



CS 147
Assignment 1
Needfinding

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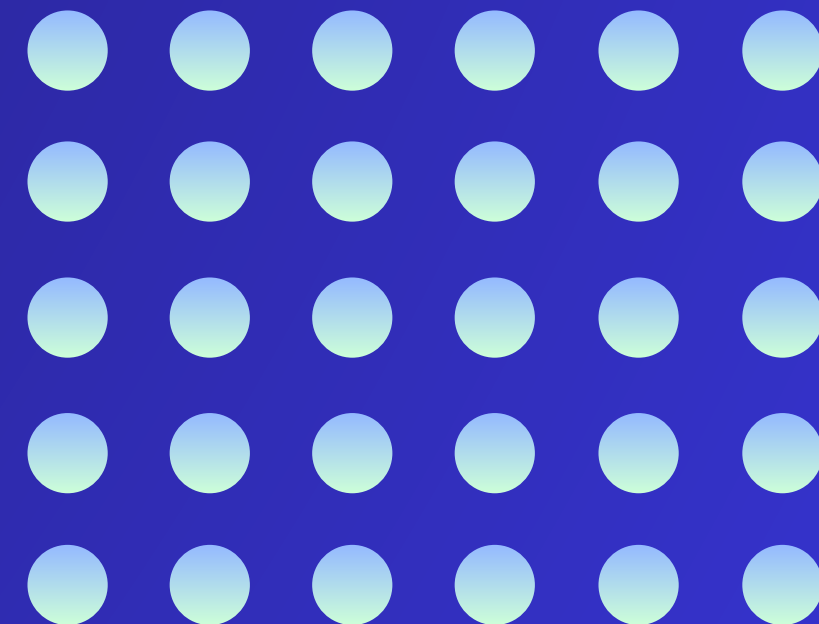
05 Summary

Our Team

Saniya Vashist, Anavi Baddepudi, Sara Bukair, Shardul Sapkota

Problem Domain

Young professionals learning about social impact opportunities




Money

Social Impact

The background is a dark blue gradient. It features several large, overlapping, wavy patterns in a lighter shade of blue, resembling stylized waves or topographical lines. In the top-left and bottom-right corners, there are decorative elements consisting of a grid of small, light blue circles. The text 'Sell out' is centered in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

Sell out



Sell-out



Sell out
Sell in

Needfinding Methodology



Interviewer recruitment process

Participants

Arpan

SWE

Coding for social
good

Average user

Veena

CSRE major from
Ghana

Education reform
and policy

Extreme user

Samuel

Stanford Professor
(Twi)

Board certified and
interfaith Chaplain

Non-user

Lalitha

VP

Oversees
innovation hubs
across Asia

Non-user

Sana

Founder of a social
impact org

Corporate social
responsibility expert

Non-user

Questions

Arpan

SWE

In-Person

Shardul - Interviewer

Saniya - Notetaker

Compensation: Meal

01

Factors affected
decision for corporate
work

02

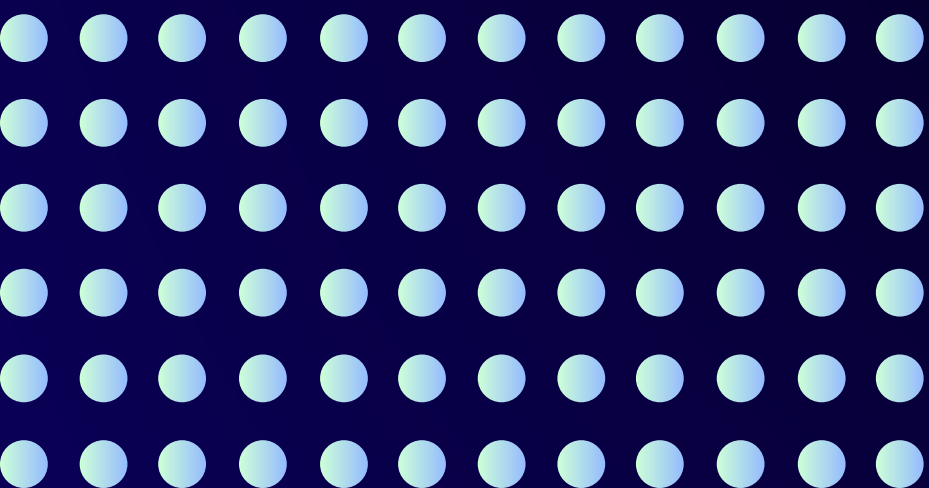
Engaging with
community while
working at Google

03

Making an impact
outside of work while
working a tech job

04

Future goals



Say

"Life doesn't let you magically live your dreams"

"Had to prioritize financial stability"

Graduated during covid and took a corporate job due to poor economy

"Stability"

"I value giving back as I've also seen my dad volunteer with the Lions Club"

Ambitions changed as they entered college due to family circumstances

"Not completely putting off nor fully committing to social impact work; trying to find a middle ground"

"Passions are not always aligned with social impact work"

"Doing startups for social impact is possible with skills I already have"

"Startups"

Arpan:
Software Engineer in his early twenties

Think

Supporting family financially is the most important priority

Working a corporate job was a result of external factors outside of his control

People without a CS background might have a harder time doing social impact work on their own

Coding enables one to do give back without needing a team.

Having a safety net is very important before doing anything risky

Giving back means projects with ambitious goals like solving infrastructure, social media, etc

Thinking is very techno-centric: social impact has to involve a startup

Convenience is critical when doing projects outside of work hours

Coming from an immigrant family, sees giving back as a way to find community

Passion should align with the project related to social impact

Showed demo of using chatgpt for a coding project

Repeated a few times how startups are the key to social impact

Do

Codes outside of his SWE job as a hobby

Worked on projects related to mental health and people with autism

Passionate about working for a social cause

Fatigue as work takes up a lot of time

Frustrated about lack of time for working on side projects

Feel

Worked in several startups

Face lit up when talking about machine learning and LLMs

Keeps up with new tools and technology outside of work

Responsible for family's financial stability

Nostalgia about Nepal as an immigrant

Discontent about not being able to commit fully to a social impact project

Obligated to do a corporate work due to external circumstances

Plays videogames in the weekend to recharge

Demeanor and voice become serious when talking about social impact and work

Excited about how new technology is enabling innovation at a rapid pace

Tired doing side projects on his own

Proud for being able to support his family

Key Quotes

Arpan

“Life doesn’t let you magically live your dreams”

“My passions are not always aligned with my social impact work”

“As an immigrant, social impact and giving back was a way for me and my family to find community”

Questions

Veenaa A.

Stanford Student

In-Person

Anavi - Interviewer

Sara - Notetaker

Compensation: Meal

01

Pursuing a path
focused on social
impact

02

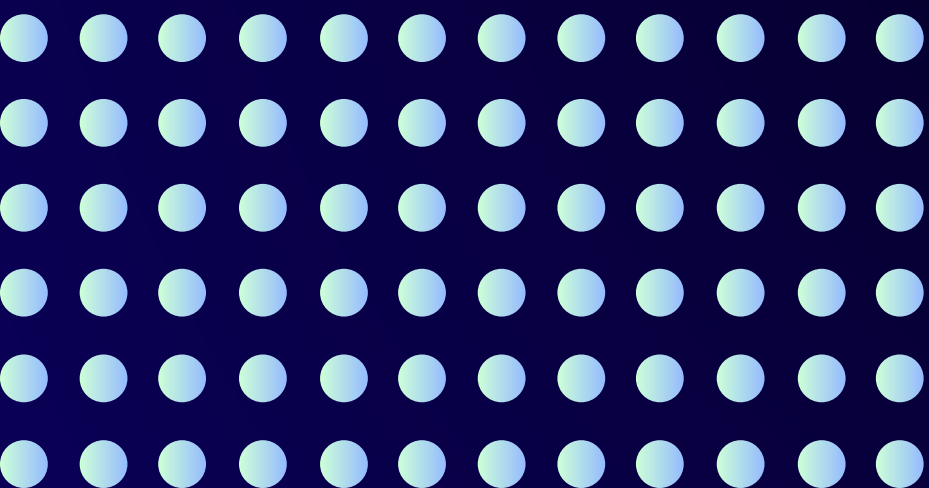
Balancing passions
with conventional jobs

03

Tools used for social
impact work

04

Future goals



Key Quotes

Veena

“Social impact work is great, but not a safe, viable career choice”

“I never doubted my end goal. At least this way, I am making a difference”

Say

Think

Came in as a public policy major. Created library in Accra Ghana

Passionate about "increasing access to equitable education in developing nations:

Jarring moment understanding public policy wasn't what she thought it was

attended private high school - better education than most in Accra

"Social impact work is great but not a safe, viable career choice"

"Social impact work is great but not a safe, viable career choice"

"I'm aware that the career choice I am making is risky"

Worried about my future employment possibilities

more lucrative options elsewhere..

Pushed towards Psychology in Freshman year

Stanford needs to support the non-stem students just as much

She is more fortunate to have family support

Stanford should have a build-your-own major for the humanities school

Stanford is a STEM heavy school

equal access to education is very important

humanities don't have a modular style to learning

Creating writing and such skills are very important

She was swayed by what the people around her were

She is more suited for social sciences classes than STEM

more responsibility to plan her own courses

Veena: CSRE Major at Stanford, From Ghana, interested in Education Policy

Do

Feel

Face shows regret when talking about how others swayed her opinion

Books all around her — backs her idea about passion for reading

At least "ill be able to make a difference" - delivered suggesting that it is impossible to both sell out and make a difference

Reacting well to passion project questions

Sounds hesitant when discussing financial plans past university

Had just come back from the library

Talks about the books she is reading right now

Clearly talks about struggles with the social aspect of what people around her are doing

Eyes brighten up when talking about communication and reading

Everyone around her is a CS major

"Its what I love to do, I know it's wishful thinking"

Feels angry about the lack of education major

Clearly passionate about education — remained constant throughout the conversation

Grateful for her parents support

Social aspect is the worst — amount that her peers can earn

Very avoidant of STEM classes

Never doubted her end goal

Fortunate to have received quality education, financial stability

Overwhelmed by the amount of emails about opportunities/ feels that they are disorganised

Questions

Samuel

Stanford Professor

In-Person

Sara - Interviewer

Saniya - Notetaker

Update on project

01

"Selling out" culture
among college
students

02

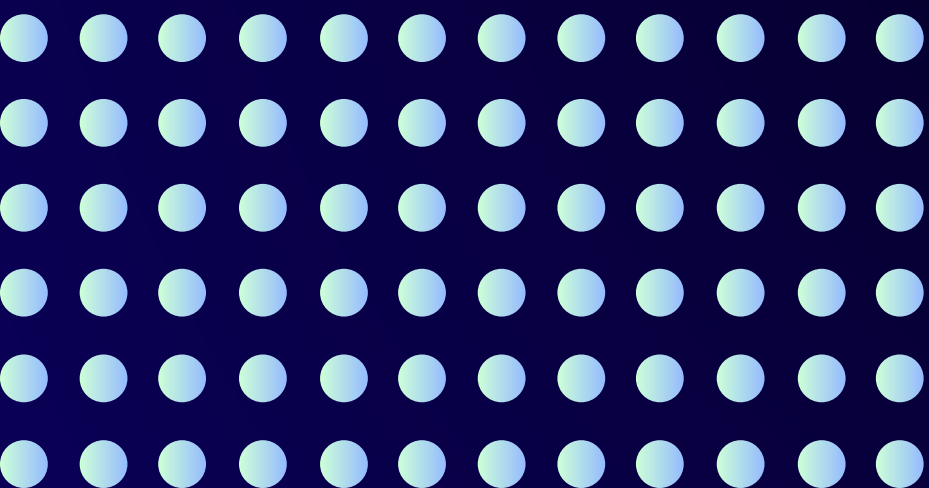
Balance their desire for
financial success and
career stability

03

Personal career
trajectory

04

Views on work and
fulfillment

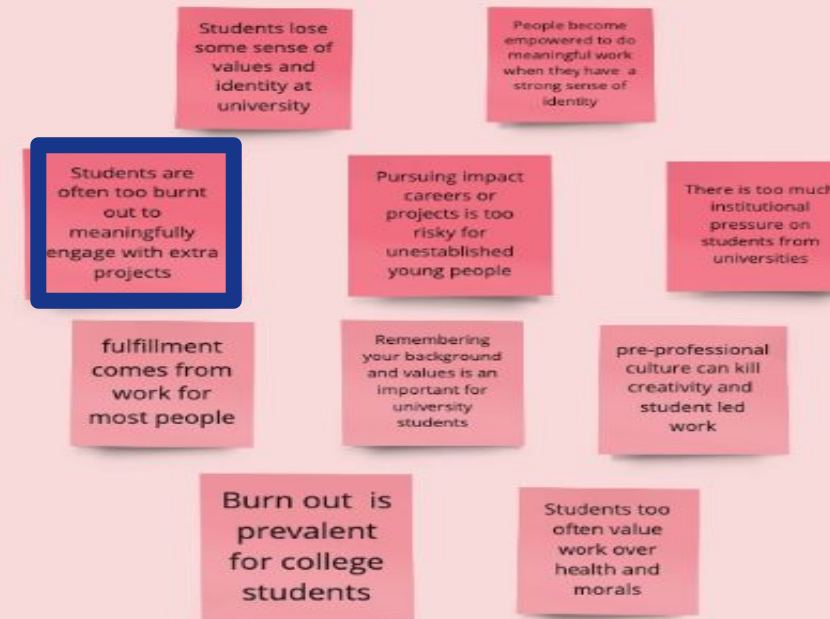


INTERVIEWEE: SAMUEL NKANSAH

SAY



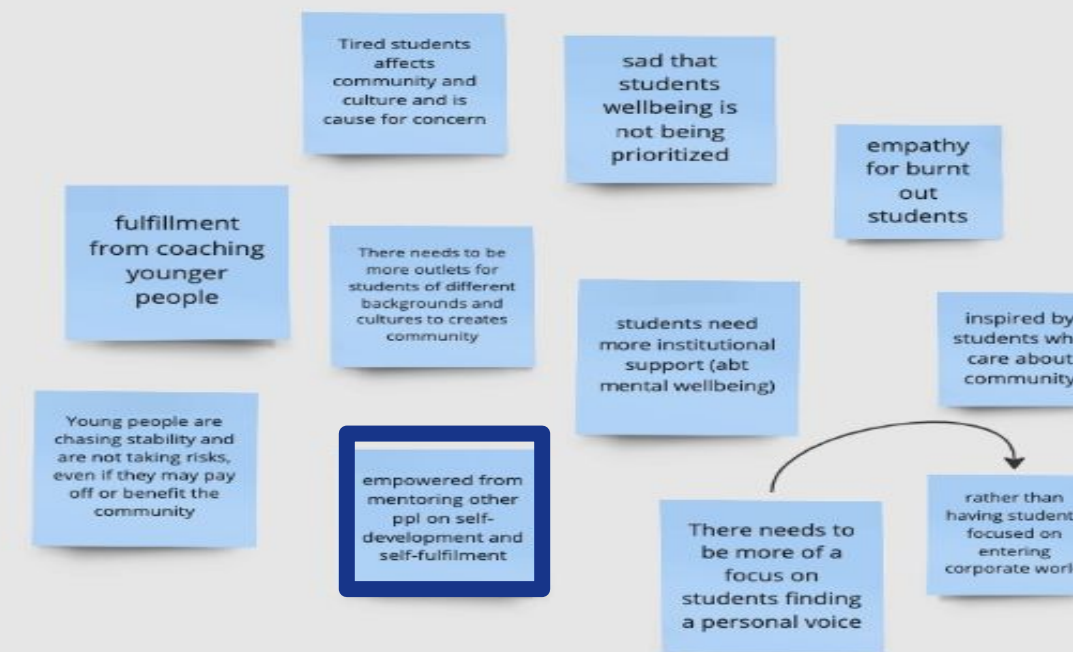
THINK



DOES



FEEL



Needs: Need for personal and emotional development in uni students to empower them to pursue meaningful and fulfilling work
Insights: Young people (particularly impact students) tend to pursue careers that give them financial stability rather than pursuing personal fulfillment. Students are working a lot, but may not be making progress on ideas that are meaningful to them.

Key Quotes

Samuel N.

“I was earning enough money but I was still a young guy. My work was not empowering and not fulfilling.”

“Students know how to manage time well, but they don’t know how to manage energy. Students will come to class on time but be very tired or burnt out.” Samuel

“I could not lose myself. I know the cooking pot and river that fed me. I always remember where I came from.” Samuel

“There is so much pressure on young men and women in this generation. Schools are producing students who are intellectually smart but emotionally challenged.” Samuel

Questions

Lalitha

VP of an enterprise software company

Zoom

Anavi - Interviewer

Sara - Notetaker

Update on project

01

Struggles of social impact startups

02

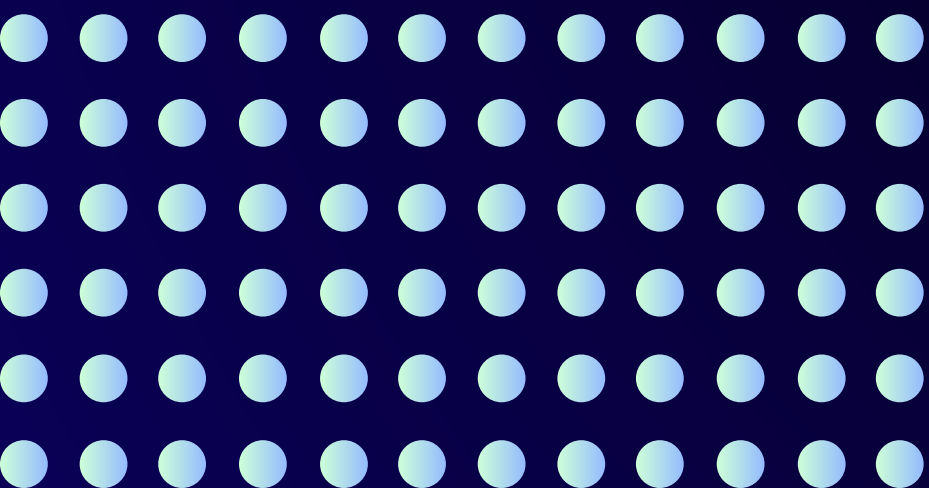
Diversity in social impact innovation

03

Financial stability and positive social impact

04

Social impact start-up profitability



Lalitha: VP of a foundry at a software company

Say

Main goal of the innovation hubs is to bring together innovators

Seeks to support visionary entrepreneurs who use SAP data/APIs and technologies

Students can balance passions and financial stability

Helped built 460+ startups grow

"Diversity is important to her and her company"

Most important step in building a product is finding a customer need and seeking feedback

It is difficult to be successful as a women in a male dominated space

Works on collaborating with startups, help them integrate SAP solutions, give them validation that they are backed by a large company like SAP.

Think

investors are less patient with longer time horizons for returns on their investments

Startups with female and other underrepresented founder groups should feel empowered to work with SAP

Social impact startups have limited customer bases, making it harder to demonstrate market viability to investors.

Diversity yields better innovation - diversity

Challenging to quantitatively measure and communicate the social impact of a start-up, meaning that it may be harder to even attract impact-focused investors

There are also brand / marketing benefits, can attract socially-conscious customers

Social mission over profit can make startups and ideas less appealing to traditional investors who are looking for financial return

Startups need VC backing - show a requirement for customers, talks about a "product-market fit"

Social impact may take longer than achieving profitability

Do

Speaks hesitantly about backing an idea

Puts heavy emphasis on profitability

Shows personal connection to the struggle of being female

Answers to these questions seem formal like she'd been asked this before

Speaks passionately about promoting diverse founders

Seems busy - meetings to go to after this

Thoughts and statements are driven by a want for under-represented leaders

Emphasis on user and customer base

Feel

Wants to support startups

Feels strongly for female empowerment/ education related p...

Shows passion for social impact startups

Shows pity for students that seek social impact without clear financial gain

Really believes in access to education

Seems to imply that it is hard to be both financially stable and have positive social impact

Wants to remove barriers associated with working with startups

Key Quotes

Lalitha

“Balancing passion and financial stability when pursuing social entrepreneurship as a student can be challenging.”

“Social impact startups have limited customer bases, making it difficult to demonstrate market viability”

Questions

Sana

Founder of social impact org

Zoom

Sara - Interviewer

Shardul - Notetaker

Update on project

01

Youth role in social impact

02

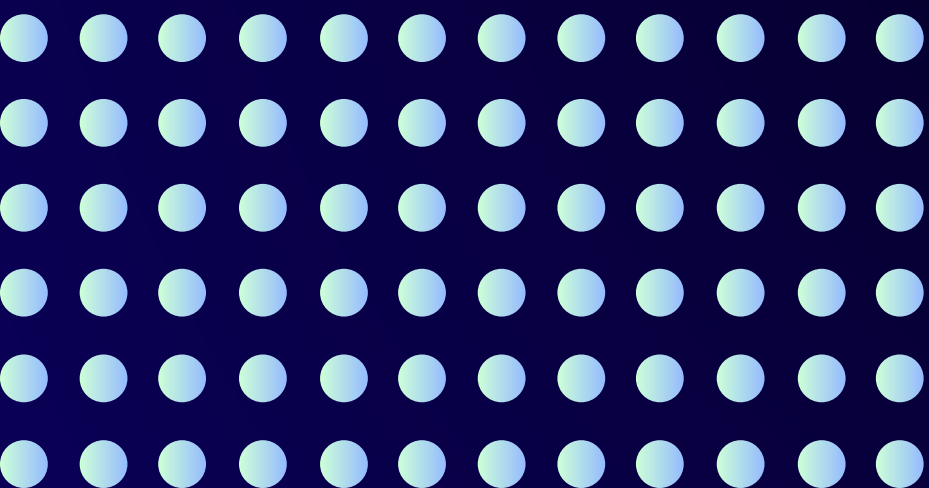
Burnout among social entrepreneurs

03

Young people involvement in community service

04

Difficulties faced by youth pursuing social good



SAY

Overwhelmed & burnt out from social media culture

Youth inaction b/c a lack of career establishment

Youth busy and distracted with other things

Youth lack platform of support to pursue passion

"Give Gen Z seat at table"

Lack of institutional & educational infrastructure for students

could only spend fully-able should impact work-life balance

Youth start-ups fail b/c they don't make the most use of the work load & have resources

Tradeoff between financial stability & maintaining through social work initiatives

empower young ppl in decision making space

THINK

need to "payback" in corporate world

need more systems to get youth in decision spaces

impact spaces spin value from youth perspective

underrep students are less incentivized to join these spaces

there is not enough \$ in social impact spaces

need for > accessibility to work on impact

Youth need to be trained young w/ mindset

Young ppl not adequately rep'd in social imp spaces

convert passion into action

social impact initiatives need more attention in professional world

DOES

consulting abt social marketing for gov

Tempo Mag - understanding community building

Tamarkan leadership start-ups young ppl

Good tech initiatives

media internships where students choose interest

publishes (amplify) student voices

short films abt sustainability, good tech

World 4 Good digital platform

write book abt leadership (compassion)

community organizing in under-rep'd communities

FEEL

Corporate & edu. responsibility

Determined to help students find voice

responsibility to connect students w/ personal resources

Fulfilled by work with student

imbalance on incentives 4 good

frustrated by students not having adequate impact platform

inspired by youth focused on impact

need to advocate 4 students

energized by youthful voices

the need to focus on impact in late life to pay back

Key Quotes

Sana

“I really want to make a difference and I’ve reached a point in my life where I feel like this is my main purpose.”

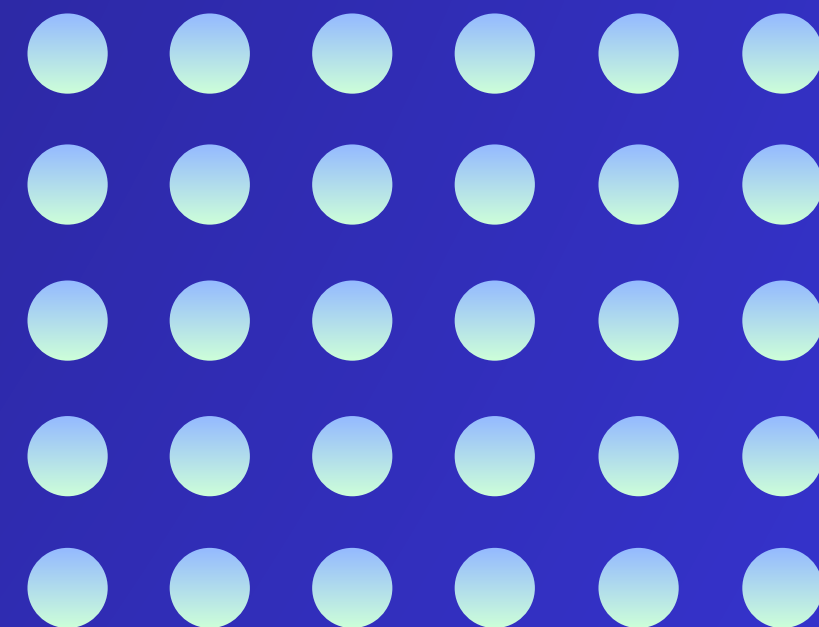
“A lot of positions of leadership are linked to power and money. Young people are not there yet, so they don’t have the means to dominate these spaces.”

Interview results



Surprises

- CS majors think that coding is the best, and only skill, for social impact
- Stanford humanities majors feel pressured to align with their peers in STEM
- Pity for students/projects that seek social impact without clear financial gain
- “Selling out” v.s. making an impact (mutually exclusive or inclusive)
- People need to be reminded of where they came from to make a difference





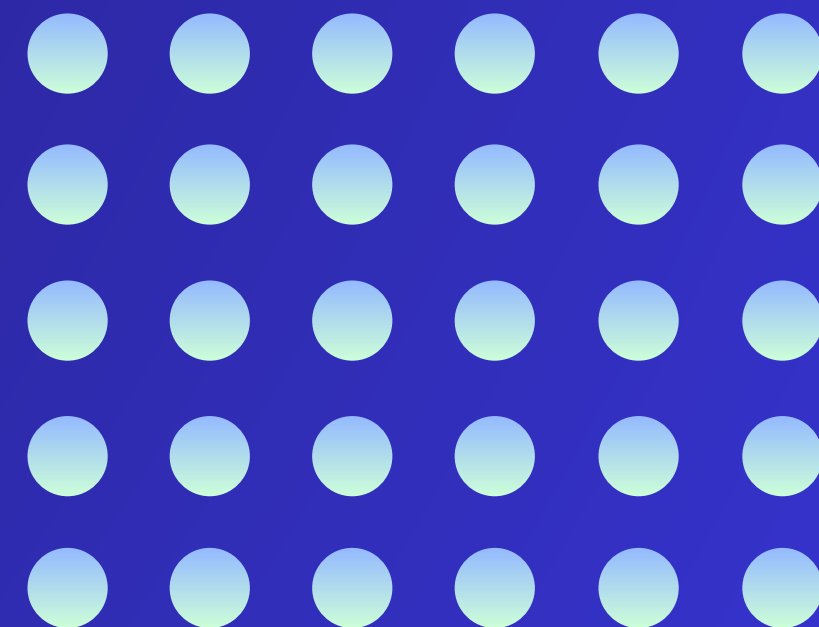
Analysis

Key Insights

Insights

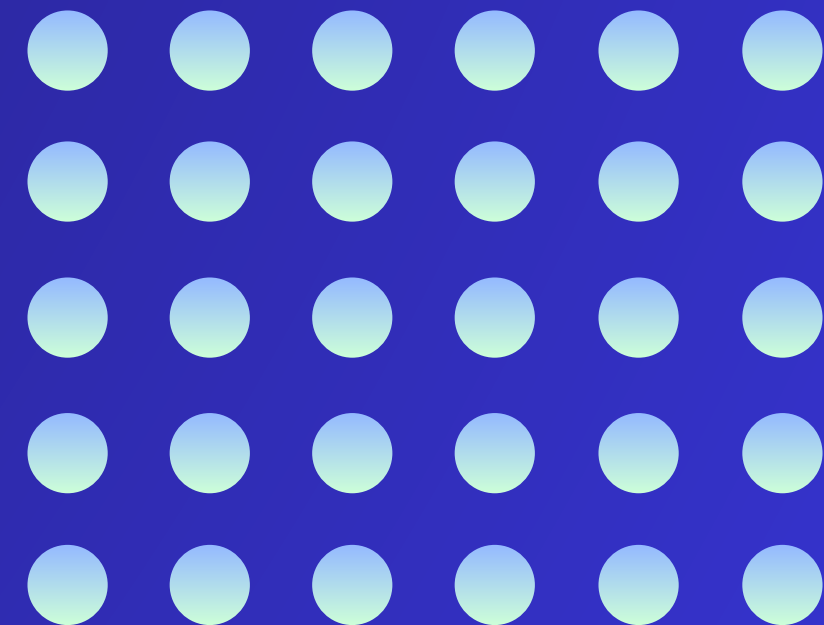
Observations and Inferences

- Tendency to wait to be financially stable and later in career to do social impact work
- Social impact work fulltime is difficult and risky
- Impact provides fulfillment
- Social impact is difficult to quantify for investors



Summary and Takeaways

- Desire for youth, young professionals, and adults to find fulfillment and social impact in work
- Tradeoff between financial success and social impact
- Difficulties in finding and accessing social impact opportunities
 - Full time or on the side
- Need more resources for young people to pursue social impact endeavors while in corporate america
- Social impact work needs to be made more accessible



Next Steps

01

Speak to young that have pursued social impact full time career or on the side

02

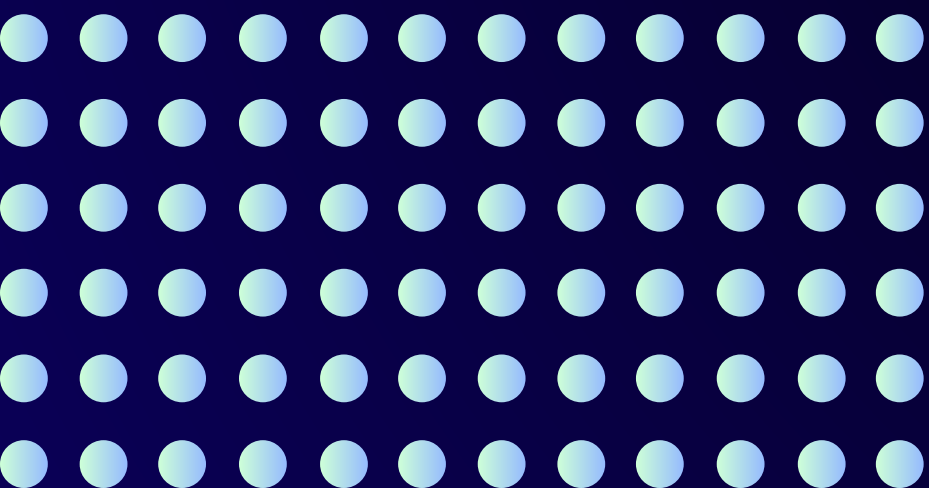
Assess correlation between financial security and social impact work

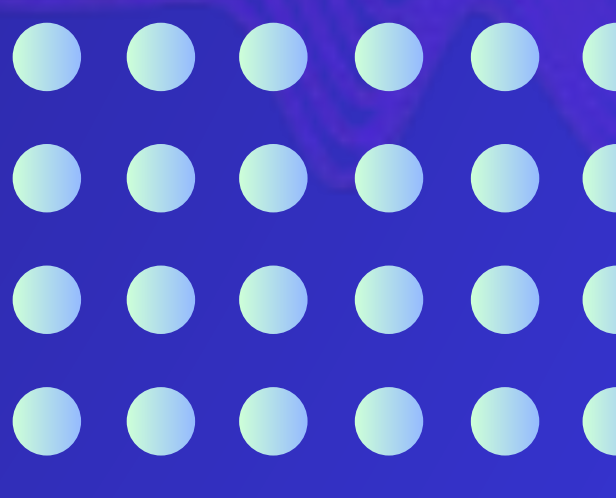
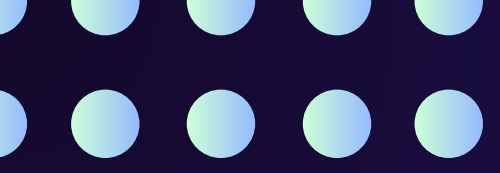
03

“How Might We” statements to brainstorm solutions

04

Develop prototypes





**Education is the passport to
the future, for tomorrow
belongs to those who prepare
for it today.**

Malcolm X

Appendix

Interview Questions

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZxVyWwy81WssbDLW9cF6E5EPSvYvPiEq-iguZaMKym3I/edit?usp=sharing>

Summary of Insights

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Klho8eDEpWJO_QgvxYpANeEqHDat2KdACWKP81ot0do/edit?usp=sharing

Empathy Maps

https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVNeYUrlw=?share_link_id=721583013289
https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVNdxWl8c=?share_link_id=588931375520
https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVNdws2rU=?share_link_id=406337757239

