



HARNESSING THE POWER OF DATA

PROJECT INSIGHTS REPORT
APRIL 30, 2026



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Harnessing The Power Of Data Program Overview

The Harnessing the Power of Data program 2.0 (Phase 2) was designed to support civic engagement organizations in strengthening how they collect, interpret, and use data to inform their work. While earlier phases of the program focused primarily on voter engagement data, Phase 2 expanded to a broader organizational approach, supporting partners in applying data practices across their programs.

Phase 2 engaged two groups of partners—**Collective Action for Youth (CA4Y)** and **Houston in Action (HiA)**—with program structures tailored to their starting points and prior experience. CA4Y partners participated as incubator, new, or continuing organizations. Incubator and new partners focused on building foundational skills in defining outcomes, collecting meaningful data, and communicating impact, while continuing partners built on prior participation to deepen their ability to apply data practices in their work. HiA partners, all of whom had participated in earlier phases of the program, engaged as continuing partners and focused on applying and extending their existing data skills.

Across both groups, the program was organized into three modules focused on key stages of the data cycle: data collection, data processes and tools, and communicating data.



HiA & CA4Y Program Timelines

HiA

	JUN 25	JUL 25	AUG 25	SEP 25	OCT 25	NOV 25	DEC 25	JAN 26
MODULE ONE: DATA COLLECTION FOR DECISION-MAKING	✓	✓	✓	✓				
MODULE TWO: MAKING MEANING FROM DATA				✓	✓			
MODULE THREE: PUTTING DATA INTO PRACTICE					✓	✓	✓	✓

CA4Y

	JUN 25	JUL 25	AUG 25	SEP 25	OCT 25	NOV 25	DEC 25	JAN 26
MODULE ONE: FOUNDATIONS OF DATA FOR IMPACT	✓	✓	✓					
MODULE TWO: CA4Y DATA PROCESSES & TOOLS			✓	✓	✓			
MODULE THREE: SHARING & COMMUNICATING DATA								

Theory of Change: Harnessing the Power of Data Program


PHASE 3
Sustain





Partner (HiA)
+ Practicum


BackBone Organization (CA4Y)
+ Support implementation of partner support curriculum

Long Term Outcomes – Community & Ecosystem Level


 Greater collaboration across nonprofit civic engagement organizations

 Increased trust between nonprofit civic engagement organizations and the communities they serve

 Increased voter engagement, registration, and turnout among community members

 Stronger nonprofit civic engagement ecosystem


PHASE 2
Institutionalize





Partner
+ Organizational Level Learning


BackBone Organizations
+ Document internal data processes
+ Improve data-related communication
+ Develop partner support curriculum


Medium Term Outcomes – Organization Level

 Organizations recognize the value of data & evaluation


 Organizations increase knowledge and skills related to data & evaluation

 Organizations develop stronger relationships with peers

 Organizations increase frequency, coverage, and quality of data use & reporting

 Organizations implement data-informed strategies


PHASE 1
Build





Partner
+ Grant Level Learning


BackBone Organizations
+ Co-learn
+ Learn & inform Partner support model
+ Understand Internal data processes

Short Term Outcomes – Participant Level

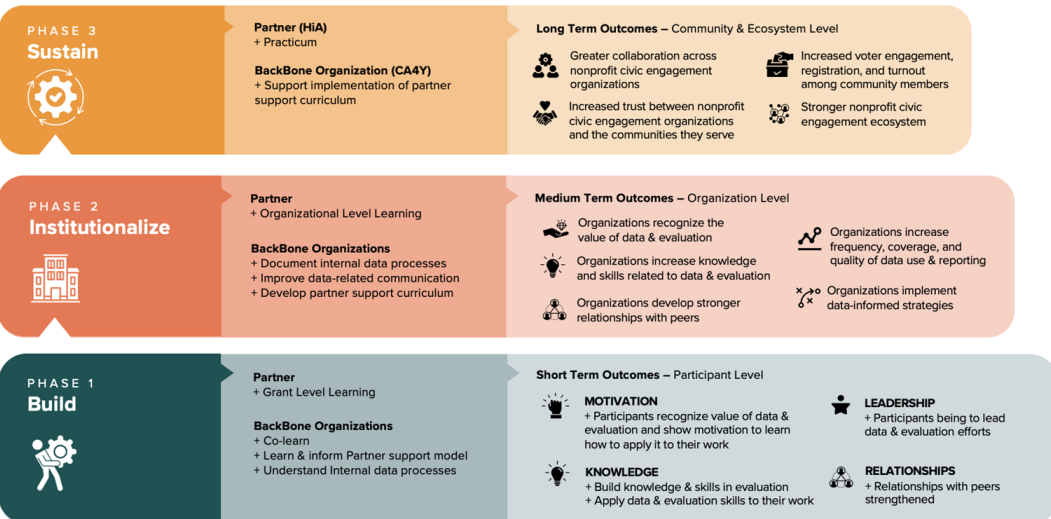
 **MOTIVATION**
+ Participants recognize value of data & evaluation and show motivation to learn how to apply it to their work

 **KNOWLEDGE**
+ Build knowledge & skills in evaluation
+ Apply data & evaluation skills to their work


 **LEADERSHIP**
+ Participants being to lead data & evaluation efforts


 **RELATIONSHIPS**
+ Relationships with peers strengthened


Theory of Change: Harnessing the Power of Data Program



The theory of change outlines a phased approach to building, institutionalizing, and sustaining data and evaluation capacity, with distinct and complementary roles for partners and backbone organizations.

 In **Phase 1 (Build)**, partners engage in grant-level learning to develop foundational knowledge and confidence in using data in their work. Backbone organizations learn alongside them, deepen their understanding of partners’ data contexts, and begin shaping a responsive support model.

 In **Phase 2 (Institutionalize)**, partners begin moving from individual learning into organizational use. Data practices start to show up more clearly in internal systems and in strategy. During this same phase, backbone organizations strengthen their own role by documenting processes and refining how partner support is structured.

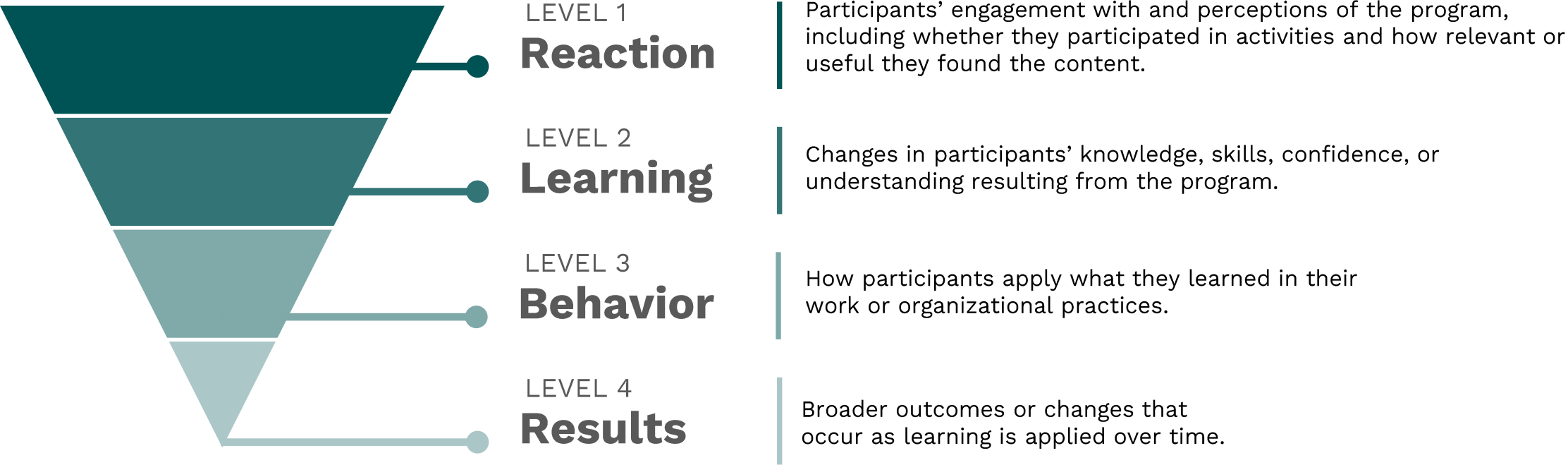
 In **Phase 3 (Sustain)**, partners apply what they have learned through practicum-based work grounded in real organizational needs. Backbone organizations support that work and help create the conditions for it to continue across the network.

Together, this approach moves beyond one-time capacity building to create the conditions for lasting change, where both organizations and the broader ecosystem are equipped to use data consistently, strategically, and collaboratively. By aligning partner capacity with backbone infrastructure, the model strengthens not only individual organizations but also the relationships and systems that connect them. Over time, this leads to more coordinated and effective civic engagement efforts, deeper trust between organizations and communities, and ultimately, increased voter engagement and turnout.

Evaluation Approach

Pivot Data Design partnered with COMM|VEDA, an independent evaluator, to conduct the evaluation of Phase 2 of the Harnessing the Power of Data program. Pivot led the overall evaluation design, while COMM|VEDA conducted partner-facing data collection and analysis. This collaborative approach allowed the evaluation to draw on Pivot’s programmatic knowledge while incorporating an independent perspective in gathering and interpreting feedback from participating organizations and program partners.

The evaluation used mixed-methods to understand how organizations engaged with the program, what they learned, and how learning began to translate into practice within their organizations. In this report, we organize the findings with the Kirkpatrick Model, a widely used framework for understanding how learning and capacity-building programs produce change over time. The model considers multiple levels of outcomes, moving from participant reaction to organizational results. In the Kirkpatrick framework:



Evaluation Approach

Below we describe the four levels of the Kirkpatrick Model and our application to the program findings.



LEVEL 1
Reaction

APPLICATION TO *HARNESSING THE POWER OF DATA*

Examines how partners engaged with and experienced Phase 2 activities, including participation patterns and perceptions of the program’s relevance and usefulness.

GUIDING EVALUATION QUESTION

To what extent did partners engage in Phase 2 activities? What components were most useful?

LEVEL 2
Learning

Explores what partners learned through the program and where shifts in knowledge, skills, confidence, or organizational data capacity began to emerge.

What did partners learn and where did capacity shift?

LEVEL 3
Behavior

Examines how partners began applying what they learned within their organizations, including changes in data collection, analysis, reflection, and use.

Did partners apply what they learned within their organizations? How?

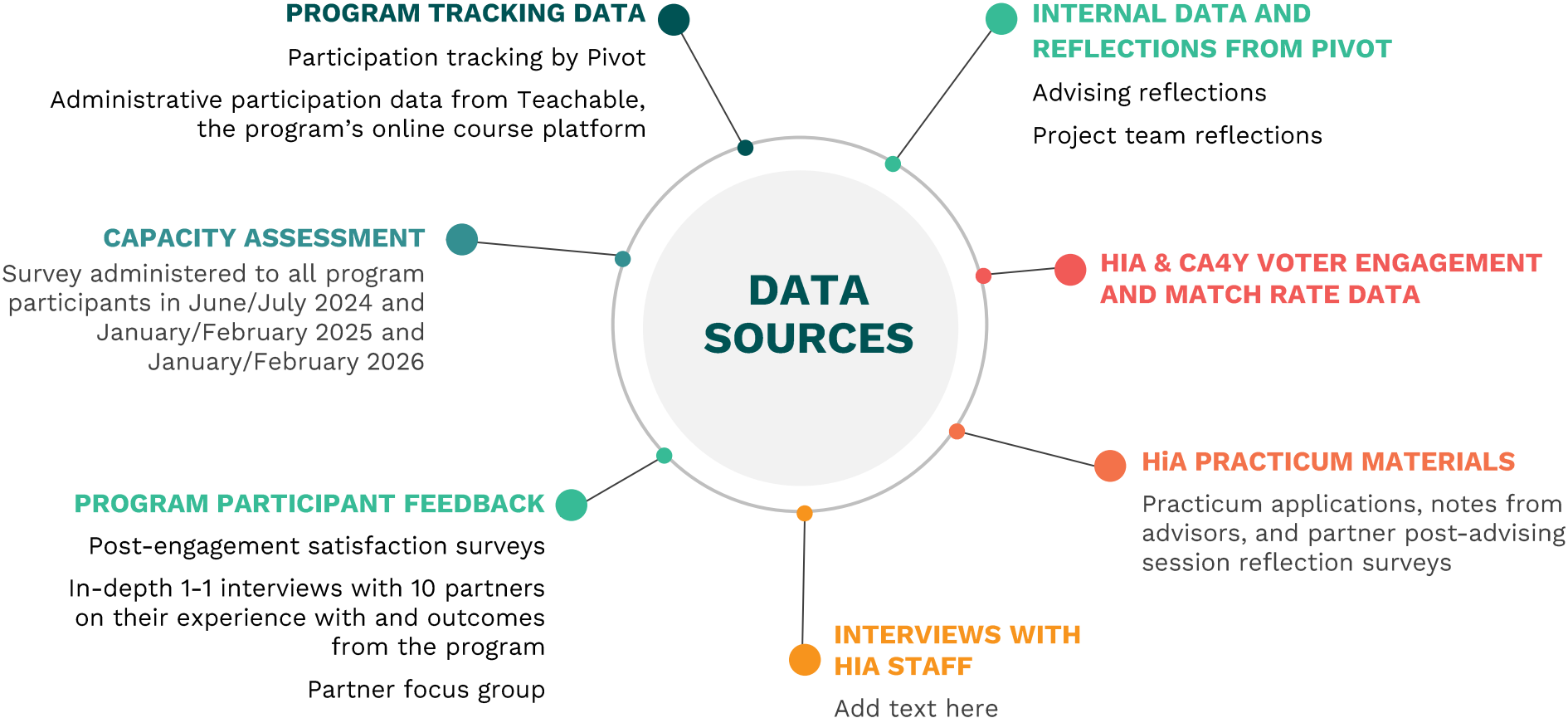
LEVEL 4
Results

Explores early outcomes or signals of change associated with program participation, including patterns in voter engagement and match data as well as broader organizational effects that may be emerging.

What early outcomes or signals of change are visible at this stage?

Data Sources

This report draws on a mix of qualitative and quantitative data from both primary and secondary sources. These include participation tracking data, post-engagement feedback surveys, a data capacity assessment, interviews and focus groups with partner organizations, perspectives from backbone organization staff and the Pivot team, practicum materials and reflections, and HiA voter engagement data, including match rate data. Interview, focus group, and survey data were collected and analyzed by COMM|VEDA Consulting.



HiA Program Structure

All organizations participating in Phase 2 of the Harnessing the Power of Data program were continuing partners from Phase 1, building on the foundation they had already established for using data more intentionally in their work. Phase 2 invited partners to deepen these practices through three modules focused on different stages of the data cycle: collecting data, interpreting data, and applying data in practice. All modules were optional, allowing organizations to participate in one, two, or all three modules depending on their interests and capacity.

Modules 1 and 2 each spanned eight weeks and included 2–3 short online course lessons, an interactive workshop (offered virtually and in person), a follow-up homework assignment, and a group coaching session where participants could ask questions and receive support. Module 1 focused on data collection for decision-making, and Module 2 focused on making meaning from data, including analyzing qualitative and quantitative data and identifying patterns. Organizations received a \$4,500 stipend for each of these modules they completed, contingent on meeting core participation expectations.*

Module 3 was a seven-week practicum available through an application process. To apply, organizations had to have participated in at least Module 1 or Module 2 and submit a brief proposal describing their project, the value of using the practicum to pursue it, and the outcomes they hoped to achieve. Selected organizations received advising support from a Pivot team member, shared their learning during a final practicum showcase, and received a separate stipend was provided to organizations selected for the practicum.



MODULE ONE: DATA COLLECTION FOR DECISION-MAKING

Building on their experience in Phase 1 of the program, this module moves participants from planning to implementation. They chose one outcome from their logic model, designed a data collection tool, and practiced collecting data using a method that fit their organization.

MODULE TWO: MAKING MEANING FROM DATA

This module focused on strengthening data analysis skills through techniques like coding qualitative responses, identifying patterns, and converting qualitative. Participants explored how to build codebooks with ChatGPT and create basic dashboards in Google Sheets to support decision-making and storytelling.

MODULE THREE: PUTTING DATA INTO PRACTICE

The final module is a practicum, designed for organizations ready to apply what they've learned in real-time, real-world scenarios. Selected organizations carried out a small data project—with light coaching support from Pivot. Projects focused on one or more parts of the evaluation cycle

To receive the \$4,500 stipend, organizations were expected to complete assigned course lessons, attend a workshop (virtual or in person), complete a homework assignment, and participate in group coaching. Flexibility was provided when needed, with organizations asked to notify program staff in advance if they anticipated missing an activity.

CA4Y Program Structure

The GenHTX data capacity building program was designed to support organizations at different starting points in their use of data. Partners participated as incubator, new, or continuing organizations, with each track providing a different entry point based on prior experience with data practices and the CA4Y network.

Incubator and new partners focused on building foundational skills, including clarifying outcomes, collecting meaningful data, and communicating their impact. Continuing partners built on prior participation in the program, deepening their ability to apply data practices to support learning, decision-making, and ongoing improvement.

Across all tracks, partners engaged in three modules focused on key stages of the data cycle: collecting data, using tools and processes to manage data, and communicating findings. Each module spanned eight weeks and included 2–3 short online course lessons, an interactive workshop (offered virtually and in person), a follow-up homework assignment, and group coaching to support application.

Incubator partners also received one-on-one coaching to provide more tailored support. Stipends were provided to participating organizations and were contingent on meeting core participation expectations.

MODULE ONE: FOUNDATIONS/DATA COLLECTION FOR DECISION-MAKING

This module focused on helping partners clarify what they want to measure and how. Incubator and new partners developed foundational skills such as defining outcomes, building logic models or theories of change, and identifying key metrics. Continuing partners built on prior work by designing or refining data collection tools and implementing them in their organizations.

MODULE TWO: CA4Y DATA PROCESSES AND TOOLS

This module provided hands-on support for using CA4Y tools to collect and manage voter engagement data for GenHTX. Partners were onboarded to the Organizer platform, reviewed reporting expectations, and strengthened their ability to use data systems to support their work.

MODULE THREE: SHARING AND COMMUNICATING DATA

This module focused on helping partners turn data into meaningful insights and stories. Partners learned how to analyze and synthesize data and communicate findings in ways that support engagement, fundraising, and advocacy.

Stipends varied by track: incubator partners received \$10,000 (reflecting additional one-on-one coaching), while new and continuing partners received \$7,300. All stipends were contingent on completing core program components, including online lessons, a workshop (virtual or in person), a homework assignment, and group coaching. Flexibility was provided when needed, with organizations asked to notify program staff in advance if they anticipated missing an activity.

Level One Reaction

In the Kirkpatrick framework, Reaction examines how participants engage with and respond to a learning program. For Phase 2 of Harnessing the Power of Data, examining reaction is particularly important because the program was intentionally designed with flexible, optional participation across modules. Engagement patterns provide insight into how organizations prioritize different learning opportunities, which program elements attracted the most participation, and whether the structure of the program aligned with partners' capacity and interests.

This section analyzes participation across the program's learning activities to understand how partners engaged with the program and which components were most utilized. It also examines partner feedback on the usefulness and relevance of the learning experience.



HiA Participation In Modules 1 And 2 (Level One: Reaction)

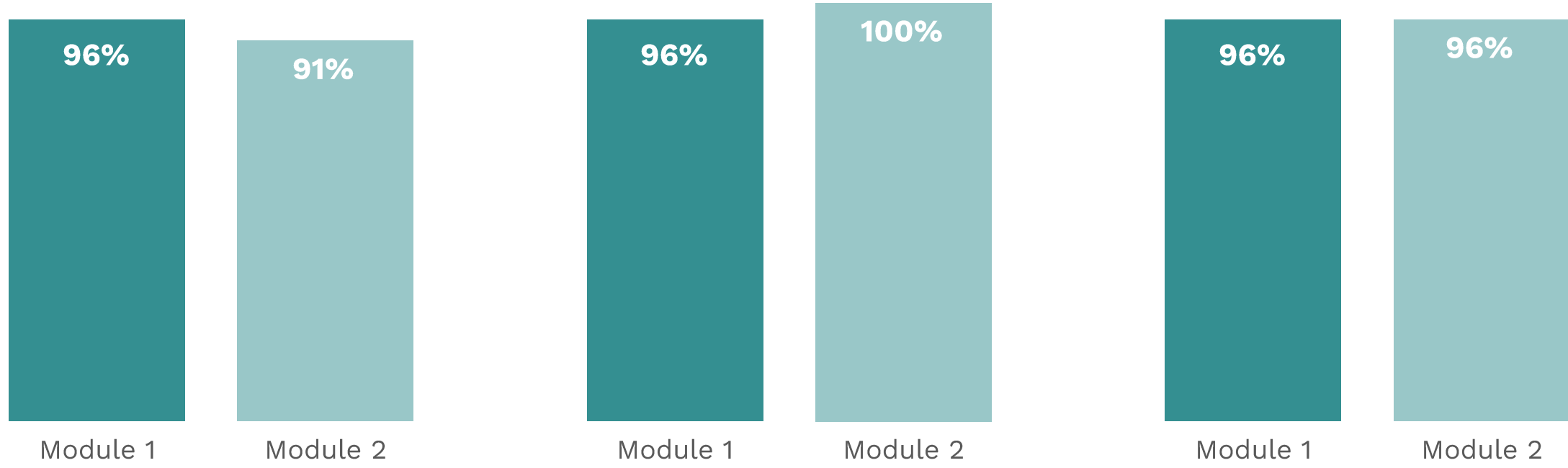


A total of 24 HiA partners participated in Modules 1 and 2 of the program, which included 2-3 online course lessons, an in-person or virtual workshop, and a virtual group coaching call. Participation was consistently high, with more than 93% of organizations engaging in each component across both modules.

Over 90% of organizations completed all **online course videos**

Over 95% of organizations attended the **workshops**

96% of organizations participated in **group coaching**



N=24

HiA Partner Satisfaction with Module Components (Level One: Reaction)



Each component played a different role in supporting partner engagement. This underscores the value of an intentional design that meets different learning styles and integrates complementary structure and content to support both learning and application.

ONLINE COURSES



Partners appreciated the **flexibility of online content**, which they were able to revisit on their own time.

“
To be able to go back and look at videos, that really added benefit.
”

WORKSHOPS



Partners appreciated **the in-person nature of the workshops**, which helped partners build relationships and trust—both with Pivot and their peers—and provided a space where partners could more fully engage with the program content.

GROUP COACHING & ADVISING




Partners appreciated the **time they were able to spend** with their advisors and peers

“
The group coaching was really great, especially being able to hear other people's questions because there's questions that people have that you wouldn't have even thought of.
”

HiA Module 3: Practicum Participation (Level One: Reaction)



HiA’s practicum served as a bridge between learning and application. It gave partners structured time and support to apply data and evaluation practices to real work inside their organizations. Partners could use the practicum to advance a specific project in one or more of the following areas: Planning for Data Collection, Collecting Data, Analyzing Data, Data Storytelling and Reporting, Data for Organizational Learning and Improvement.

 **63%** (15) of HiA organizations that participated in modules one and two **applied** for and were **accepted** into **module three**, the practicum.

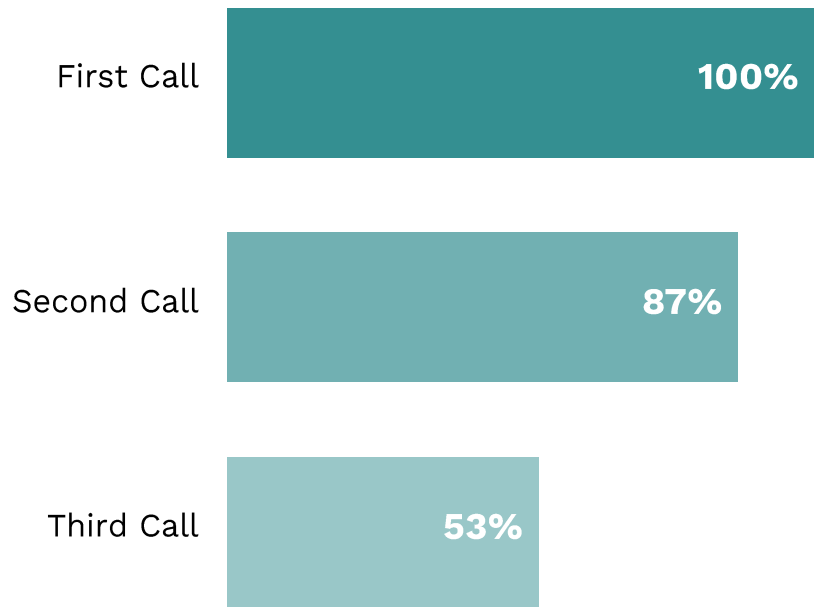
FOCUS AREA	# ORGS (OUT OF 15)	EXAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTION QUOTES FROM PARTNERS
PLANNING FOR DATA COLLECTION	6	“We’re going to build an annual data collection plan so we can actually see the outcomes from our youth leadership training program. Part of this means creating tools to survey participants about their demographics, learning, and engagement, and making sure the data we collect is consistent every year. That way, we can really measure how we’re moving toward our goals.”
COLLECTING DATA	8	“We will design a short, repeatable survey/interview tool to use during the 1:1 meetings we already hold with community members. The tool will capture how audiences describe belonging, cultural exchange, and inspiration. During the practicum, we will pilot the tool and summarize findings in an [...] Impact Data Brief.”
ANALYZING DATA	11	“We have access to multiple data streams from law enforcement agencies and schools... Through this project, we hope to create a framework to organize and analyze the data and develop a Theory of Change for additional school districts and law enforcement agencies to understand the wider implications of our program upon students suffering from trauma-related symptoms.”
DATA STORYTELLING & REPORTING	9	“We propose to create a newsletter to be distributed monthly for the purposes of communicating the impact of our programs on the community we serve, advertise opportunities and engage the community we serve as well as create an annual impact report to be distributed at the end of every fiscal year in December for the purpose of communicating our outcomes, success, challenges and gaps.”
DATA FOR ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT	12	“We will utilize the collected data from our citizenship class surveys to make a shareable plan of action for the following semester in January 2026. Our goal is to utilize the feedback of student readiness, comfortability, and next steps to better prepare our students and teachers alike. Our entire staff will benefit from an understanding of what is working and/or not working in the classes.”

HiA Practicum Advisors (Level One: Reaction)



The practicum allowed HiA partners to advance their data work with tailored guidance. Partners who participated in the practicum were offered three check-ins with an Evaluation Advisor from the Pivot team.

Attendance at Evaluation Advisor check-in calls **decreased overtime.**

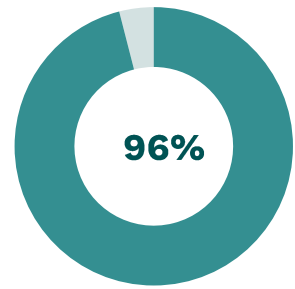


This is likely due to program timing conflicting with the election cycle and holiday season.



100% (15/15) of organizations **presented a deliverable** at the culminating partner showcase.

We asked partners to complete a reflection survey after each advisor session.



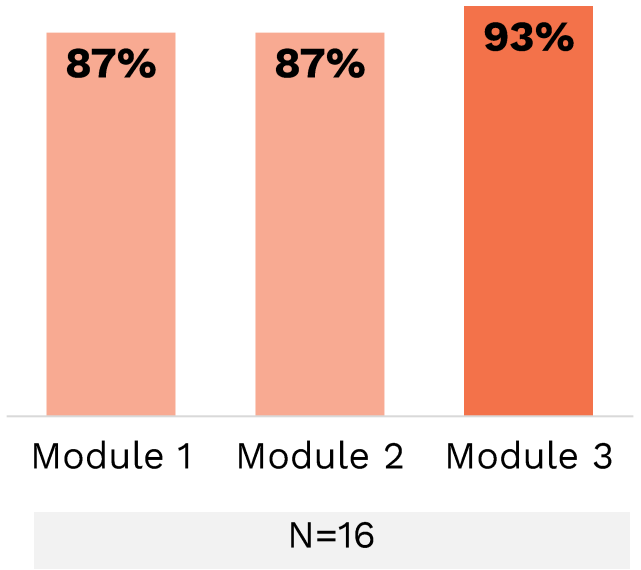
96% of the time, partners identified **feedback from their Advisor** as one of the **most helpful program resources.**

CA4Y Participation In Modules 1, 2, & 3 (Level One: Reaction)

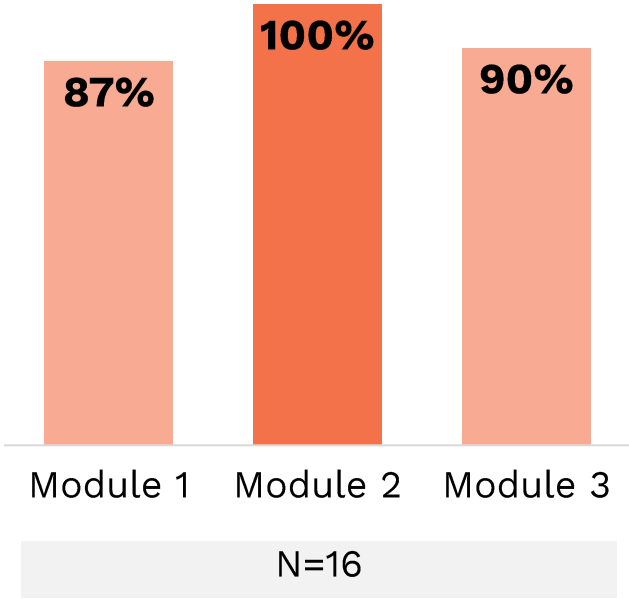


Participation remained high across all three components. Workshops showed the strongest engagement, group coaching also stayed high across modules, and online course completion increased by Module 3. Overall, these patterns suggest that partners stayed engaged across the full program, with especially strong participation in the more interactive components.

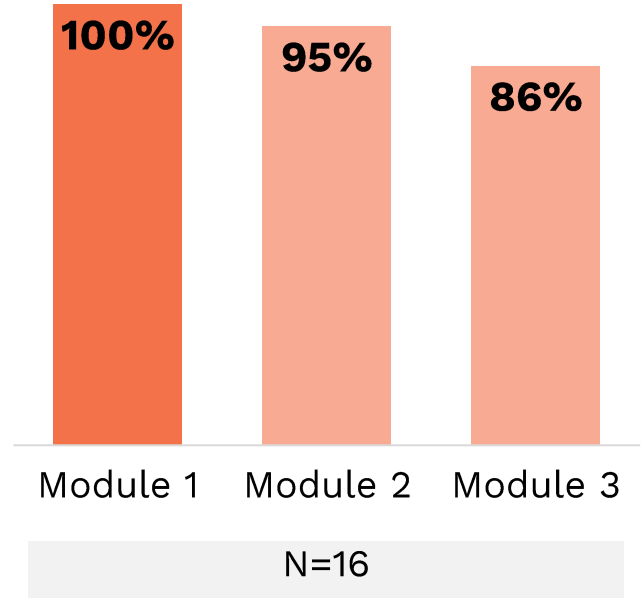
Over **89%** of organizations completed all **online course videos**.



Over **92%** of organizations attended the **workshops**.



96% of organizations participated in **group coaching**.

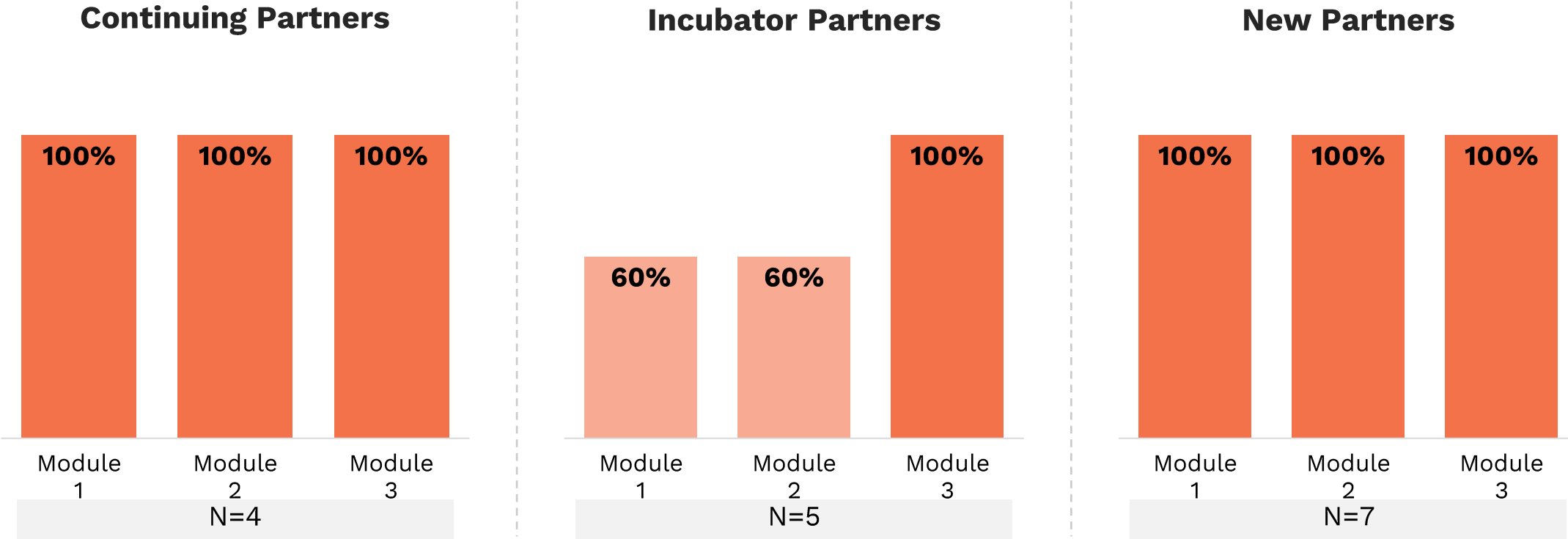


CA4Y Online Course Participation by Track (Level One: Reaction)



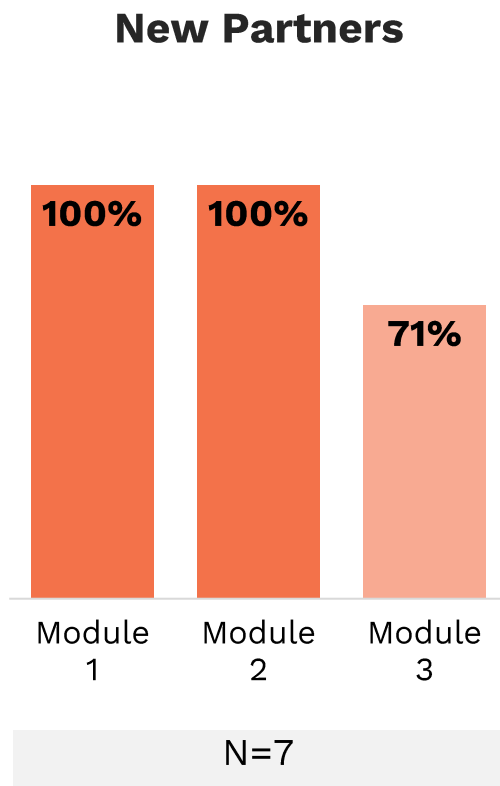
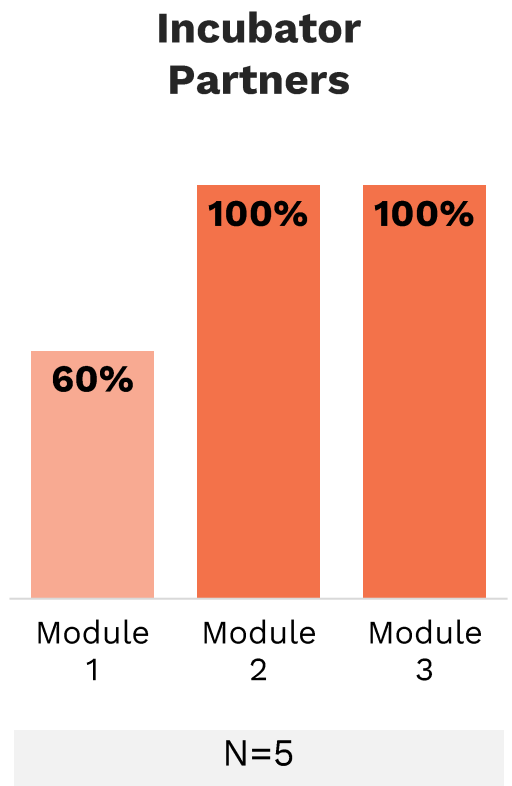
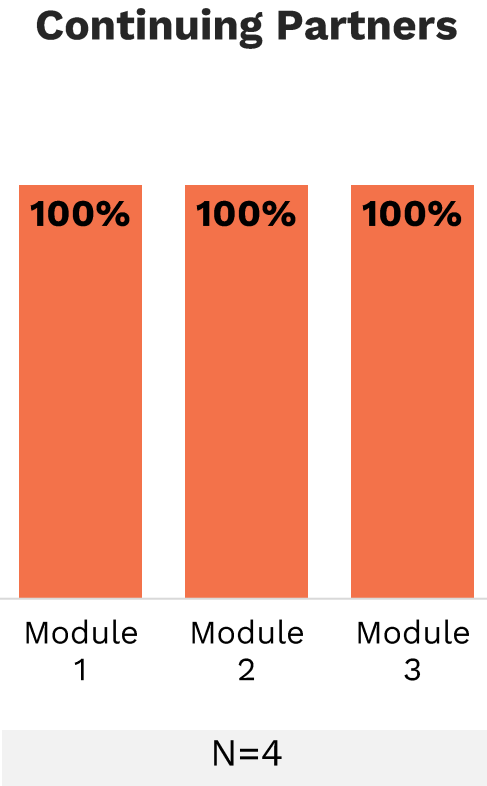
Online course participation was very high across partner tracks, with 100% completion in most cases. The main exception was incubator partners in Modules 1 and 2. Overall, this represents a clear increase from last year and likely reflects the way online lessons were more intentionally built into each module. Partners were assigned a small number of required videos, given clear deadlines, and received reminder emails when content had not yet been completed.

The lower participation among incubator partners likely reflects a different starting point. These partners were newer to the program and still getting oriented to the content and expectations. Because this group was also small, a few personal or organizational challenges had a bigger effect on the overall percentage.



CA4Y Workshop Attendance by Track (Level One: Reaction)

Workshop attendance remained consistently high across partner tracks, with continuing partners showing perfect participation across all modules. This is not surprising, as these partners were already familiar with program engagement structures from prior participation. The most notable dip occurred among incubator partners in Module 1, likely reflecting their entry into the program and, simultaneously, into the CA4Y network while navigating existing staffing and capacity constraints. Attendance increased in later modules, suggesting growing familiarity and engagement over time.



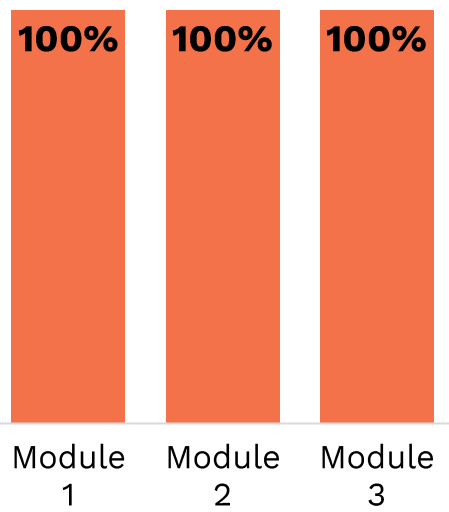
“
There wasn't a single workshop that I attended or went through that I didn't come away learning something different. Even when I was sitting at my computer going through the learning module that I was like, 'Oh, that is so cool. I can use this in this way.'
”
-CA4Y Partner

CA4Y Coaching by Track (Level One: Reaction)

Coaching participation was strongest among continuing and incubator partners. Continuing partners maintained 100% participation in group coaching across all three modules. Incubator partners also maintained 100% participation in group coaching. In addition, incubator partners were the only group offered one-on-one coaching, and participation in those sessions increased from 80% in Modules 1 and 2 to 100% in Module 3. New partners began with 100% participation in group coaching, followed by lower participation in later modules. Overall, these patterns suggest that coaching remained a strong point of engagement, with the most variation among new partners as the program progressed.

Continuing Partners

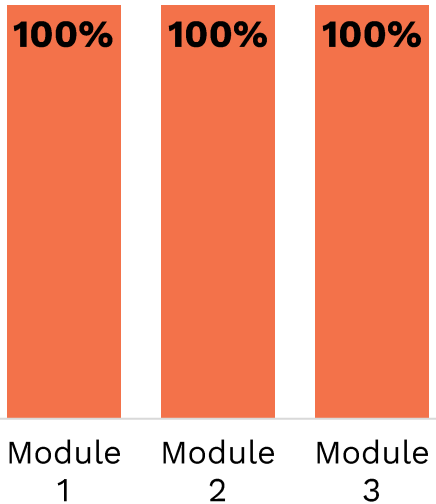
GROUP COACHING



N=4

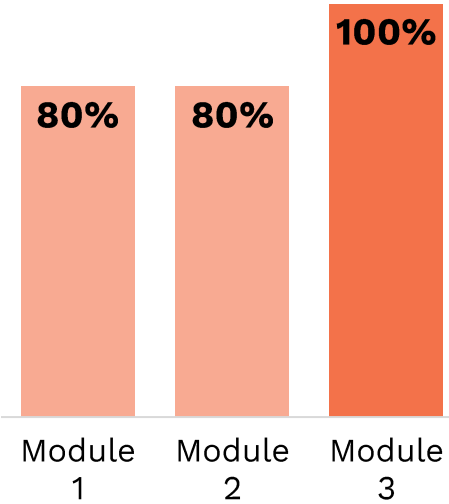
Incubator Partners

GROUP COACHING



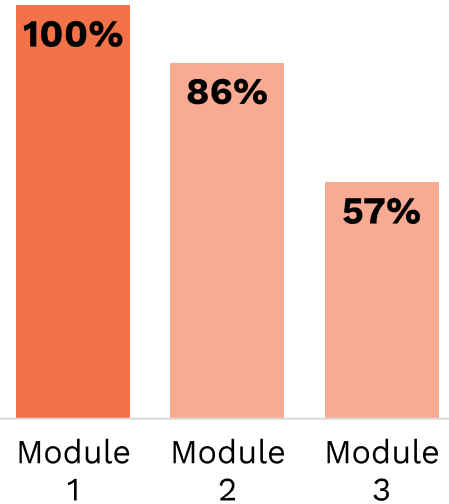
N=5

1:1 COACHING



New Partners

GROUP COACHING



N=7

Rather than serving redundant roles, each component contributed in different ways to partner engagement. This underscores the value of an intentional design that meets different learning styles and integrates complementary structure and content to support both learning and application.

ONLINE COURSES

Partners valued the online course for its flexibility to learn at their own pace, but some struggled to navigate the platform and track their progress.

WORKSHOPS

For many partners, workshops demystified core evaluation concepts like theories of change and logic models, transforming them into practical tools that directly informed their work. Especially for new partners, workshops helped them to progress from “What is this?” to an understanding of how these frameworks can be applied in their work.

GROUP COACHING

Partners appreciated group coaching for the opportunities to share ideas with their peers, check homework, and learn from others’ work.

“ The group coaching was really great, especially being able to hear other people's questions because there's questions that people have that you wouldn't have even thought of...It just keeps you from forgetting. ”

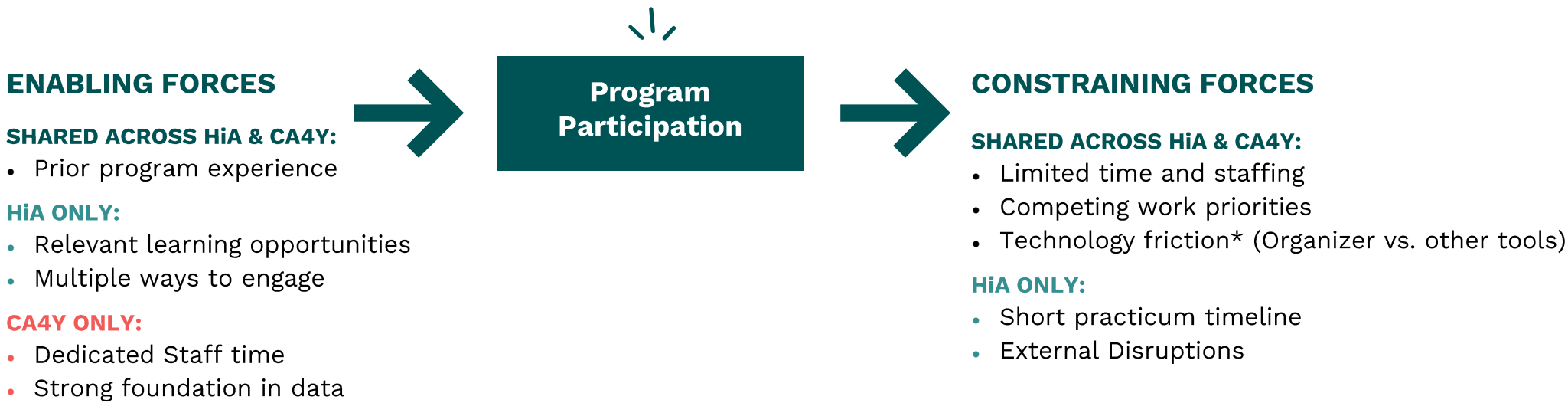
Forces Shaping Partner Participation (Level One: Reaction)

HiA: Despite high participation, HiA partners still faced barriers to engagement.

In interviews, nearly all HiA partners described time and capacity challenges that affected their participation, including limited staff, limited time, and demanding programmatic workloads. These challenges were often compounded by external pressures during the program period, such as lost grant funding, organizational layoffs, and increased demands on time and energy related to shifts in the public funding landscape. Practicum partners, in particular, expressed a desire for a longer practicum period to fully complete and apply the work.

CA4Y: Partner participation in CA4Y was shaped by a combination of prior exposure, organizational capacity, and technology access.

Continuing partners entered the program with a stronger foundation in data and evaluation, which made it easier for them to navigate expectations. In contrast, newer partners were learning core concepts while also engaging in program activities, creating a steeper entry point. At the same time, many organizations, especially those that were volunteer- or youth-led, faced ongoing time constraints and competing priorities that made participation harder. Some partners also experienced friction navigating unfamiliar tools or moving between platforms used in the program and within their organizations.



Level Two Learning

In the Kirkpatrick framework, Learning examines the extent to which participants acquire new knowledge, skills, or ways of thinking as a result of participating in a program.

For Phase 2 of Harnessing the Power of Data, this section explores how partners' understanding of data practices evolved through the program. In particular, it examines whether the learning modules strengthened partners' ability to collect meaningful data, interpret qualitative and quantitative information, and connect data insights to organizational decision-making. Because the program intentionally expanded beyond voter engagement to focus on broader organizational data practices, the analysis also considers whether partners reported greater confidence applying data across their work.



Capacity Assessment (Level Two: Learning)

Our Capacity Assessment provides an important lens into partners' learning over the course of the program, capturing shifts in their knowledge, skills, and confidence related to data and evaluation. A subset of 18 organizations completed the assessment at all three time points, allowing for a more consistent view of change over time. The assessment highlights where partners are building foundational capabilities and where additional support may be needed, offering insight into both individual growth and emerging organizational readiness to use data more effectively.



TIME POINT 1

Midpoint
(June-August 2024)



TIME POINT 2

2025 End-of-Program
(February 2025)



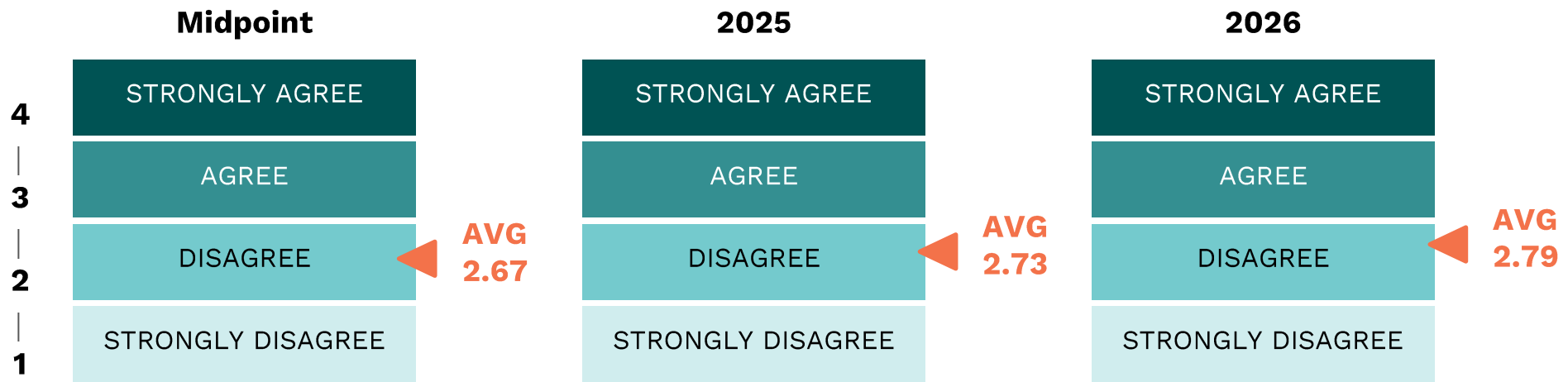
TIME POINT 3

2026 End-of-Program
(January-February 2026)

Data Skills (Level Two: Learning)

One area that remained more mixed was staff and volunteer data skills. Between 2025 and 2026, partners reported some improvement in whether staff and volunteers had the skills needed to use technology to collect, manage, and analyze voter engagement data. Even so, this was still identified as an area that was emerging rather than one of the clearest strengths. This suggests that while the program helped build momentum, growth in data skills was slower and likely depended on factors beyond training alone, including staff capacity, role clarity, and how much time organizations had to practice and apply what they were learning in real time.

Partners reported **modest improvement in staff and volunteer skills** to use technology for data collection, management, and analysis from Midpoint to 2026.

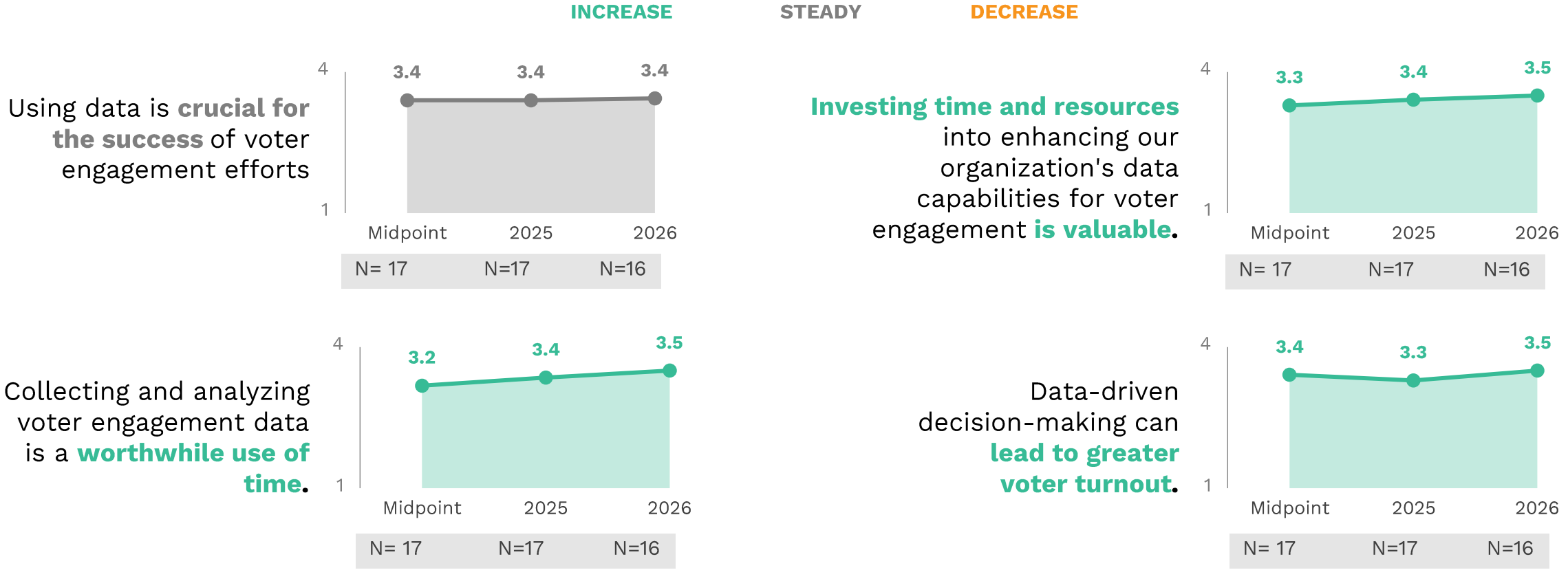


Perceptions of Value of Data (Level Two: Learning)

Partners reported consistently high levels of agreement about the value of data, with slight upward movement over time. While baseline beliefs were already strong, increases in areas such as the perceived usefulness of data and its connection to voter turnout suggest that partners are valuing data conceptually, while also beginning to see its practical relevance more clearly.

Perceptions of data's value increased over time in all areas except one, which remained steady.

Partners were asked to rate each statement based on their organization's level of belief, where 1 = No one at my organization believes this and 4 = All people at my organization believe this.



Partner Learning Across The Evaluation Continuum (Level Two: Learning)

Partner learning progressed over time, moving from foundational skill-building to analysis and, ultimately, application in practice. In interviews with partners, they often indicated that the data skills they learned through the program were helping them to advance their organizational missions more effectively.

DATA COLLECTION AND INSTRUMENT DESIGN

Partners cited survey design as an important skill they gained from the program, sharing examples of how they applied those skills in ways that enabled them to collect better data on their organization’s work. One partner said the program helped their organization start collecting quantitative data, which they had struggled with in the past.

“ I was able to get feedback on our actual questionnaire that we were going to ask for our relational meetings [campaign] ... and create a better questionnaire. ”

MAKING SENSE OF DATA

Partners strengthened their ability to analyze and interpret data while expanding their understanding of what counts as meaningful data. They gained practical skills using tools that often integrated into their day-to-day work, while also placing greater value on both quantitative and qualitative insights and how to communicate them. At the same time, some CA4Y partners struggled to learn the Organizer platform within the program timeframe—especially those also engaged with HiA and navigating multiple systems.

APPLYING DATA PRACTICES

Partners grew by applying data to clarify program goals, identify patterns, and determine next steps for their outreach and programming. They also improved in synthesizing and visually communicating findings. Practicum advisors observed increased confidence across the full evaluative process—from building a logic models to data analysis and reporting.

“ Learning to use the spreadsheets..., create pivot tables, and...analyze data is very helpful, especially because we create a lot of surveys...for our program. ”

How Starting Points and Capacity Shaped Learning (Level Two: Learning)

Partner learning trajectories varied based on prior experience with the Harnessing the Power of Data program and the number of staff engaged in the work. Partners with prior program experience and multiple staff involved were better positioned to collaborate internally, work through ideas, and apply data skills more independently. In contrast, partners with less prior experience or a single staff member leading the work relied more heavily on interactions with Pivot team members as a working space. For these partners, group coaching offered valuable peer insights and examples. The practicum’s advisory approach, however, required adaptation and functioned more as one-on-one coaching with active, in-the-moment support to move work forward.

	Higher Staffing Capacity	Lower Staffing Capacity
Higher Starting Knowledge	Deepen and apply skills more independently	Reinforce and apply skills with deeper Pivot support
Lower Starting Knowledge	Accelerated learning, benefitting from internal collaboration	Slower progression, higher Pivot coaching needs



“When [Pivot] came into the picture, I didn’t even know what they were talking about when they were saying data. People were saying, ‘Data, data, data, data’ ... When they started breaking down what data is and the importance of data, I started realizing the second year [that] data is something that I need to capture.”

“This is our second year with Pivot, and the first year with Pivot was amazing...For a lot of the returning orgs, it wasn't that difficult to navigate the second year because we had a strong foundation the first year.”

“Year one [of the program, if] I needed something, [Pivot] did it for me. Then year two, they were like, ‘Well, why don't you learn a little bit?’...All of us now are at the maturity of now being able to understand ... data collection and how to use it”

Level 3 Behavior

In the Kirkpatrick framework, Behavior examines whether participants apply what they learned once the learning experience concludes. At this level, the focus shifts from knowledge acquisition to changes in practices, processes, or decision-making within participants' organizations.

For Phase 2 of Harnessing the Power of Data, this section examines how partners began integrating program concepts into their organizational work. The analysis explores whether and how organizations applied new approaches to data collection, analysis, reflection, or internal decision-making. Particular attention is given to examples where partners experimented with new tools, incorporated data into strategy discussions, or used insights to adjust programs or outreach efforts.

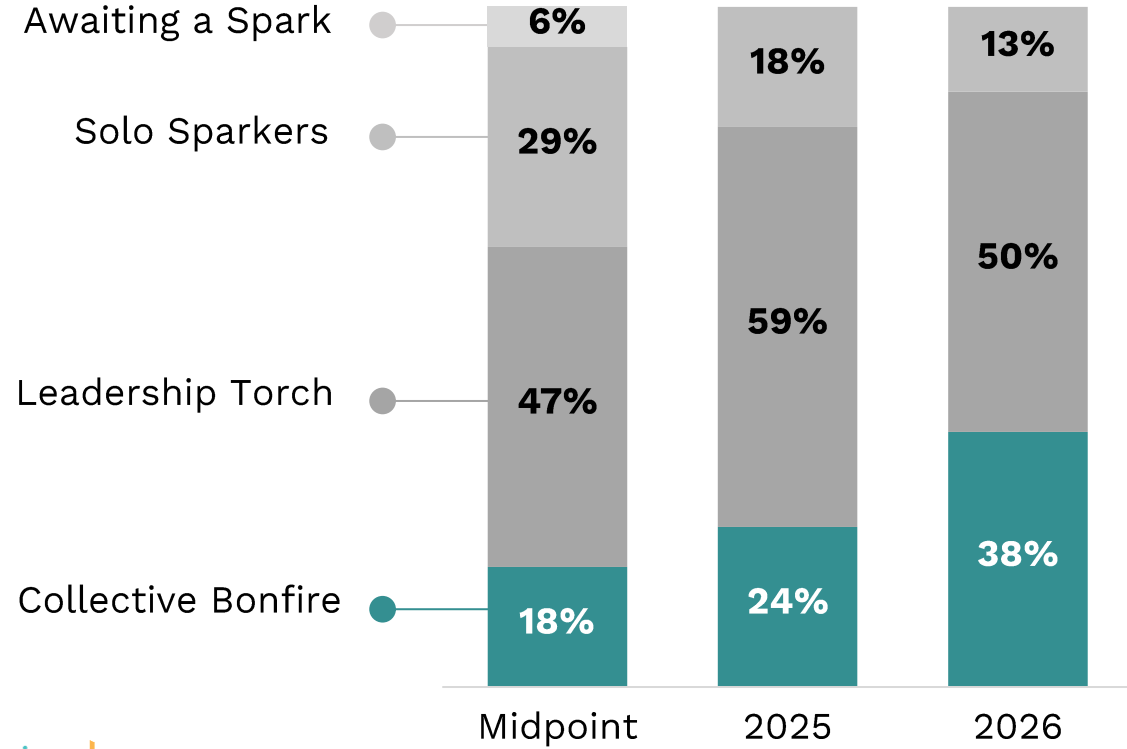
Because organizational change takes time, the findings in this section focus on early applications of learning rather than long-term institutionalization of new practices.



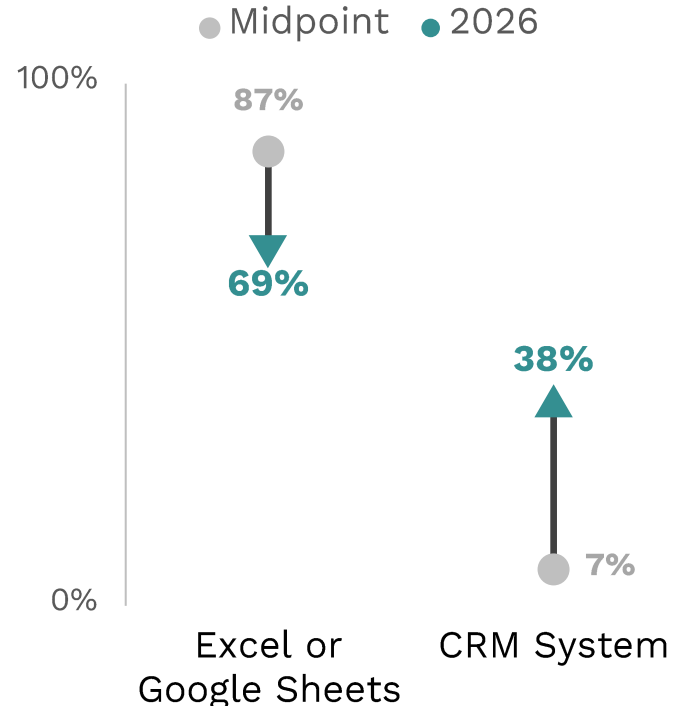
Data Culture (Level Three: Behavior)

Data culture showed one of the clearest shifts over time. From 2024 to 2026, the share of partners describing their organization’s data culture as a “collective bonfire” increased by 20 percentage points. Over the same period, partners also showed a notable shift in the tools they were using to manage data: use of Excel or Google Sheets declined from 87% to 69%, while use of a CRM system increased from 7% to 38%. Taken together, these changes suggest that, over time, more organizations were moving toward shared ownership of data and toward systems that better support ongoing data use.

From 2024 to 2026, the share of partners describing their data culture as a **“collective bonfire” increased by 20 percentage points.**



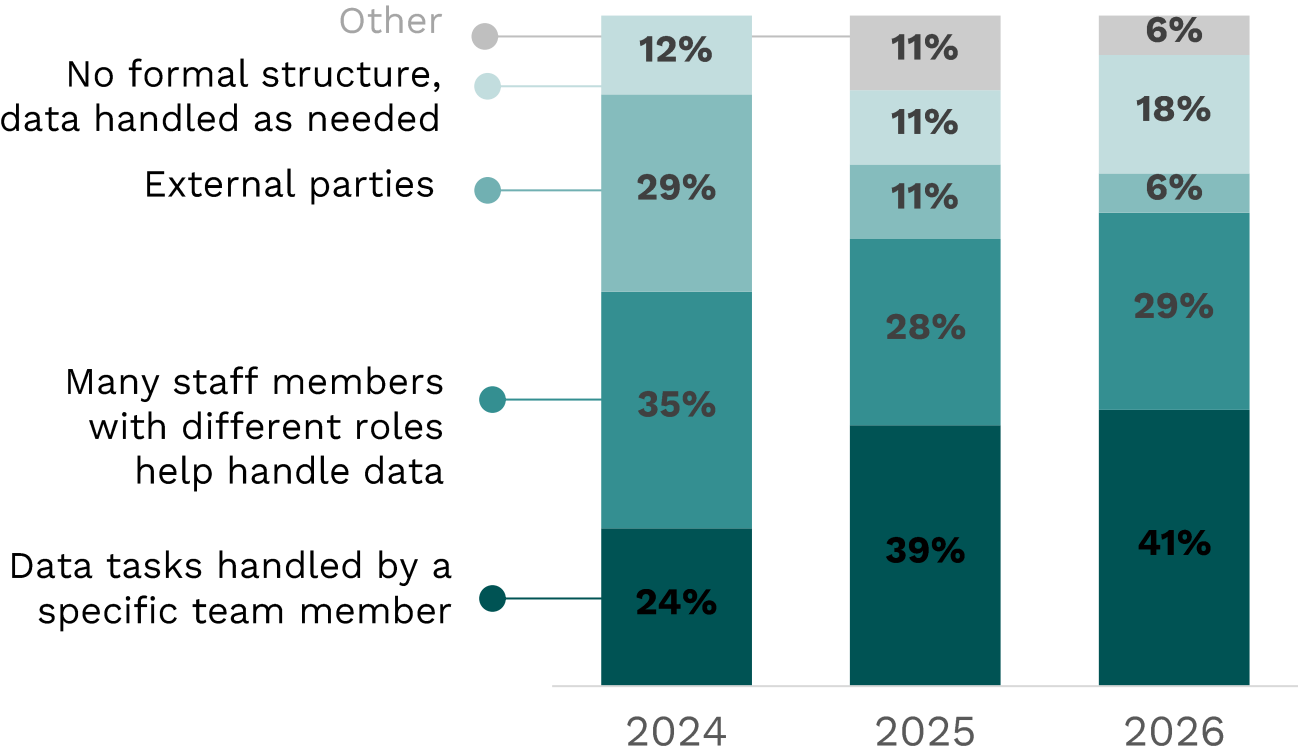
From 2024 to 2026, partners became **less reliant on Excel or Google Sheets** and more likely to use a CRM system.



Data Management (Level Three: Behavior)

Responsibility for data work became more concentrated over time. From 2024 to 2026, the share of partners reporting that data tasks were handled by a specific team member increased by 17 percentage points. During the same period, the share saying that many staff members with different roles handled data decreased by 6 percentage points, and reliance on external parties also declined. Together, these patterns suggest that more organizations were bringing data work in house and assigning clearer internal ownership for it.

From 2024 to 2026, partners became more likely to assign data work to a **specific team member** and less likely to rely on external parties.



Early Integration into Organizational Routines (Level Three: Behavior)

Partner reflections suggest that both HiA and CA4Y organizations were beginning to apply program learning in concrete ways within their day-to-day work. These early examples were not yet fully embedded across organizations, but they point to meaningful movement from learning into practice. Across both groups, the strongest signs of early integration appeared in three areas: data collection practices, internal reflection and learning conversations, and reporting or storytelling shifts. At the same time, the form this took varied somewhat between HiA and CA4Y.



Data Collection Practices



Internal Reflections & Learning Conversations



Reporting or Data Storytelling



Data Collection Practices

Several partners across both HiA and CA4Y described changes in how their organizations collect data, suggesting that program participation had already begun to influence routine practices. In both groups, partners shared examples of moving toward more intentional and structured approaches to gathering information.

Among **HiA partners**, this sometimes meant creating tools or processes that had not previously existed. For example, one partner shared that the program supported them in creating and implementing their organization’s first community survey. Another explained that the practicum helped position their team to build surveys for future events during the upcoming election season. These examples suggest that HiA partners were moving beyond simply understanding the importance of data collection and were beginning to operationalize that learning through new practices and tools.

CA4Y partners described a similar kind of movement. One partner shared that their organization had started collecting pre- and post-surveys for events as a result of one of the program modules. Another said the program helped them stay more organized with the data they were already collecting. Together, these examples suggest that CA4Y partners were also beginning to apply program learning in practical ways by strengthening how data was gathered and used within ongoing organizational work.

Early Integration into Organizational Routines (Level Three: Behavior)



Internal Reflections & Learning Conversations

Partners across both HiA and CA4Y also described early shifts in how data was being used to support internal reflection, learning, and coordination. While these examples were still emerging, they suggest that data was beginning to prompt new kinds of conversations within organizations about impact, implementation, and shared responsibility.

Among **HiA partners**, some of the clearest examples involved using data to think more critically about the organization's work and its effects. One practicum partner shared that the program helped both them and their organization reflect more intentionally on the impact of their work through the lens of the data they were collecting. This suggests that data was beginning to support not only reporting, but also internal sense-making and reflection.

CA4Y partners described this somewhat differently, but the underlying shift was similar. Some partners made a deliberate effort to distribute participation across team members so that more than one person would be exposed to the program content. This points to an early effort to build broader internal awareness of data and evaluation practices rather than keeping the learning with a single individual. At the same time, one partner noted that this kind of knowledge transfer became more difficult in organizations with high volunteer turnover, where the people attending program sessions were not always the ones responsible for carrying the work forward.

“

[The program] helped [me] be more laser focused on our mission and goals ... and then being able to really look at the data that we have and use it as our next steps, like what we should do, what we should take away.

”

Early Integration into Organizational Routines (Level Three: Behavior)



Reporting or Data Storytelling

Changes in reporting and storytelling practices were another clear area of early application across both HiA and CA4Y. In both groups, partners described using what they learned to communicate their work more clearly to people outside their organizations. These examples suggest that data was beginning to support not only internal tracking, but also stronger external communication.

Among **HiA partners**, these shifts were most often described by practicum participants, who used the practicum to create external-facing materials such as monthly newsletters, impact reports, funder-facing theories of change, and other marketing or communications tools. These products suggest that some HiA organizations were beginning to translate raw information into more structured and audience-aware forms of reporting and storytelling.

CA4Y partners described a similar kind of shift. Partners shared that they were using what they learned about storytelling to create more effective impact reports and data summaries for external audiences. One continuing partner noted that their organization's data summaries were recognized as useful by outside groups and were brought into meetings with external partners and stakeholders. Another shared that using charts instead of long paragraphs helped make information shorter, clearer, and easier to share. These examples suggest that CA4Y partners were also beginning to use data in more strategic ways to communicate their work and make it more visible to others.

“

To be able to condense all of that information and to let the community and our neighbors know what we do is important. That's something that we hadn't really focused on. You kind of take for granted because you're in it and you're on the ground and you know you're doing the work, but you're not making sure that people see that you're doing the work.

”

Barriers to Deeper Application (Level Three: Behavior)

Although partners across both HiA and CA4Y described meaningful early examples of applying what they learned, they also pointed to several barriers that limited deeper or more sustained integration. Across both groups, the most consistent challenges related to time, staffing, and the realities of carrying data work alongside other responsibilities. Together, these findings point to the importance of organizational capacity and continuity in shaping how far learning could be carried into practice.

Among **HiA partners**, **staff capacity and turnover** emerged as persistent constraints. Many partners were managing data and evaluation responsibilities on top of already full roles, which made it difficult to consistently apply new practices. In some cases, the individuals doing the practicum work were interns or temporary staff, which limited how fully the learning could be embedded within the broader organization. **Program timing** also shaped the extent to which partners could put learning into practice. For some organizations, the overlap between the program and election season made it difficult to participate fully in the practicum or devote sufficient time to application. Even among those who did participate, several felt the practicum timeline was too short for the scope of work they hoped to accomplish and expressed a desire for more time to refine their deliverables and go deeper in the work.

Among **CA4Y partners** time and staffing structure were the most significant barriers to deeper application. **Time and capacity** constraints were especially pronounced for organizations that were volunteer-led or youth-led, where partners were trying to balance training participation with broader outreach and community engagement responsibilities. **Staffing structure** also made knowledge transfer more difficult in some cases. One partner noted that the people who attended program sessions were not always the same people responsible for carrying the work forward afterward, especially when youth team members were in school during the day or when organizations experienced high turnover. These conditions made it harder to sustain implementation and spread learning across the organization, even when partners found the content valuable and relevant.

“
Because it wasn't enough time... if we had more time, [our practicum deliverables] could have been something that was more detailed.
”

“
Because we're youth-led, I ended up going to the sessions and the coaching sessions since [they're] during the school day, but the team members that we want to be executing the work are the ones at school.
”

HiA PRACTICUM SPOTLIGHT

Overview and Purpose

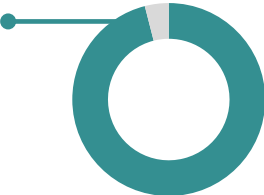
The practicum was HiA’s third and final module, designed to help partners apply what they had learned through a real organizational project. After completing one or both earlier modules, partners could apply to participate in this more intensive phase. Each selected partner worked on a concrete deliverable with advising support from Pivot. Below we share the goals of the practicum:

A bridge between learning and application: The practicum was designed to help HiA partners move from learning about data and evaluation to applying those ideas through a real organizational project. As the most applied component of the program, it created space for partners to work on a concrete deliverable tied to their own goals, with support from a Pivot advisor along the way. This mattered because it gave partners a chance to test what they had learned in practice rather than stopping at discussion or training alone.

Building on earlier program learning: The practicum took place after partners had already engaged in earlier phases of the program, including workshops, coaching, and online learning. This sequencing was intentional. By the time partners entered the practicum, they had already built a foundation in core concepts and were better positioned to use that learning in a more focused way. The practicum then served as a bridge between skill-building and organizational use.

Rooted in real organizational needs: Partners entered the practicum with projects tied to actual needs inside their organizations. Rather than asking them to complete a hypothetical exercise, the practicum asked them to create something useful. For some, that meant building a tool or process for internal use. For others, it meant analyzing data they had already collected or creating a product they could share externally.

By the end of the practicum, **96%** of partners reported feeling confident applying what they learned from the full *Harnessing the Power of Data* program..



HIA PRACTICUM SPOTLIGHT

Overview and Purpose

STEP 1

Applications, feedback and project planning: The practicum began with an application process in which partners described the project they wanted to pursue and why it mattered to their organization. Pivot hosted an initial webinar to introduce the opportunity and offer guidance on the application process. In total, 15 partners applied, and all 15 were accepted. After reviewing applications, advisors shared feedback to help partners refine project scope and clarify the purpose of the final deliverable. Pivot then hosted a second webinar to launch the practicum process. During that session, partners were introduced to the goal plan, a practical work plan for the weeks ahead. Pivot shared a template, walked through an example, and gave partners time in small groups with their advisors to ask questions and prepare for the next step.

STEP 2

Applied project work: The applied work part of the practicum unfolded over a four-week period and included three one-on-one advising check-ins with a Pivot advisor. These sessions gave partners a chance to ask questions, get feedback, and work through challenges as they developed their deliverables. The advising structure created a balance between accountability and flexibility. Partners had enough support to keep moving, while still retaining ownership over the project and final product.

STEP 3

Peer connection during the practicum: Midway through the practicum, Pivot hosted a peer networking lunch where partners could connect, share progress, and learn from one another. This created an additional touchpoint during the advising period and gave partners a chance to reflect on their work before finalizing deliverables.

STEP 4

Final deliverables and partner sharing: At the end of the practicum, partners submitted a final deliverable connected to their project goals. These products varied widely, but each reflected an effort to apply data and evaluation learning in a concrete way. All 15 practicum participants then shared their work at the Partner Showcase, creating a public moment for reflection, celebration, and peer learning.

STEP 5

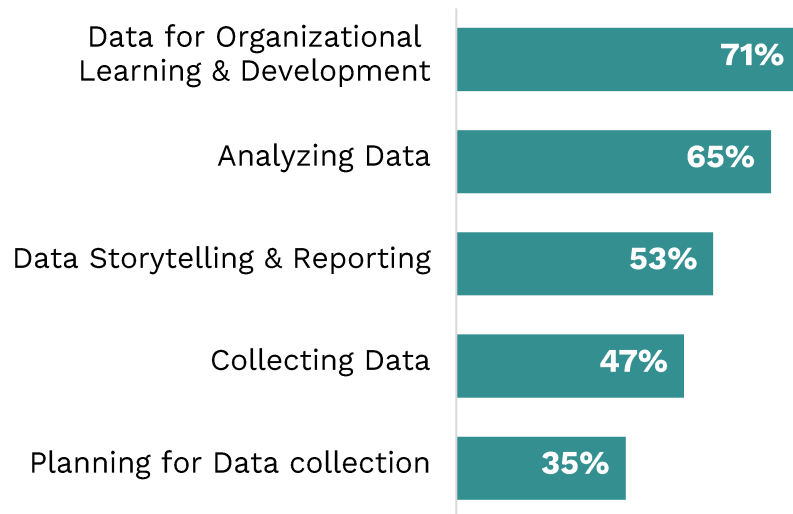
Reflection after the practicum: After the showcase, partners were invited to complete a post-practicum reflection survey. Some also participated in endpoint interviews or focus groups. Together, these reflections offered insight into what partners were able to produce, what they learned through the process, and what made deeper application more or less possible within the practicum period.

HiA PRACTICUM SPOTLIGHT

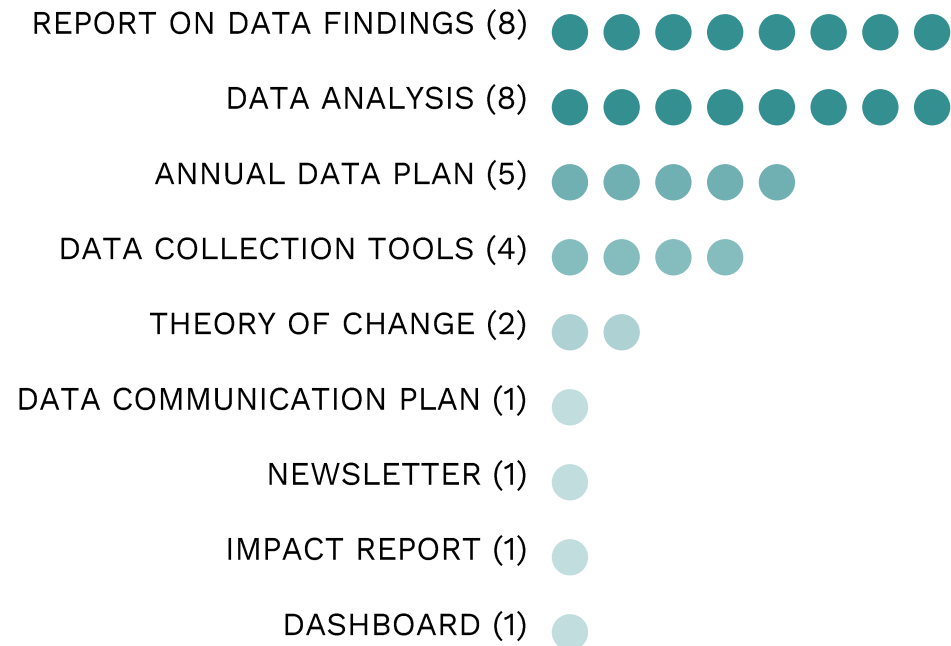
Overview and Purpose

As part of the practicum application, HiA partners were asked to describe the project they wanted to pursue and the deliverable they hoped to develop. Their responses show that partners entered the practicum with concrete, organization-specific goals. While projects varied in scope, most were designed to strengthen how organizations collect data, make meaning from it, and use it to guide communication or improvement.

Partners most often **proposed projects focused on organizational learning and improvement**, followed by data analysis and data storytelling.



Partners proposed **practical deliverables** that could be used within their organizations right away.



What the Practicum Helped Partners Do

The practicum gave partners a structured opportunity to apply data and evaluation concepts through a real organizational project. Across partner reflections and advisor observations, its value was most visible when learning became concrete. In many cases, that meant producing a deliverable partners could use, share, or build on after the practicum ended.

Applying the Full Evaluation Cycle

One of the clearest benefits of the practicum was that it helped partners work through a fuller evaluation process from start to finish. Partners used the practicum to apply multiple parts of the evaluation cycle, from clarifying purpose and selecting methods to analyzing findings and shaping a final product.

Building Confidence Through Doing

The practicum also helped partners create products they felt proud to share. As one advisor reflected, the showcase highlighted that partners were presenting deliverables they had developed themselves and could continue using beyond the practicum. The practicum did not just support completion of a task. It helped partners build confidence in their ability to develop something concrete and useful.

Learning to Design for an Audience

Another important shift was that partners became more intentional about who their deliverables were for and how they would be used. Through the practicum, partners developed reports, tools, and communications materials with clearer audiences in mind, including staff, funders, board members, and community members. This helped strengthen not only technical skills, but also partners' ability to translate data into formats that were more useful and usable within their organizations.

“

When we went to the practicum showcase, ... they had their final Impact Reports and that was something they were actually proud of showcasing, and they were able to use the practicum experience to actually develop something concrete on their own.

- PIVOT COACH/ADVISOR

”

What We Learned: Feedback From Advisor Feedback was Most Helpful

The findings below offer a closer look at what partners were able to build through the practicum and what got in the way. Many partners described progress that continued beyond the advising period. They also named barriers that limited how far their projects could go within the practicum timeline.

Building Sustainable Practices

When partners were asked what progress they had made since their last advisor call, many described work that was still moving forward after the formal practicum period. Their responses suggest that the practicum helped partners create tools, strengthen routines, and carry ideas into ongoing organizational practice. The resources they named as most helpful reinforce a similar point. Partners most valued supports they could keep using over time, especially templates and feedback they could return to as their work evolved.

When partners were asked about **progress they made toward their practicum goals** since their last advisor call, they most often described:



Creating surveys, tracking sheets, or communications tools that could continue supporting their work after the practicum.

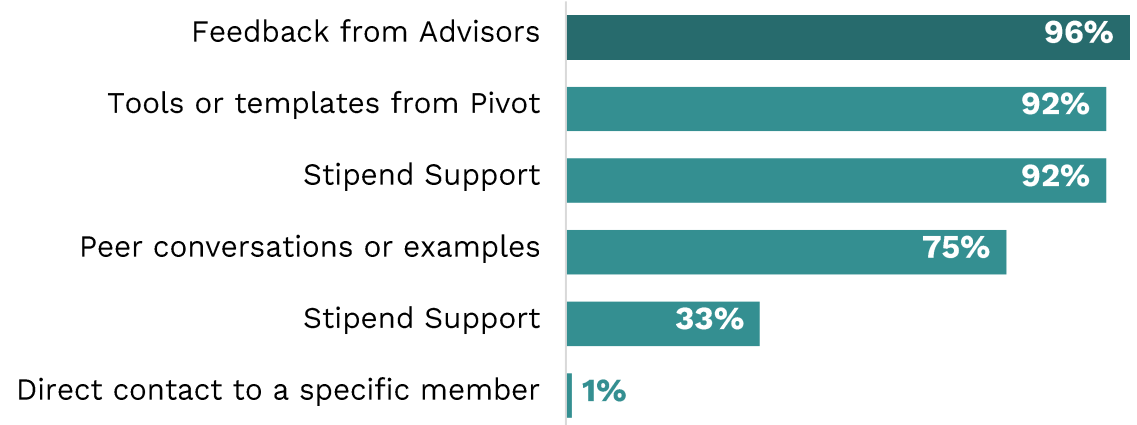


Improving how staff collect feedback, review information, or share findings internally.



Building staff confidence with data while also creating tools the organization could sustain.

Advisor feedback was the most helpful resource for partners, followed closely by Pivot tools and templates and stipend support. N=24



What We Learned: Limited Time and Capacity was the Most Common Barrier

Challenges

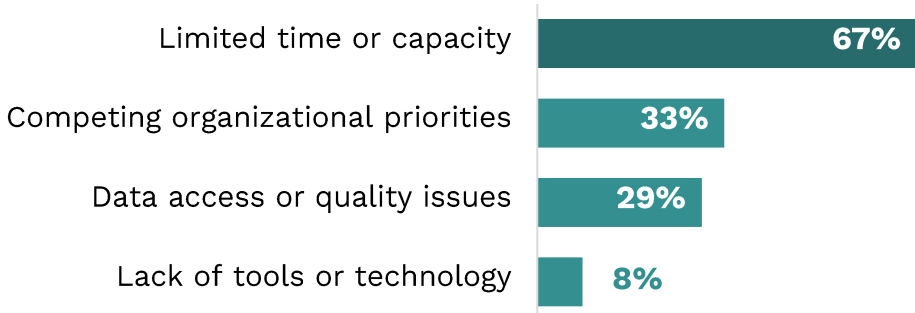
Partners made meaningful progress through the practicum, but they also named clear barriers that made it harder to move projects forward. Across the findings, the same challenges surfaced repeatedly: limited time, staffing constraints, and projects that were initially scoped too broadly for the practicum timeline.

When partners were asked what had been most challenging or unclear as they worked toward their practicum goal, two themes stood out most clearly:

- 1 Project scope often needed to be narrowed before partners could fully begin the work:** Many projects started too broad for the practicum timeline. As a result, early advising sessions were often spent refining the project rather than moving directly into development, which left less time for implementation.
- 2 Staffing capacity shaped how much progress partners could make between sessions:** Partners had more difficulty when the practicum was carried by one person or when staffing shifted during the process. In these cases, advising sessions were more likely to function as work sessions, which limited time for reflection and refinement.

“ It opened my eyes that there definitely has to be a data person with every organization because it's something that is very vital and it's also very time-consuming. ”

Limited staff time or capacity was the most common barrier partners identified, followed by competing priorities and data access issues. N=24



Level 4 Results

The Results level examines broader outcomes associated with the program, including how strengthened data capacity contributes to organizational effectiveness and community impact. For Harnessing the Power of Data, this analysis focuses on how strengthened data capacity may contribute to improved voter engagement strategies and stronger organizational alignment around data use.

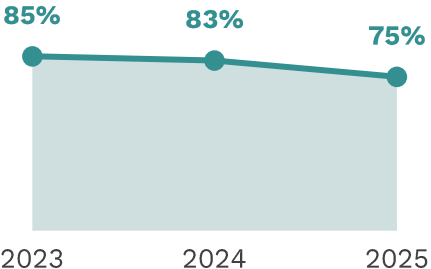
Because community-level outcomes often unfold over longer time horizons and are influenced by many external factors, the analysis focuses on early indicators of impact, such as shifts in outreach strategy, improved tracking of engagement activities, and stronger ability to connect program activities to community participation outcomes.



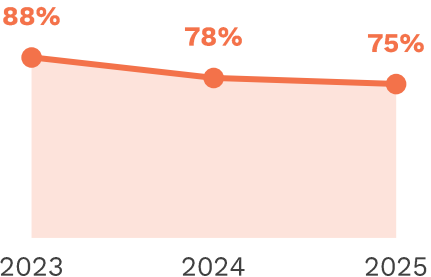
Early Signals In Voter Engagement Data (Level Four: Results)

Match rate data offers one early signal of how well partners were able to collect and submit voter engagement data in a format that could be matched to the voter file. While match rates do not capture the full range of outcomes reflected in this report, they do provide one useful indicator of data quality and submission readiness over time.

HiA match rates remained relatively steady over time, with a modest decline in the most recent year.



CA4Y 2025 Funded Partners match rates followed a similar pattern.



Why the Decrease Overtime?

Election context also likely shaped this pattern. Presidential election years tend to bring higher turnout and broader engagement, while 2025 was a much harder cycle. Taken together, these factors suggest that match rates should be interpreted in relation to both data practices and the conditions under which outreach occurred. Last year’s report made a similar point: match rates are influenced not only by partner skill, but also by the realities of how data is collected in the field.

For HiA, one likely reason is a **shift in tactic strategy**. Over the past year, HiA placed greater emphasis on relational meetings, which are valuable for community engagement but generally harder to match to the voter file than tactics like phone banking. With phone banking, contacts are often drawn directly from the voter file, which makes high match rates more likely. Relational tactics require partners to collect complete individual-level information in real time and depend on that information aligning with what is already in the voter file. Because of that, some decline in match rate is not surprising. In that context, the decrease appears relatively limited.

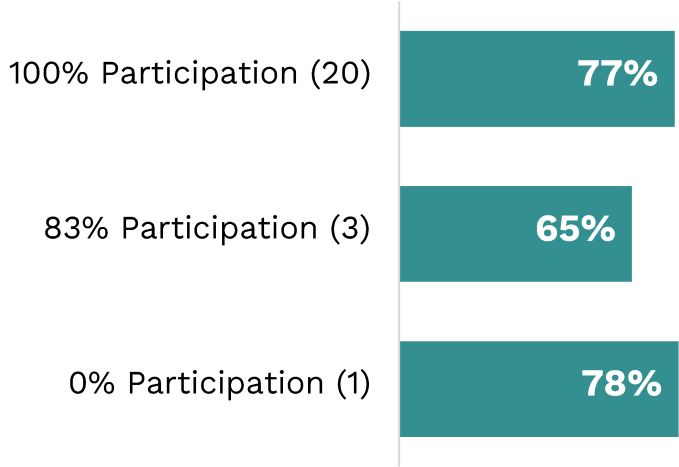
For CA4Y, an additional factor was the **transition in how partner data support** was provided. In 2025, CA4Y directly managed partner data support for the first time and introduced a new data tool, following prior years in which this support was subcontracted. As with any major implementation shift, that transition likely shaped how consistently partners were able to collect, manage, and submit matchable data during the year.

Match Rates (Level Four: Results)

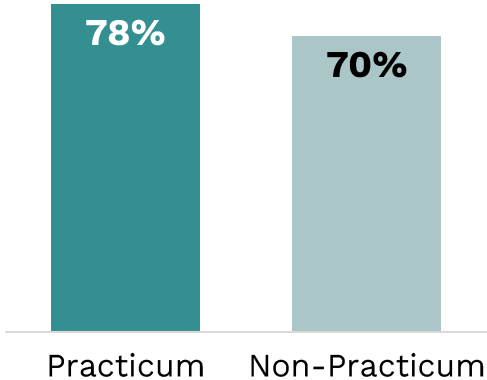
HiA Participation and Match Rates

Participation was consistently high across most HiA organizations, which limited variation in the data. Because so many partners had full participation, there is not strong evidence in this dataset that participation alone explains differences in match rate outcomes.

Match rates **did not follow a clear pattern** by participation level



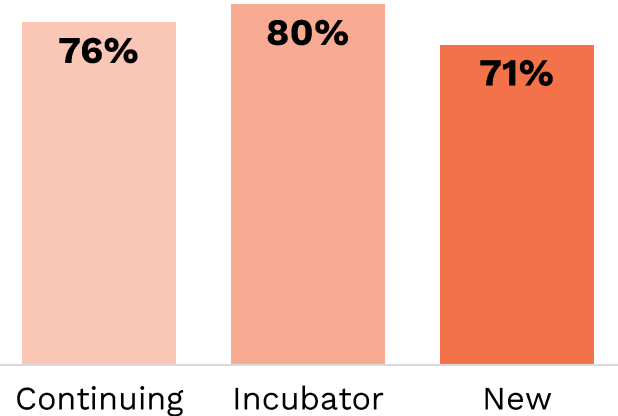
Partners who participated in the **practicum** had **slightly higher match rates** than those who did not participate.



CA4Y Participation and Match Rates

Match rates were fairly similar across CA4Y partner tracks, with incubator partners showing a slightly higher average than continuing and new partners. One possible reason is that incubator partners received more intensive support from both Pivot and CA4Y, including one-on-one coaching and closer guidance as they built their data practices.

Incubator partners had slightly higher match rates than new and continuing partners.



Organizational-level Outcomes Partners Associate with the Program

(Level Four: Results)

Partner reflections suggest that some of the clearest organizational-level outcomes were not just about individual learning, but about how organizations were beginning to think and work differently around data. Across both HiA and CA4Y, partners described stronger internal alignment around the role of data, along with growing attention to what it would take to sustain these practices over time. In many cases, the strongest signals of change were still emerging, but they point to a broader shift in how data was understood and used within organizations.

Stronger Internal Alignment Around Data Use

Across both groups, partners described changes in how data was understood inside their organizations.

Among **HiA partners**, some reflected on a growing recognition that data work requires staff time, clear ownership, and stronger integration into everyday work. One practicum partner shared that the program helped bring together parts of the organization that had previously been working in silos. Another noted that what they learned was being used beyond voter engagement and applied across other parts of the organization.

CA4Y partners described a similar shift. Both new and continuing partners shared that the program helped strengthen internal structure and improve how their organizations talked about and used data. For some, this meant building clearer strategy documents, such as a theory of change or logic model. For others, it meant creating stronger data outputs that were useful to outside stakeholders. Together, these examples suggest that partners in both groups were beginning to connect data use more closely to how their organizations operate.

“ What I have learned throughout the program, I've taken it through all of the sectors [of our organization]. We just don't use that for voting. We use our practicum all the way across our organization. ”

- PRACTICUM PARTNER

“ Everything that we did, all the workshops, the theory change, the logic model, just focusing on those things helped us for this year because...we know exactly what we're going to do, how we're going to do it, when we're going to do it, who we're going to do it with, everything like that. It just really helped structure the organization. This year, we can do better work than we did last year. ”

- NEW CA4Y PARTNER

Organizational-level Outcomes Partners Associate with the Program

(Level Four: Results)

Plans for Sustainability

Partners across both groups also described concrete and aspirational plans for sustaining data and evaluation practices over time.

Among **HiA partners**, practicum participants were often able to point to specific next steps, such as continuing a newsletter or carrying forward a survey process that had become part of organizational practice. At the same time, several noted that long-term sustainability would depend on having dedicated staff capacity.

CA4Y partners also wanted to build on what they had learned, though they more often emphasized the need for refreshers, follow-up opportunities, and support for onboarding new team members. Others pointed to the pace of change in tools and technology and the importance of continuing to learn over time. These reflections suggest that sustainability was already on partners' minds, even when the path forward was still taking shape.

Taken together, these findings suggest that partners were beginning to connect data and evaluation more closely to organizational strategy and day-to-day work. The strongest outcomes at this stage were still emerging, but they point to movement beyond individual skill-building and toward broader organizational ownership of data use.

“
“What I have learned throughout the program, I've taken it through all of the sectors [of our organization]. We just don't use that for voting. We use our practicum all the way across our organization.”

- PRACTICUM PARTNER

“
I think it's important to reinforce what people have learned or what they've been exposed to...This would help organizations not just totally forget what they were exposed to...[and] reinforce the narrative that all this valuable information was presented to us in an effort to help educate us and help us function better within the organizational structure”

- NEW CA4Y PARTNER

Sustainability: What this phase suggests about sustainability and “responsible transition”

This phase of *Harnessing the Power of Data* suggests that sustainability is not best understood as a clean endpoint where support simply ends and organizations carry everything forward on their own. A more useful frame is responsible transition: a gradual shift in ownership, paired with clear expectations about what partners and backbone organizations can realistically carry after the formal program period ends. Across the findings, partners showed meaningful signs that data and evaluation practices were beginning to take root. They created tools they planned to keep using, began weaving data into regular organizational work, and described stronger internal alignment around its value. At the same time, the findings make clear that long-term sustainability depends on more than partner motivation. It also depends on staffing continuity, backbone capacity, and the presence of structures that can hold the work over time.



Conditions That May Support Sustainability

Sustaining data practices depends not only on what partners learned, but on whether organizations have the internal capacity and ownership to carry that learning forward. Several patterns point to which organizations may be better positioned to sustain data practices, including organizational budget size, the presence of a designated data person, and participation in the practicum. Together, these findings suggest that sustained data use becomes more likely when organizations have enough internal structure, staffing, and readiness to give the work a clear home.



Budget size.

Budget size offered one signal of whether organizations were better positioned to support a data-focused role. Organizations with budgets over \$250,000 were somewhat more likely to add new positions focused on data, while organizations with smaller budgets were more likely to shift existing roles to absorb that work. This suggests that larger organizations may have more room to build dedicated data capacity, while smaller organizations are often trying to sustain the work by redistributing responsibilities internally.



Designated data person.

The strongest pattern, however, was around having a designated data person. Across the capacity assessment, organizations with a designated data person were consistently better positioned to support ongoing data use. Compared with organizations without one, they were more likely to:

- report having **enough staff and time** to meet data needs
- rate their **technology skills** more strongly
- show **growth in technology use**
- feel more **confident navigating data challenges**
- describe **data as more shared** across the organization



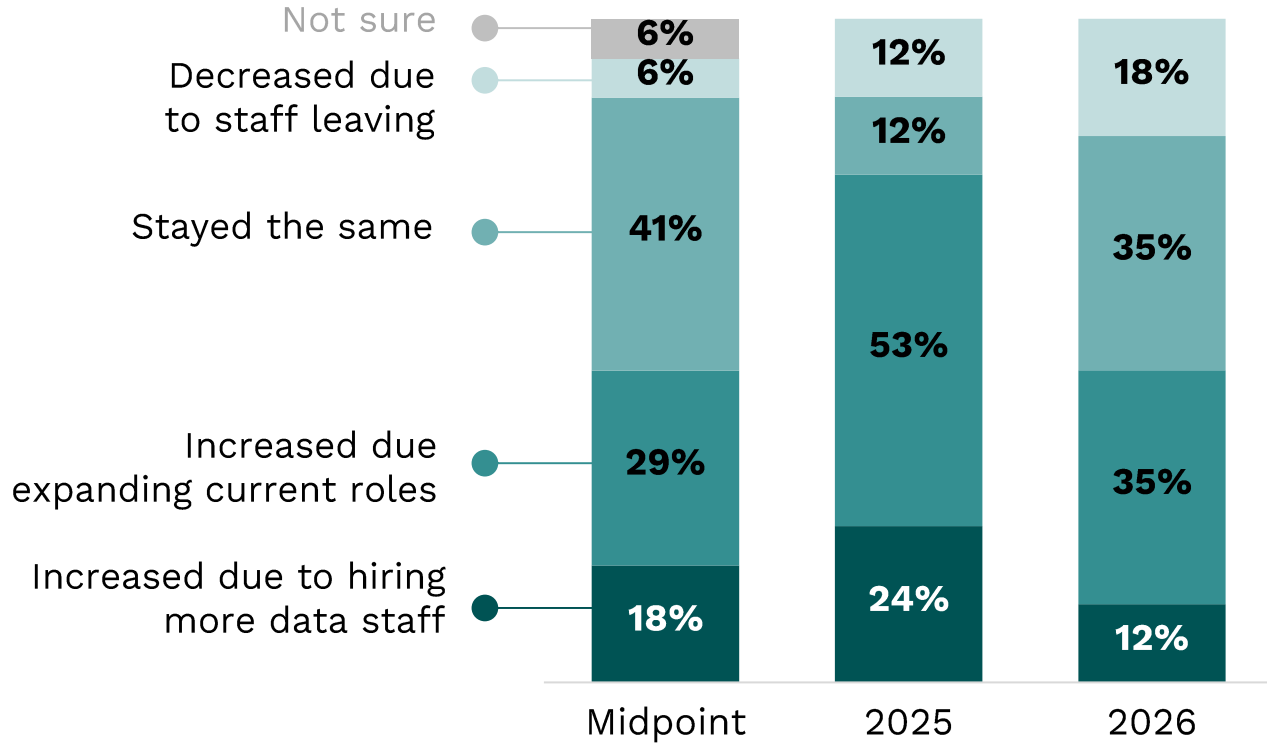
Internal ownership.

Partners who participated in the practicum also tended to show stronger indicators of readiness to sustain data work. Compared with partners who did not participate, practicum participants were more likely to report increases in staff and volunteer capacity and technology use, and they rated their knowledge and skills more strongly across several data-related areas. This pattern may reflect the kinds of organizations that chose to apply: those with stronger internal ownership of the work and greater readiness to deepen it over time.

Conditions That Make Responsible Transition More Difficult

The capacity assessment also points to why responsible transition matters. Even when organizations value data and want to continue the work, staffing capacity remains uneven and can shift quickly. From 2025 to 2026, fewer partners reported growth through hiring or expanding roles, while more said capacity stayed the same or decreased due to staff turnover. One possible interpretation is that, as partners learned more about what strong data capacity requires, they also became more realistic in how they assessed their own staffing needs and limitations. Staffing decisions are also dynamic and responsive to the external environment, including available grants, funder priorities, election cycles, and community giving levels. Together, these findings suggest that sustaining data practices requires planning for variability in capacity, including differences between organizations and shifts within them over time.

From 2025 to 2026, partners were less likely to report growth in data capacity and more likely to say capacity stayed the same or decreased due to staff leaving



Sustainability depends on responsible transition



Transition planning is about shifting ownership.

One of the clearest lessons from this phase is that transition planning works best when it starts early and focuses on shifting ownership, not just delivering products. Tools, templates, curricula, and resource hubs can all extend the life of a capacity-building initiative, but only if people understand how those resources fit into their work, when to use them, and who is responsible for carrying them forward. In that sense, transition is not simply a handoff of materials. It is also a handoff of understanding. This phase suggests that strong transition planning depends not only on what gets created, but on whether people have enough clarity to use those resources well after the initiative ends.



Early signs of sustainability are already visible.

Another lesson from this phase is that sustainability should be judged in stages, not as an all-or-nothing outcome. At this point, the strongest evidence of sustainability is not that every organization has fully institutionalized data and evaluation practices. It is that many partners have begun building the conditions that make longer-term use more possible. In some organizations, that meant stronger buy-in around the role of data. In others, it meant practical tools that could be reused or clearer ways of collecting and sharing information. For some, sustainability may look like continuing to use a survey, report template, or internal reflection process. For others, it may mean using what they learned to onboard new staff, sharpen strategy, or make the case for a more dedicated data role. These are still early-stage outcomes, but they matter because they show that the work is beginning to move beyond one-time participation and into regular organizational practice.

Sustainability depends on responsible transition



Responsible transition also means being honest about limits.

At the same time, the findings reinforce that responsible transition also means being honest about limits. Capacity-building gains can fade when staffing is unstable, when only one person holds the learning, or when backbone structures are not in place to reinforce use over time. The program created strong momentum, but momentum alone is not the same as permanence. This is especially important for funders to consider when designing similar initiatives. Responsible transition requires early clarity about who is expected to carry what forward, what level of commitment that requires from all involved parties, and what support will still be needed after the formal initiative ends. In that sense, sustainability is not only a partner question. It is also a design question.



What this phase suggests going forward.

Taken together, this phase suggests that sustainable data capacity is most likely when the work moves through a deliberate arc: building foundational understanding, supporting real-time application, and then creating a transition period where ownership gradually shifts while support is still available. That transition period is important. It gives partners and backbone organizations space to clarify roles, adapt resources, and test what they can realistically sustain. Rather than asking whether capacity has fully stuck by the end of the program, a more useful question is whether the conditions for ongoing use have been intentionally built. Across this phase, there is meaningful evidence that those conditions are beginning to take shape, even if the long-term trajectory will continue to depend on staffing, organizational stability, and the strength of the support structures that remain.