

Impact Profile Summary

Organization Overview

Tech901's mission is to grow Memphis' information technology talent base through skill and employment development. Tech901 fights poverty by equipping its graduates with marketable technical skills that improve their ability to obtain well-paying technology jobs. By subsidizing tuition, Tech901 is changing the recruiting paradigm for the IT workforce in Memphis. Approximately 75 percent of the student body is currently experiencing poverty or at risk of experiencing poverty.

Approximately one in four Memphians - almost 157,000 people - live in poverty, and another 84,000 live in households with incomes between 100 and 150 percent of the poverty threshold. Additionally, nearly 40 percent of workers are employed in low-skilled, labor-intensive occupations that often pay less than a living wage, have few opportunities for advancement, and are more likely to be replaced by automation. Despite above-average growth in IT job opportunities in Memphis, the share of IT employment is still well below the national average due in part to a shortage of local workers equipped with the necessary skills.

Impact Results

An Impact Study Update measures the change in poverty-fighting effectiveness since the previous impact study. For each dimension, the effectiveness is determined based on the strength of available evidence compared to Slingshot Memphis' outcomes-driven methodology. Impact results provide an objective, consistent way to measure impact, track progress, and identify opportunities for growth. Below are the impact results for Tech901:

Dimension	Unclear	Weak	At Least Neutral	At Least Strong	Very Strong
 Benefit-Cost Ratio	Insufficient evidence exists to confidently estimate benefits	Costs exceed estimated benefits	Estimated benefits and costs similar	Estimated benefits exceed costs	Estimated benefits substantially exceed costs
 Systems-Level Change	Insufficient evidence to determine systems-level change	Evidence for the creation of systems-level change does not exist	Evidence for the creation of limited systems-level change	Evidence for the creation of moderate systems-level change	Evidence for the creation of significant systems-level change
 Use of Best Practices	Indiscernible best practices or insufficient data on the practices	Few practices are effective and/or practices are inconsistently applied	Some practices are effective and/or inconsistently applied	Most practices are effective and consistently applied	Practices are most effective and consistently applied
 Measurement Infrastructure	Required information is inaccessible	Limited measurement infrastructure and use of data to understand and improve impact	Basic measurement infrastructure and use of data to understand and improve impact	Acceptable measurement infrastructure and use of data to understand and improve impact	Robust measurement infrastructure and use of data to understand and improve impact



Benefit-Cost Ratio

At Least Strong

- Tech901 creates an estimated \$1.25 to \$1.50 in poverty-fighting benefits for each dollar it spends
- The magnitude of poverty-fighting benefits were 15 less than the previous impact study due to the lack of testing options during the pandemic
- Increased employment and higher earnings associated with obtaining a technology certificate are the primary poverty-fighting benefits experienced by Tech901 graduates
- Graduates are also able to access enhanced healthcare and other employment benefits at higher rates



Use of Best Practices

At Least Strong

- Tech901's strongest practice is its robust data-driven approach to identify program challenges and systematically implement solutions
- Program models are informed by research and implemented consistently
- Additional career and wraparound support for students would further strengthen programming
- Courses are implemented consistently via teacher observations and regular faculty discussions to share feedback and support
- THEC accreditation was obtained in 2019 and the virtual lab was substantially upgraded in response to COVID-19



Systems-Level Change

At Least Neutral

- Tech901 helps bridge the gap between waiting IT jobs and a motivated and trained workforce
- The main forms of systems-level change are pathways into its programs and pathways out of its programs into technology careers
- Two prominent examples were identified:
 - Partnership with The Collective Blueprint to enroll about 10 percent of its leaders into Tech901 programs
 - Partnership with ALSAC St. Jude and The Collective Blueprint to create a two-year IT internship program
- At the onset of COVID-19, the two-year IT internship program was temporarily suspended
- No other significant changes were observed since the previous impact study



Measurement Infrastructure

At Least Strong

- Robust data storage systems, real-time data dashboards, and comprehensive collection of program metrics are the strongest components
- Measurement objectives enable an outcomes-oriented understanding of performance
- Data quality assurance processes exist and are applied consistently most of the time
- Caspio is a sophisticated data storage with dashboards and reports that help incorporate data and analysis into decision-making
- A holistic perspective of data quality and analysis would further enhance performance
- Since the previous impact study, participant metrics have been expanded, Caspio was implemented, some data quality processes were automated, and a new faculty member was hired to help provide database and analytical support

Potential Opportunities for Growth

- Grow the completion and certification rates for students experiencing and at risk of poverty
- Build additional employer partnerships to enhance job placement rates for graduates
- Investigate opportunities to support job retention and career progression for graduates
- Continue expanding the collection of participant and outcomes metrics to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the benefits Tech901 creates
- Partner with additional nonprofits to help their participants enroll in Tech901
- Introduce diagnostic analyses to better understand the root causes of observed trends

Higher impact result
 Lower impact result
 Some measurable improvement
 Some measurable regression
 Limited change