

The Program-to-Labor-Market ROI Worksheet

A workforce-alignment tool for seeing where a program and its market diverge.

A program earns its place when it connects to where the regional economy actually hires, at a wage that justifies its cost. Most institutions cannot say, program by program, whether that is true. This worksheet applies in miniature the Universal HBCU Workforce Alignment Model that my FrameShift diagnostic produced — a way to test one program at a time, and to see where alignment is strong and where it is silent.

HOW TO USE IT

Work one program at a time, and answer each step from public data before reaching for internal assumptions. The sources are named beneath each step.

STEP 1 · NAME THE PROGRAM

The program or credential under review:

STEP 2 · MAP THE TARGET OCCUPATIONS

The specific occupations this program should lead to (name three to five):

Source: O*NET; the CIP-to-SOC crosswalk (NCES) that links fields of study to occupations.

STEP 3 · TEST REGIONAL DEMAND

Are those occupations growing in your region, flat, or declining? Note projected annual openings:

Source: BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics; your state labor-market information office.

STEP 4 · WEIGH EARNINGS AGAINST COST

Median earnings in those occupations: Net price or typical debt:

☐ Clearly ☐ Marginally ☐ No — Does the wage justify the cost?

Source: BLS OES (earnings); College Scorecard and IPEDS (net price, debt, completer earnings).

STEP 5 · RENDER THE VERDICT

☐ Aligned. Strong demand, wages justify cost — grow and market it.

☐ Partial. Demand or earnings is soft — refine, add a credential, or reposition.

☐ Silent. No clear occupational or earnings case — restructure, teach out, or rebuild.

WHAT THIS REVEALS

Run across the full portfolio, these five steps become a program-rationalization map: what to grow, what to refine, and what no longer earns its place. That portfolio view, built with your institutional data and your regional labor market, is the Workforce Alignment Model engagement.

To build the full alignment map across your programs, and turn it into a positioning strategy, reach me directly.