, symposiums, talks, internships and community events together. I think the more we get these young minds to work with the employers in their prospective fields the better they will be able to interview/work and hit the ground running."

— UW Bothell community partner

