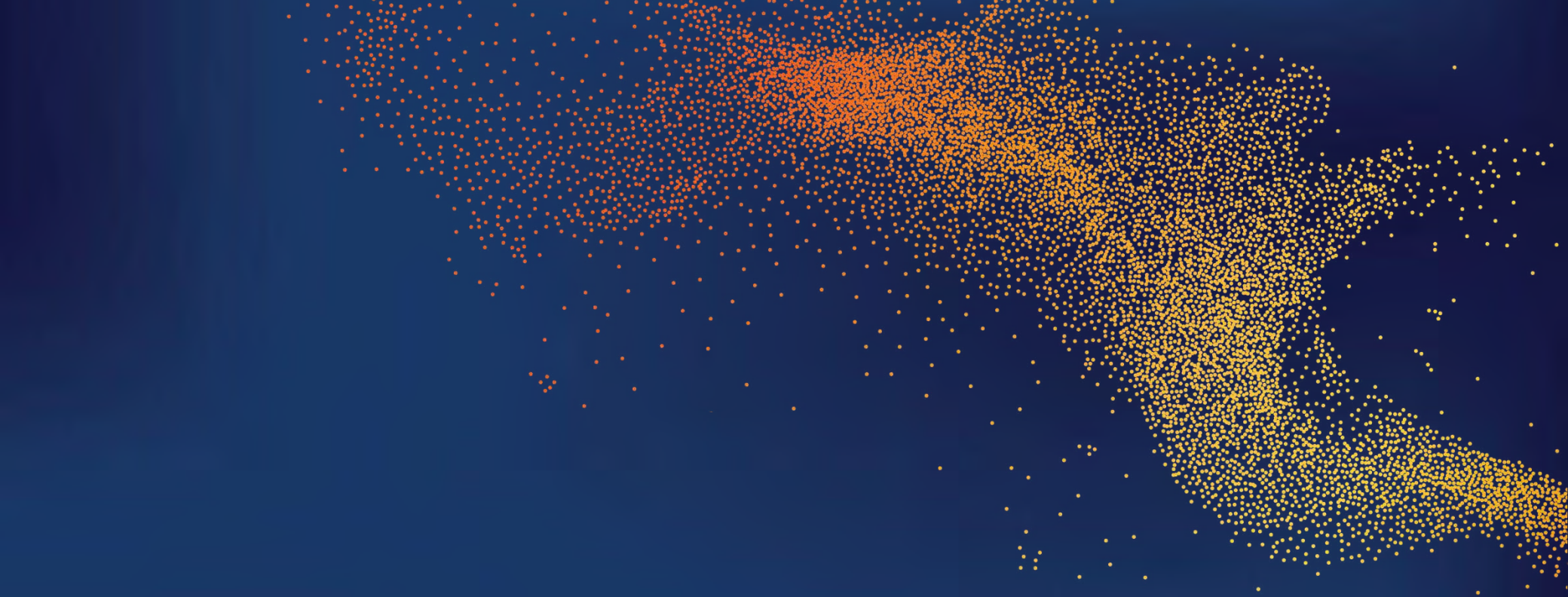




Evaluation of the SILA program – Cohort 4 report

11th September 2025

Nous Group acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respect to Elders past and present, who maintain their culture, Country and spiritual connection to the land, sea and community.

This artwork was developed by Marcus Lee Design to reflect Nous Group's Reconciliation Action Plan and our aspirations for respectful and productive engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.



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1 Executive summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Social Impact Leadership Australia (SILA) program has built on the success of its first three cohorts to deliver another successful program for cohort 4. Through its groundbreaking design, SILA aims to achieve multi-layered outcomes for CEO participants, their organisations, and the for-purpose ecosystem.

Cohort 4 participants gave a positive overall assessment of the program with a strong net promoter score (NPS) of 96 out of 100. 20 of 23 participant survey respondents rated SILA a 10 out of 10. This is the highest result of all four cohorts. For context, an NPS score above 80 is considered world class.¹

BACKGROUND

The Centre for Social Impact (CSI) engaged Nous to conduct a long-term independent evaluation of the cohorts undertaking the SILA program.

THIS REPORT

This report is the fourth cohort evaluation report. It focuses on the experience of the fourth cohort of 24 participants that completed the SILA program from August 2024 through to May 2025.

¹Qualtrics, *What is a good Net Promoter Score?*

The SILA program continues to deliver transformative outcomes across individual, organisational, and ecosystem levels.

Cohort 4 participants led with greater intention and strategic confidence, supported by improved wellbeing and shared problem-solving. • The SILA program empowered CEOs to lead with greater confidence, intention and strategic authority. • SILA improved CEO wellbeing and resilience, contributing to sustainable leadership. • Cohort 4 created a trusted network that led to shared problem-solving.	Organisations experienced leadership renewal and strategic recalibration. • Organisations strengthened leadership and resilience through SILA's creative disruption. • SILA's creative disruption exposed organisational gaps. • SILA equipped boards to better support strategic leadership and social impact.	Cohort 4 CEOs are actively planning and contributing to the broader ecosystem. • SILA equipped CEOs with the language, frameworks and confidence to lead beyond their organisations, advocate for systemic change and influence sector-wide reform. • The peer networks enable ongoing sector influence, leading to benefits beyond the program duration.
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SILA alumni spread leadership practice, drove sector collaboration, and contributed to better outcomes for communities.

Alumni sustained program benefits and have spread their learning beyond their organisation.	Alumni credit the program for catalysing positive organisational change.	Alumni are driving sector collaboration that contribute to better community outcomes.
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Elements of the SILA program continue to effectively and efficiently deliver a valuable participant experience.

- SILA's **unique approach** contributed to a **positive learner experience** for cohort 4.
- SILA delivers its **greatest value** through the **combination and integration of program elements**.
- Participants identified several **barriers** that **impacted their experience**.

Five recommendations can further enhance the SILA program.

1 Continue to enhance inclusivity and safety through trauma-informed facilitation and inclusive design.	2 Improve coach pairing processes to better align with CEO needs and learning preferences.	3 Continue to streamline retreat formats to reduce fatigue and increase accessibility.	4 Further strengthen sabbatical planning and support for Step Up Leaders (SULs).	5 Align program timeframes in NT and QLD with environmental challenges.
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96% of surveyed participants agreed or strongly agreed they have **clear ideas about how they can use their new skills and knowledge.**²

96% of surveyed participants agreed or strongly agreed that the **program encourages continued learning and conversation with others.**²

91% of surveyed participants agreed or strongly agreed that their organisation is **likely to enhance its capability and culture as a result of the program.**²

The SILA program continues to deliver transformative outcomes across individual, organisational, and ecosystem levels.

Cohort 4 participants led with greater intention and strategic confidence, supported by improved wellbeing and shared problem-solving.

- **The SILA program empowered CEOs to lead with greater confidence, intention, and strategic authority.** Cohort 4 participants reported increased self-awareness, strategic clarity and leadership purpose. Seven participants commented on a profound increase in their confidence, leading to a better understanding of how to best serve their organisations. Twelve participants reported reduced operational entanglement, enabling greater focus on organisational strategy.¹
- **SILA improved CEO wellbeing and resilience, contributing to more sustainable leadership.** Seventy-eight per cent of post-program survey participants strongly agreed or agreed that SILA contributed to improved wellbeing.² The unique experience of the sabbaticals helped cohort 4 participants to redefine their personal leadership identity. This has contributed to more sustainable leadership practices and a reduction in burnout and compassion fatigue.
- **Cohort 4 created a trusted network that led to shared problem-solving.** CEOs in the program developed trust and increased confidence, which led to shared problem-solving and a strong peer network. Participants reported that they continued the relationships they formed during the program well beyond its formal conclusion, with regular check-ins, informal mentoring, and collaborative problem-solving becoming part of their leadership routines.¹

Organisations experienced leadership renewal and strategic recalibration.

- **Organisations strengthened leadership and resilience through SILA's creative disruption.** Sabbaticals increased organisational capacity and resulted in changes to structure, culture and performance. These impacts cascaded through organisations, reducing key-person dependency and supporting greater operational discipline. Ten SULs reported assuming greater responsibility post-sabbatical, enabling their CEOs to focus on strategy over operations.³
- **SILA's creative disruption exposed organisational gaps.** Motivation for becoming a SUL varied, and in a few cases, limited interest in becoming a CEO influenced the extent to which they benefitted from the experience. Seven SULs commented that they experienced burnout from stepping up.³ This was correlated with the relevant size of their organisation and the level of support during the handover period with the CEO. Three SULs left their organisations following the sabbatical: in one case the experience revealed significant capability gaps in the SUL, in another it surfaced existing tensions with their organisation that led to resignation, and in the third it prompted the organisation to recognise that the SUL's substantive role was not mission critical.
- **SILA equipped boards to better support strategic leadership and social impact.** Board support was critical in enabling sabbaticals and leadership development. Board members, through supporting the SULs during the sabbatical, deepened their understanding of organisational complexity and the role of the CEO and executive leadership team.³ Board members that participated in the Governance for Social Impact (GSI) course reported that they improved their alignment with their CEO and elevated their strategic and systems thinking due to the course.⁴

¹ Cohort 4 CEO interviews; ² Cohort 4 post-program participant survey n=23, Nous analysis; ³ Cohort 4 SUL interviews; ⁴ Cohort 4 board interviews

96% of surveyed participants agreed or strongly agreed that they could **make a difference across their sector** by using what they had learned in the program.¹

100% of cohort 1, 2 and 3 alumni surveyed one year on from SILA said they had **made a difference in their organisation due to the program**.²

31% of cohort 2 alumni surveyed two years on from SILA **had left their organisations**, sharing learnings further across the ecosystem.²

Cohort 4 CEOs are actively planning and contributing to the broader ecosystem.

- **SILA equipped CEOs with the language, frameworks and confidence to lead beyond their organisations, advocate for systemic change, and influence sector-wide reform.** Seventy-one per cent of survey respondents outlined that they strongly agreed that they could make a difference across their sector with the skills they had learnt from the program.¹ CEOs applied systems thinking to community engagement and advocacy, contributing to broader sector impact. While CEOs are now more confident and intentional in their efforts to benefit the broader ecosystem, it was acknowledged that these changes would take time to be embedded, and leaders will need to ensure these changes are sustained.³
- **The peer networks enable ongoing sector influence, leading to benefits beyond the program duration.** SILA peer networks provided strategic collaboration, with participants leveraging cross-cohort relationships to co-design sector initiatives.³

SILA alumni sustained personal and organisational positive impact and continue to drive sector-wide collaboration and innovation.

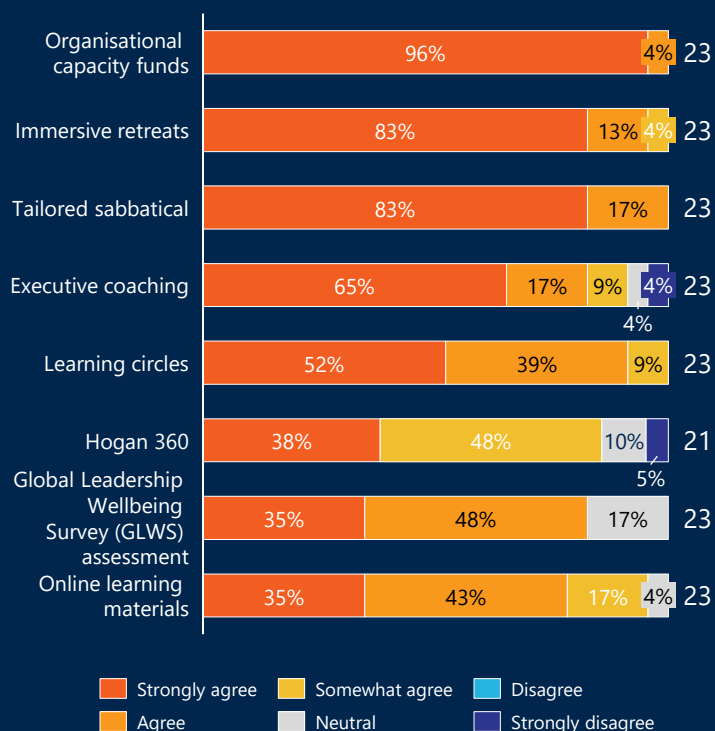
- **Alumni sustained program benefits and have spread their learning beyond their organisation.** One-year post-program, all cohort 3 alumni reported applying the skills gained in their roles, maintaining improved wellbeing, and staying connected with fellow participants. Similarly, cohort 2 alumni, surveyed two years after completion, expressed deep appreciation for the opportunity and described the program as a transformative experience that strengthened their professional confidence and long-term career outlook. Importantly, alumni are spreading these benefits beyond their organisation. Nearly three-quarters (73 per cent) have mentored others outside their organisation because of the program.
- **Alumni credit the program for catalysing positive organisational change.** In cohort 3, 91 per cent of CEOs reported enhanced capability and culture, and 86 per cent saw tangible improvements in key business measures due to the program. Cohort 2 alumni also noted increased investment in senior leadership development. These outcomes highlight the program's role in enabling alumni to strengthen leadership pipelines, embed cultural shifts, and improve overall organisational performance.
- **Alumni are driving sector collaboration that contribute to better community outcomes.** Alumni reported increased cross-organisation partnerships, joint advocacy, and sustained peer learning. Eighty-seven per cent of cohort 2 alumni believe they have made a meaningful impact in the social purpose ecosystem, while all cohort 3 alumni reported that they are applying their learning to influence change within their organisations and across the sector. Examples include launching new initiatives, shaping funding models, and championing systemic reforms.

¹ Cohort 4 post-program participant survey n=23; ² Alumni survey; ³ Cohort 4 CEO interviews

Elements of the SILA program continue to effectively and efficiently deliver a valuable participant experience.

100% of surveyed participants found the time and investment into the program worth it for them and for their organisation.

Figure 1 | To what extent do you agree with the following statement: I found the following valuable.^{1,2}



SILA's unique approach contributed to a positive learner experience for cohort 4. Cohort 4 participants reaffirmed SILA as a standout leadership program, describing it as transformational. Participants reported that the program's structured teaching, opportunities for reflection, and tailored coaching contributed to a positive learner experience. Ninety-one per cent of survey respondents found the program engaging and challenging, echoing sentiments from earlier cohorts.

SILA delivers value through the combination and integration of program elements. SILA's strength lies in the integration of its elements, delivering a high-quality, transformative experience. Cohort 4 participants strongly valued executive coaching (65 per cent, up 10 per cent from cohort 3), citing increased confidence, strategic clarity, and improved team dynamics. Capacity funds remained the highest-rated element (96 per cent), enabling participation and board support. Sabbaticals and retreats were described as deeply restorative and strategically valuable, fostering renewal and systems-level thinking.

Changes in sentiment for some elements highlight opportunities for improvement. The proportion of strongly agreed responses for the learning circles was 25 per cent lower than in cohort 3. This decline reflected scheduling challenges for some groups. The proportion of strongly agreed responses for online learning materials was 33 per cent lower - primarily due to technology issues and the volume of content. GLWS and Hogan 360 assessments were less effective for participants familiar with similar tools. Despite these changes, cohort 4 participants affirmed each elements' value and reiterated the strength of a multi-faceted program design.

Participants identified several barriers that impacted their experience.

- **Cultural and gender safety issues.** While the program includes many cultural considerations, participants identified areas for improvement in Retreats 1 and 2. SILA took on board feedback and participants recognised improvements in inclusive, trauma-informed delivery for Retreat 3.
- **Coaching mismatches.** Some participants suggested clearer upfront expectations and more input into coach selection.
- **Retreat logistics.** Constraints at retreat locations affected how participants could engage with each other and the program content.
- **SUL post-sabbatical burnout.** This highlighted the need for stronger wellbeing support and clearer capability requirements for participation.
- **QLD and NT specific issues.** Weather-related disruptions during 'disaster season' complicated participation for Cohort 4 CEOs and SULs.

Recommendations to address these challenges are identified on the next slide.

¹ Cohort 4 post-program participant survey n=23; ² Cohort 4 mid-point participant survey

Five recommendations can further enhance the SILA program.

Continue to enhance inclusivity and safety through trauma-informed facilitation and inclusive design.

- Continue to embed trauma-informed facilitation, particularly for the session on authority.
- Continue to embed cultural protocols and community priorities through co-design with First Nations leaders.
- Strengthen inclusive language protocols for facilitators and participants.
- Diversify learning modalities to better support varied learning preferences.

1

Improve coach pairing processes to better align with CEO needs and learning preferences.

- Communicate the SILA coaching approach to participants prior to program commencement.
- Introduce a coachee-led pairing process to empower CEOs.
- Conduct a chemistry check post the first coaching session, allowing participants to swap coaches.

2

Continue to streamline retreat formats to reduce fatigue and increase accessibility.

- Refine retreat schedules to balance intensity with rest.
- Diversify delivery formats to accommodate different learning preferences, reducing lecture-style teaching.

3

Further strengthen sabbatical planning and support for SULs.

- Incorporate additional guidance into the CEO eligibility criteria to ensure SULs have the required capability for stepping up.
- Strengthen joint CEO and SUL coaching sessions pre and post sabbatical.
- Encourage wellbeing and rest for the SUL post sabbatical, including recommended time-off, and add this guidance into the sabbatical toolkit.
- Schedule the first SUL learning circle at a time that promotes participation.

4

Align program timeframes in NT and QLD with environmental challenges.

- Better align the sabbatical period with seasonal constraints.

Location-specific recommendation

5

Program participants provided rich qualitative reflections.

“
It's given me confidence in my leadership... helped me to understand who I am as a leader
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

“
I'm a lot more confident that I'm the right person to lead this organisation right now, which to be honest, I wasn't prior to SILA.
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

“
I'm a lot more confident in the gifts that I can bring into the CEO position now and I'm coming with a lot more resolve and authority.
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

“
I've matured in the way that I'm doing things... I can see it already. Just in a few months that it's helping us mature.
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

“
It's been transformational for the maturity of the organisation.
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

“
This opportunity is going to show years down the track as a really important part of our organisation's future sustainability.
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

“
Allowed the team to work differently together and gave people the opportunity to shine.
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

“
It's helped build a culture of trust.
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

“
You could feel the depth of collective experience without any hint of ego... it was energising.
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

“
With the funds we had we were able to help some of our staff access leadership courses they couldn't afford otherwise.
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

“
The program has given me a narrative and a language set to talk about systems change, which has been very useful.
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

“
I've started getting into national level conversations... I can funnel more funds and interest towards us.
- Cohort 4 CEO
”

Evaluation assessment

Nous has used a modified model for leadership evaluation based off the Kirkpatrick, Phillips and Kaufman models¹. This modified model allows the evaluation to assess outcomes across the individual, organisation and ecosystem levels as per the objectives of the SILA program (see Figure 2 below).

The evaluation assessment to the right assesses the individual impact for cohort 4 leaders across levels one to three. It assesses the cumulative impact (including previous cohorts) on for-purpose organisations and the social-purpose ecosystem across levels four to six.

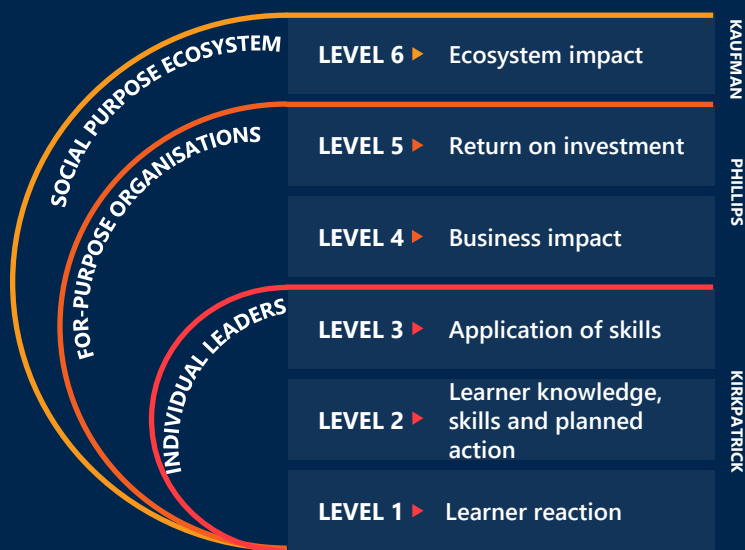


Figure 2

¹ D.L. Kirkpatrick & J.D. Kirkpatrick, *Evaluating Training Programs*, 1994; R Kaufman & JM Keller, *Levels of Evaluation: Beyond Kirkpatrick*, 1994; J Phillips, *How much is the training worth?*, Training and Development, 1996.

Individuals	Level 1	Learner reaction (see Section 4)	Was the overall learner experience for the CEO positive? Achieved Level 1 outcomes for CEOs	Was the program relevant to the CEO's role? Achieved Level 1 outcomes for CEOs
			Was the learner experience of each element positive for the CEO? Achieved Level 1 outcomes for CEOs	
			Was the learner experience for the SUL and broader organisation positive? Mostly achieved Level 1 outcomes for SULs and board members	
	Level 2	Learner knowledge (see Section 3.1)	Did the CEO participants learn new knowledge and skills? Achieved Level 2 outcomes for CEOs	Were the CEO participants ready and willing to apply the new skills? Achieved Level 2 outcomes for CEOs
	Level 3	Application of skills (see Section 3.1)	Have the CEO participants successfully applied their new skills in their role? Achieved Level 3 outcomes for CEOs	
Organisations	Level 4	Business impact (see Sections 3.2 and 3.5)	Did SILA have positive impacts on Step Up Leaders? Mostly achieved Level 4 outcomes for organisations	
			Did SILA have positive impacts on organisational culture and/or performance? Achieved Level 4 outcomes for organisations	Did SILA have positive impacts on organisational approaches to leadership development and succession planning? Achieved Level 4 outcomes for organisations
	Level 5	ROI (see Section 3.2 and 3.5)	Was the organisational investment in SILA justified? Achieved Level 5 outcomes for organisations	
Ecosystem	Level 6	Ecosystem impact (see Section 3.3 and 3.5)	Did SILA have a positive impact on the social purpose ecosystem? Mostly achieved for cohort one, two and three and on track for cohort 4 to achieve Level 6 outcomes for the ecosystem ...	

2 Introduction and background

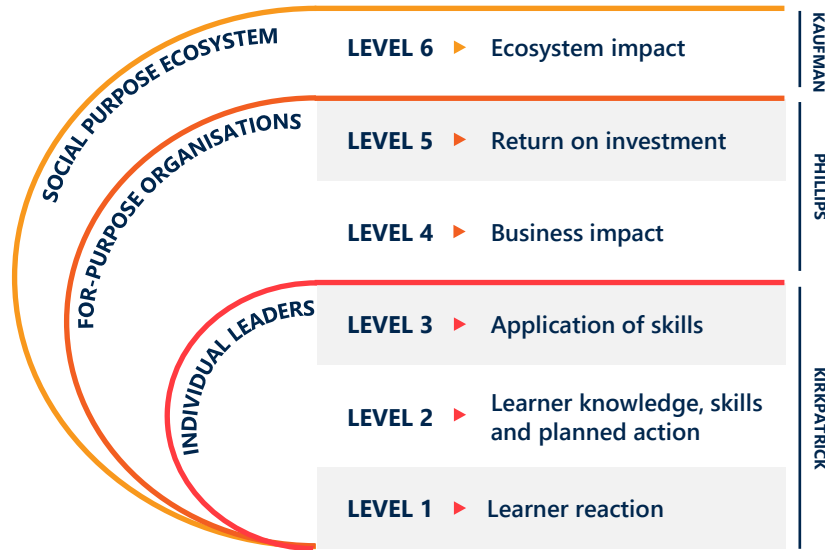
Overview of the evaluation

Centre for Social Impact (CSI) engaged Nous to conduct a long-term evaluation of the cohorts undertaking the SILA program. This report is the fourth cohort evaluation report. It focuses on the experience of the fourth cohort of participants that completed the SILA program from August 2024 through to May 2025. It also includes insights on the ongoing impact of SILA on participants from cohorts two and three.

The evaluation explores participants' and organisations' overall experience across the core program components: Hogan 360 and GLWS assessment; three immersive retreats; capacity funds; Step-Up Leader and tailored sabbatical; executive coaching and learning circles.

Nous has used a modified model for leadership evaluation based off the Kirkpatrick, Phillips and Kaufman models¹. This modified model allows the evaluation to assess outcomes across the individual, organisation and ecosystem levels as per the objectives of the SILA program (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 | Modified model of leadership evaluation for the SILA program



¹ D.L. Kirkpatrick & J.D. Kirkpatrick, *Evaluating Training Programs*, 1994; R Kaufman & JM Keller, *Levels of Evaluation: Beyond Kirkpatrick*, 1994; J Phillips, *How much is the training worth?*, Training and Development, 1996.

Cohort 4 report

This report looks at the outcomes and impact that the SILA program had on the individual CEO participants, their organisations (including the Step-Up Leaders (SULs), and the for-purpose ecosystem (*section 3*).

This report also looks at the effectiveness and efficiency of the program overall and the individual program elements (*section 4*).

The report includes recommendations on how the SILA program team can enhance the experience and outcomes of the program for future cohorts (*section 5*).

The evaluation has used a mixed-methods approach to collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative data. Data collection and analysis activities have included:

- Interviews with CEO participants (18), SULs (13) and board delegates (6).
- Mid and post-program participant surveys (*refer to [Appendix C](#)*).
- Mid and post-program coach surveys (*refer to [Appendix D](#)*).
- Three participant post-retreat surveys (*refer to [Appendix E](#)*).
- Hogan 360 assessment results (*refer to [Appendix F](#)*).
- Global Leadership Wellbeing Survey (GLWS) results (*refer to [Appendix G](#)*).
- Cohort 2 and 3 alumni surveys (*refer to [Appendix H](#)*).
- Cross-cohort overall summary and comparison (*refer to [Appendix I](#)*).
- Cross-cohort capacity funds analysis (*refer to [Appendix J](#)*).

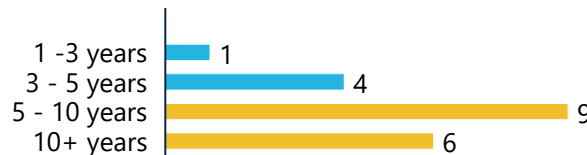
Cohort 4 SUMMARY

The fourth cohort of CEOs and for-purpose organisations was diverse. This infographic provides a snapshot of the cohort of CEOs, SULs and their organisations.

16 FEMALES
OUT OF **24** CEOs

4 First Nations CEOs who lead
First Nations organisations
(the first to go through the program)

CEO tenures varied between
1 and 10+ years with **15** having
served as a CEO for **5+ years**



*out of 20 survey respondents

THERE WAS AN EVEN SPREAD OF
ORGANISATIONS BY REVENUE **SIZE**
WITH ONE THIRD ABOVE \$10M, THE LARGEST
SIZED COHORT TO DATE



*out of 23 survey respondents

SECTORS INCLUDE...

- Arts (6)
- Advocacy/Public Welfare (5)
- First Nations (4)
- Health (4)
- Environment (3)
- Housing/Homelessness (2)
- Youth (2)
- Disability (1)
- Domestic and Family Violence (1)
- Education (1)
- Employment (1)

Note: some organisations operate
across multiple sectors



7 organisations based
in **Northern Territory**

17 organisations based
in **Queensland**



42 participants from **20** boards completed the Governance for Social Impact Program

HOGAN 360 DATA

Cohort 4 CEOs exceeded the global average
score across the four main categories (self-
management, relationship management,
working in and working on the business).

Cohort 4 CEOs work well in managing their
relevant business and have strong self-
management skills.

Cohort 4 CEOs have room to improve their
communication skills in relationship
management and accountability when
working on their business.

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP WELLBEING SURVEY

The averages (on a Likert scale out of 5) of the
six areas of wellbeing are listed below.
Participants scored highest in 'Authentic relationships'
for their work life, and while slightly lower in their
personal life, it remained their strongest domain overall.

		Professional	Personal
1	Authentic relationships	4.16	3.88
2	Meaning, purpose, direction	4.13	3.74
3	Resilience and equanimity	3.85	3.52
4	Vitality and energy	3.18	3.29
5	Balance and boundaries	3.51	3.12
6	Intellectual engagement and flow	4.08	

STEP-UP LEADERS

HEADS OF:

People & Culture
Sustainability
Operations
Marketing
Corporate Services
Campaigning

came from
diverse roles,
experiences and
career aspirations.



Some had been CEOs before

Some had stepped-up before

Some do not want to
be the next CEO

Some want to be the next CEO

Some are now CEOs or acting
CEOs

OVERVIEW OF ALL COHORTS

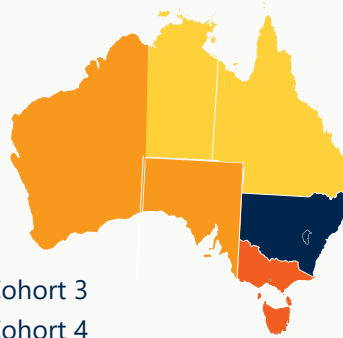
Overall, the cohorts of CEOs and for-purpose organisations have been diverse. This infographic provides a snapshot of cohorts 1, 2, 3 and 4 of CEOs, SULs and their organisations.

94 CEO participants

23 Cohort 1 **24** Cohort 2

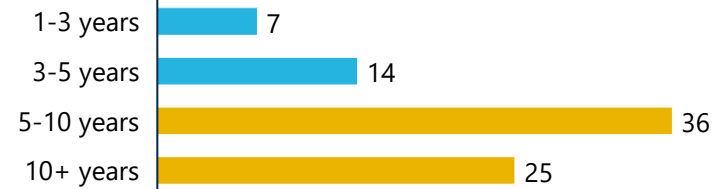
23 Cohort 3 **24** Cohort 4

From all states and territories



■ Cohort 1 ■ Cohort 3
■ Cohort 2 ■ Cohort 4

CEO tenures varied between 1 and 10+ years with the majority having been CEO for **5+ years***



*out of 82 survey respondents

5 participants identified as **First Nations**

1 participant identified as having a **disability**

2 participants identified as **nonbinary**

94 SULs participated, from diverse experience backgrounds, including:

HR
Operations
Research
Programs
Marketing
Economics
Partnerships
Casting

Some were experienced Deputy CEOs, some were not

CEO AND SUL MOVEMENT ACROSS COHORTS

71 CEOs remain in the roles they had when they undertook the program



15 from cohort 1
15 from cohort 2
17 from cohort 3
24 from cohort 4

23 CEOs moved on to new opportunities either during or after the program



8 from cohort 1
9 from cohort 2
6 from cohort 3
0 from cohort 4

30 SULs moved on to new opportunities either during or after the program



10 from cohort 1
10 from cohort 2
8 from cohort 3
2 from cohort 4

ORGANISATIONS

HAD VARYING REVENUE*

SIZE

<\$1.5M \$1.5M-\$3M \$3M-\$5M \$5M-\$10M \$10M-\$25M \$25M+



*out of 82 survey respondents

A range of sectors participated, including:

ENVIRONMENT SECTOR PEAKS
HEALTH EDUCATION SOCIAL WELFARE
PHILANTHROPY DISABILITY ADVOCACY
ARTS AND CULTURE CHILDREN AND YOUTH

70 organisations service regional, rural and remote areas



3 Outcomes and impact

The SILA program continues to deliver transformative outcomes across individual, organisational, and ecosystem levels.

The objectives of the SILA program are to:

1. Support **CEOs** to improve their understanding of self while building self-leadership and leadership cultures.
2. Support NFP leaders to advance the capability of their **organisations**.
3. Create a stronger social purpose **ecosystem** through a strategic network of system-thinking leaders, who can support and guide each other through conflict, crisis and opportunity.

This section explores the outcomes related to these objectives:

- 3.1 Cohort 4 participants led with greater intention and strategic confidence, supported by improved wellbeing and shared problem solving.
- 3.2 Organisations experienced leadership renewal and strategic recalibration.
- 3.3 Cohort 4 CEOs are actively planning and contributing to the broader ecosystem.

3.1 Cohort 4 participants led with greater intention and strategic confidence, supported by improved wellbeing and shared problem-solving.

3.1.1 The SILA program empowered CEOs to lead with greater confidence, intention and strategic authority.

Cohort 4 CEOs gained the skills to lead with greater confidence, strategic clarity, and purpose. Seven CEOs reported a profound increase in confidence, which they attributed to a deeper understanding of their leadership identity.¹ This growth enabled them to articulate who they are as leaders and how they can best serve their organisations. Two additional participants also reported moving away from the need to constantly prove themselves in their role, instead leading with greater authority and intention.¹

SILA's tools and frameworks provided the language and structure for individual CEO transformation. Participants noted that the tools and frameworks helped them become more reflective and deliberate in their leadership. Three CEOs and five SULs, referring to their CEO's leadership, described increased agility and the ability to "gear-shift" their style depending on context.¹² This was particularly valuable during reintegration post-sabbatical, enabling CEOs to tailor their communication and remain adaptive to team and environmental needs. One CEO described learning to "sit in discomfort and disappointment," integrating adaptive leadership principles into their style. Thirteen CEOs also reported greater leadership maturity and self-awareness.¹

A key shift was the move from operational entanglement to strategic focus. Twelve participants described stepping back from day-to-day tasks to concentrate on organisational strategy. Originally outlined by Heifetz and Linsky (2009), the metaphor of "moving from the dancefloor to the balcony" powerfully captures the shift: stepping away from immediate operations to gain a broader strategic perspective.³ SILA helped CEOs observe patterns, make strategic interventions, and refocus their leadership. Twelve CEOs reflected that the ability to alternate between high-level perspective and on-the-ground engagement was critical to sustained leadership impact. Participants redirected their energy toward advocacy and innovation because of this strategic reorientation (see section 3.3.1).

“It's given me confidence in my leadership... helped me to understand who I am as a leader ... and ... understanding that I'm able to be a more effective leader.

- Cohort 4 CEO ”

“I'm a lot more confident that I'm the right person to lead this organisation right now, which to be honest, I wasn't prior to SILA.

- Cohort 4 CEO ”

“He's been very consciously...trying to stay...on the balcony, not on the dance floor.

- Cohort 4 SUL ”

¹ Cohort 4 CEO interviews; ² Cohort 4 SUL interviews; ³ Heifetz R and Linsky M et al (2009) The Practice of Adaptive Leadership Mass: Harvard Business Review Press

3.1.2 SILA improved CEO wellbeing and resilience, contributing to sustainable leadership.

The SILA program helped cohort 4 CEOs improve their wellbeing and resilience. Through sabbatical leave, structured reflection, and leadership development, the program delivered both immediate and lasting benefits to personal wellbeing and leadership behaviour. Post-program survey data in Figure 4 shows that 78 per cent of CEOs agreed or strongly agreed they could better manage their wellbeing as leaders.¹ This reflects the marked uplift in individual and interpersonal effectiveness.

The sabbatical enabled transformational renewal. Thirteen participants commented on only recognising the extent of their fatigue after they stepped away from their roles. Several CEOs credited the experience with preventing burnout, saying they used the time to reconnect with personal interests, rest, or engage in creative projects.² One CEO worked with a psychologist to rebuild their personal life and establish healthier boundaries, while two others, including a founder, noted a new ability to separate their identity from their organisation.² This pause fostered greater self-awareness of their leadership identity and reinforced the importance of prioritising wellbeing (see Learner Journey 2).

Wellbeing gains translated into sustainable changes in leadership behaviour. CEOs self reflection alongside SUL and board member perspectives highlight that CEOs:^{2,3,4}

- were more deliberate in decision-making, better at setting boundaries, and more willing to delegate,
- were less likely to sacrifice wellbeing for performance,
- paced themselves more effectively and modelled healthier leadership practices,
- were more attuned to their emotional states and better equipped to address stressors constructively,
- embraced leadership styles grounded in reflection, empathy, and long-term impact, and
- no longer experienced “compassion burnout” to the same extent.

“ I’m a lot more confident in the gifts that I can bring into the CEO position now and I’m coming with a lot more resolve and authority. ”
- Cohort 4 CEO

“ It’s not a good role model to be just working non-stop all the time... I’ve started playing soccer again. ”
- Cohort 4 CEO

“ She’s come back with more calmness... pacing herself... more conscious of the wellbeing of the team. ”
- Cohort 4 SUL

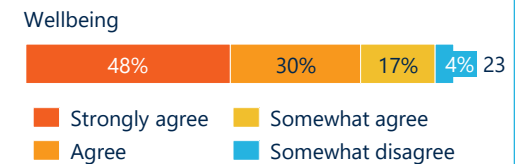
Learner Journey 2 | SILA is a transformative experience for a CEOs’ wellbeing



One cohort 4 CEO is the founder of their organisation and had closely tied their identity and self-worth to the organisation. Prior to SILA, the participant was close to burnout, having regularly felt compassion fatigue, and experienced imposter syndrome as a CEO.

SILA was a transformative experience for the CEO. They returned to their organisation with renewed confidence and clarity in their role. They are now more mindful of the risk of burnout and have learnt to say ‘no’. They now prioritise their wellbeing, at the expense of not engaging with every opportunity for the organisation, but in being more strategic in the sector.

Figure 4 | To what extent do you agree with the following statement¹: I can now better manage my wellbeing as a leader



¹ Cohort 4 post-program participant survey n=23, Nous analysis; ² Cohort 4 CEO interviews; ³ Cohort 4 SUL interviews; ⁴ Cohort 4 board interviews

3.1.3 Cohort 4 created a trusted network that led to shared problem-solving.

“ The learning circles are very valuable, but I don’t think until at least ...five sessions in you go, ‘Oh wow... listen to what we’re saying to each other.... we wouldn’t have said [this] three or four sessions ago’.

- Cohort 4 CEO

“ You could feel the depth of collective experience without any hint of ego... it was energising.

- Cohort 4 CEO

Cohort 4 built a high-trust network of CEO peers that delivers personal and professional value. This is consistent across cohorts, as evidenced in the cross-cohort insight box on the right. SILA created safe spaces for vulnerability, honest feedback, and authentic dialogue across sector and geographic boundaries. This included the learning circles, immersive retreats, and ongoing opportunities for peer engagement. Seventy per cent of survey respondents strongly agreed the program encouraged continued learning and peer conversation, and as shown in Figure 5, 81 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that they now have a peer support network¹. Nine participants noted that developing peer relationships was a key benefit of the program (see Figure 6).

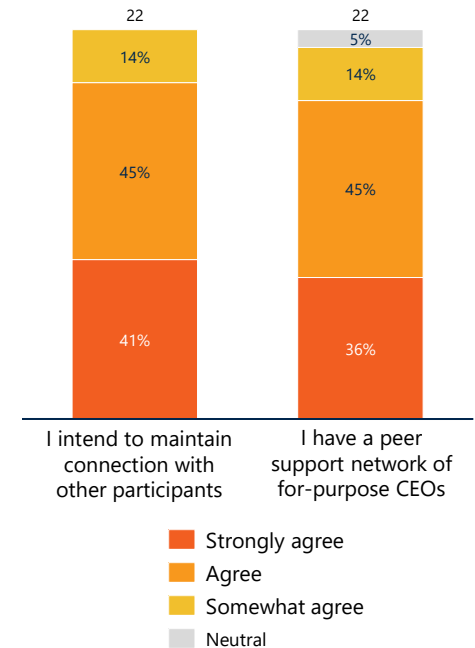
The CEO peer network became a vital source of resilience. Participants regularly turned to peers for advice, encouragement, and shared learning. Participants extended the relationships they formed during the program beyond its formal conclusion, evolving them into ongoing relationships. For example:

- Two CEOs regularly meet for dog walks to reduce isolation, exchange ideas and strengthen mutual accountability. These meet ups have already delivered tangible benefits – one CEO used a solution shared by the other CEO to solve a similar organisational problem.²
- Two CEOs regularly meet up for neighbourhood runs to enhance their wellbeing.
- Seven CEOs described how the peer network helped them think beyond their own organisations. Participants continue to support each other through collective leadership efforts and ecosystem engagement (see section 3.3.2).

Figure 6 | Categorised benefits identified by participants of the program (n=18)¹



Figure 5 | Most participants agree and strongly agree that they now have a peer support network of for-purpose CEOs¹



Broader SILA program insights

As heard across all four cohorts, CEOs of not-for-profit organisations often do not have a peer network of like-minded CEOs to rely upon. This is a key benefit of SILA in enabling the development of this network for shared problem solving and initiative development.

¹ Cohort 4 post-program participant survey n=23, Nous analysis; ² Cohort 4 CEO interviews

3.2 Organisations experienced leadership renewal and strategic recalibration.

3.2.1 Organisations strengthened leadership and resilience through SILA's creative disruption.

SILA catalysed leadership renewal across participating organisations, through strengthening internal capability, elevating emerging leaders, and embedding cultural and operational shifts that extended beyond the sabbatical period. CEOs did not simply take a break during the sabbatical; the period triggered ripple effects across their organisations in shifting responsibility and culture, especially for SULs. These organisational impacts included:

- **Enabling SULs to step into CEO roles and build capability.** SULs gained hands-on experience leading their organisations as "Intern CEOs". CEOs observed that SULs developed a deeper understanding of the CEO role and its responsibilities. Post-program survey data in Figure 7 shows that ninety-two per cent of CEOs agreed or strongly agreed that their SULs developed new skills and confidence through the program.¹
- **Building SULs strategic clarity and career direction.** SULs overcame imposter syndrome, clarified their aspirations, and reported increased confidence and a greater understanding of the strategic demands of the role.² One SUL described a shift from initial anxiety to assurance by the end of the sabbatical. Many SULs reported open conversations with their CEOs about future leadership opportunities (see Learner Journey 2), with six expressing interest in becoming CEOs, and one appointed by their board to become CEO of a sister organisation.²
- **Elevating leadership capability across teams.** The sabbatical created a 'ladder-effect', empowering organisational staff beyond the SUL. Most CEOs and SULs noted that teams remained elevated post-sabbatical, with CEOs returning more focused on strategy than operations.^{2,3} Eighty-three per cent of CEOs agreed their organisation is likely to enhance its capability and culture as a result of SILA.¹ One SUL noted their CEO was no longer a 'micro-manager' but had renewed trust in staff capability.²
- **Improving operational resilience and discipline.** Organisations embedded new systems and practices, such as formalised meeting styles and automated reporting.² These changes supported streamlining operations, reducing CEO operational entanglement, and empowering middle managers.

“This opportunity is going to show years down the track as a really important part of our organisation's future sustainability.”

- Cohort 4 CEO

“It ... confirmed to me that yes, I am capable. Yes, that's what I want in the future.”

- Cohort 4 SUL

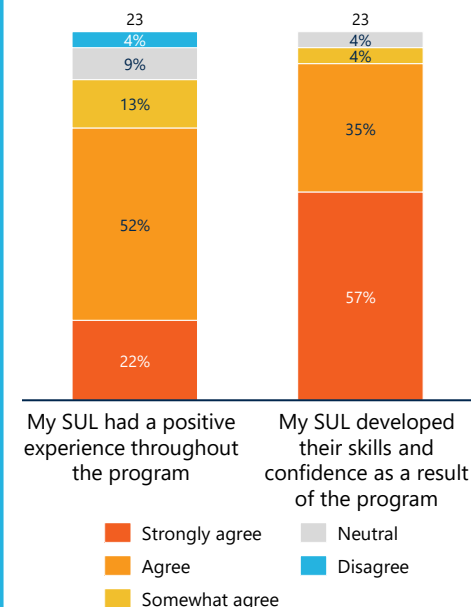
“There was a lot of anxiety ... in the first [webinar]... and to the end where it was like, 'Oh, I've got this.'... that confidence was really palpable.”

- Cohort 4 SUL

“We'll be running all 15 leaders through a specialist leadership programme and a diploma in management and leadership.”

- Cohort 4 CEO

Figure 7 | Most participants agree and strongly agree that their SUL had a positive experience throughout the program and developed their skills¹



Learner Journey 2 | SUL deepens their desire to be a CEO in the future



A medium-sized organisation appointed their deputy CEO as their step-up leader, who had previous experience acting as the CEO.

The SUL had a positive experience and further developed their confidence and leadership style. The SUL was grateful for the opportunity, which deepened their desire to become CEO in the future, but they are unsure if this will be at the current organisation.

The board and CEO are supportive of leadership development within the organisation, including providing additional coaching for the SUL.

¹ Cohort 4 post-program participant survey n=23, Nous analysis; ² Cohort 4 Step Up Leaders interviews; ³ Cohort 4 CEO interviews

Compared to previous cohorts, cohort 4 reported experiencing less organisation disruption during the sabbatical. This is likely due to larger scale of the participating organisations (as shown in the cohort 4 summary, more than one third of the organisations are over \$10m in size, the largest average size cohort to date) and the increased number of experienced SULs, including 3 deputy CEOs.^{1,2} One participant however emphasised the need to maintain momentum after the program to build on the sabbatical experience and further strengthen their organisation's capability.³

With the sustained leadership development and increased capability across organisations, CEOs were enabled to prioritise strategic outcomes over operational demands once they returned from sabbatical. This renewed focus on strategy is a key benefit of the SILA program and was consistent across cohorts, see the box on the right. One CEO formally appointed their SUL as interim CEO to focus on internal innovation, a few organisations formalised deputy CEO positions (see Learner Journey 1), while another took on an internal coaching role for their executive team, guided by their leadership manifesto.³ The "balcony" metaphor helped CEOs maintain strategic perspective, with four organisations embedding these shifts into their strategic plans.^{2,3}

Learner Journey 1 | Board creates a new Deputy CEO position



The SUL of an organisation is at the end of their career. They stepped up during the sabbatical to enable the CEO to participate in the SILA program, but they had no intention of being CEO in the future. They were the only person able to step up due to their deep organisational knowledge and operations skills.

The SUL was grateful for their experience of SILA and especially valued the leadership coaching which they had never had before. However, they noted that someone else in the organisation may have benefitted more from stepping up.

Acknowledging the gaps in succession planning, the board approved the creation of a Deputy CEO role to support the CEO and hired for this role externally to support succession planning.

Broader SILA program insights



CEOs across all cohorts highlighted the challenge of spending too much time on operational rather than strategic activities. This may be due to capability or capacity issues, or a desire to be more directly involved in delivering social impact and value.

"It's been transformational for the maturity of the organisation."

"Our senior leadership team... felt more empowered as a result of the organisation being able to keep running without the CEO."

"I think it's helped build a culture of trust... I realised that jumping in was making them feel like I didn't trust them."

"Not having me in the space resulted in senior staff having more ownership... it's a very different scenario to last year."

"We've implemented like an L10 meeting style... more formal about the way we meet... more disciplined in that space."

"The willingness to step up, the drive is there."

"Allowed the team to work differently together and gave people the opportunity to shine."

"We got a lot done in a calmer, quieter, inclusive and collaborative way"

"My big focus area is... evolve, don't devolve... how do we keep building on it, not devolving back to how things were."

"A kind of democratisation of some of our decision-making processes... the quality of the conversation... has changed."

"I've matured in the way that I'm doing things... I can see it already. Just in a few months that it's helping us mature."

3.2.2 SILA's creative disruption exposed organisational gaps.

While the sabbatical model catalysed leadership development and cultural renewal, it also surfaced vulnerabilities in leadership pipelines, wellbeing, and organisational culture. These insights have prompted reflection and, in some cases, immediate intervention to address the challenges revealed.

- **SULs experienced wellbeing risks and burnout.** Seven SULs reported wellbeing concerns, particularly in smaller organisations, or where their sabbatical handover from their CEO was insufficient.¹ The dual pressure of maintaining their substantive roles while acting as CEO led to a feeling of burnout for four SULs. Despite valuing the sabbatical toolkit and pre-sabbatical coaching, four SULs felt underprepared and attributed this to inadequate preparation by their CEOs (see Learner Journey 3).¹
- **Organisational fatigue and disruption emerged.** In two cases, SUL leadership during the sabbatical caused disruption, including staff turnover and dissatisfaction. This required the CEOs to intervene immediately upon return, limiting their ability to apply program learnings due to the need to focus on operational tasks.^{2,3} This was more likely in organisations that did not have an obvious SUL (see cross-cohort insight in the box on the right).
- **SULs reassessed their leadership aspirations.** Seven SULs concluded that the CEO role did not align with their career goals.¹ Motivation for becoming a SUL varied, and many stepped up solely to enable their CEO's participation in SILA which influenced the extent to which they benefited from the program. However, nine SULs reported a stronger understanding of how to support their CEOs more effectively post-sabbatical.¹
- **The sabbatical surfaced cultural and equity issues.** Four SULs experienced personal challenges including HR issues and a lack of board support, which limited the benefits they could gain from the program.¹ These challenges were not caused by the creative disruption and cannot be prevented by the SILA team, but were surfaced through the experience. Two SULs reported strained relationships with the CEO upon their return (see an example in Learner Journey 3).
- **Turnover highlighted organisational instability.** Three SULs left their organisations following the sabbatical experience. There were three key drivers for this, in one case stepping up highlighted significant capability gaps in the SUL that convinced the board that they were no longer appropriate for the executive team, in another the creative disruption exposed existing challenges between a SUL and their organisation that led to their resignation, and one organisation realised that the SUL's substantive role was not mission critical.^{1,2,3}

“ Our SUL wasn't ready and wasn't capable of acting as CEO... the sabbatical created chaos ”

- Cohort 4 board member and GSI participant

“ [The SUL] felt extremely overwhelmed...[they would] never want to be a CEO now ”

- Cohort 4 CEO

“ I did it for her... not looking for ambition, but I now better understand her context ”

- Cohort 4 SUL

Learner Journey 3 | Sabbatical creates tension between SUL and CEO



One cohort 4 SUL is from a large organisation and experienced strong pressure from the board to deliver high performance.

The SUL had a difficult step-up experience due to limited support during the transition. They found the CEO role isolating and struggled with the demands of leading a large organisation, especially without wider support.

The SUL has a very different leadership style to the CEO. The SUL and CEO now have a strained relationship due to the lack of support the SUL received, and the SUL is now planning to leave their organisation.

Broader SILA program insights



As heard across all four cohorts, many not-for-profit organisations do not prioritise succession planning, and do not have a clear leadership pipeline.

6 SULs

In total have left their organisation since the program.

6 SULs reported a renewed desire to be a CEO.

7 SULs

reported not wanting to be CEO in the future.

¹ Cohort 4 SUL interviews; ² Cohort 4 CEO interviews; ³ Cohort 4 board interviews

3.2.3 SILA equipped boards to better support strategic leadership and social impact.

SILA catalysed a shift in board engagement, enabling boards to play a more strategic and values-aligned role in supporting leadership and driving social impact. The GSI course provided board members a shared language with their CEOs regarding leadership. As shown in Figure 8, 79 per cent of survey respondents who provided an answer, agreed or strongly agreed that their board members found the GSI program valuable.¹ The board members themselves also reported that the GSI course had positive impacts. As shown in Figure 10, 100 per cent either agreed or strongly agreed that the content they learned in the course will enable them to be better social purpose leaders. Ninety-six per cent also agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident to apply what they had learned throughout the GSI course in their role.⁵ In one case, a board member applied their learnings from the GSI course to other boards they serve on, extending SILA's influence beyond the individual organisations. However, the relevance of the GSI course varied, with three board members noting that content focused on the human services sector was less applicable to their context or background.²

General board support for CEO participation in SILA was widespread, reflecting a cultural readiness to invest in leadership development. Nine CEOs and ten SULs pointed to the support of their board throughout the process, including supporting the CEOs participation in SILA, as well as support for the SUL^{3,4}. Examples of board support included:

- Approving funding for executive coaching and internal leadership initiatives inspired by SILA and embedding SILA principles into governance practices to uplift organisational maturity.² As outlined in Figure 9, 91 per cent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their organisation intends to invest more in leadership development following the program. Eleven organisations used capacity funds to support professional development for executive teams and to pilot new leadership structures.¹
- Maturing governance and succession planning in response to the disruption, proactively addressing leadership continuity. Two board members commented on revising their board agendas to include additional strategic foresight discussions.
- Approving mini-sabbaticals for senior leaders, following the SILA example, to reinforce a culture of resilience.²
- Establishing regular meetings between board chairs and SULs during the program for additional support.^{3,4}

These actions signalled an evolution of board governance from traditional oversight to stewardship of leadership culture and systemic change, with boards taking a more proactive role in leadership sustainability and investment.

“ I enjoyed [the program] more than I thought I would... even for experienced board members. Definitely some things I've taken back and started working with on the board... beneficiary-focused leadership and systems thinking. ”

- Cohort 4 board member
and GSI participant

“ The board recognised how much risk we were holding if I was to leave... they've [now] supported leadership development. ”

- Cohort 4 CEO

“ The board became more involved in leadership development and succession planning. ”

- Cohort 4 CEO

Figure 8 | Majority of participants agree that their board members found value in the GSI program.¹

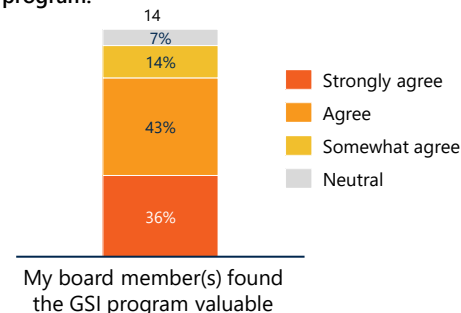


Figure 9 | Most participants agreed to some extent to invest in their senior leadership team¹

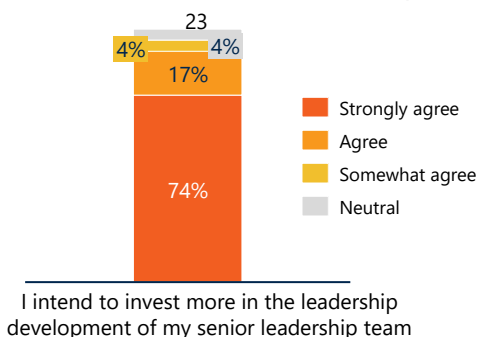
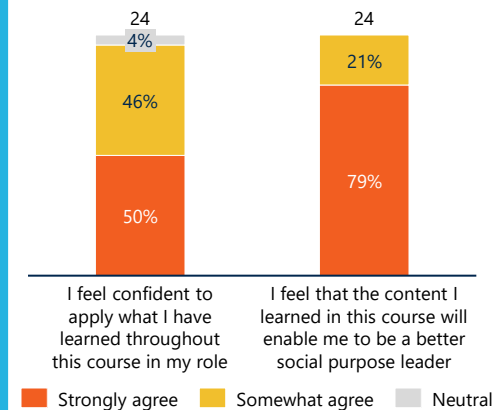


Figure 10 | Board members reported strong improvements following the GSI program.⁵



¹ Cohort 4 post-program participant survey n=23, Nous analysis; ² Cohort 4 board interviews; ³ Cohort 4 CEO interviews; ⁴ Cohort 4 SUL interviews;

⁵ Governance for social impact evaluation survey n=26

3.3 Cohort 4 CEOs are actively planning and contributing to the broader ecosystem.

3.3.1 SILA equipped CEOs with the language, frameworks and confidence to lead beyond their organisations, advocate for systemic change and influence sector-wide reform.

SILA equipped cohort 4 CEOs with the strategic mindset, language, and frameworks to lead beyond their organisations and advocate for systemic change. Ninety-two per cent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed they could make a sector-wide difference with the skills they gained (see Figure 11).¹ The program's emphasis on systems thinking, adaptive leadership, and cross-sector collaboration enabled CEOs to engage more confidently in policy and advocacy work and deepen their sector partners (see Learner Journey 1). One CEO became "more vocal" in shaping their organisation's ecosystem role and another sought to replicate SILA's retreat model with a sister organisation to extend its impact.²

CEOs applied systems thinking to advocacy, strategy, and community engagement to drive eco-system level impacts. This was demonstrated through a range of practices including:

- Participating in national policy conversations, government advisory groups, and high-level committees, to expand sector influence.²
- Negotiating new contracts with similar international organisations (e.g. one arts sector CEO is in discussion with international counterparts for joint service delivery).³
- Building cross-sector coalitions to address housing, health, and social service challenges. For example, one CEO in women's health described leveraging relationships with local councils and businesses, groups not traditionally aligned to women's services, to build broader coalitions focused on improving outcomes for children and families.²
- Strengthening partnerships with other organisations and government to advocate for systemic changes such as new policies or funding models to ensure organisational sustainability.
- Unifying regional peak bodies and launching sector-wide innovation initiatives, including social impact programs and cross-industry collaborations.² For example, one participant has created an online platform to share project ideas across their sector, which is to be pitched to national government.

While CEOs are now more confident and intentional in driving broader impact, it was acknowledged that embedding these changes will require sustained effort over time.²

“ The program has given me a narrative and a language set to talk about systems change, which has been very useful. ”

- Cohort 4 CEO

“ I've started getting into national level conversations... I can funnel more funds and interest towards us. ”

- Cohort 4 CEO

“ Aboriginal Affairs is inherently a systems-based sector... the program validated the importance of collaborative partnerships and root cause analysis. ”

- Cohort 4 CEO

Learner Journey 1 | CEO uses their sabbatical period to engage in outreach

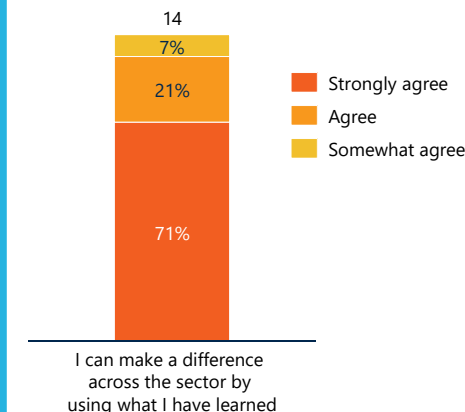


One cohort 4 participant has been CEO of their organisation for ten years. They have been very active in their organisation and have led most initiatives. They have had lots of ideas on how to best support their sector but were beginning to feel burnout in their role.

During the sabbatical, the CEO identified new initiatives. These initiatives were informed by their overseas travel during the sabbatical, after witnessing how other organisations were contributing to their environments. The CEO plans to implement similar programs back at their organisation.

During the sabbatical, the CEO engaged with community leaders and partners over informal lunches and meetings to deepen their sector partnerships and discuss shared initiatives.

Figure 11. All participants strongly agree that they can make a difference across their sector³



¹ Cohort 4 post-program participant survey n=23, Nous analysis; ² Cohort 4 CEO interviews; ³ Cohort 4 board interviews

3.3.2 The peer networks enable ongoing sector influence, leading to benefits beyond the program duration.

The SILA peer network is a core mechanism for sustaining sector influence and cross-sector collaboration beyond the program's formal end. CEOs described forming lasting bonds which fostered trust and a shared language that made collaboration more seamless and effective.¹ This network has reinforced sector-wide shifts, particularly in First Nations and health organisations, where systems thinking and holistic approaches are foundational (see Learner Journey 3).

Participants now collaborate across geographies and sectors in co-designing initiatives. The shared leadership frameworks developed through SILA facilitated joint advocacy, collaborative service models, and new sector-wide initiatives. For example, 2 CEOs in the same sector are working together to secure government funding, while others reported stronger strategic relationships and more coordinated sector engagement.¹ One CEO reflected on feeling "stronger and more powerful together" when engaging in sector-wide advocacy, while others credited the network with helping them navigate complex challenges.¹ A board member noted that their CEO, previously hesitant to collaborate due to funding competition, now actively works with peer organisations to advocate for shared causes.² The SILA peer network is not a by-product but a central mechanism through which SILA's impact is sustained and amplified across the ecosystem.

Learner Journey 3 | First Nations CEO has a renewed focus on advocacy



A First Nations participant in the SILA program was already deeply engaged in systems thinking and advocacy, as a core tenet of their cultural foundations, and already had a broad support and peer network including other First Nations leaders.

They engaged and connected with local communities during the retreats. Their participation in the program has given the CEO the space to further invest in community relationships and focus on further growth opportunities for the organisation.

"I elevated my gaze to the system and the sector... how can I get impact in that area?"

"I brought back an idea from one of the countries I was at... and now we're running new projects."

"I've put myself into high-level committees... like advising the federal minister for NDIS."

"I've started getting into national level conversations... I can funnel more funds and interest towards us"

"We've now got the social trader certification... thinking about ourselves in that kind of broader social ecosystem."

"Now I'm presenting into networks of veteran organisations... I'm getting into the circles to hear all the different perspectives."

"Pre-SILA we kept each other abreast... now we're looking at co-service delivery and who else we need to be bringing into that conversation."

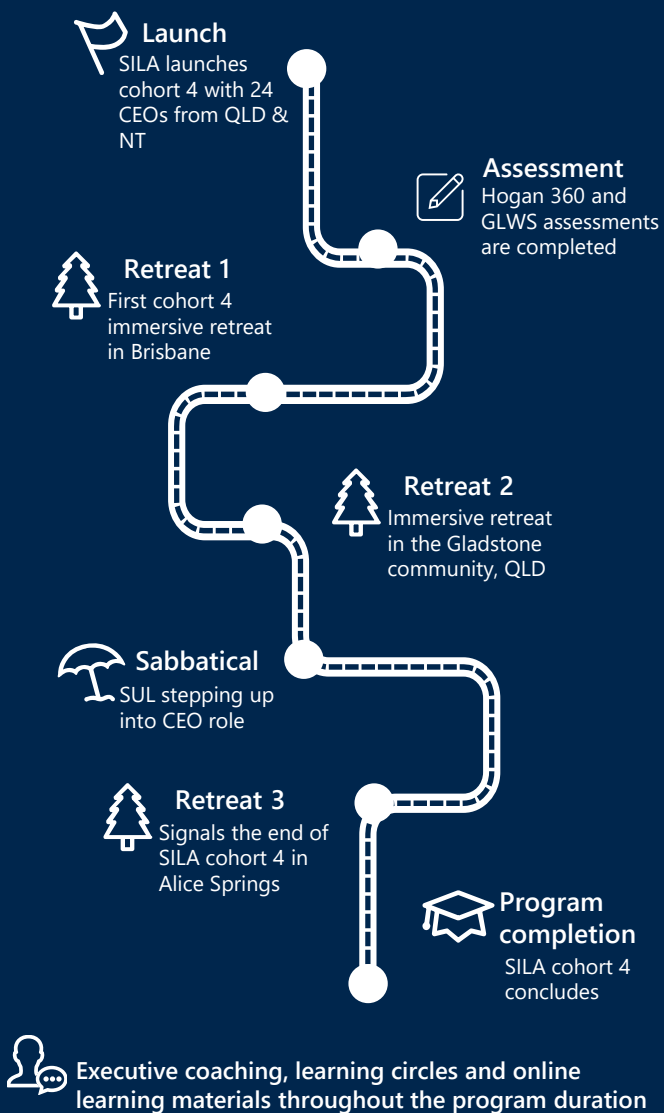
"I'm on all these committees... ministers advisory group, social impact hub group, First Nations..."

"I've been able to better understand how to use levers within the system... such as local council or philanthropy... to build collaborations and coalitions."

"It just reinforced a lot of the understanding of the importance of collaborative kind of partnerships... the need to dig a little deeper and look at root causes"

¹ Cohort 4 CEO interviews; ² Cohort 4 board interviews; ³ Cohort 4 post-program participant survey n=23, Nous analysis

Participant learner journeys highlight diverse experiences across the cohort.



Learner journey 1: Through the SILA experience, one CEO transitioned from a hands-on, operational leader to a strategic, ecosystem-oriented changemaker, deepening organisational impact while rediscovering personal purpose.

A long-serving CEO, deeply embedded in their organisation and facing burnout, saw SILA as a timely opportunity to reimagine their leadership and organisational future.

One cohort 4 participant has been CEO of their organisation for **ten years**. They had been very **active in their organisation** and led most initiatives, with their SUL referring to them as a '**micro-manager**'. Prior to SILA, they had been feeling **burnt out** in their role and considered leaving their organisation, however there was **no clear succession plan in place**. They heard about the SILA program through connecting with a SILA alumni and were very excited to participate.

The SILA program enabled the CEO to step back and focus on strategic initiatives, while the organisation had leveraged the SUL's operational leadership and board support to initiate succession planning and strengthen future capacity.

The SUL was approaching the end of their career and stepped up to support the CEO but had **no intention of being CEO in the future**. They led organisational operations and had deep organisational knowledge. During the sabbatical, the CEO **developed new ideas to bring back to their organisation, including advocacy and sector initiatives**. The board was supportive of the **creation of a new role to support the CEO, which will be hired for externally as part of succession planning**.



The program enabled organisation capability development through stepping up



The program pushed the organisation to reassess succession planning.

SILA catalysed a leadership transformation, enabling the CEO to shift from operational control to strategic empowerment. This built organisational capacity, deepened board recognition, and fostered a more distributed leadership model.



[The CEO has come back with a] renewed curiosity ... of what they do, how to do it better, and for the purpose of helping people.



-Indicative board member

SILA proved to be a valuable investment for the CEO and their organisation. They **shifted from a hands-on approach and operational focus** to a more **strategic, ecosystem-oriented leadership style**. After returning from sabbatical, the CEO introduced new initiatives but **intentionally empowered other managers to lead** these projects to build organisational capacity for the future. This shift was supported by managers who stepped up during the sabbatical. The **board gained a deeper appreciation for the CEO's role and the organisation's social impact**. The SUL expressed gratitude for the SILA experience and valued the leadership coaching but noted that someone else might have benefited more from stepping up.

Learner journey 2

SILA empowered a founder-CEO to reset their wellbeing, embrace strategic leadership, and invest in developing their executive team, transforming personal fatigue into organisational renewal and future-focused capacity.

A founder-CEO, deeply entwined with their organisation's identity and facing compassion fatigue, entered SILA seeking renewal and leadership growth. One participant is the founder and CEO of their organisation and had closely tied their identity to the organisation. Before SILA they had not completed any formal leadership training or coaching. The founder had been experiencing compassion fatigue and had been neglecting their own wellbeing, including not taking any breaks from work. The SUL had their own career ambitions but was very supportive of the CEO and the organisation's mission.

The CEO used the capacity funds to invest in leadership coaching for the SUL and the executive team. SILA and the sabbatical period had enabled a reset of wellbeing practices for the CEO and confirmed the organisation's strategic priorities. The board approved extended leave for the SUL and executive team.



The program had shifted the CEOs mindset around the importance of investing in wellbeing



The SUL had deepened their desire to be CEO in the future



The program had reinforced strategic thinking

SILA transformed the CEO's confidence and strategic clarity, fostering wellbeing, peer collaboration, and leadership development across the executive team. The CEO now feels more confident in their role, especially when engaging with national bodies and new external partners and no longer experiences imposter syndrome. SILA has enabled them to be more mindful of the risk of burnout, and they have learnt to say 'no' when needed, to focus on their strategic goals and wellbeing. The CEO supported further training and coaching for the executive team. Deep connections with their SILA peers have strengthened their network, and they are now collaborating on shared initiatives with their cohort. The SUL has deepened their desire to be CEO in the future but is unsure if this will be at their current organisation.

Learner journey 3

SILA provided a seasoned First Nations CEO with the space to reflect, recalibrate, and invest in community leadership, while revealing organisational maturity and the critical need for more inclusive support structures in leadership transitions.

A cohort 4 CEO leads a large organisation and felt strong pressure from the board to deliver high performance. As a First Nations leader, they are already deeply engaged in systems thinking and sector advocacy, with a broad support network including other First Nations organisations. They had previously attended leadership programs and received coaching and had been eager to deepen their learning through SILA. They had already invested in their wellbeing and had looked forward to connecting with local communities.

- The SUL had a difficult step-up experience due to limited support during the transition. They found the CEO role isolating and struggled with the demands of leading a large organisation.
- The First Nations participant had not felt culturally safe during the first and second retreat, but they had valued the third retreat for its sensitivity.
- The board, while supportive of SILA, had not received much value from the GSI program due to the lack of sector relevance.



Dedicated time for reflection strengthened their leadership style and the importance of sector engagement



Strategic enterprise shifted to build a more resilient organisation

SILA offered the CEO a reflective pause that revealed organisational strength and enabled renewed focus on strategic growth, though it had also surfaced unresolved tensions in leadership support that led to a strained relationship with the SUL. The participant had appreciated the investment in the SILA program but reflected that in hindsight it would have been more valuable earlier in their career. They enjoyed the time and space to reflect on their leadership style. The organisation stepped up in their absence, and it highlighted the organisations self-sufficiency and maturity. This has given the CEO the space to further invest in community relationships and focus on growth opportunities. The SUL and CEO now have a strained relationship due to the lack of support the SUL felt, and the SUL is now planning to leave the organisation.

4 Alumni Outcomes and Impacts

4. SILA alumni spread leadership practice, drove sector collaboration, and contributed to better outcomes for communities

The evidence from the 1-year and 2-year alumni surveys shows that SILA's influence extends well beyond individual participants and their organisations. Alumni are acting as multipliers - sharing leadership practice, driving sector collaboration, and creating the conditions for improved outcomes for communities. This section synthesises how these ripple effects are realised across the sector and what they mean for the broader social purpose ecosystem.

The section includes the following:

- 4.1 Alumni sustained program benefits and have spread their learning beyond their organisation.
- 4.2 Alumni credit the program for catalysing positive organisational change.
- 4.3 Alumni are driving sector collaboration that contribute to better community outcomes.

4.1 Alumni sustained program benefits and have spread their learning beyond their organisation.

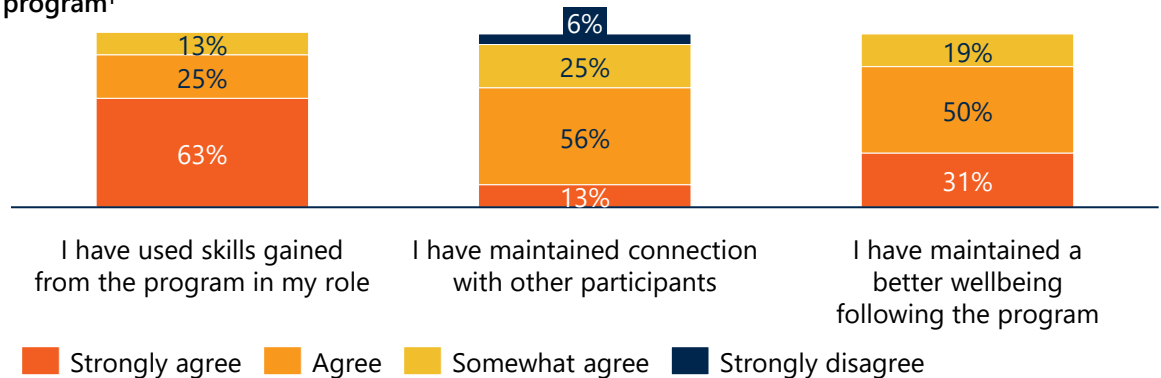
Alumni have sustained personal benefits beyond the program. In the cohort 3 1-year post-program survey (see Figure 11):

- One hundred per cent of cohort 3 alumni reported they have used skills gained from the program in their roles.
- Ninety-four per cent have maintained connection with other participants.
- One hundred per cent have to some degree maintained better wellbeing following the program.

Cohort 2 alumni also reflected strong positive personal impacts in the 2-year post-program survey. In their qualitative responses, they consistently expressed gratitude and appreciation for the opportunity. They also overwhelmingly described the program as a pivotal experience that has enhanced their professional confidence and shaped their long-term career outlook.²

SILA alumni have spread their learnings to the broader system. Nearly three-quarters (73 per cent) have mentored others outside their organisation because of the program.

Figure 11 | Cohort 3 participants have sustained personal positive impacts following the program¹



“ [The greatest personal impact has been] the friendships and connections I made. Also the tools I learned. I am much more comfortable sitting in the discomfort now - and I have a more clear understanding of what my values are and how far I am willing to compromise

- Cohort 2 CEO in alumni survey ”

¹ Alumni 1-year survey – Cohort 1 n=11, Cohort 2 n=16, Cohort 3 n=16; ² Alumni 2-year survey, n=13

4.2 Alumni credit the program for catalysing positive organisational change.

The ripple effect of SILA is evident in organisational change. In cohort 3:

- ninety-one per cent of CEOs reported that their organisation has enhanced its capability and culture
- eighty-six per cent observed tangible improvements across key business measures.¹

Among cohort 2 alumni, 87 per cent reported increased investment in leadership development for their senior teams.²

These outcomes suggest that the program catalyses broader organisational transformation - fostering stronger leadership pipelines, embedding cultural shifts, and improving performance.

4.3 Alumni are driving sector collaboration that contribute to better community outcomes.

Alumni from both cohort 2 and 3 have demonstrated a strong commitment to sector-wide collaboration and innovation following the program. They reported increased cross-organisation partnerships and joint advocacy efforts. One participant noted, "The WA SILA Cohort is developing a collaborative advocacy group. The connection to networks has been outstanding. We have also continued the learning circles."

These collaborative efforts are underpinned by the impact of SILA. Eighty-seven per cent of cohort 2 alumni agreed they have made a meaningful difference in the social purpose ecosystem due to SILA.² All cohort 3 alumni said they are applying SILA learnings to drive change within their organisations and across the sector.

Alumni have launched new programs, influenced funding models, and advocated for systemic change that benefits end users. Examples of system initiatives from cohort 3 that were inspired by SILA are below.

Examples of system initiatives from cohort 3 alumni survey:

Launching a new initiative to support NFPs and charities across their needs

Strengthened ACCO partnerships

Applying a systems lens to conversations with other leaders to drive strategic projects

Collaborating with partners on a significant national advocacy initiative

Sharing organisational thinking and strategies with other like-minded organisations

Ensuring consistent focus on people during system change

Broader SILA program insights



Among all previous cohorts, cohort 3 participants gave the highest average rating for how likely they were to recommend the SILA program one year after participation, scoring it **9.88** out of 10. This marks an increase from **9.55** for cohort 1 alumni and **9.81** for cohort 2 alumni.

Two years after the program cohort 2 participants reported an average score of **9.85** out of 10 on how likely they were to recommend the SILA program. This marks an increase from **9.78** for cohort 1 alumni two years after their participation.

“ Through the SILA program, I am also able to make better use of the political capital that I've built to shape policy, drive change and contribute to shaping conversations about key issues. In the past I tended to hold the political capital that I'd built, just in case there was a more important issue or reason to use it on in the future. ”

- Cohort 2 CEO in alumni survey

Overall, the cohorts of CEOs and for-purpose organisations have been diverse. The infographic on the following page provides a snapshot of alumni findings from cohorts 1, 2 and 3 and their organisations.

¹ Alumni 1-year survey – Cohort 1 n=11, Cohort 2 n=16, Cohort 3 n=16; ² Alumni 2-year survey, n=13

OVERVIEW OF COHORTS

70 CEO alumni

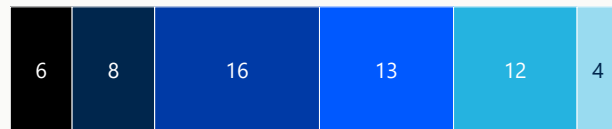
23 Cohort 1

24 Cohort 2

23 Cohort 3

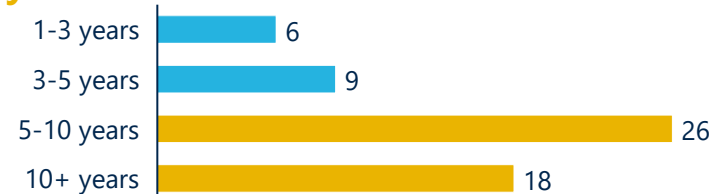
ORGANISATIONS HAD VARYING REVENUE* **size**

<\$1.5M \$1.5M-\$3M \$3M-\$5M \$5M-\$10M \$10M-\$25M \$25M+



*out of 59 survey respondents

CEO tenures varied between 1 and 10+ years with the majority having been CEO for **5+ years***



*out of 59 survey respondents

Reported ongoing **personal** impacts:

USEFUL TOOLS AND FRAMEWORKS
DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SELF
CONFIDENCE BROADENED PERSPECTIVES
SELF CARE PEER SUPPORT
DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF LEADERSHIP

Reported ongoing **organisation** impacts:

INCREASED TRAINING INVESTMENT
MORE STRATEGIC FOCUS CEO EXIT
LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORKS/LANGUAGE
REDUCED REACTIVITY TO ISSUES
SUL EXIT INCREASED ROLE CLARITY

Reported ongoing **system** impacts:

CONTINUED CONNECTION WITH NETWORK
NEW PARTNERSHIPS
INCREASED SYSTEMS REFLECTION
MORE CONFIDENT NAVIGATING ECOSYSTEM
BROADENED PERSPECTIVES

CEO AND SUL MOVEMENT ACROSS COHORTS

47

CEOs remain in the roles they had when they undertook the program



15 from cohort 1
15 from cohort 2
17 from cohort 3

24

CEOs moved on to new opportunities either during or after the program



8 from cohort 1
9 from cohort 2
6 from cohort 3

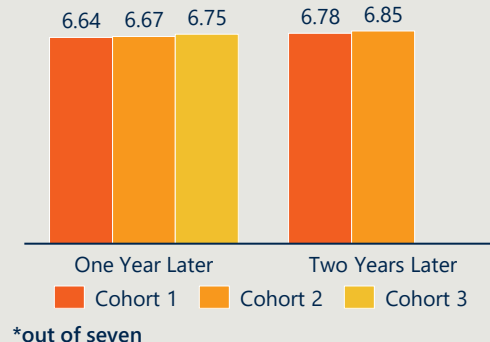
28

SULs moved on to new opportunities either during or after the program



10 from cohort 1
10 from cohort 2
8 from cohort 3

Average response* to "the investment of time and effort by myself and my organisation into the program was justified"



87%



Of cohort 3 participants who attended the alumni event strongly agreed they found it valuable

5 Effectiveness and efficiency

Elements of the SILA program continue to effectively and efficiently deliver a valuable participant experience

This section explores the program’s effectiveness and efficiency through four sub-sections:

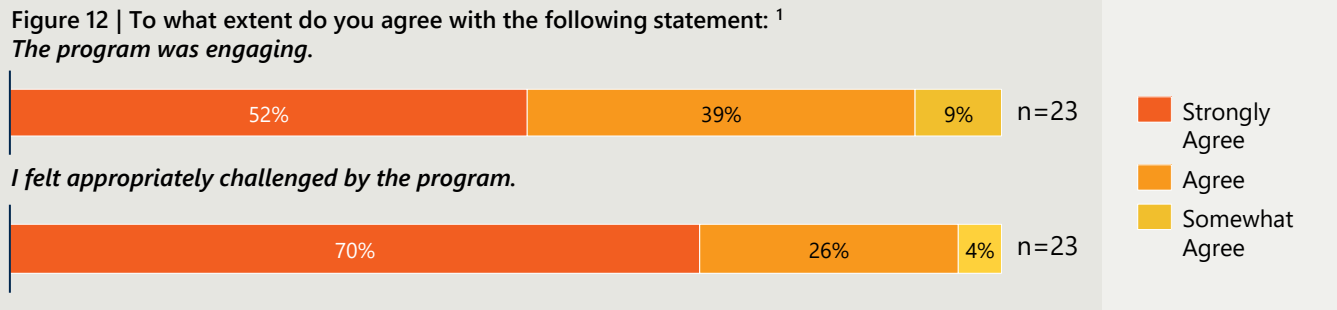
- 5.1 SILA’s unique approach contributed to a positive learner experience for cohort 4.
- 5.2 SILA delivers value through the combination and integration of program elements.
- 5.3 Participants identified several barriers that impacted their experience.

5.1 SILA’s unique approach contributed to a positive learner experience for cohort 4.

Cohort 4 participants reaffirmed SILA as a standout leadership program, describing it as transformational and deeply valuable.¹ Their feedback highlighted several distinctive features:

- **Holistic program design:** Participants appreciated the integration of diverse learning modalities, reflective practices, and strategic frameworks that supported both personal and professional growth.
- **Space for strategic reflection:** The program provided dedicated time and structure for participants to step back from operational demands and engage in high-level thinking about leadership challenges and opportunities.
- **Depth of learning through combined elements:** The synergy between experiential learning, peer dialogue, expert facilitation, and real-world application created a richer and more impactful learning experience than other leadership programs.
- **High engagement and challenge levels:** Ninety-one per cent of participants found the program engaging. All participants felt appropriately challenged, indicating a good balance between support and stretch.

These insights echo the positive observations documented in the evaluation reports for cohorts 1, 2, and 3, reinforcing SILA’s reputation for delivering high-quality leadership development.



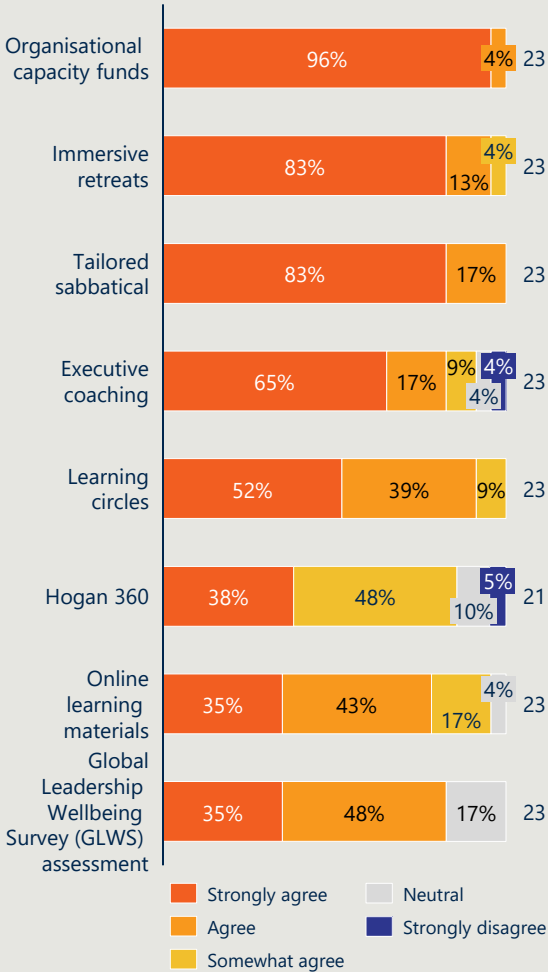
5.2 SILA delivers value through the combination and integration of program elements.

SILA elements contribute to a high-quality experience, with strong participant ratings across each. Cohort 4 showed increased approval of executive coaching (65 per cent strongly valued it, up from 55 per cent in cohort 3), which provided participants the right level of stretch and helped them challenge limiting assumptions.² They valued the support of a trusted advisor throughout the program.

Conversely, the proportion of strong approval declined for learning circles, online materials, Hogan 360, and the GLWS assessment compared to cohort 3.

¹ Cohort 4 post-program participant survey; ² Nous Evaluation of the SILA program – Cohort 3 report

Figure 13 | To what extent do you agree with the following statement: I found the following valuable.^{1,2,3}



“ With the funds we had we were able to help some of our staff access leadership courses they couldn’t afford otherwise. ”
- Cohort 4 CEO

While participants broadly valued the program, views on individual elements varied (see Figure 13):

- **Capacity funds enabled participation and secured board approval.** This role made it the highest rated element. Ninety-six per cent of participants strongly agreed the funds were valuable, consistent with cohort 3.
- **Sabbaticals delivered profound benefits including rest, strategic reframing, and personal renewal.** They were widely described as transformative and participants shared powerful reflections: “I didn’t realise how tired I was until I stopped,” said one, while another called it “a gift” that enabled them to write a book and reconnect with their purpose. Six CEOs specifically reported that they had returned to find their teams had stepped up, prompting meaningful shifts in delegation and strategic focus.
- **Retreats created a space for deep reflection and peer connection, making them highly valued experiences.** Participants described them as immersive environments that enabled strategic clarity and systems-level leadership thinking. Five noted the retreats helped them “step up to the balcony” and view their leadership through a broader lens.
- **Executive coaching increased confidence, strategic clarity, and improved team dynamics.** This element saw the greatest uplift in approval from cohort 3 to cohort 4 (10 per cent increase). Participants described the coaching as “absolutely fantastic” and “the most valuable part of the program.” Reflecting this positive experience, cohort 4 reported investing more heavily in coaching for executive teams and broader staff than previous cohorts.

Changes in sentiment for some elements highlight opportunities for improvement:

- **Learning circles saw a drop in strong agreement mostly due to scheduling challenges.** There was a 25 per cent decrease in ‘strongly agree’ responses for this element compared with cohort 3. Three participants reported that coordinating meetings was difficult specifically because organisations ran their sabbaticals at different times. Still, qualitative feedback underscored the learning circle’s enduring value, with one participant calling them “a highlight of the program” and another noting they “created a rare sense of psychological safety.”
- **Online learning materials saw a dip in approval driven by technical issues and mixed views on content volume.** There was a 33 per cent decrease in ‘strongly agree’ responses for this element compare with cohort 3. Participants appreciated the mixed-media formats and usability of the portal. However, three participants reported loading issues with video content. Three participants also wanted more materials, however, another participant noted it was difficult to get through the existing amount.
- **Assessments received mixed feedback.** There were notable drops in strong agreement for both GLWS (down six per cent), and Hogan 360 (down seventeen per cent) compared to cohort 3. While both tools supported coaching alignment, participants who had already completed similar assessment found them less valuable.

Overall, the integration of these elements created a powerful experience that enabled individual growth, strengthened organisations, and deepened contributions to the social purpose ecosystem. As one CEO summarised, “You wouldn’t want to take away any of those things.”

¹ Cohort 4 post-program participant survey; ² Cohort 4 mid-point participant survey; ³ Please note that the mid-point survey responses (i.e., GLWS and Hogan 360-degree assessments) were measured on a 5-point scale without the options for ‘disagree’ and ‘agree’. ⁴ see Appendix J



The non-First Nations cohort might be left with particular impressions, or certain biases might be reinforced if [cultural safety] isn't addressed in a rigorous way in terms of how you're engaging with community and understanding systems - not only traditional systems, but how the post-contact colonial construct now plays out and impacts on people's behaviour and responses to certain things.

- First Nations Cohort 4 CEO

I think there could have been more done around cultural safety and differences in the group and making people feel safer in those spaces.

- Cohort 4 CEO

I didn't gel with my coach...it was a pairing made by somebody else that's guessing. Sometimes you're going to match, sometimes you don't.

- Cohort 4 CEO

I think retreat 1 got it right - time to walk outdoors and talk (or not talk) - despite the un-comfy chairs!! I found retreat 2 and 3 to be a lot more classroom based. I noticed many of us struggled with that.

- Cohort 4 CEO



5.3 Participants identified several barriers that impacted their experience.

Cohort 4 participants consistently described the SILA program as transformative and valuable. However, several barriers affected their experience¹:

- **Cultural and gender safety:** While the program has many cultural and gender safety considerations already in place, participants reported important areas for continued growth. Retreat 2 was described by both First Nations and non-First Nations CEOs as culturally unsafe. One participant shared, "culturally it just was not appropriate," while another reflected, "I was very triggered... too much was left on me or us to make it right with the group." Similarly, one First Nations participant, as well as three female participants reported they found the authority session in Retreat 1 emotionally challenging. While the session is designed to confront and challenge, some felt the approach did not fully consider the diverse lived experiences and cultural contexts in the room. This led to discomfort and a view that the session unintentionally reinforced power imbalances.
SILA reflected on this feedback and adjusted for Retreat 3. Participants received these changes well. One First Nations participant commented "there was a lot of [First Nations] engagement into the planning of Alice Springs... that might take a bit more time going into a community, but I think it is essential." These reflections underscore the importance of continued focus on embedding trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and inclusive design and facilitation into all program elements.
- **Coaching misalignment:** Coaching was widely recognised as a standout element for this cohort, with 65 per cent of participants expressing strong approval. However, four participants noted that their initial coach pairing did not meet their expectations. One participant switched coaches and reported a more effective experience with the second pairing. Another participant was denied a request to switch their pairing late in the program. To enhance future coaching outcomes, participants suggested setting clearer expectations upfront, offering more opportunity for input into coach selection and providing opportunities to switch coaches through the program.
- **Retreat logistics:** Participants consistently highlighted that logistical issues such as room size, acoustics and temperature had a negative impact on their experience. Thirty-eight per cent (8 out of 21 responses) of all constructive feedback about Retreat 1 cited such issues. One participant noted, "the chairs were literally a barrier to listening." Venue suitability varied. Participants appreciated the outdoor spaces in Retreat 1 but found later venues classroom-like. Retreat fatigue was common. Twelve participants recommended more balanced schedules with time for breaks and reflection.
- **SUL burnout:** The sabbatical was a highlight, and participants felt well supported. However, six organisations reported their SULs experienced burnout post-step-up. Two also used capacity funds to enable SULs to take time off to recharge. Three participants requested more explicit guidance from SILA on how to support SUL wellbeing and recovery. This builds on similar feedback from cohorts 2 and 3.
- **Seasonal and environmental challenges:** Location-specific factors affected cohort 4. Some SULs led through floods, heatwaves and other severe weather events, as the sabbatical coincided with peak disaster season.²

¹ Cohort 4 post-program participant survey; ² Cohort 4 CEO interviews

6 Conclusions and recommendations

Five recommendations can further enhance the SILA program.

The fourth cohort of the SILA program continues to build upon the strengths from the previous cohorts. The net promoter score of 96 positions SILA as a world-class program, with the evaluation demonstrating positive outcomes for participants, their organisations, and the ecosystem.

This section provides five recommendations based on the findings in sections 3 and 4. The recommendations aim to further refine the design and delivery of the program and enhance the identified outcomes of an already leading program. The recommendations include program recommendations and cohort specific support.

Program recommendations:

- 1 Continue to enhance inclusivity and safety through trauma-informed facilitation and inclusive design, including First Nations approaches.
- 2 Improve coach pairing processes to better align with CEO needs and learning styles.
- 3 Continue to streamline retreat formats to reduce fatigue and increase accessibility.
- 4 Further strengthen sabbatical planning and support for SUL.

Location-specific recommendation:

- 5 Be aware of sabbatical timeframes in NT and QLD to better align with environmental challenges.

1 Continue to enhance inclusivity and safety through trauma-informed facilitation and inclusive design.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

Participants from cohort 4 highlighted the need for more inclusive and trauma-aware facilitation, especially during Retreats 1 and 2. Participants acknowledged that Retreat 3 was a marked change, with one First Nations participant thanking the SILA team for their care in the retreat's design and delivery.

1.1. Continue to embed trauma-informed facilitation. Ensure trauma-informed approaches are used throughout the program, especially the authority session in Retreat 1. Consider redesigning this session to include pre-session context to warn participants of the session's content, including groups for whom the session may be triggering (i.e. those who have experienced domestic violence) or provide optional debriefs for those who may be negatively impacted by the session.

1.2 Continue to embed cultural protocols and community priorities through co-design with First Nations leaders. Continue to co-design program elements with First Nations leaders to ensure cultural protocols and community priorities are embedded - particularly in retreat settings. Continue to identify opportunities to deepen cultural safety across the program so that safety is foundational.

Cohort-specific guidance:

This recommendation is especially relevant for future Northern Territory and Queensland cohorts, which may include a higher proportion of First Nations participants - as seen in cohort 4 (n = 4). It remains valuable for all cohorts to ensure the program is culturally safe and appropriate, with safeguards and protections in place.

1.3 Strengthen inclusive language protocols for facilitators and participants. This should include protocols to prevent misgendering, and promote accountability, fostering a respectful and inclusive learning environment.

1.4 Diversify learning modalities to better support varied learning preferences. This could include resources tailored for neurodiverse participants, and the integration of additional varied materials, such as podcasts, visual aids, or other multi-media into the online learning environment.

2 Improve coach pairing processes to better align with CEO needs and learning preferences.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

This recommendation aims to preserve the strengths of SILA's coaching model while addressing feedback about coach mismatches and unmet expectations. By refining the pairing process and introducing structured flexibility, SILA can ensure coaching is consistently impactful, tailored, and aligned with each CEO's leadership journey.

2.1 Communicate the SILA coaching approach to participants prior to program commencement. Provide CEOs with an understanding of what they can expect from coaching during the program, aligning the coaching to session content, compared to traditional executive coaching practices.

2.2 Introduce a coachee-led pairing process. Allow CEOs to select from a shortlist of coaches based on style, experience, and sector relevance to empower CEOs to take ownership of their coaching and foster stronger engagement.

2.3 Conduct a chemistry check post the first coaching session, allowing participants to swap coaches. Ensure alignment between participants and coaches and maximise the coaching impact by providing the flexibility to change coaches if needed at any point in the program. Outline the process to participants for changing their coach if required.

3 Continue to streamline retreat formats to reduce fatigue and increase accessibility.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

This recommendation responds to feedback that retreat formats were not universally accessible, impacting participants ability to learn. By streamlining schedules and diversifying delivery styles, SILA can reduce fatigue, improve engagement, and ensure all participants, regardless of learning preference, can fully benefit from the program.

3.1 Refine retreat schedules to balance intensity with rest. Incorporate shorter sessions and additional unstructured time for reflection, alongside optional wellness activities (e.g. mindfulness) to support energy and focus.

3.2 Diversify delivery formats to accommodate different learning preferences. Reduce lecture style teaching and increase opportunities for cohort plenaries and small group discussions to share and embed learning.

4 Further strengthen sabbatical planning and support for SULs.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

This recommendation responds to feedback that SULs reported inconsistent experiences of sabbatical planning and were reliant on the initiative of their CEO. By embedding additional structured planning, SILA can ensure sabbaticals are empowering, strategic, and sustainable.

SILA already provides valuable support for the sabbatical planning period, including the sabbatical toolkit and coaching sessions, and this recommendation aims to further strengthen the support provided.

4.1 Incorporate additional guidance into the CEO eligibility criteria regarding SUL capability. Ensure future SILA participants have a SUL with the required capability for stepping up to ensure organisations can experience the full benefits of the program.

4.2 Strengthen joint CEO and SUL coaching sessions pre and post sabbatical. Use these sessions to support more consistent sabbatical planning between CEOs, board members and SULs, and encourage CEOs to follow the sabbatical toolkit to set the SUL up for success.

4.3 Encourage wellbeing and rest for the SULs post sabbatical. Encourage CEOs and board members to proactively schedule a rest period for the SUL as a part of the sabbatical reintegration plan and incorporate this guidance into the sabbatical toolkit to ensure ongoing sustainable leadership practices are embedded.

4.4 Schedule the first SUL learning circle at a time that promotes participation. While learning circles are a valuable component of the program, many SULs reported that these sessions were inconsistently attended or failed to gain traction due to logistical challenges and lack of early rapport between SULs.

5 Align program timeframes in NT and QLD with environmental challenges.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

Several CEOs and SULs in QLD and NT faced challenges due to extreme weather (e.g. heatwaves, floods) during their sabbatical periods. Future program delivery for this cohort could consider adjusting sabbatical timing to avoid disaster seasons and environmental stressors to enable participants to receive the most value from their program participation, and to better support SULs during the step-up period.

5.1 Better align the sabbatical period with seasonal constraints. Provide guidance to QLD and NT participants in avoiding taking their sabbatical during the peak summer months (typically December to February), when extreme weather events such as heatwaves and floods are more likely, and encourage CEOs in this cohort to undertake their sabbaticals from February to April to minimise environmental constraints.

7 Appendices

Appendices Contents

<u>Appendix A</u>	Evaluation background
<u>Appendix B</u>	Cohort 4 participant summary
<u>Appendix C</u>	Participant mid and post-program survey results
<u>Appendix D</u>	Coach mid and post-program survey results
<u>Appendix E</u>	Post-retreats survey results
<u>Appendix F</u>	Hogan 360 assessment results
<u>Appendix G</u>	Global Leadership Wellbeing Survey (GLWS) assessment results
<u>Appendix H</u>	Cohort 2 and 3 alumni survey results
<u>Appendix I</u>	Cross-cohort overall summary and comparison
<u>Appendix J</u>	Cross-cohort capacity funds analysis

Appendix A – Evaluation background

Evaluation background

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The SILA program evaluation will need to support a range of purposes, which are outlined below:

- Understanding the likely direct, indirect, intended and unintended effects of the program on the participants, their organisations and the for-purpose ecosystem.
- Identifying how and why the program, and its elements, were effective or ineffective.
- Learning from the successes and failures of the program so that the delivery of SILA can improve over time.
- Identifying any opportunities or gaps in program design to sustainably achieve SILA's desired outcomes.
- Demonstrating the evidence for continued investment in the SILA program or similar programs.
- Sharing the findings of the evaluation with broader stakeholders to influence change across the social sector.
- Identifying the similarities and differences in experiences and outcomes across cohorts.

The evaluation investigates five high-level evaluation areas – appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Deliver an innovative national capacity-building and leadership program that combines evidence-based change levers...

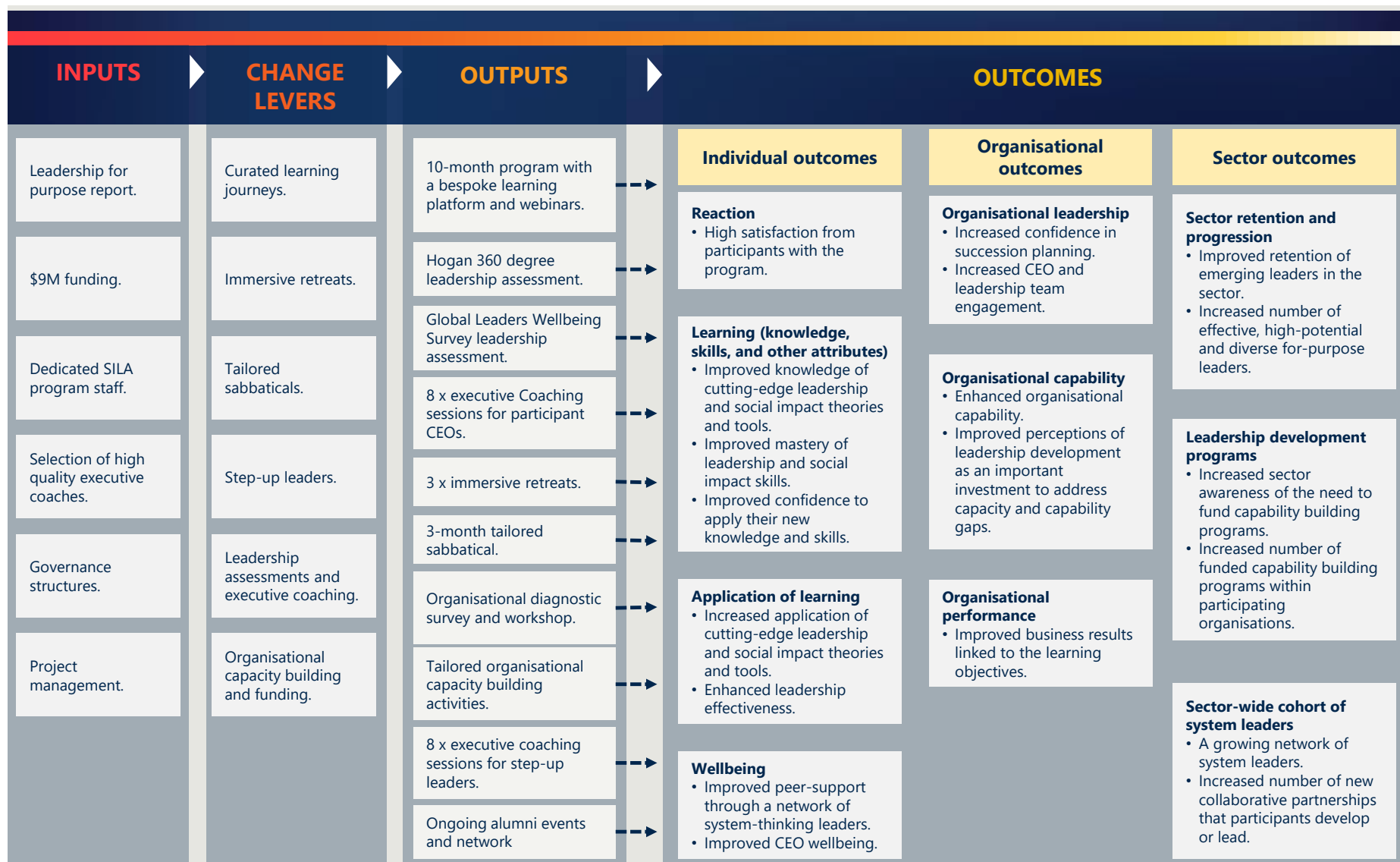
- curated learning journeys
- tailored sabbaticals
- immersive retreats
- step-up leaders
- executive coaching and leadership assessments
- organisational capacity building and funding

...to meaningfully shift outcomes across three intersecting pillars...

- Improving the knowledge, capability and wellbeing of **individuals**
- Strengthening the leadership, capability and performance of **organisations**
- Improving the quality and breadth of leaders, creating a culture of permission, and building a cohort of system leaders across the social purpose **ecosystem**

...and advance the capability of leaders, organisations, and ecosystems for a better civil society.

Program Logic



Key Evaluation Questions

Key Evaluation Question	Research question
KEQ 1 Appropriateness	- To what extent does the SILA program design address the identified need for the program? - How appropriate is SILA's design to achieve the intended outcomes? - How appropriate is the process to source and select cohorts to achieve the intended diversity and inclusion objectives? - Could the program elements be better designed to address the identified need and the program's intended outcomes and objectives?
KEQ 2 Effectiveness	- To what extent have the cohorts of participant CEOs met expectations for participant diversity and quality? - Has SILA delivered what it intended to deliver for each cohort and overall? Why or why not, and with what variability? - To what extent did the program achieve the intended outcomes for the participant CEOs? - To what extent did the program achieve the intended outcomes for the Step-Up Leaders and organisations? - How do these outcomes differ or change within and between cohorts? What factors have shaped any variance in outcomes? - What factors have enabled SILA to achieve its intended outcomes? - What factors have constrained SILA from achieving its intended outcomes? - What were the distinct or common enabling or constraining factors across cohorts? - How should the enabling and constraining factors shape future program delivery? - To what extent were the individual program elements effective to support the delivery of the intended outcomes? - How did the different program elements interact with each other to support the delivery of the intended outcomes? - Could the program elements be delivered more effectively? - Could SILA stop the delivery of any program elements?
KEQ 3 Efficiency	- What resources (funding, people, facilities) have SILA deployed to deliver the program? For what purposes? - How does this compare to the use of resources expected prior to implementation? How did this change between cohorts? - Could the program be delivered more efficiently and how? - What variables have affected the use of resources in the program and what lessons does this present for future program planning? - How cost effective was the delivery of the program for each cohort and overall?
KEQ 4 Impact	- To what extent has the program achieved long-term impact for the participant CEOs and their organisations? - To what extent did the program achieve the intended sector/ecosystem impacts? - Were there any unintended impacts, both positive and negative, at the individual, organisational and ecosystem levels? - What were the factors that drove any unintended impacts? - What can we learn from the unintended impacts to improve program design and delivery? - Did the individual, organisational and ecosystem impacts justify the investment in the program? - What are the opportunities to expand the impact of this program?
KEQ 5 Sustainability	- To what degree has SILA demonstrated accountability for results? - To what degree has the program built the processes, systems, capability and relationships with key stakeholders to support a culture of critical reflection and continuous improvement? - To what extent has the SILA program evolved to support the ongoing sustainability of the program? - How financially sustainable is the ongoing delivery of the program? - To what extent has SILA delivered on the expectations of its funders?

Appendix B – Cohort 4 participant summary

Cohort 4 consists of 24 social sector CEOs from Queensland and the Northern Territory.

1. **Aimee McVeigh**, QCOSS
2. **Amie Carrington**, Domestic Violence Action Centre
3. **Annie Rily**, Carpentaria
4. **Bec Reynolds**, Queensland Council for LGBTI Health
5. **Fi Caniglia**, Q Shelter
6. **Fiona Jose**, Cape York Partnership
7. **Geoffrey Smith**, Australian Spatial Analytics
8. **James Gough**, Darwin Festival
9. **Julie McLellan**, Healthy Land & Water
10. **Kate Eltham**, BlakDance
11. **Kirsty Howey**, Environment Centre NT
12. **Liam Glover**, Australians Together
13. **Lisa Ward**, The Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland
14. **Lucas Patchett**, Orange Sky
15. **Margaret O'Brien**, Young Change Agents
16. **Melissa Warner**, Queensland Positive People
17. **Patrick Nolan**, Opera Queensland
18. **Philip Watkins**, Desart
19. **Rob McPhee**, Danila Dilba Health Services
20. **SezzaJai Sykes**, NT Writers' Centre
21. **Tanya Stevenson**, Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre
22. **Zoe Black**, Happy Paws Happy Hearts
23. **Zoe Scrogings**, Corrugated Iron Youth Arts
24. **Zoe Williams**, Gulf Savannah NRM

Appendix C – Participant mid and post-program survey results

Cohort 4 participants received a survey halfway through the program and a survey at the end of the program.

To understand SILA cohort 4's program experience, there were two surveys distributed throughout the program – one halfway through the program (after retreat two) and another two months after program completion.

The **mid-program survey** was a 33-question survey which requested feedback on the delivery of the program; effectiveness of individual assessments and executive coaching; and benefits and barriers of the program.

The **post-program survey** was more detailed, with 63 questions. It builds on the mid-program survey and asks feedback on other program aspects such as: the value of program aspects; the knowledge and skills gained and how they were applied; and general reflections.

The survey results are compared with each other to understand if there were significant improvements or changes that were implemented after the mid-program survey. However, there are some caveats to the highlight:

- *The mid-program survey has questions with 5-point scale responses; however, the post-program survey has 7-point scale responses. For a fair comparison, the analysis on the following slides uses the averages of results on a 7-point basis.*
- *There are a few questions that were asked in both surveys, however most questions were asked in only one.*

- 22 out of 24 participants responded to the survey
- Survey consisted of 33 questions

Participant mid-program survey context and questions

Demographic questions asked

1. Please let us know your name

Program aspects asked

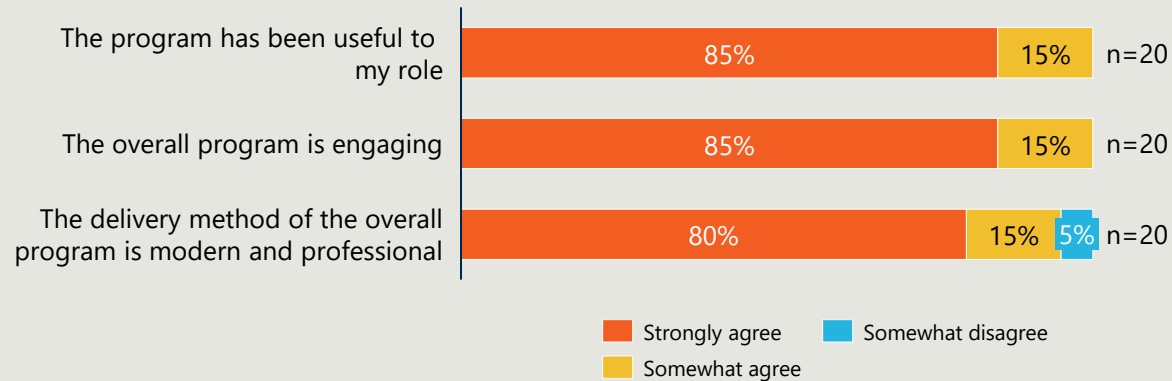
2. The overall program is engaging (5-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
3. The delivery method of the overall program is modern and professional (5-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
4. The overall program has been useful to my role (5-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
5. I feel the level of challenge from the program is (3-point scale – (Too low, Just right, Too high)
 - o Please explain your response to the above
6. I found the Hogan 360-degree leadership assessment valuable (5-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
7. What did you find useful about the 360-degree leadership assessment?
8. What can be improved regarding the 360-degree leadership assessment?
9. I found the Sabbatical Toolkit and facilitated planning session valuable (5-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
10. What did you find useful about the Sabbatical Toolkit and facilitated planning session?
11. What can be improved regarding the Sabbatical Toolkit and facilitated planning session?
12. I am finding the learning circles valuable (5-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
13. What are you finding valuable about the learning circles?
14. What can improve regarding the learning circles?
15. I am finding the executive coaching valuable (5-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
16. What are you finding valuable about the executive coaching?
17. What can improve regarding the executive coaching?

Participant mid-program survey questions

18. Have you spent or have you decided how you will spend your capacity funds (Yes/No)
19. What did or will you spend your capacity funds on?
20. What did you find useful about the capacity funds?
21. What can improve regarding the capacity funds?
22. Did you connect with alumni from previous cohorts after you were selected for SILA? (Yes/No)
If Yes:
 23. What was the purpose/outcome of connecting with the alumni?
 24. How useful was connecting with the alumni? (5-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
25. Have you experienced any benefits from participating in the program? (Yes/No)
26. Can you please describe the benefits? (If Yes only)
27. Have you experienced any unexpected benefits from participating in the program? (Yes/No)
28. Can you please describe the unexpected benefits? (If Yes only)
29. Have you experienced any barriers to fully participating in the program? (Yes/No)
30. Can you please describe the barriers? (If Yes only)
31. What has been the most valuable aspect of the program?
32. What do you think is the most important change to improve your experience for the remainder of the program?
33. Is there anything else you would like to share?

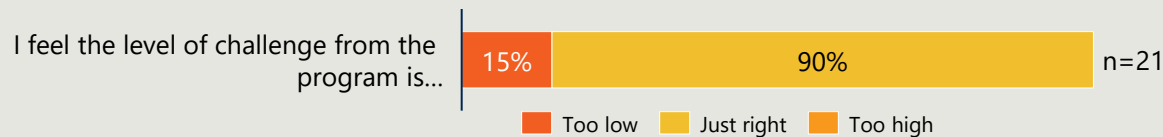
Most participants are finding the program to be engaging, useful and the right level of challenge.

All participants* found the program to be engaging and useful to their roles.



* One anonymous participant reported not finding the program engaging or useful and did not provide a reason, yet still reported receiving high value across the individual program elements. Nous believes the negative response was likely a mistake and has therefore excluded their response to this question.

Most participants agreed that the level of challenge was just right.



“

I'm increasingly appreciative of the sophistication and depth of the program design, and the skill of those delivering it.

”

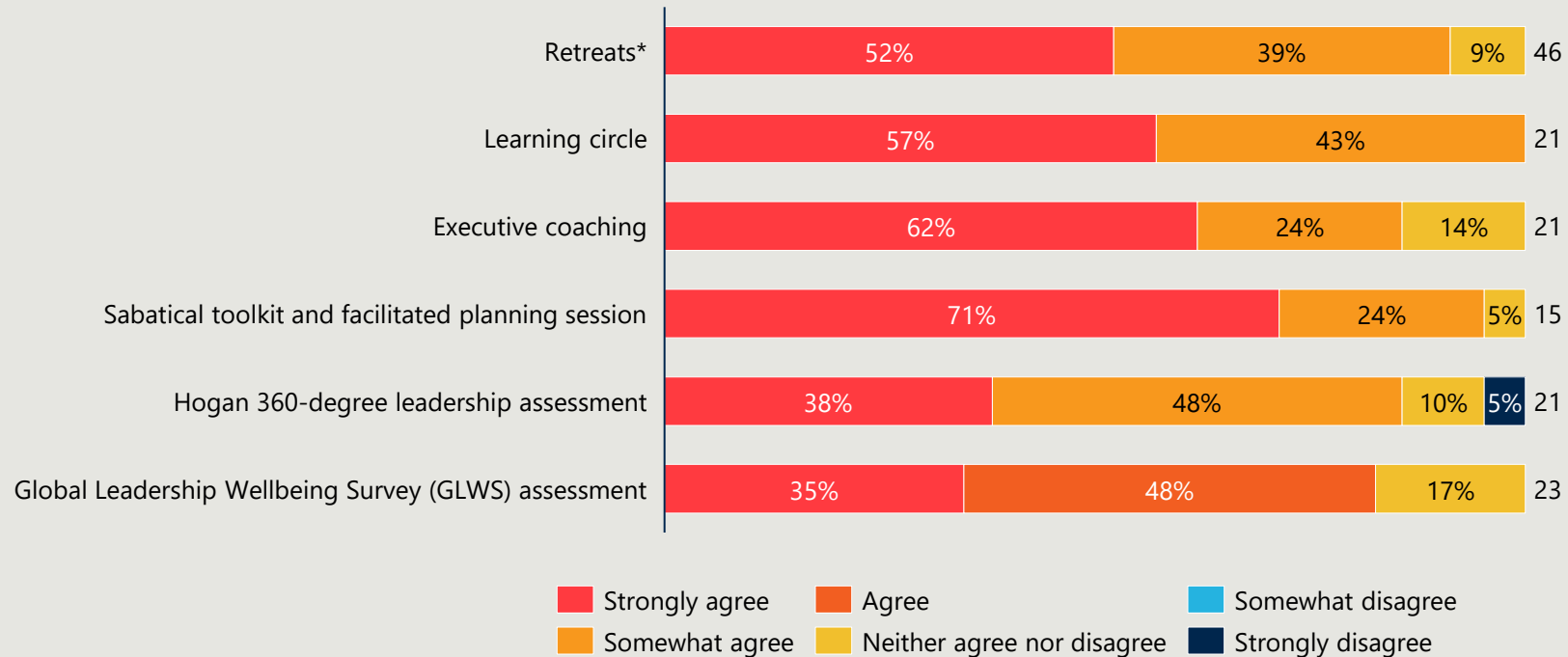
“

I feel room to be challenged more by the program, particularly in holding myself accountable for getting to that place of "radical candour" that was discussed in the first retreat. I feel a deep motivation to not waste a single moment or opportunity gifted by this program.

”

Participants found all program elements to be mostly valuable.

I found/am finding the following valuable:



* Taken as the average from retreats 1 and 2 to the question "The overall learning experience stretched and challenged me..."

Participants found aspects of program elements to be valuable, while other aspects have further room for improvement (1/2).

Retreats

What participants found valuable

- The opportunity to meet, connect with and learn from like-minded peers.
- The learning content, style and environment, especially how it challenged them to grow.
- Time and space set aside specifically to reflect on leadership and purpose.

"[I valued] the ability to connect with so many wonderful people, to be in a learning environment and to have boundaries from work to enable time for self-development"

What can improve

- More trauma informed approaches to challenging aspects of the 'Authority session'.
- A more comfortable indoor setting and room layout, to better facilitate group discussion.

"While I understand the approach taken [to the Authority session] and the learning outcomes sought, triggering trauma to meet the learning needs of others does not sit well with me. [It] was contrary to a trauma informed approach"

Learning circle

What participants found valuable

- The deep trust, connection and support built with peers which created space for vulnerability.
- Learning about the similarities, differences and challenges of other organisations and industries in the NFP space.

"The learning circles have been a highlight of the program. Having input and advice from other leaders dealing with similar issues has been refreshing, particularly given being a CEO can be quite a lonely experience"

What can improve

- Support for scheduling and preparing for sessions, especially over sabbatical.
- More opportunities to come together during retreats.

"Finding time is always hard, especially as once on sabbatical people aren't available."

Executive coaching

What participants found valuable

- A knowledgeable outsider's perspective to help participants reflect, challenge thinking and gain new insights.
- The emotional support provided by coaches and the trusting relationship built.
- Space to work through challenging issues with helpful feedback.

"I feel like it's a great check in, sometimes reality check and sometimes affirmation - it gives me confidence to keep thinking and exploring things I may have originally brushed over or across."

What can improve

- More opportunities for in-person meetings.
- Further encourage participants to set a schedule for meetings from the start.

"I think it would be best to advise participants to set a regular monthly schedule of consultations rather than a self-directed pattern of meetings."

Participants found aspects of program elements to be valuable, while other aspects have further room for improvement (2/2).

Sabbatical Resource Toolkit and Facilitated Training Session

What participants found valuable

- Gave solid structure and direction to sabbatical planning to help participants and their SULs feel more confident and better prepared for sabbatical.
- Useful resource that encouraged participants to consider new aspects of the sabbatical.

"This was an excellent resource - I used a number of the templates, which saved me thinking and doing time - it also prompted me to think about things I may not have considered. Our SUL also commented that she found it helpful."

What can improve

- Offer more varied formats. Participants requested options including a downloadable word file and a video format. This could better facilitate online sharing, planning and collaboration for participants and SULs.

"The only thing I can think of is having the templates in word format so they can be downloaded and used directly"

Hogan 360-Degree Leadership Assessment

What participants found valuable

- Structured self-reflection offered participants new insights into themselves and greater understanding of their leadership.
- External feedback validated self-perceived strengths and development areas.
- The opportunity to spark dialogue and collaboration on their leadership and development within their organisation.

"[I valued] the feedback from my team and the opportunities we have taken from it to deepen our commitment to working as an exec team"

What can improve

- Some participants who had previously done similar assessments reported limited value.
- Some participants wanted more guidance on using and interpreting results

"I question whether the responses are authentic enough to be useful. A little more guidance in how to get the best from the tool before completing it would be valuable."

Global Leadership Wellbeing (GLWS) Assessment

What participants found valuable

- A structured approach helped participants to identify key gaps and development focus areas.
- Debrief session with coaches to unpack results, draw connections, and encourage self-reflection and responsibility.

"The assessment forced me to face what I have long suspected about my wellbeing. The debrief session meant that I couldn't avoid the results!"

What can improve

- Continued assessment to track progress, rather than only capturing a point in time.
- Debrief sessions could focus more on direct actions to drive improvement.

"It was a snapshot in the moment. I wonder if I had done it a week before or a week after if the results would have been the same."

"Keeping focused on the outcomes and actions from the results, we got a bit too involved in old stories."

More than half of participants planned to spend capacity funds on development opportunities for their staff.

Most participants were clear on how they would spend their capacity funds.



Categorised ways participants did or will spend their capacity funds (n=22)



What participants found valuable

- Financial support to backfill roles during sabbatical.
- Invest back into organisational growth.
- Flexibility to direct funding where it is needed.

"[The] opportunity to fund something I've been exploring in my role (for the business) and also it takes the pressure off opex (salaries)"

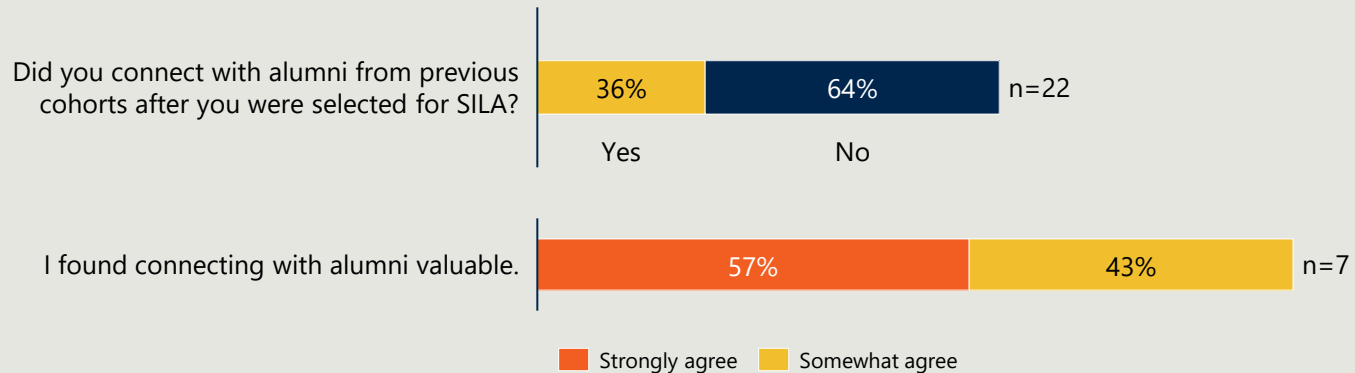
What can improve

- Continue to reinforce the untied nature of the funds to participants and their organisations

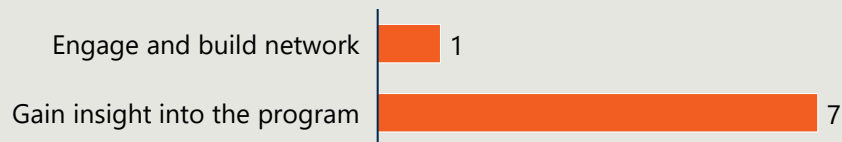
"I would have liked to be able to use a small portion of the capacity funds to support some personal travel during my sabbatical, to enable some learning objectives I had, but I didn't feel this was legitimate or authorised. It wasn't clear whether I could do this and how to communicate with my board about what specific expenses were considered authorised use of the funds by SILA."

A small number of participants connected with SILA alumni to build their network and gain insight into their program experience.

Participants who connected with SILA alumni found the experience to be valuable.



Categorised reasons for contacting alumni (n=7)

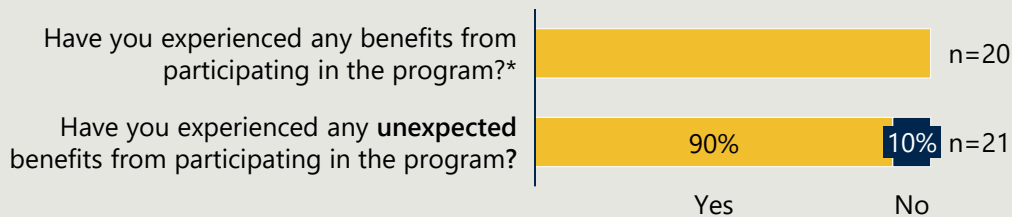


“ To find out how to get the best out of the program. To calm anxieties. ”

“ To ask questions about what it is really like beyond the advertising material. To connect into another network and extend this beyond the Qld/NT network. To ask for help and ideas about sabbatical. ”

The program is providing a range of both expected and unexpected benefits to participants.

Many participants reported benefits from program participation.



Categorised benefits identified by participants (n=18)



* One anonymous participant reported not experiencing any benefits and did not provide a reason, yet still reported receiving high value across the individual program elements. Nous believes the negative response was likely a mistake and has therefore excluded their response to this question.

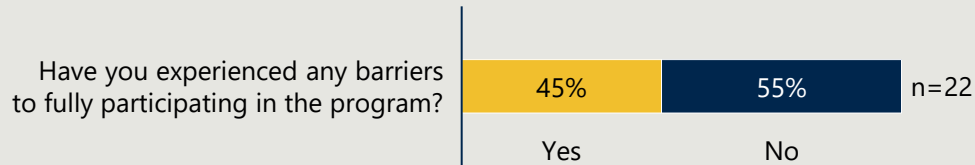
“ The content and facilitators are the best I've come across. I assumed it would be good but had no idea how transformational it would be for my leadership approach. ”

“ I first applied because I wanted a break and was close to burn out. I now realise the benefits are so wide ranging. SILA has allowed my organisation to mature and foster genuine leadership, to grapple with my absence, and for me to transcend my leadership limitations. ”

“ Good to meet other CEOs and recognise some of my more (self) undermining traits in others in similar roles. ”

Almost half of participants experienced barriers preventing their full participation throughout the program.

Few participants experienced barriers preventing their participation.



Categorised barriers (n=9)



“

We have an ill child and nights are the hardest for her. Being away has been challenging but only at a personal level. I definitely considered withdrawing completely because I took seriously the participation requirements. Having said that, combining some leave with the sabbatical (mid-december to end of March) is giving us critically important time to invest in her treatment and overall wellbeing.

”

“

Learning styles at the retreat make full participation challenging as I am using my personal resources to stay in the room, which inhibits the next layers of learning and connecting.

”

“

My only barriers has been myself. To prioritise the time to spend on the program and reflect rather than throwing myself back into all the things that 'I think' I need to be doing.

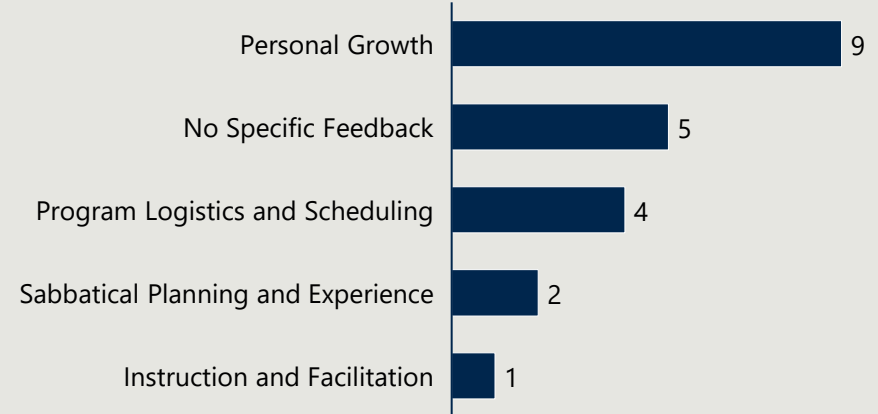
”

Participants found a range of aspects to be valuable and have identified important changes that could improve their ongoing program experience.

What has been the most valuable aspect of the program?
Categorised responses (n=20)



What do you think is the most important change to improve your experience for the remainder of the program?
Categorised responses (n=20)



“ [Most valuable has been] the deep learning I have found within myself. To value my skills and give myself more time to reflect and also celebrate. ”

“ More vulnerability and 'i don't know' moments from the SILA team - slow down, vary the process if necessary, allow the concepts to be applied to real time moments more fully. ”

The participants are generally very grateful for the opportunity, with some participants sharing additional comments.

Any additional feedback?

"Thanks for all the care shown in supporting the SILA retreat. Yes, Thank you."

"Thank you to the SILA team for making the experience challenging and enjoyable. It is a difficult balance to find in the chaos of learning, but I have felt valued safe the entire way through."

"Thank you for the best professional development I've ever done. I'm feeling very lucky."

"Thank you, such a valuable experience. The whole team are incredible people and bring a wealth of expertise. Lisa and Gabby were also superstars!"

"This is a great opportunity, and I am very grateful to be participating"

"Thank you for the opportunity to be involved in such an incredible program. I am still pinching myself and don't want it to end."

"[Lisa and Gabby] go above and beyond to make the program run smoothly and to meet the needs of all the participants. It's really exceptional and it's easy to see how much passion and care they put into high-quality experiences for the SILA cohort."

"When I get back from my sabbatical I'm going to shift my role so I can do more strategic work and try and get more support for the work we do. Or I may end up deciding it's all too hard and move into another industry. Sabbatical will give me time to think about this."

Thank you for the opportunity to participate. I can feel that the program is changing me in ways that I'm not even aware of yet. One final comment. As an Aboriginal participant, I would have benefited from having more Aboriginal people in the program - perhaps a dedicated Aboriginal cohort, as many of the challenges I face are quite unique and are more easily understood by other Aboriginal people.

- 23 out of 24 participants responded to the survey
- Survey consisted of 63 questions which covered Levels 1 to 4 of Kirkpatrick and Phillip's model

Participant post-program survey context and questions

Demographic questions asked

1. What is your name?
2. How many years have you acted in a CEO role?
3. How large is your organisation by revenue?

Level 1 – Learner reaction questions asked

4. The length of the whole program was... (Too short, just right or too long)
5. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (7-point scale – Strongly disagree to strongly agree)
 - o The program content was easy to understand.
 - o The program was engaging.
 - o The delivery method of the program was modern and professional.
 - o I was satisfied with the overall learning experience.
6. How likely is it that you would recommend the SILA program to another social purpose sector CEO? (10-point scale – Not at all likely to extremely likely)
7. Is there anything you would like to share about the Hogan 360-degree leadership assessment that you did not share or has changed since the mid-point survey?
8. Is there anything you would like to share about the GLWS assessment that you did not share or has changed since the mid-point survey?
9. I found the organisational capacity funds valuable. (7-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
10. At a high level, what did your organisation spend the capacity funds on?
11. What did you find valuable about the organisational capacity funds?
12. What can improve regarding the organisational capacity funds?

Participant post-program survey questions

Level 1 – Learner reaction questions asked (cont'd)

13. I found the learning circles valuable. (7-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
14. What did you find valuable about the learning circles?
15. What can improve regarding the learning circles?
16. I found the immersive retreats valuable. (7-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
17. What did you find valuable about the immersive retreats?
18. What can improve regarding the immersive retreats?
19. I found the executive coaching valuable. (7-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
20. What did you find valuable about the executive coaching?
21. What can improve regarding the executive coaching?
22. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the sabbatical? (7-point scale – Strongly disagree to strongly agree)
 - o I found the tailored sabbatical valuable.
 - o I found the sabbatical toolkit valuable.
 - o My Step Up Leader was supported and prepared for the sabbatical period.
23. What did you do for your tailored sabbatical?
24. What did you find valuable about the tailored sabbatical and associated supports?
25. What can improve regarding the tailored sabbatical and associated supports?
26. I found the online learning materials valuable. (7-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
27. What did you find valuable about the online learning materials?
28. What can improve regarding the online learning materials?

Participant post-program survey questions

Level 2 – Knowledge, skills and planned action questions asked

29. The program provided the right level of coverage of: (7-point scale – Strongly disagree to strongly agree)
- o Adaptive leadership theory and tools for applied use
 - o Purpose centric leadership
 - o Aligning leadership of the self with organisational and system strategy for social impact
 - o Working and leading in complex environments
 - o Social impact theories and tools
 - o Understanding own and other's mindsets and views on the world
 - o Deep collaboration
 - o Working across difference and boundaries
 - o Applied systems thinking, understanding systems and sub-systems
 - o Navigating a complex social ecosystem and your organisation's role within it
 - o Personal authority, power and rank
 - o Working politically and understanding the political landscape
 - o Understanding narratives and assumptions
30. The program encourages continued learning and conversation with others. (7-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
31. I felt appropriately challenged by the program. (7-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
- o Why did you disagree with the statement above? (The program was too challenging, The program was not challenging enough)
32. [If disagreed] Why did you disagree with the statement above?
- o The program was too challenging
 - o The program was not challenging enough
33. The program was relevant and useful to my role. (7-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
34. Please explain your responses to the question above.
35. I have clear ideas about how I can use the new skills and knowledge. (7-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
36. Please explain your response to the question above and if relevant, provide examples of how you can use the new skills and knowledge.
37. I can make a difference in my organisation by using what I have learned. (7-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)

Participant post-program survey questions

38. I can make a difference across the sector by using what I have learned. (7-point scale – Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
39. Please explain your response to the two questions above and if relevant, provide examples of how you can make a difference in your organisation and across the sector by using what you have learned.

Level 3 – Application of skills questions asked

40. Please rate the following statements: (7-point scale – Strongly disagree to strongly agree)
- o I intend to or have used knowledge and skills obtained from the program to mentor others outside my organisation.
 - o I intend to or have initiated or strengthened partnerships with other organisations or government as a result of the program.
 - o I intend to or have advocated for or contributed to systemic changes (e.g., new policies, funding models, sector standards) inspired by the program.
41. Please share any detail on your responses to the set of questions above, including what you have or intend to do.
42. Developing self - As a result of the program: (7-point scale – Strongly disagree to strongly agree)
- o Being vulnerable with others is now much easier
 - o I am motivated to grow my leadership skills
 - o I am more willing to be stretched and challenged
 - o I am more willing to reflect on feedback and adjust my ways of working
43. Please explain your responses to the above.
44. Growing networks - As a result of the program: (7-point scale – Strongly disagree to strongly agree)
- o I intend to maintain connection with other participants
 - o I have a peer support network of for-purpose CEOs
45. Please explain your responses to the above.
46. Managing wellbeing - As a result of the program: (7-point scale – Strongly disagree to strongly agree)
- o I can now better manage my wellbeing as a leader
47. Please explain your responses to the above.
48. Investing in self and others - As a result of the program: (7-point scale – Strongly disagree to strongly agree)
- o I intend to continue to invest in my own leadership development
 - o I intend to invest more in the leadership development of my senior leadership team
49. Please explain your responses to the above.

Participant post-program survey questions

Level 4 – Business impacts questions asked

50. As a result of the program: (7-point scale – Strongly disagree to strongly agree)
- o My organisation has enhanced its capability and culture
 - o My organisation is likely to enhance its capability and culture
 - o My organisation has experienced tangible improvements across key business measures
 - o My organisation is likely to experience tangible improvements across key business measures
 - o My organisation intends to invest more in leadership development
51. Please explain your responses to the above.
52. In my opinion: (7-point scale – Strongly disagree to strongly agree)
- o My Step Up Leader (SUL) had a positive experience throughout the program.
 - o My SUL developed their skills and confidence as a result of the program.
53. Please provide feedback on how SILA could better support SULs and prepare them for the sabbatical period.

General reflections

54. Did at least one member from your board participate in the Governance for Social Impact (GSI) program offered?
55. My board member(s) found the GSI program valuable. (7-point scale – Strongly disagree to strongly agree)
56. To your knowledge, what did they find valuable? What can improve?
57. Did you experience any unexpected benefits from participating in the program? (Yes/No)
58. [If Yes] Can you please describe the unexpected benefits?
59. Did you experience any barriers to fully participating in the program? (Yes/No)
60. [If Yes] Can you please describe the barriers?
61. What do you think was the most useful and engaging aspect of the program?
62. What do you think is the most important change to improve the program for future cohorts?
63. Any additional feedback?

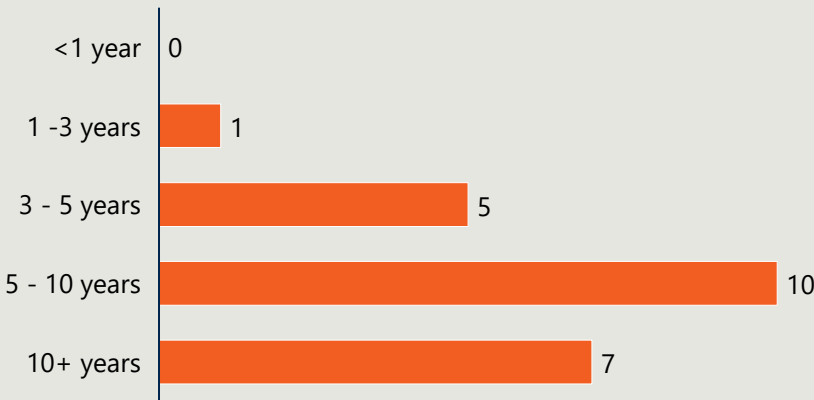
CEO participants primarily had a long tenure in their roles and worked in organisations with larger revenues.

Nous developed and uploaded the survey to Microsoft Forms. The form was distributed to SILA program cohort 4 CEO participants following their completion of the program.

Overall, the post-program survey received 23 responses. Not all respondents answered every question.

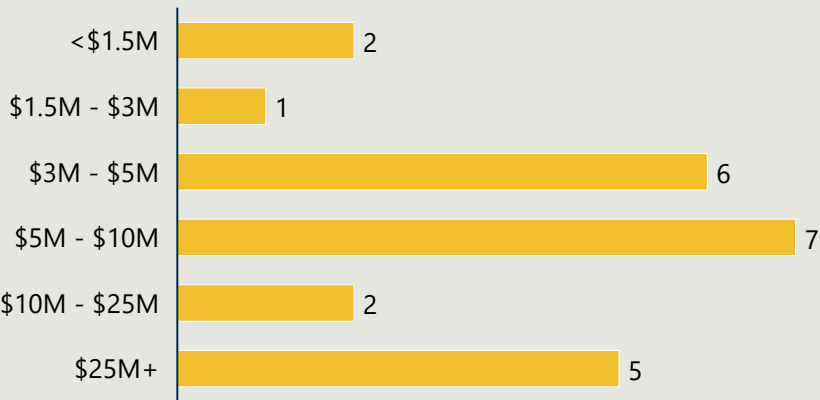
Most of the respondents (70 per cent) had been in a CEO role for over five years.

How many years have you acted in a CEO role?



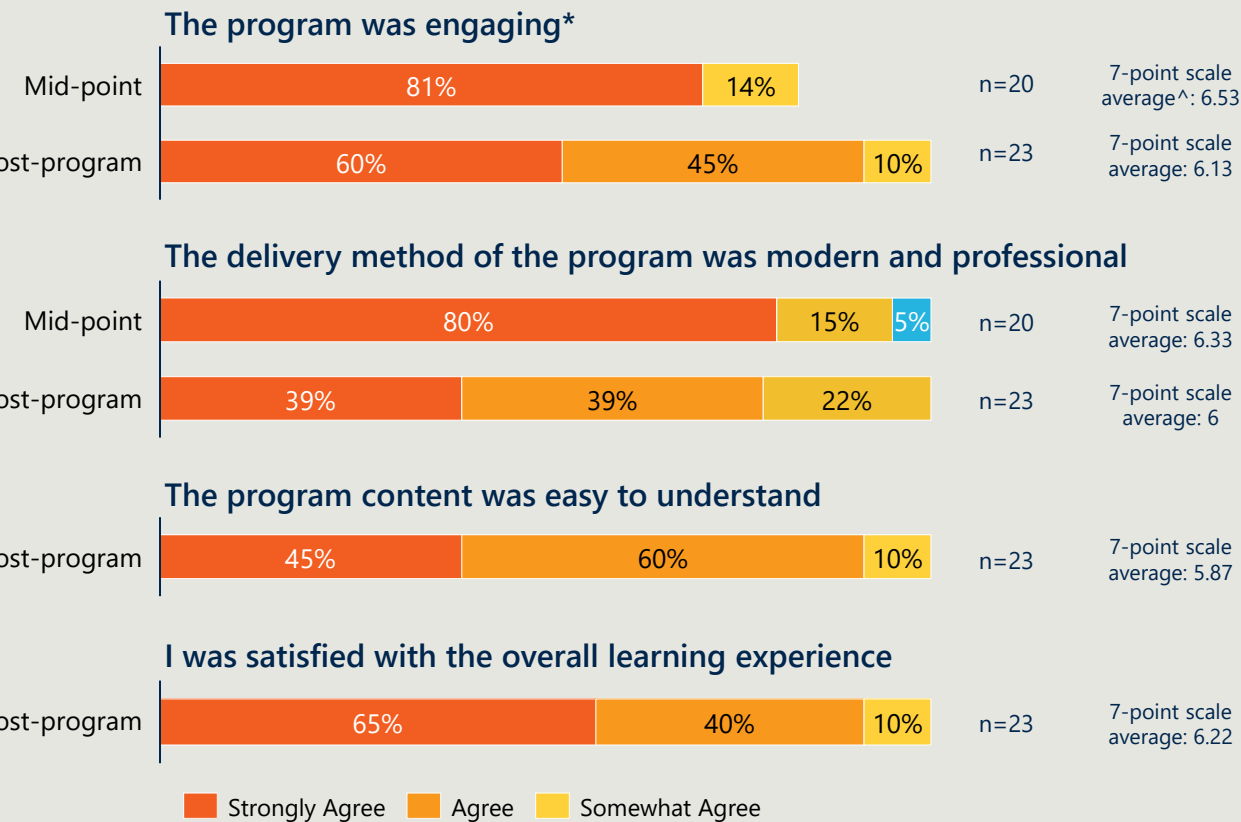
Overall, organisations tended to be larger in this cohort. Only five per cent of organisations were less than \$3M in revenue and five organisations exceed \$25M in revenue, the largest of any cohort so far. Seventy-three per cent of organisations were larger than \$5M in revenue.

How large is your organisation by revenue?

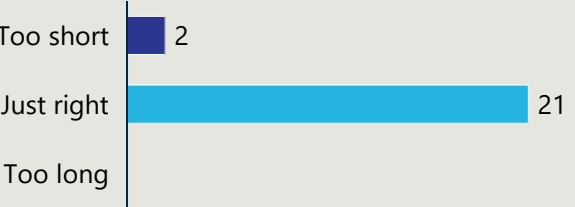


All participants found the program to be engaging, relevant and useful to their roles, and most thought the length of it was just right.

The average response to the question “How likely is it that you would recommend the SILA program to another social purpose sector CEO?” was **9.85/10 (n=23)**. Based on the responses, the calculated Net Promoter Score* (NPS) is 96.



The length of the whole program was...



In terms of delivery, individual participants suggested improvements on the following:

- Ensure retreat venues can appropriately facilitate deep learning.
- Continue refining approach for engaging Indigenous communities in a culturally safe manner.

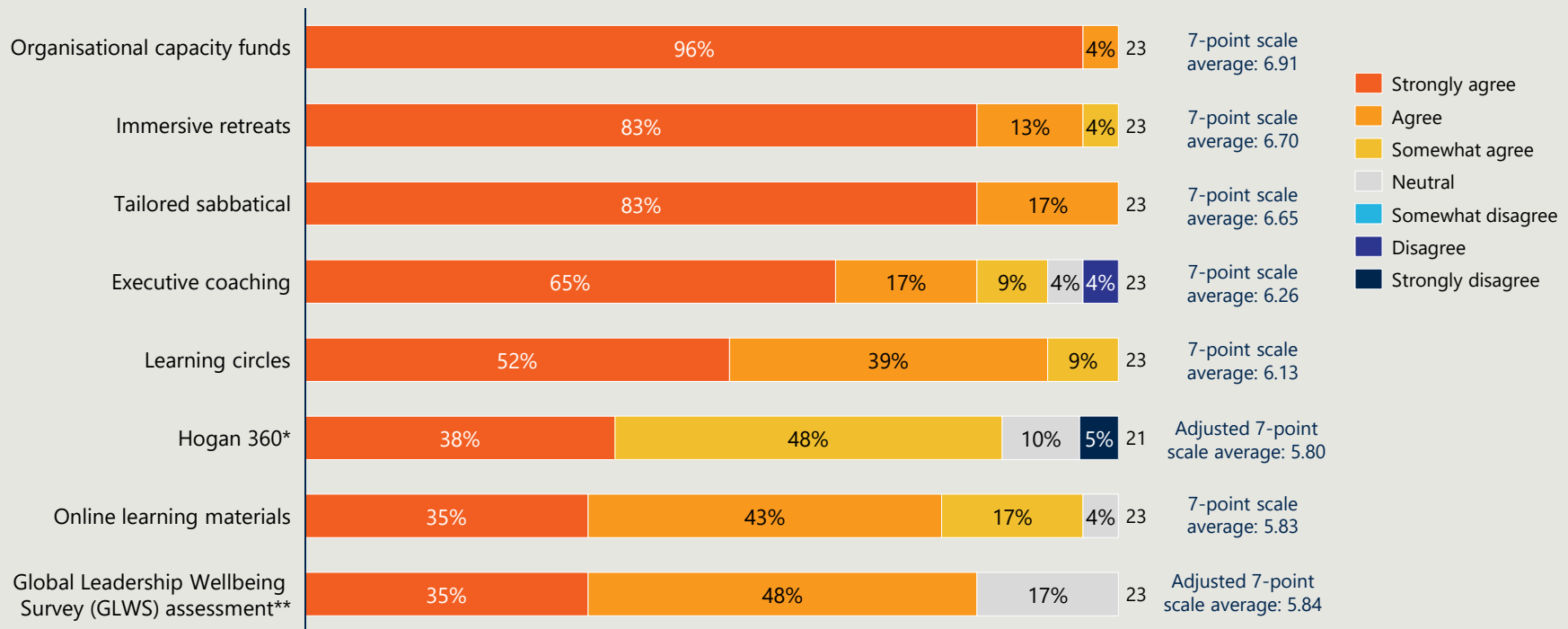
* One anonymous participant reported not finding the program engaging and did not provide a reason, yet still reported receiving high value across the individual program elements. Nous believes the negative response was likely a mistake and has therefore excluded their response to this question.

* NPS is derived through subtracting the percentage of customers who are detractors from the percentage who are promoters. Nous used an NPS calculator (<https://npscalculator.com/en>) to determine the score.
^ During the mid-point survey answers were provided on a 5-point scale (from 1, Strongly Disagree to 5, Strongly Agree) while post-program were provided on a 7-point scale (from 1, Strongly Disagree to 7, Strongly Agree). To enable comparison across surveys the mid-point results have been adjusted to a 7-point scale, where 1 is Strongly Disagree and 7 is Strongly Agree

Following the program, participants found most elements useful but to varying degrees.

The capacity funds were deemed the most valuable element of the program, followed by the immersive retreats and tailored sabbatical. Executive coaching had the most variable responses, while the GLWS had the least 'strongly agree' responses.

I found the following valuable:



*Hogan 360 was assessed on 5-point scale (Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neutral, Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

**GLWS was assessed on 5-point scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

Participants valued the cohort experience and opportunities to build peer networks.

Participants valued connecting to their peers the most. There are opportunities for SILA to provide more support through structured check ins throughout learning circles and creating safe environments in retreats.

Learning circles

What participants found valuable

- Methodology of problem exploration and support

"The methodology is really strong. Peer learning is always good, but being supported to figure out your own issue meant the potential solutions were more effective"

- An opportunity to build and strengthen a peer network

"Both process and the opportunity to share with peers in a more intimate setting. The opportunity to have an ongoing 'sounding board' network. Practicing some of the skills from SILA."

- A safe space to share experiences and learn from other participants

"Unlike traditional professional development, the circles weren't about performance or output, they were about being seen and seeing others fully, in both our challenges and our aspirations. This created a rare sense of psychological safety that allowed authentic insight and connection."

What can improve

- Ongoing facilitation post-program

"[I would like them] funded for 3 years post SILA for one annual f2f "

- Scheduling

"It was hard to fit the sessions in around 6 CEOs very busy work schedules. Try as we might someone's someone could not make it."

Retreats (post-program reflection on all retreats)

What participants found valuable

- Having time to disconnect from work and fully immerse in learning

"Work life suspended and capacity to be totally immersed in the learnings without distraction."

- Content and learning
- Building deeper peer connection

"The way the Facilitators delivered content and created experiences which bonded the cohort."

"Was a way to learn new systems and thinking, consolidate our learnings from reading, and to strengthen our relationships to fellow CEOs"

What can improve

- Retreat facilities better suited to deep learning

"Every venue we had challenges with sound, chairs and heating/cooling so probably just a bit more consideration of this given the awkward group size of 28ish."

- A trauma-informed approach and safety around disclosure

"Spending time...developing cultural safety within the group."

"Local Aboriginal engagement - Gladstone was very disappointing although Alice Springs was amazing! "

Participants got a lot out of the individual program elements but there could be improvement to accessibility.

Participants would like the option to meet their coaches face to face. They would also like access to their online learning materials earlier on so they can adequately prepare.

Executive coaching

What participants found valuable

- Experienced coaches created a safe space to receive support

"My coach is so experienced, I feel I can talk about anything and everything and not overwhelm him. He has a great grasp on leadership theory and I feel a weight off my shoulders and a sense of optimism"

- Opportunity for reflection and new perspectives

"The wisdom and ability for the coach to question and flip my thinking. I always left the conversations energised and looking at things with a new lens"

- Space to be challenged and push for change

"Being challenged and held accountable for my thoughts, assumptions, narratives etc. Pushing me to think differently and more broadly."

What can improve

- More focus on pairing, and potentially more participant involvement in coach selection

"Because the coach and coachee are paired up without coachee input - I had to be assertive in asking for my coach to be changed."

"Would love some choice in the matching process,"

Online learning materials

What participants found valuable

- Varied formats of materials

"I liked the mixed media and all the materials really resonated and continue to resonate with my experience leading a social enterprise."

- Set the scene for future sessions and learning

"They gave context and meaning to the intensives - and a variety of resources to ensure people could watch, listen, read etc."

- Interesting and relevant content

"The curation of resources balanced theory with practice. The materials weren't overwhelming, they were thoughtfully selected, relevant, and often sparked deeper reflection or new perspectives."

What can improve

- Technical difficulties with some video content

"Sometimes the video content did not work and I was disappointed to miss it - file size of videos was a problem"

- There was conflicting sentiment on the quantity of materials

"Additional resources would be useful in general to support the themes covered in the program."

"There was sooo much material. Finding time to read it all before each retreat was a challenge - but worthwhile."

The capacity funds and tailored sabbatical sets SILA apart from typical leadership programs.

The capacity funds allowed CEOs to participate in the program by supporting organisations through the sabbatical period, and the sabbatical gave them space to reassess their priorities and vision for the future.

Organisational capacity funds

How it was spent

- Most funds were spent on backfilling salary costs associated with the sabbatical and step up roles.
- Some also invested in additional training and development for staff.
- One organisation used the funding to engage a consultancy to design a strategy refresh.
- Another organisation funded some sabbatical travel for the CEO.

What participants found valuable

- Funds enabled the sabbatical and were incentive for board approval.
- The flexibility of untied funds.

"Flexibility to apply it where needed, makes it easier with the proposition to the board"

What can improve

- Providing examples of how other organisations have used the funds
- All participants thought that this was a very generous element of the program, and many didn't have suggestions for improvement.

"It would be good to have some example of how other orgs have used it, and the impact of the funds."

Tailored sabbatical

What participants valued

- Flexibility to use the time as needed

"The lack of structure, which I was initially concerned about, was actually the most valuable aspect. My coach encouraged me to not over-engineer the experience and just pick one thing a day which would bring me alive/create play."

- Space to reflect on learnings, purpose and future goals

"[It] gave me a clarity of perspective, an internal understanding of my values and priorities that I may have completely missed were it not for the sabbatical."

- Sabbatical toolkit and support structures set participants and organisations up for success

"The sabbatical toolkit was absolute gold and I think was critical to the success of my experience of stepping away and for my Step Up Leaders. It really gave us the pathway for making sure we comprehensively prepared and spent the time that was needed."

What can improve

- More clarity from coaches

"Difficult to ascertain the preferred outcomes from the sabbatical. Coaching conversation about this topic didn't sharpen understanding."

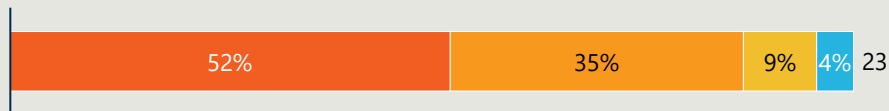
Most participants felt they had the tools to adequately prepare for their sabbatical.

Around half the participants strongly agreed they found value in the support of the sabbatical toolkit and the SULs. They focused on their wellbeing, spent time with family and travelled.

I found the sabbatical toolkit valuable.



My Step Up Leader was supported and prepared for the sabbatical period.



Strongly agree
Agree
Somewhat agree
Somewhat disagree

What did you do for your tailored sabbatical?

"Family, friends, self care and totally reorganised my personal life which had been neglected for 5+ years!"

"I attended a 5 day clowning workshop, called Politics of the Fool, to learn how to use satire and mockery for political change. I would never have spent the time and money on this if it weren't for the sabbatical...[It] really shifted my ability to not be overwhelmed by the social changes needed"

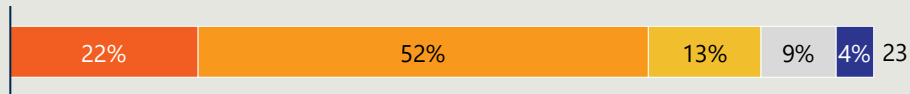
"Spent time with my young family and engaged in some pro-bono consulting for social enterprise initiatives"

"I [travelled] alone which I never would have done before SILA. I wandered through neighbourhoods and visited some organisations that I admired for their innovative work. I spent time by myself which initially was a scary thought, but I enjoyed my own company...I started to develop the outline of a book that I would like to share with friends and family on my experience. Over the next few months, I published my book on Amazon."

"Rested, came 'home' to myself as a person and a leader, integrating 5 years of learning as a CEO. Reconnecting with essential part of myself holistically through a strong focus on wellbeing"

SUL experiences varied between organisations, but were largely positive, with some areas for continued focus.

My Step Up Leader (SUL) had a positive experience throughout the program.



My SUL developed their skills and confidence as a result of the program.



- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

The impact of the SUL experience on organisations:

- Some SULs performed well which strengthened succession plans
"They stepped up perfectly. They were able to see themselves as a future CEO and have grown in confidence."
- "We followed the process using the tools and the conversations and coaching and felt very well prepared and as a result everything went very well."*
- Some SULs struggled and placed pressure on organisations
"I realised as the program progressed that I needed two SULs due to the diversity and size of our organisation. Therefore, the second (identified later in the program) did not have the same training and supports as the other."

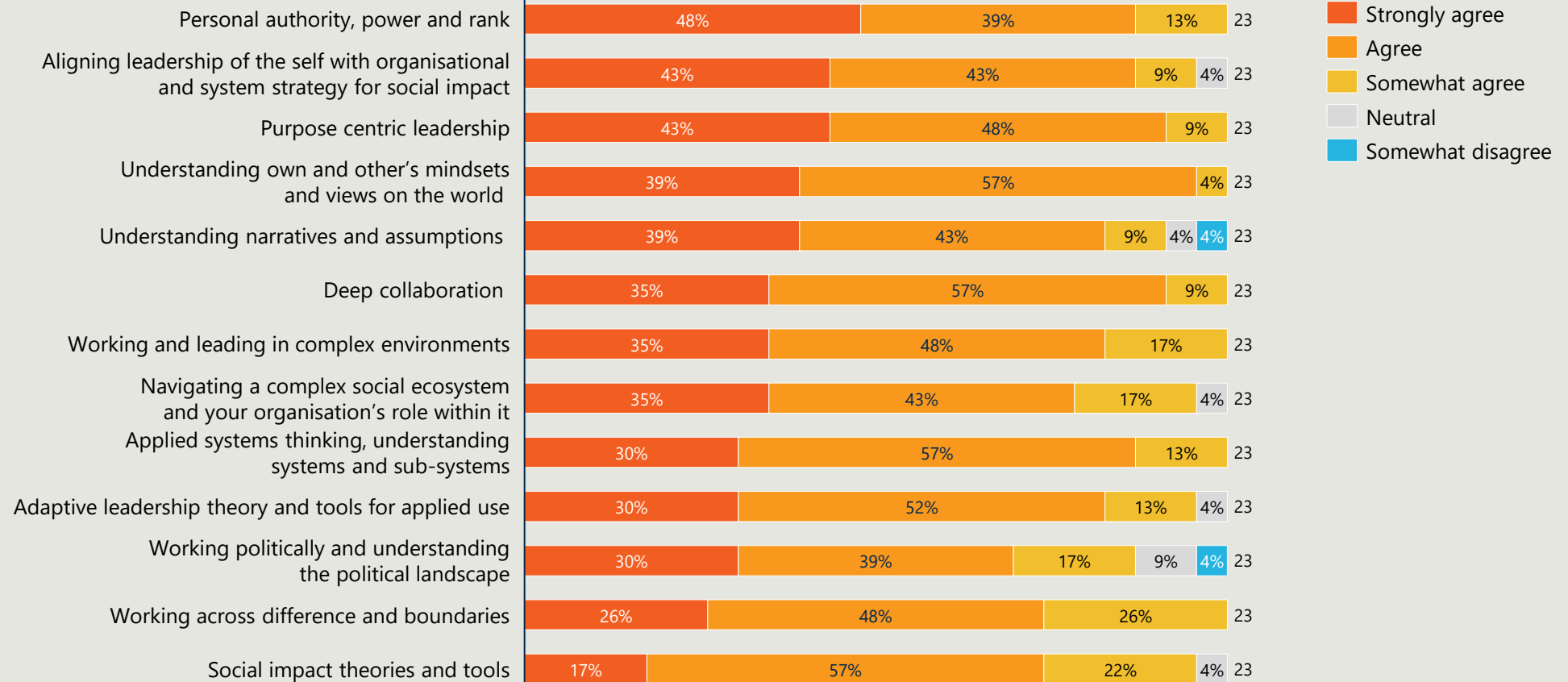
How SILA could better support SULs and prepare them for the sabbatical period:

- Provide space for SULs to recover following the step up period.
"My SUL was approaching burn out when I came back from the sabbatical. I do think there is room for SULs to be taken through a version of Retreat 1 and with some more funding perhaps all orgs participating in SILA could be encouraged to set aside 5-6 weeks bonus leave for the SUL in the year which follows the CEO sabbatical"

The program was comprehensive in its cover of knowledge and skill development.

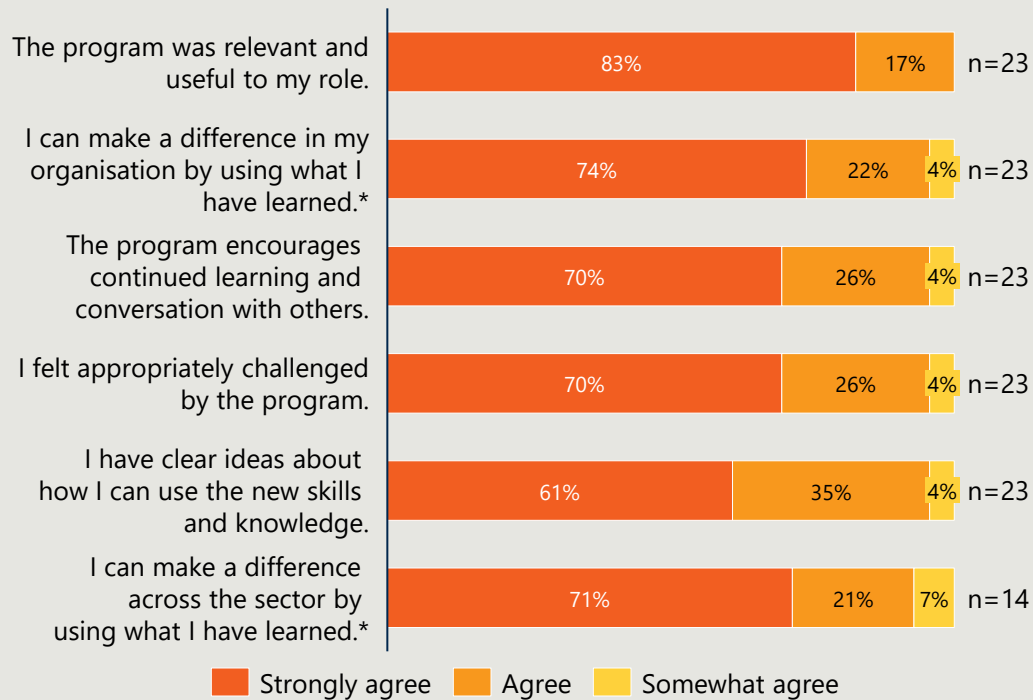
The majority of participants either agree or strongly agree that they sufficiently explored all of the key areas identified as most important to the SILA program.

The program provided the right level of coverage of:



The experiences and skills gained from the program are likely to support future action.

The program challenged participants to grow and develop with takeaway messages flowing onto their companies.



*After the initial nine responses, the question "I can make a difference in my organisation and across the sector by using what I have learned" was divided into two separate questions: "I can make a difference in my organisation by using what I have learned" and "I can make a difference across the sector by using what I have learned" for improved clarity.

The program provided me with language and concepts I had not explored before. It taught me techniques to hold deep conversations, to show up and to be present. My peers taught me even more - how to question, how to listen, how to stay quiet, how to add value - amazing group

I have already started to implement the new skills and knowledge. Upon my return to work I wrote my board a letter asking to add a new position to our organisation, a Deputy CEO, who can look after the daily ongoing duties of HR, Complaints, program oversight, etc so that I can focus on strategy, vision and a new research arm for the organisation

I have a new perspective on my leadership and applying amore adaptive style (recognising dependencies more clearly) in both the workplace and in the sector. This has (and I think will continue) to transform how I lead the organisation and how I participate more broadly in the sector.

Within my organisation, I have begun a process of systems change that is making the organisation more accountable to ourselves and our stakeholders...I now have a clearer perspective on what our role is within the sector and how we can be effective agents of change. For the first time in my 15 years of being in a leadership role, I have the mobile number of the Minister.

Participants embraced self-reflection and are willing to be challenged to grow their skills.

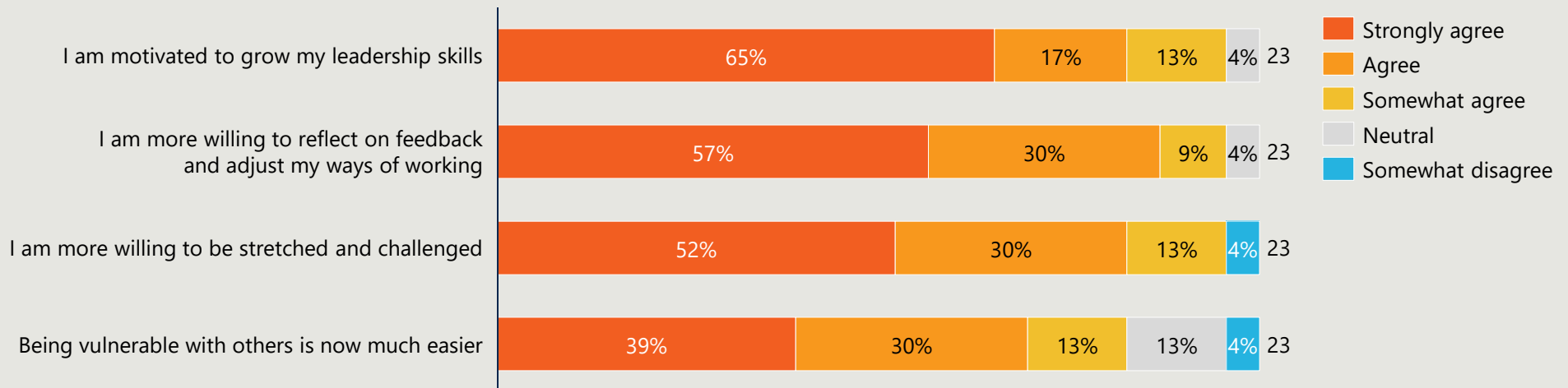
Many participants viewed the self-reflective aspects an opportunity to challenge their growth and behaviours. The process strengthened their sense of self and priorities for the future.

“ The transformation which occurred in my sabbatical has led to deep self-trust and care for my own wellbeing. I can't describe what a lifetime gift this is for me and my family. ”

“ I feel I have developed the most courage in getting feedback and reflecting on how to then adjust my ways of working which has then inspired me to grow my leadership skills. ”

“ I was vulnerable in a staff meeting about a personal challenge I was facing. I was also vulnerable around a particular project that was challenging. Both times I really felt my team rally around me in a whole new way. It was actually rather profound. ”

Most participants agreed that they were motivated to grow their leadership skills and were more willing to reflect on feedback.



All participants intend to maintain connection with SILA participants.

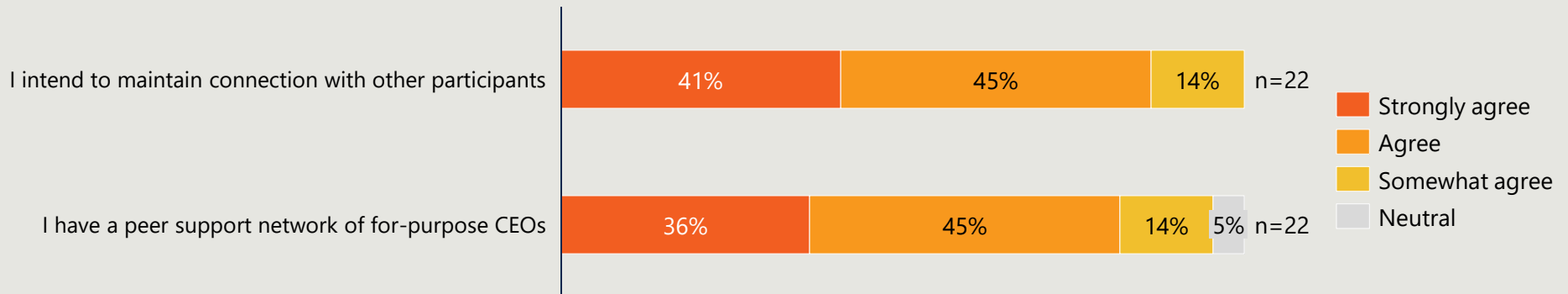
Some Learning Circles are ongoing, and some participants are developing other networks in the sector that they wouldn't have done prior to SILA. However, others feel there are some logistical barriers.

“ Living remotely is a challenge when maintaining relationships - my preference is always face to face but I am aware of this and aim to maintain networks established in the program. ”

“ I catch up regularly with a couple of the cohort in Brisbane. I am also involved in a new peer support network. ”

“ I truly feel I could pick up the phone to almost anyone in the SILA cohort. When I travel from Brisbane to other QLD/NT locations they are high priority people for me to connect with. I did not have this deep connection with peers before SILA. ”

18 of the 19* participants somewhat agree, agree or strongly agree that they have a peer support network of for-purpose CEOs.



*One participant expressed in interviews that he had mistakenly pressed Strongly Disagree – this response has been excluded

SILA allowed CEOs to restore and reset their wellbeing habits, but this will need to be maintained when they return to their organisations.

Participants valued the opportunity to focus on their mental and physical wellbeing but understand the challenge of maintaining these habits in the long term.

“

This is my number one priority and this program has set me up better than anything I have tried in the last decade

”

“

Every day since I started by sabbatical I have thought about way to manage my wellbeing. Of course I still have days which are incredibly difficult but I give myself much more self compassion and create room to bring myself back to a state of wellbeing.

”

All participants could at least somewhat agree that they can manage their wellbeing better following the program.

I can now better manage my wellbeing as a leader



- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree

All CEOs are looking to invest in their senior leadership teams and continue investment in their own development.

SILA has become a catalyst for professional development in participant organisations. CEOs are looking to share their load and upskill their senior leadership teams.

“

I will continue to focus on my leadership but will focus very intentionally on the leadership of the executive team to ensure strong succession planning and continued leadership in the organisation.

”

“

Through my SILA connections, I now feel empowered to look for board roles to complement my CEO role. I have increased the budget in my organisation for the senior leadership team to take on development programs/experiences.

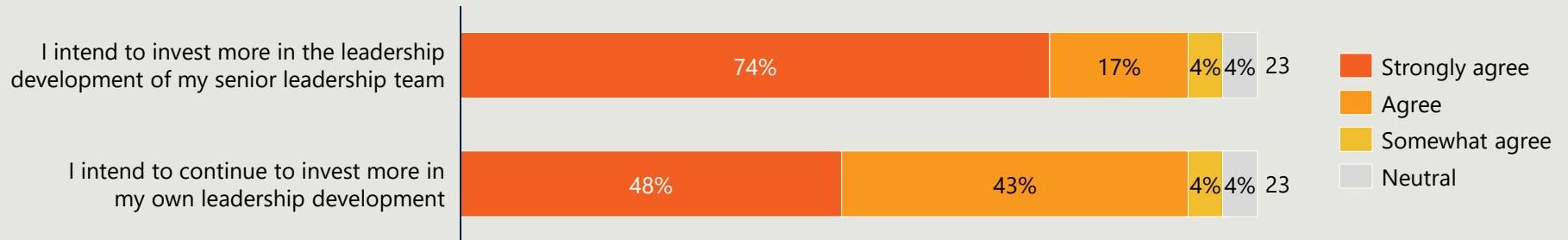
”

“

I have demonstrated to the organisation that investing in leadership is important by investing in myself and them. This is just the beginning and we will embed leadership practice more deeply

”

All participants agreed to some extent to invest in their senior leadership team and to invest more in themselves.



All participants believe that their SILA experience will lead to tangible benefits for their organisation.

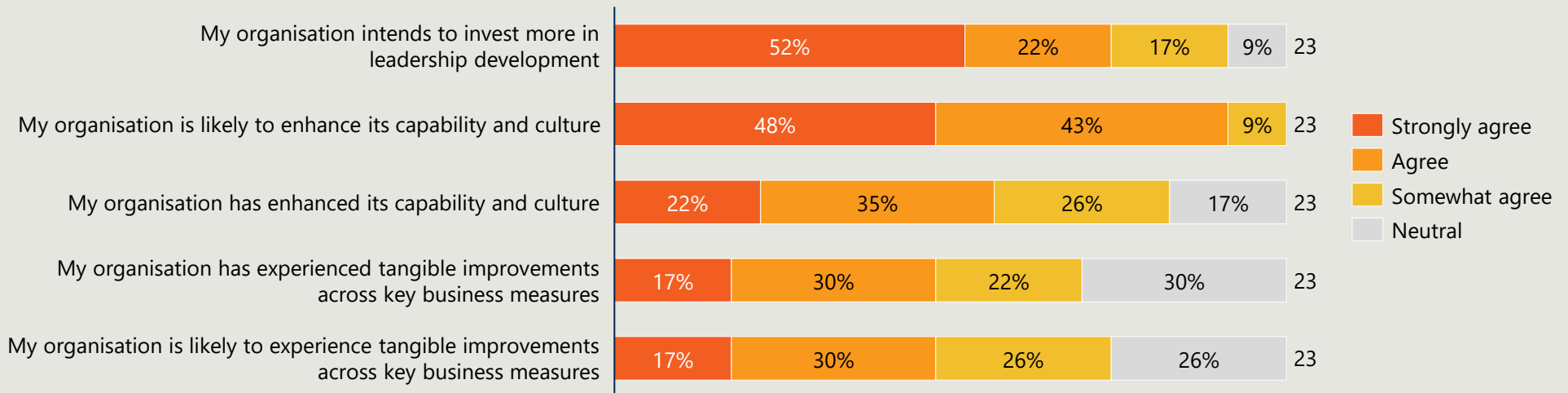
Although participants recognised it was still early and that the full benefits would unfold over time, they were already seeing benefits tied to the growth in responsibility of executive and senior management teams.

“ We continue to invest in our executive and senior leaders' leadership capability. It's too early to tell if we have experienced tangible improvements across our business measures - but they have now been added to my Executives KPIs and so leadership metrics will be tracked and measured ”

“ My organisation and the staff have stepped up and done a great job while I was away. I have tried to keep this standard and not step back in now that I am back. ”

“ My organisation's structure and capacity (including in senior leadership) has completely changed in the last twelve months. SILA forced me to share leadership, foster succession planning, and restructure the organisation in a way that better serves our constituencies and staff. ”

All participants at least somewhat agree their organisation is likely to enhance its capability and culture as a result of the program.



The program provided rewards beyond what was originally expected.

Most of the participants experienced some sort of unexpected benefit, ranging from personal learning to organisation succession planning.

When compared with the mid-point survey, fewer people experienced unexpected benefits of the program.



Categorised unexpected benefits (n=23)



I was most nervous about the Sabbatical (what was I going to do for 3 months!) however this was by far the most valuable component - for my wellbeing, my learnings and reflections.

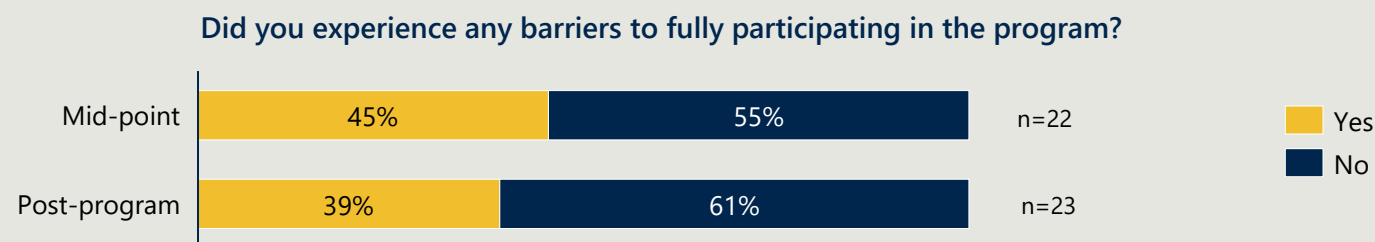
I feel like my whole attitude to life has changed. I feel calmer and more content which I hadn't expected to experience.

I didn't expect the deep connection to indigenous culture throughout the program. I learnt a lot, particularly in beautiful Alice Springs

I really didn't anticipate at the outset how much joy and lightness I would regain by participating in the SILA program. I have been genuinely buoyed by the sense of competence and awareness the program has brought me. It has returned a level of energy and ebullience in my role and my sense of overall purpose that I didn't even know I had lost.

The depth of connection with my fellow SILA participants. I also really enjoyed the way the retreats ran with different ways to learn and grow. It has made me rethink some of my team training & development days which are too powerpoint heavy!

Some participants didn't feel they could fully participate in the program, but these barriers decreased over time.



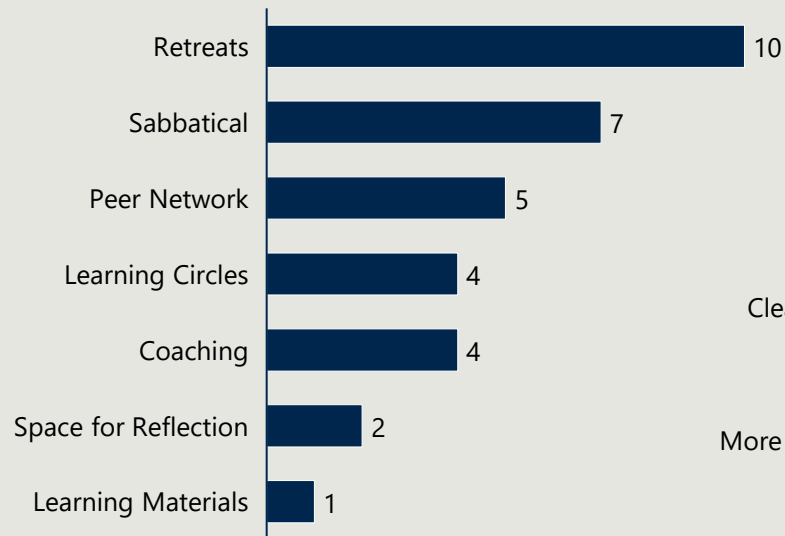
Barriers varied based on participants and their personal needs. Broader barriers involved unforeseen family pressures and difficulty finding the time to fully “switch off” and engage in deep learning.

Mid-program barriers (responses)	Post-program barriers (responses)
- Finding time to pause, reflect and focus (4) - Personal reasons (3) - Work demands and exhaustion (3) - Engaging as a co-CEO (1) - Learning styles (1)	- Personal reasons (3) - Finding time to pause, reflect and focus (2) - Exhausting nature of retreats (1) - Cultural Safety (1) - Leave planning around sabbatical (1) - Imposter syndrome based on org size and sector (1)

Overall feedback was overwhelmingly positive for consistent reasons, with small, varying areas for improvement.

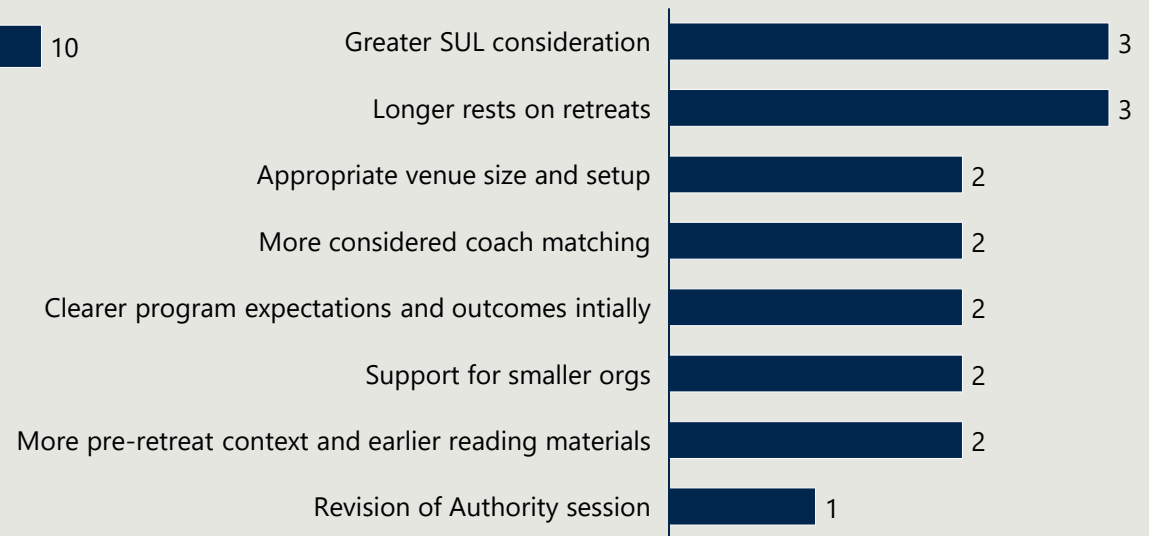
What do you think was the most useful and engaging aspect of the program?

Categorised responses



What do you think is the most important change to improve the program for future cohorts?

Categorised responses



Overall feedback was overwhelmingly positive for consistent reasons, with small, varying areas for improvement.

What do you think was the most useful and engaging aspect of the program?

Highlights of the program include the retreats, sabbatical and cohort of participants.

What do you think is the most important change to improve the program for future cohorts?

Feedback on improvements was varied but some examples are below.

“

The sabbatical. I would not have changed these narratives and unhelpful habits without a full break from the organisations.

”

“

Maintain the cross-cultural learning with a strong focus on First Nations leadership presence.

”

“

The most useful and engaging aspect of the program was the space to reflect deeply, with structure and support, while being surrounded by peers who were also grappling with complexity in their leadership. The retreats created a rare environment where I could step back from the constant doing, reconnect with purpose, and sharpen my thinking.

”

“

The function rooms of each retreat were not set up in the best way for the immersive learning we were undertaking.

”

“

Carving out space to be intentional, available and focused on my development yet also that the future of our organisation is not dependent on one person or ego. Our work is more important than me and will continue whether I am the CEO or not.

”

“

A little more time on the 3 day workshops to process some of the learnings - either more time to rest from afternoon before dinner or one night off from dinner rather than dinners every night.

”

The participants were very thankful for the program and the personal and organisational growth it afforded them.

Most participants responded overwhelmingly positively and testified to the immense value of the SILA program as a personal and organisational development opportunity.

Any additional feedback?

Thank you to SILA and the team for giving me this opportunity to explore myself and the support you provided without any expectations.

I can't express enough gratitude for the privilege of being part of this program. I truly felt seen and heard throughout the journey. It has transformed me and made me a better leader. Now, the important part is being intentional about holding on to these lessons and insights, and continuing to apply them in my work and life moving forward.

A huge thanks for this gift of a lifetime. Kristy, Robbie and Mark each said things which I know will stay with me for the rest of my journey. I have also found my kindred hearts in the cohort (finally).

The background work of Gabbi and Lisa was particularly exceptional. A group of this many CEOs would not be easy to wrangle but they made those retreats very meaningful and impactful by holding all the logistics together for us.

This program has been essential to leveraging me into the next phase of my leadership, where I have the confidence to make a social impact.

The SILA program is a wonderful opportunity. I feel very fortunate and grateful to have participated in the program. I'm confident that some of the benefits will be released later, and I look forward to that both in my personal and professional journey. Thanks to the wonderful SILA team.

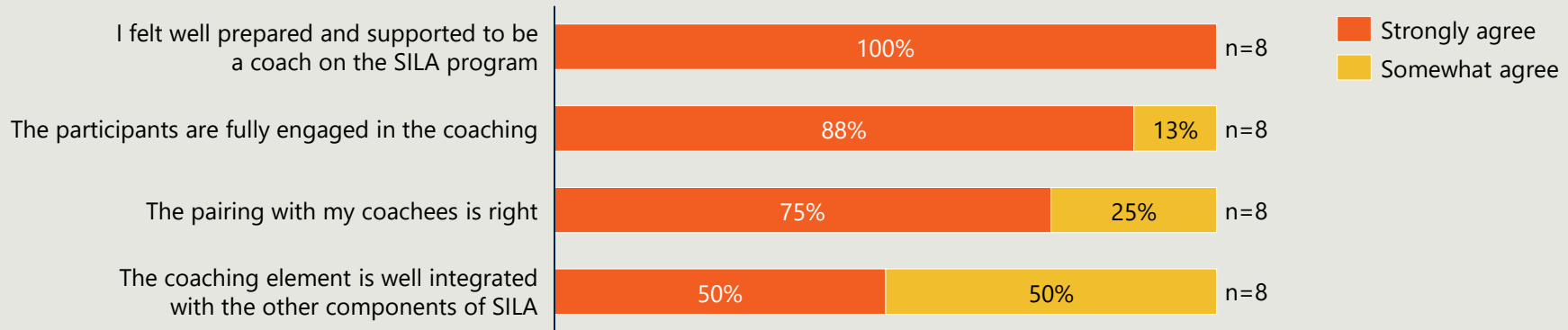
Would love some interconnectivity with other cohorts - can't wait for our group get together and potentially national!

Everyone involved should be commended on how this program and investment has and will continue to impact of For-Purpose Leaders. I feel so refreshed and valued to continue to keep going.

Appendix D – Coach mid and post-program survey results

Eight coaches completed a mid-program survey reflecting on their program experience.

At the mid-point, coaches were all having a positive experience in the coaching element.



“

With appreciation that a number of the organisations involved in SILA are very small and that therefore there's a very small pool of Step Up Leaders to choose from, I suggest encouraging the organisations to choose someone who will really benefit from the stretch, rather than the most obvious safe pair of hands. This would be more in line with the programs objective of building capacity within the sector.

”

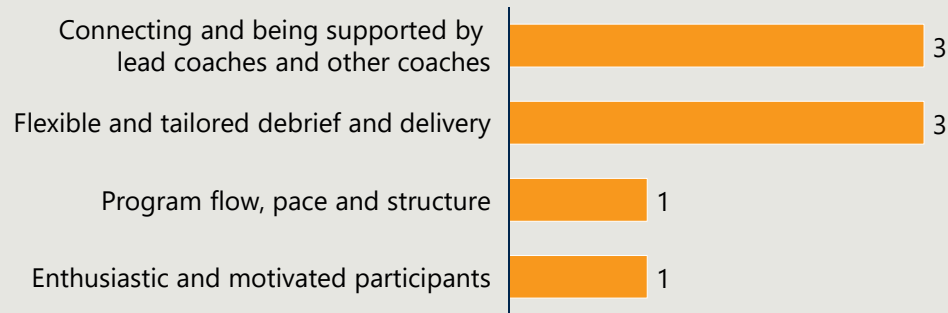
“

Love the intention to continue to widen the 'experience net' - where the wider ecosystem of the participant - eg. the executive, the board - is taken into consideration

”

Coaches enjoyed the delivery of coaching sessions but proposed recommendations for continuous improvement.

What has worked well with the delivery of the coaching sessions? Categorised responses (n=8)



“

The latitude we have to tailor the coaching to the needs of each individual participant [works well].

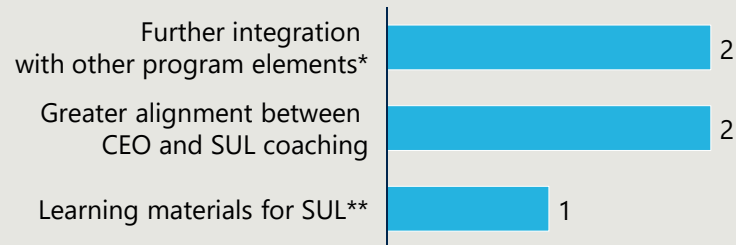
”

“

The cadence of sessions is working well this year, with most SUL's CEO's on sabbatical during the coaching period. The timing of the 360s has been good too.

”

What do you think can be improved with the delivery of the coaching sessions? Categorised responses (n=7)



“

Only improvement may be increased alignment with the CEO learning program to enhance shared conversations and learnings for teams.

”

“

Possibly better links to the rest of the program but its not really an issue

”

* For example, scheduling longer sessions for debriefing material.

** Coach noted Hogan 360 does not add much value for SULs

The post-program coach survey was completed by nine coaches who reflected on the SILA program.

5



coaches
supported CEO
participants

4



coaches
supported Step
Up Leaders

1



coach was in
their first year
of supporting
the SILA
program

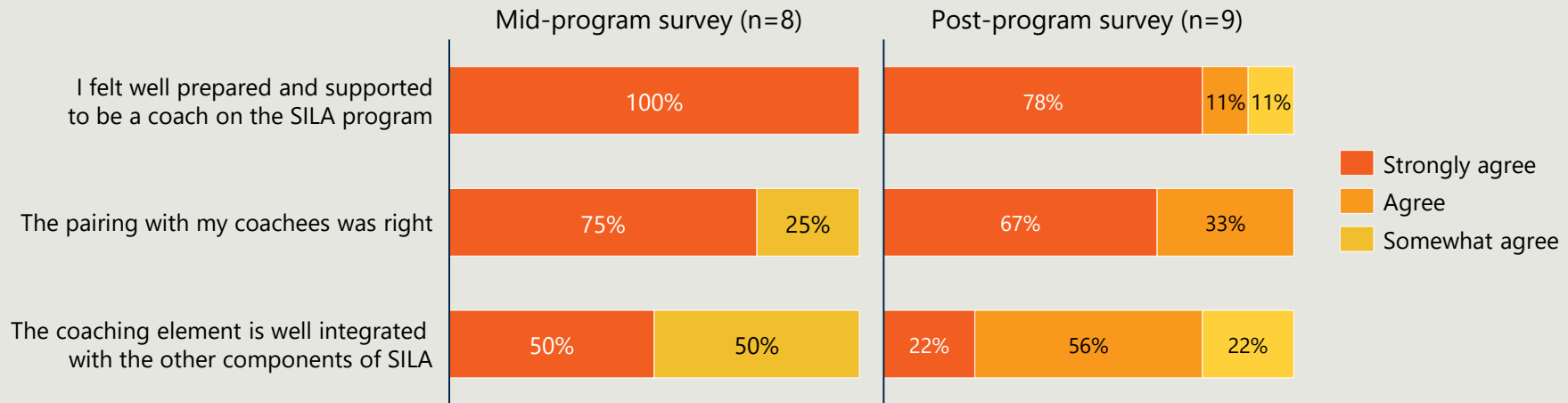


5

coaches have
worked with
their CEO or
SUL coachees
outside the
SILA program

Coaches believe the program has provided a positive experience but noted improvement opportunities.

The survey's qualitative data illustrates that there has been a slight decrease in strong agreement across all statements when compared to the coach's mid-program survey.



“

The support and preparation provisions of the program are now robust - plenty of lead time, good access to all the materials, and with strong support from Lisa and Terri (admin and professional/programmatic)

”

“

The pairing is always a challenging task. Ideally Terri should be involved in the interviews, as she knows the coaches the best and would be best placed to make the pairings.

”

“

It feels more integrated this year - especially with the tri party catch ups between the SUL, CEO and Terri. I feel the value of the increased leadership capacity of the SUL, as a result of the program, could be better promoted and integrated across the program.

”

Participants shared their views about each retreat through open-ended responses.

	Retreat 1 themes (n=24)	Retreat 2 themes (n=23)	Retreat 3 themes (n=24)
What did the retreat help you learn about yourself as a leader?	• The need to reflect on leadership journey, style and barriers (13) • The need to challenge assumptions, be vulnerable and explore different approaches (8) • Useful tools/structure to intentionally develop leadership philosophy (5)	• Confidence in leadership ability (9) • When to take a step back and gain more perspective (8) • The importance of listening and not immediately jumping to action (5)	• Self-awareness of power as a leader and confidence in abilities (19) • The importance of emotional intelligence and personal wellbeing (6) • Realigned to purpose (5)
What did you learn from the retreat that is applicable to your organisation?	• Immunity to change (9) • Above and below the waterline (4) • Adaptive leadership (4) • Supporting/developing staff (3) • Ladder of inference (3) • Deep listening (3)	• System thinking/understanding (9) • Improving relationships and collaboration – internally and externally (8) • Observing and embracing disruption (3) • Adaptive leadership (2)	• Understanding systems, power and factions (9) • Self-leadership and emotional intelligence (8) • Leading with vulnerability and collaboration (5) • Coaching and listening (5)
What did you value most about the retreat?	• Meeting, connecting and learning from others (17) • Learning content, style and environment (9) • Time and space to reflect (7)	• Connecting with and learning from peers (12) • Engaging with community (6) • Learning about new systems (5) • Stepping out of comfort zone (3) • Time and space to reflect (3)	• Peer connection and collegiality (13) • Being in Alice Springs/on Country (9) • Personal growth and reflection (6) • Learning environment and facilitation (5)
How could the retreat experience be improved?	• More comfortable chairs and collaborative room set up (9) • More access to outdoor spaces, breaks and activities (7) • More trauma-informed approaches (3) • More time to reflect and debrief (3)	• Reflect further on Gladstone and its community (7) • More time to process/reflect throughout and at the end of the retreat (4)	• More time to process/reflect throughout the retreat (11) • Inclusive learning styles (6) • Location experience and logistics (4)
Which session or concept was most impactful?	• Sharing stories (7) • Immunity to change (5) • Adaptive leadership (4) • Personal goal setting (2)		

CEO coaches observed significant shifts in their coachees throughout the program.

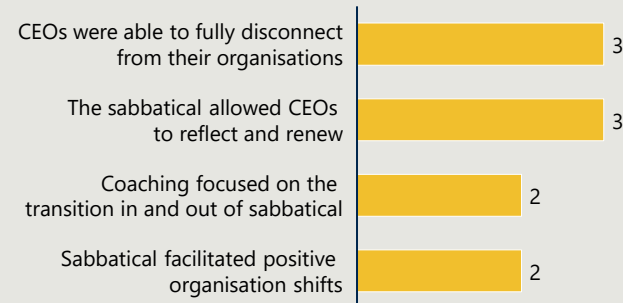
The post-program coach survey included open-ended and Likert scale questions to explore CEO participant engagement. Themes and supporting quotes are shared below.

The CEO participants were fully engaged in the coaching.



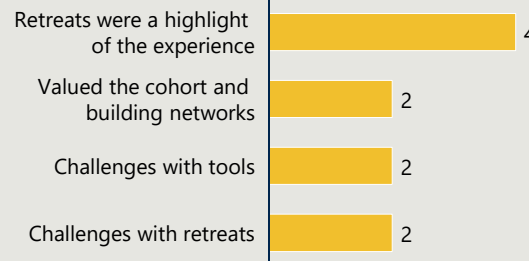
What reflections did CEO participants share on their experience with the sabbatical?

Categorised responses (n=5)



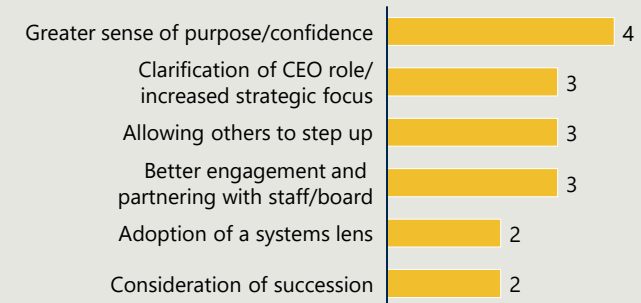
What reflections did CEO participants share on their experience with the other SILA components?

Categorised responses (n=5)



What shifts in mindset, knowledge, skills or behaviours did you observe in CEO participants?

Categorised responses (n=5)



“ [The sabbatical was] generally very well received and appreciated. Noticed less “re-integration” back into work for this cohort - likely due to the attention paid to that issue for this cohort. Most found it extremely valuable, a space to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and explore activities and projects that would otherwise have been overlooked. The impact on their organisations is primarily positive. ”

“ The final retreat was particularly valued as a synthesis opportunity, with participants feeling that the progression from “leadership of self” to “systems” to “organisation” created perfect timing for integration. One participant described the experience as beautifully integrated and timely, while another found it quite emotional. ”

“ Universally - greater ‘whole system’ understanding and appreciation. Greater want and ability to operate at a higher, more strategic level. Greater confidence in themselves and their organisations - including the ability to push back work to where it should be held. Greater clarity of the issues and strengths they, their people and organisations have. ”

SUL coaches reflected on varying levels of engagement and shifts from their coachees.

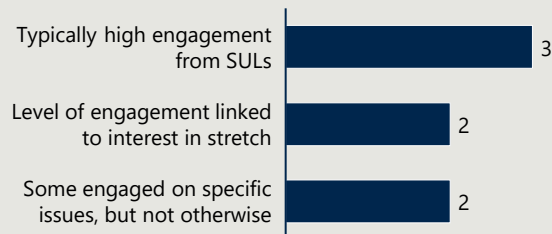
The post-program coach survey included open-ended and Likert scale questions to explore SUL engagement. Themes and supporting quotes are shared below.

The SUL participants were fully engaged in the coaching.

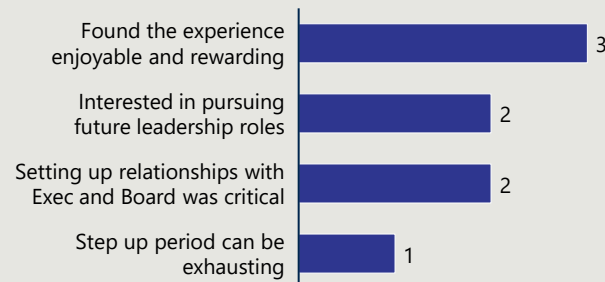


Categorised responses (n=4):

Comments on SUL engagement.



What reflections did SUL participants share on their experience with the SILA program?



What shifts in mindset did you observe in SUL participants?



“

There was still degrees of engagement that varied from personally transformative to more role focused engagement. Some of the factors that impacted engagement was whether they opted in to be SUL, the quality of their existing relationship with their CEO, preparedness for the role.

”

“

For some it's not a stretch. Make sure wherever possible the person getting the SUL gig wants stretch to ensure we fulfil our objectives around building sector capacity.

”

“

Increased confidence. During the program many faced unexpected events like change in government, floods, cyclone prep alongside the challenge of stepping into a more senior role. In these instances, all felt they had risen to the occasion and led their teams through crisis - even beyond their own expectations.

”

Overall feedback from coaches was positive, but there is room for improvement in certain areas of the coaching.

The feedback indicates that the coaching remains an important element of the program in supporting CEOs and SULs. Opportunities to integrate SUL experience further would be beneficial.

What do you think can improve with the delivery of the coaching sessions? (n=9)

“ I could have been more explicit about addressing power dynamics within the broader program (funding relationships, authority structures) that were affecting participants' ability to fully engage. ”

“ Despite best attempts it has been hard to schedule the times to connect with the other coaches ”

“ Perhaps extending the number of coaching sessions - 8, instead of 6 ”

“ Having one or two 4-way sessions (SUL, SUL coach, CEO & CEO coach) ”

“ I could have been more proactive in helping participants develop concrete plans for sustaining changes and insights after the formal coaching concluded, rather than addressing this primarily in final sessions. ”

What did you find worked well with the delivery of the coaching sessions? (n=9)

“ Adjusting the sessions to the needs of the SUL. For example, if they were feeling like they were in operation uncertainty we focus more on action, if the focus was more about their development or they were emotionally charged we sat in a more reflective space. ”

“ Flexibility. Treating the time as a parcel of time that can be used flexibly, straddling the sabbatical period. ”

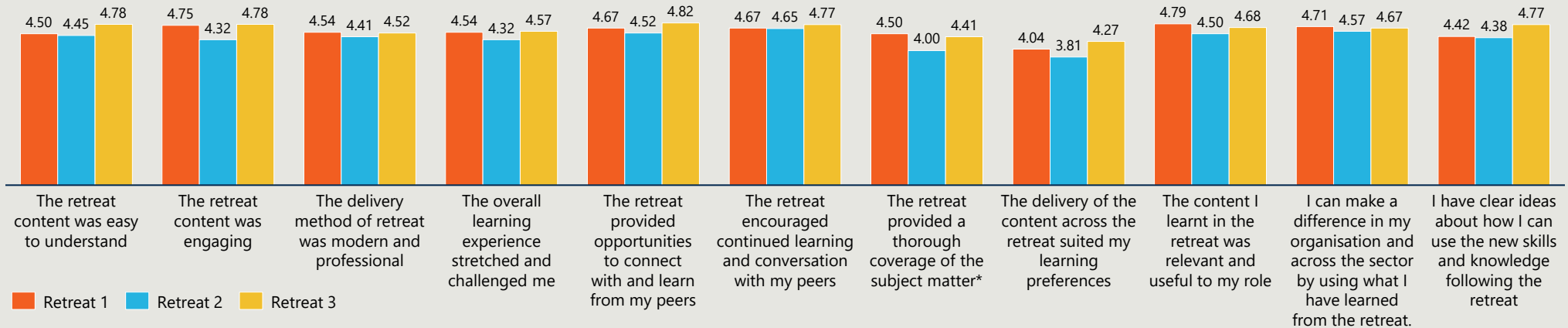
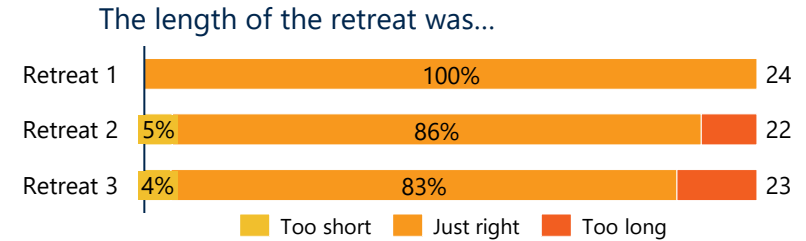
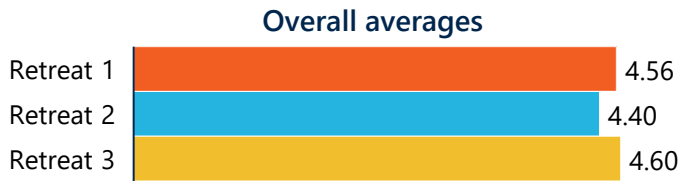
“ I guided them to step into different roles or viewpoints to help them access different resources and perspectives they already possessed. I aimed to challenge them while maintaining psychological safety, and I worked to integrate leadership theory naturally into our conversations without being overly academic. ”

“ I think it all worked well and the number of sessions felt about right. ”

“ Having access to all of the material that the participants were exposed to. ”

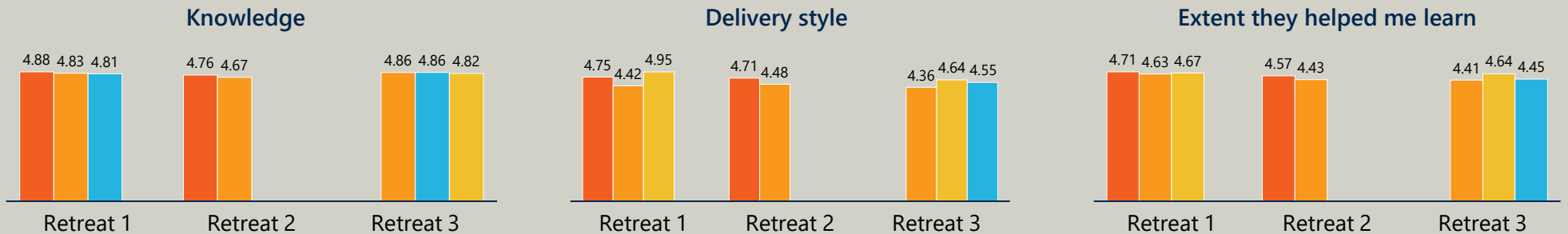
Appendix E – Post-retreats survey results

On average, participants scored retreat 3 the highest.



Facilitator average rating

Kirsty M Robbie M Mark YP Terri S



Appendix F – Hogan 360 assessment results

Cohort 4 participants and SULs scored above the global average for each of Hogan's core leadership competencies.

Hogan's Leadership Model *Cohort 4 participants (Global average)*



- Cohort 4 participants scored highly across the leadership models, particularly in self-management, relationship management and working on the business.
- For all four models, participants scored significantly higher than the global average.

Hogan's Leadership Model *Cohort 4 step-up leaders (Global average)*



- The cohort 4 Step-Up Leaders scored highly across the leadership models. For all models, participants scored significantly higher than the global average (+0.3).
- SUL scores are slightly lower than participants for self-management, relationship management and working on the business, which is to be expected.

Cohort 4 participants are above the global average for most assessment item groups.

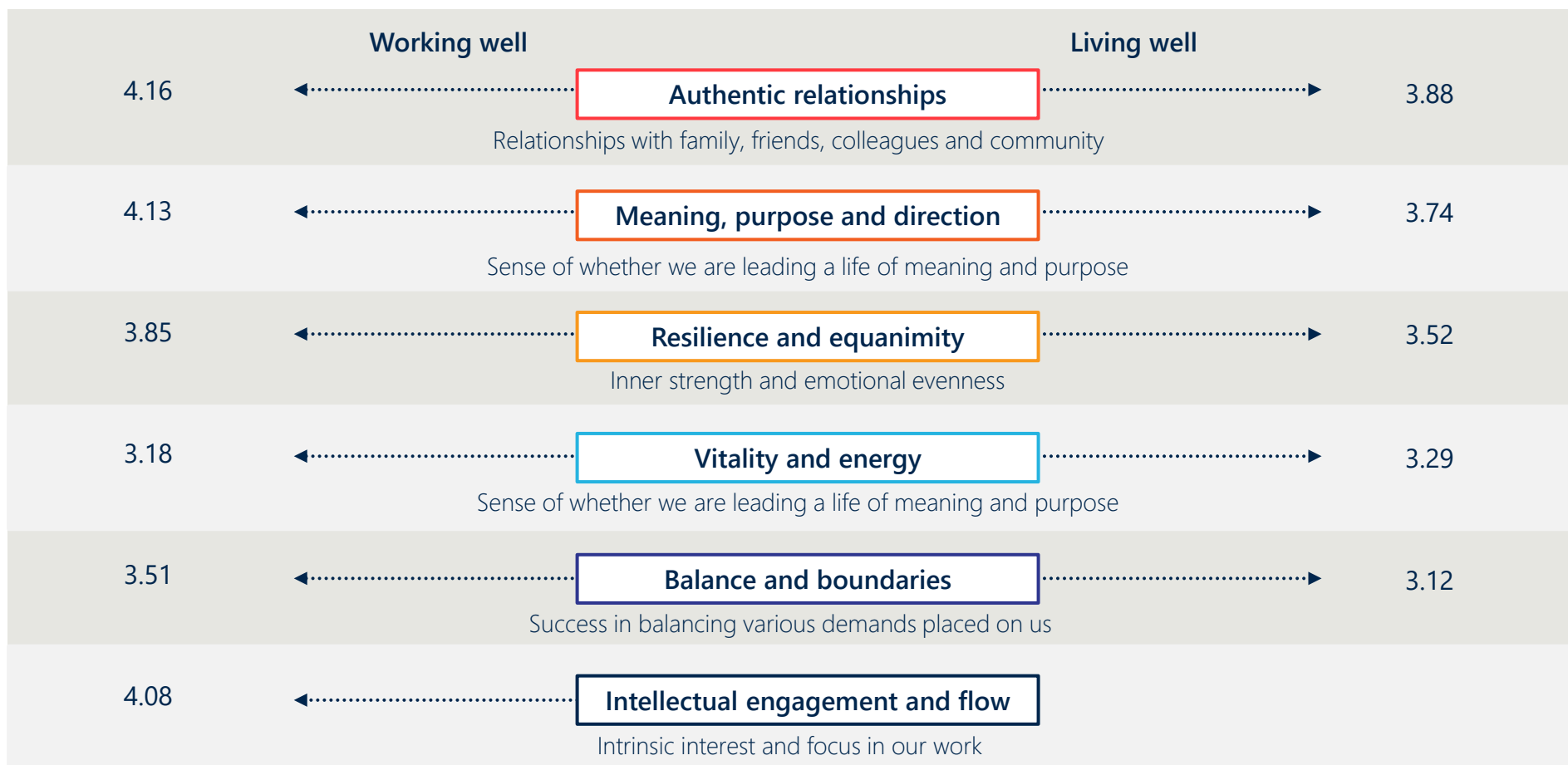
- Cohort 4 results were generally slightly higher than cohort 1, 2 and 3 results.
- Cohort 4 participants scored higher than the global average on all assessment items. Working on the Business was much higher (+0.5) than the global average for cohort 4 participants.
- Cohort 4 participants scored slightly higher than their SULs on most assessment items.

	Global average	Cohort 4 participant average (Global comparison)	Cohort 4 SUL average (Cohort 4 participant comparison)	Cohort 3 participant average	Cohort 2 participant average	Cohort 1 participant average
Self-Management	5.7	6.1 (+0.4)	6.0 (-0.1)	5.9	5.9	6.0
Integrity	5.8	6.2 (+0.4)	6.1 (-0.1)	6.0	6.0	6.1
Resilience	5.6	6.0 (+0.4)	5.9 (-0.1)	5.9	5.8	5.9
Relationship Management	5.6	6.0 (+0.4)	5.9 (-0.1)	5.9	5.8	5.8
Communication	5.5	5.8 (+0.3)	5.7 (-0.1)	5.8	5.8	5.8
People skills	5.5	6.1 (+0.6)	6.0 (-0.1)	5.9	5.8	5.9
Team player	5.5	5.9 (+0.4)	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.8
Engaging	5.7	6.0 (+0.3)	5.8 (-0.1)	5.7	5.8	5.8
Working in the Business	5.7	6.0 (+0.3)	6.0	5.9	6.0	6.0
Capability	6.0	6.4 (+0.4)	6.2 (-0.1)	6.3	6.3	6.3
Efficiency	5.6	5.8 (+0.2)	5.8	5.5	5.6	5.5
Results	5.8	6.1 (+0.3)	6.1	5.9	6.1	6.2
Customer	5.6	6.0 (+0.4)	6.0	5.9	5.9	6.1
Working on the Business	5.4	5.9 (+0.5)	5.7 (-0.2)	5.6	5.7	5.6
Accountability	5.4	5.7 (+0.3)	5.5 (-0.2)	5.3	5.5	5.4
Motivation	5.4	6.0 (+0.6)	5.8 (-0.2)	5.7	5.6	5.7
Strategy	5.4	5.9 (+0.5)	5.6 (-0.3)	5.6	5.7	5.6
Innovation	5.5	6.0 (+0.5)	5.8 (-0.2)	5.6	5.8	5.8

Appendix G – Global Leadership Wellbeing Survey assessment results

Cohort 4 participants identified various work and personal aspects that can detract and enhance their wellbeing.

- Global Leadership Wellbeing Survey (GLWS) identifies aspects of wellbeing affected by our professional life (working well) and personal, home and social lives (living well).
- For cohort 4 participants, authentic relationships and meaning, purpose and direction were work aspects that enhanced their ability to work well. Authentic relationships was also a personal aspects that enhanced participant wellbeing.



*Note: Scores are the aggregated averages from participants' ratings on a 5-point Likert scale (1 – Never, 2 – Rarely, 3 – Sometimes, 4 – Usually/Often, 5 – Always).

Appendix H – Cohort 2 and 3 alumni survey results

Participants from cohorts 1, 2 and 3 received a survey one year after their program completion.

Only cohort 3 were surveyed in this round of evaluation. Cohort 1 and 2 results from prior rounds are included for comparison points.

Cohort 3 answered the following 1-year alumni survey questions (1/2):

Demographic Questions

1. Are you still with the same organisation as when you undertook the SILA program? (Yes/No)
2. What is your current role?
3. How many years have you acted in a CEO role?
4. How large is your organisation by revenue?
5. Did you attend the alumni event on 13 June 2025?

Feedback on alumni event (13 June 2025)

6. I found the alumni event valuable (7-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree)
7. Having SILA organise flights and accommodation influenced my ability and desire to attend the event (7-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree)
8. What did you like about the alumni event?
9. What would you change about the alumni event?

Impact on self

10. Please rate the following statements:
 - o I have maintained connection with other participants
 - o I have maintained a better wellbeing following the program
 - o I have continued to invest in my own leadership development

11. Please share any detail on your responses to the set of questions above

Impact on organisation

12. Please rate the following statements:
 - o I have used skills gained from the program in my role
 - o I have made a difference in my organisation due to the program
 - o I have invested more in the leadership development of my senior leadership team
13. Please share any detail on your responses to the set of questions above
14. The program has had a positive impact on our Step Up Leader (7-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree)
15. What impacts (positive or negative) has the program had on your Step Up Leader?
16. The program has had a positive impact on organisational culture (7-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree)
17. What impacts (positive or negative) has the program had on your organisational culture?
18. The program has had a positive impact on organisational performance (7-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree)
19. What impacts (positive or negative) has the program had on your organisational performance?

Participants from cohorts 1, 2 and 3 received a survey one year after their program completion.

Cohort 3 answered the following 1-year alumni survey questions (2/2):

Impact on ecosystem

- 20. I made a difference in the social purpose ecosystem due to the program (7-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree)
- 21. Please rate the following statements:
 - o I have used knowledge and skills obtained from the program to mentor others outside my organisation.
 - o I have initiated or strengthened partnerships with other organisations or government as a result of the program.
 - o I have advocated for or contributed to systemic changes (e.g., new policies, funding models, sector standards) inspired by the program.
- 22. Please share any detail on your responses to the set of questions above.
- 28. Can you please describe the unexpected setbacks?
- 29. How could SILA have better supported you or your Step Up Leader to benefit from the program?
- 30. Share a brief story of how a leadership decision you made following the program directly improved a beneficiary's life.
- 31. Any additional feedback?

General reflections

- 23. The investment of time and effort by myself and my organisation into the program was justified.
- 24. How likely is it that you would recommend the SILA program to another social purpose sector CEO?
- 25. Did you experience any long-term unexpected benefits from participating in the program?
- 26. Can you please describe the unexpected benefits?
- 27. Did you experience any long-term unexpected setbacks from participating in the program?

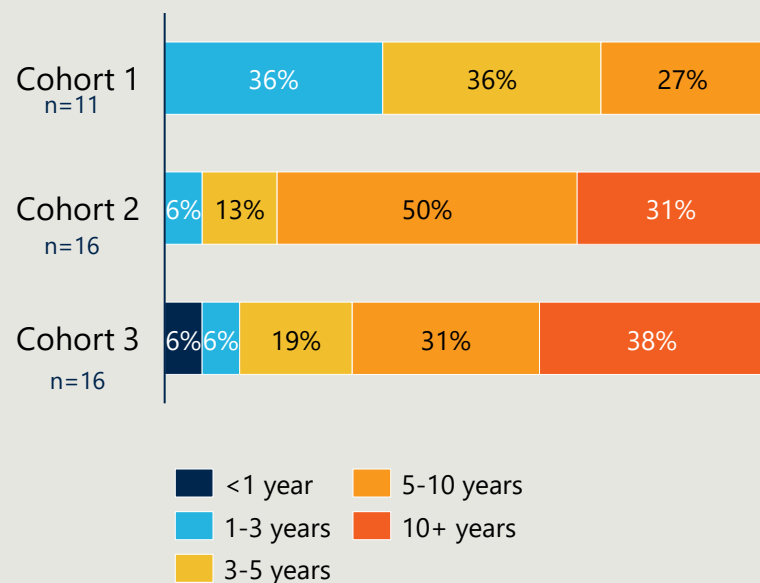
Respondents came from varied backgrounds and organisational contexts.

Cohort 3 was the most diverse in both CEO tenures and organisational size by revenue.

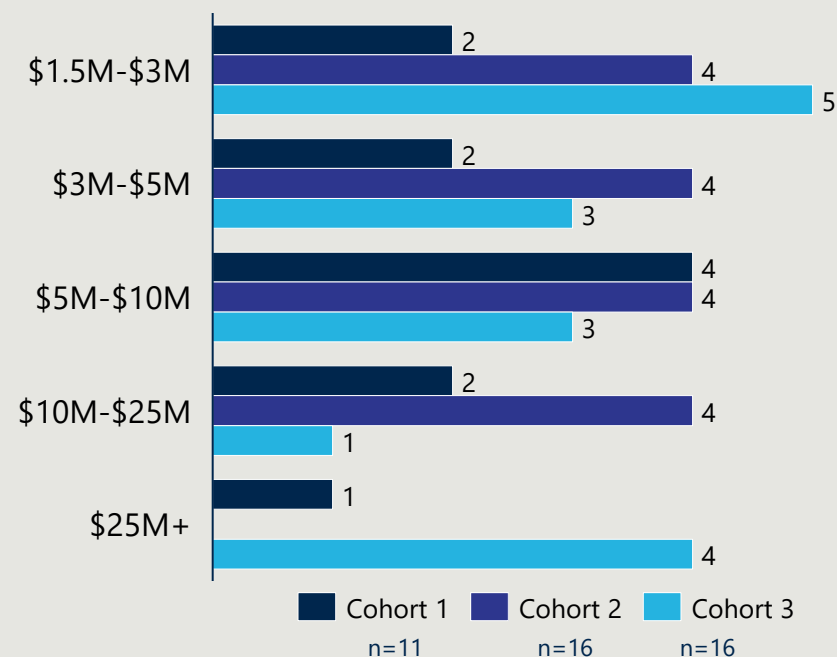
One year after the program, **all** CEO respondents from **cohort 1** were still with the same organisation as when they undertook the SILA program. **Sixty-nine per cent** of CEO respondents from **cohort 2** and **88 per cent** of CEO respondents from **cohort 3** were still with the same organisation one year on.

Note: **Cohort 1** was **not** engaged during this round of evaluation, but their earlier responses have been included for reference.

How many years have you acted in a CEO role?



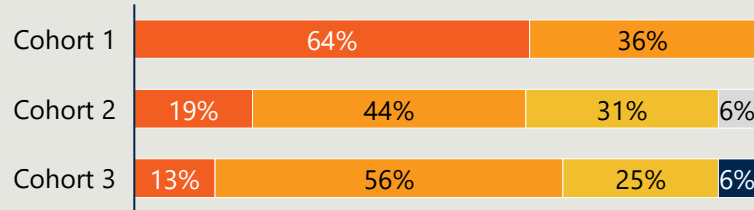
How large is your organisation by revenue?



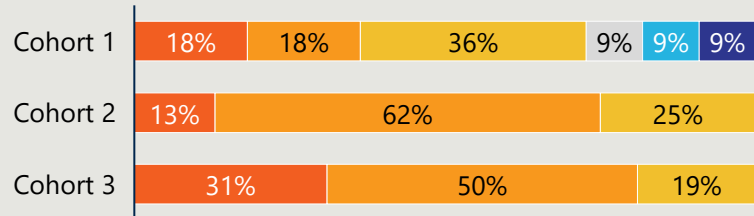
All cohorts felt the impacts of the program were maintained one year on.

A larger proportion of cohort 1 felt they maintained a connection with their cohort a year after program completion. Cohort 3 agreed most strongly that they maintained their wellbeing following the program. Cohort 3 also most strongly agreed they continued to invest in their own leadership development.

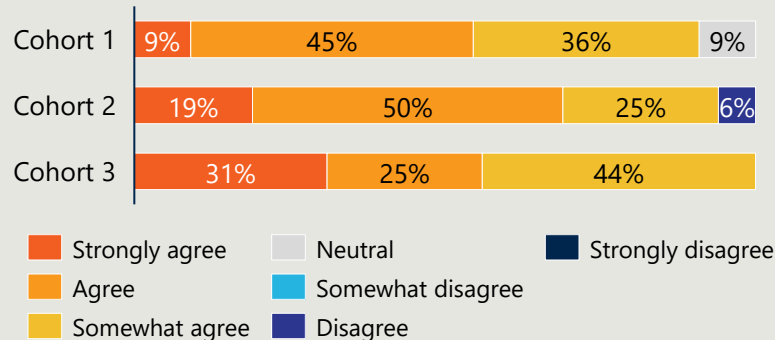
I have maintained connection with other participants.



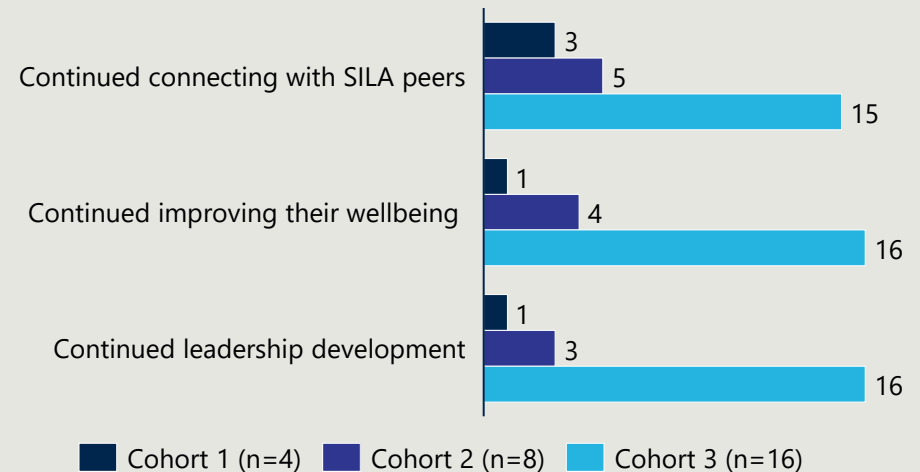
I have maintained a better wellbeing following the program.



I have continued to invest in my own leadership development.



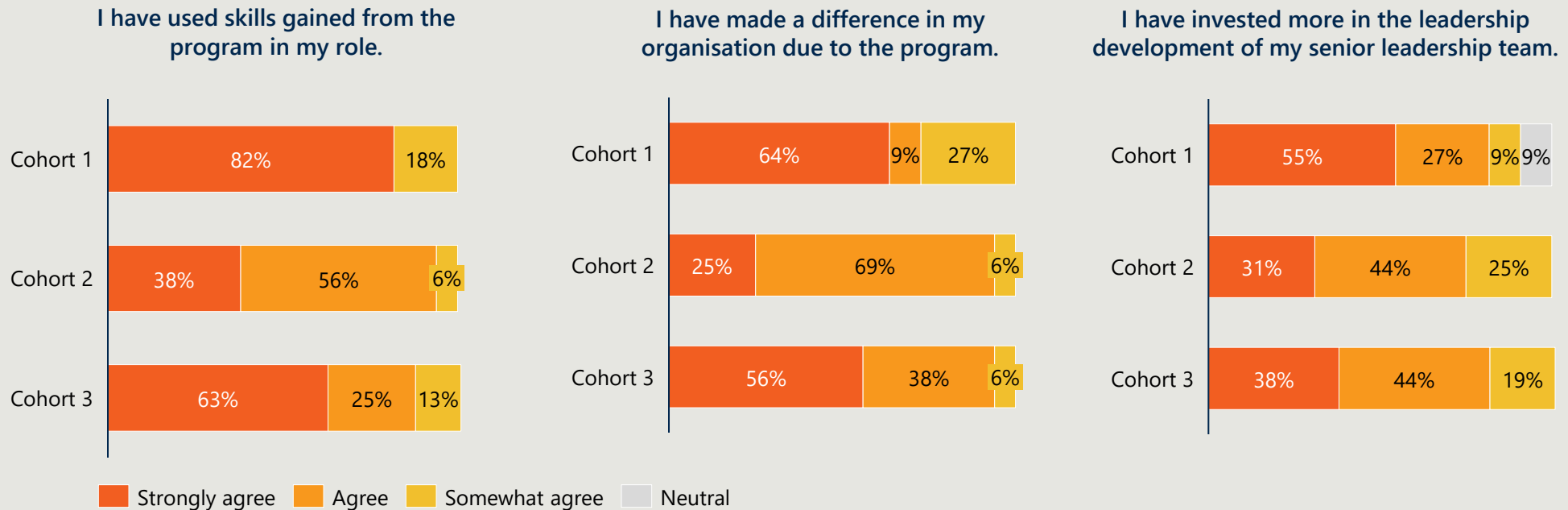
After the program, participants shared that they:



“Despite a year of significant conflict and disruption, professionally and personally, I have been able to navigate with increased professional and emotional maturity which I believe enhanced my response to the workplace and re-framing of the future. Wellbeing was difficult at times to maintain and prioritise but skills I had developed with SILA were definitely instrumental.

- Cohort 3 participant ”

Both cohorts felt they were able to make a difference to their organisation.



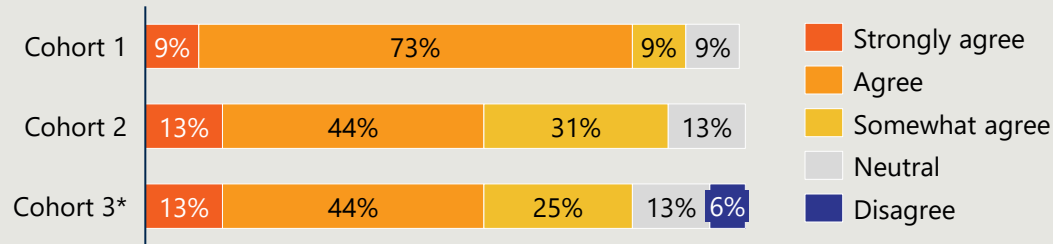
It's made me a more reflective and conscious leader. I'm more comfortable sitting with ambiguity and creating space for others to step up.

- Cohort 3 CEO



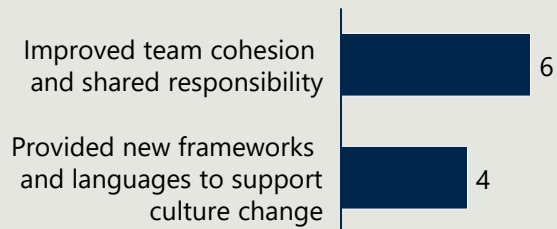
The benefits of the program extended beyond individual CEOs to positively impact their organisational culture.

The program has had a positive impact on organisational culture.



“ The ripple effect of SILA has definitely been felt across our organisation. It's fostered more open, strategic conversations and encouraged a culture where leadership is seen as a shared responsibility, not just something that sits at the top. ”
- Cohort 3 CEO

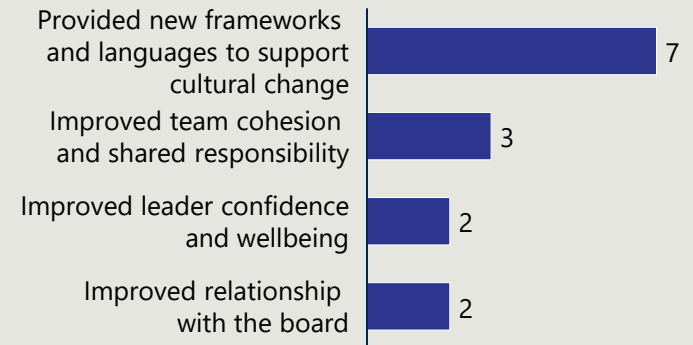
Positive impacts of the program for cohort 1 participants included: Categorised responses (n=11)



Positive impacts of the program for cohort 2 participants included: Categorised responses (n=14)



Positive impacts of the program for cohort 3 participants included: Categorised responses (n=16)



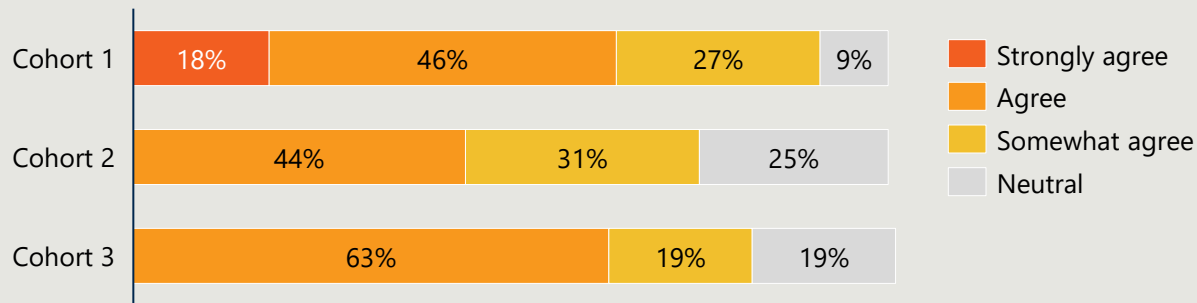
Four participants in cohort 3 reported significant organisational upheaval following the program, but three of them reflected that it was ultimately beneficial.

*The cohort 3 participant who disagreed reported that the Executive team became competitive during their sabbatical and it has taken time to bring positive culture back to the organisation and team

The program also positively impacted organisational performance.

Cohort 1 alumni reflected on a more positive impact on organisational performance than cohorts 2 and 3, though all of them were generally positive.

The program has had a positive impact on organisational performance.



“

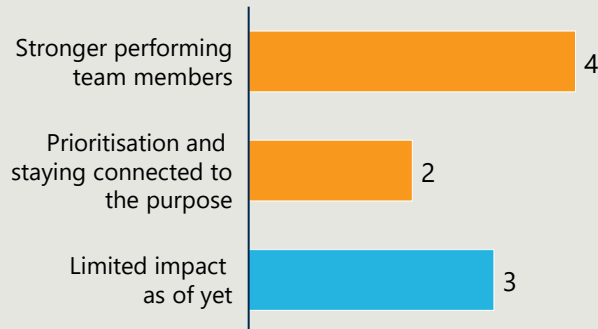
It was brilliant having the board participate in the governance for impact sessions which created alignment and better understanding of possibilities. This will help the organisation as it moves forward.

- Cohort 3 CEO

”

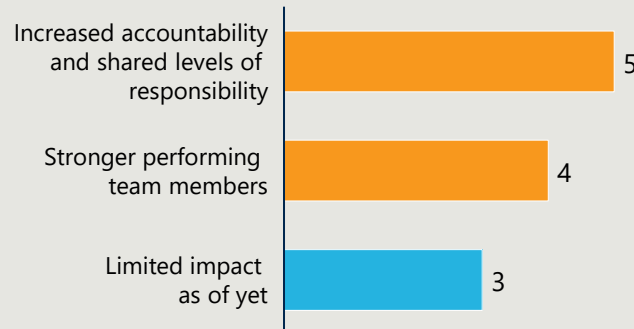
Cohort 1: What impacts (positive or negative) has the program had on your organisational performance?

Categorised responses (n=11)



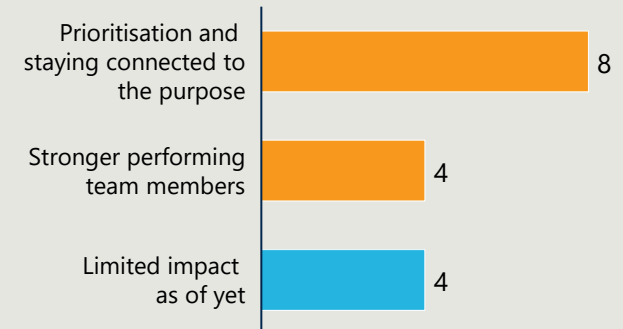
Cohort 2: What impacts (positive or negative) has the program had on your organisational performance?

Categorised responses (n=15)



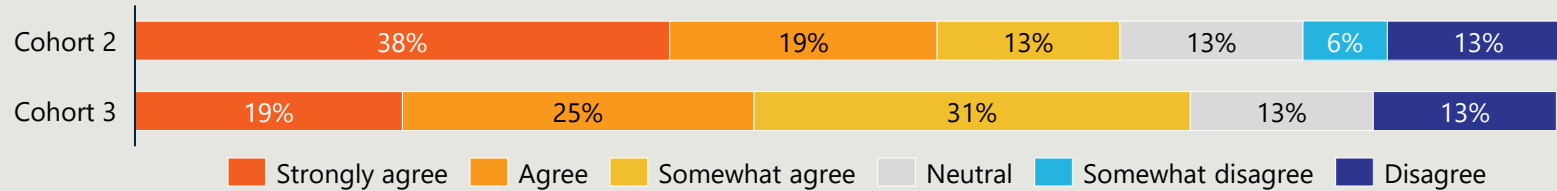
Cohort 2: What impacts (positive or negative) has the program had on your organisational performance?

Categorised responses (n=16)



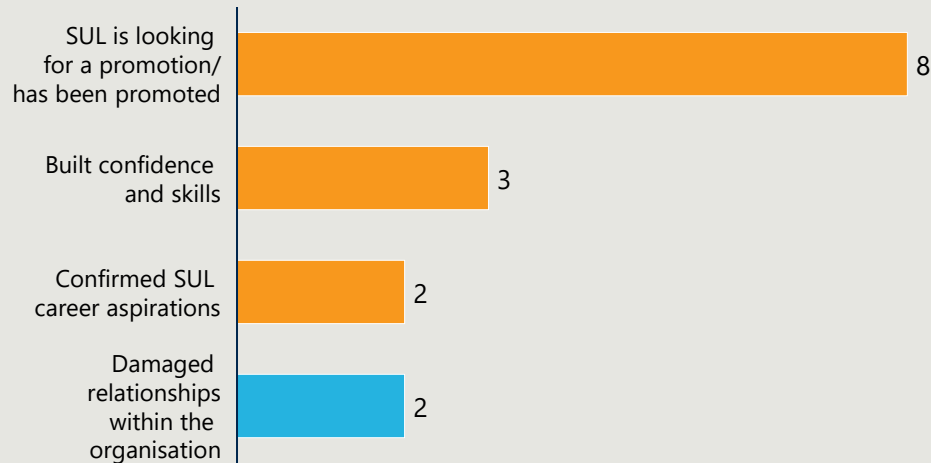
Cohort 2 and 3 alumni reflected on varying SUL experiences and the need for more structured support in the future.

The program has had a positive impact on our Step Up Leader.



What impacts (positive or negative) has the program had on your Step Up Leader?

Categorised responses



How could SILA have better supported you or your Step Up Leader to benefit from the program?

“ It would have been helpful if there was a deeper understanding of what is involved in working with a remote Indigenous board who don't have English as a first language. A lot of work, for example, was put in by myself, my step-up leader and our organisation to the board support program, but from all accounts (it was during my sabbatical) it was not suitable for remote Indigenous stakeholders.

- Cohort 3 CEO ”

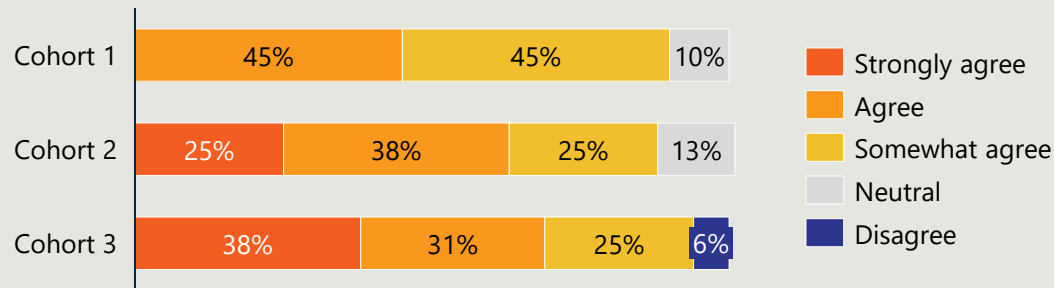
“ The re-entry post sabbatical was a bit bumpier than I had imagined it would be, so possibly some buttressing with some facilitated joined up conversations with Step up, CEO and Board Chair about how to manage re-entry would have been useful.

-Cohort 3 CEO ”

Participants are empowered to engage the broader social purpose ecosystem through building partnerships and networks.

Participants also feel they have been able to share and translate their learnings to new organisations when they move on.

I have been able to make a difference in the social purpose ecosystem due to the program.



“Through the program, I gained greater clarity and confidence in how I could contribute more meaningfully to the broader social purpose ecosystem. One of the most tangible outcomes has been the launch of Community Station—a new initiative designed to support NFPs and charities across the full spectrum of their needs.

- Cohort 3 CEO ”

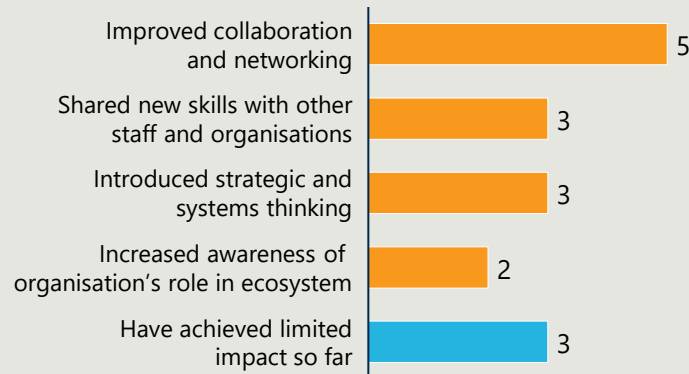
How cohort 1 respondents have made a difference (or not) to their social purpose ecosystem:

Categorised responses (n=11)



How cohort 2 respondents have made a difference (or not) to their social purpose ecosystem:

Categorised responses (n=15)



How cohort 3 respondents have made a difference (or not) to their social purpose ecosystem:

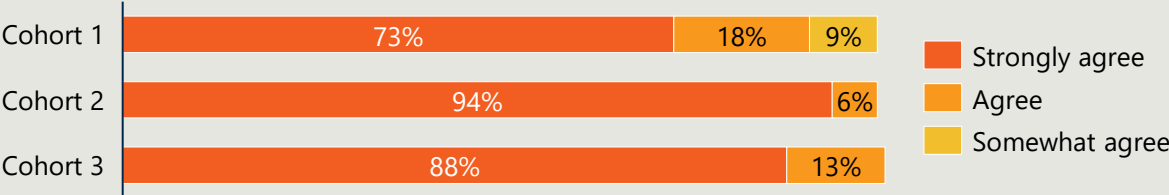
Categorised responses (n=16)



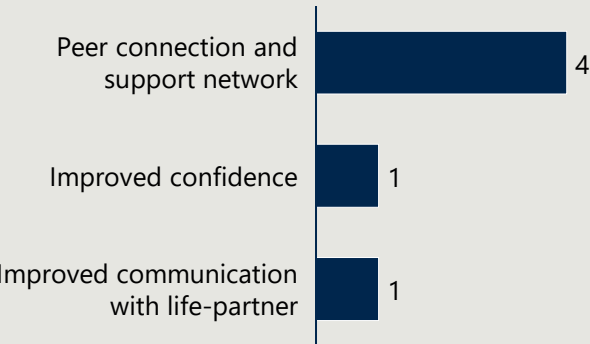
Cohort 1 and 2 participants experienced unexpected benefits and are extremely likely to recommend the SILA program.

On average, out of 10, respondents in **cohort 1** scored the likelihood that they would recommend the SILA program as **9.55**.
On average, out of 10, respondents in **cohort 2** scored the likelihood that they would recommend the SILA program as **9.81**.
On average, out of 10, respondents in **cohort 3** scored the likelihood that they would recommend the SILA program as **9.86**.

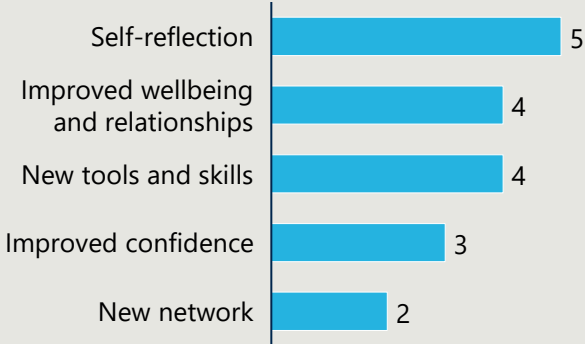
The investment of time and effort by myself and my organisation into the program was justified.



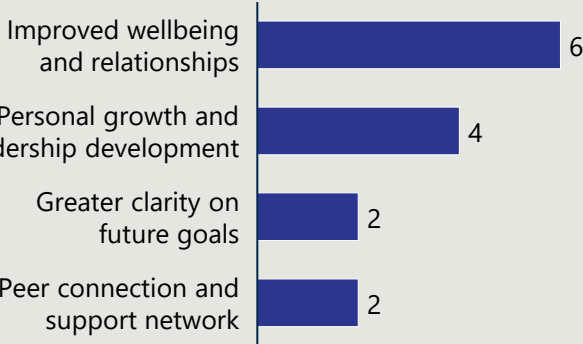
Fifty-five per cent of respondents from cohort 1 experienced long-term unexpected benefits from the program, including:
Categorised unexpected benefits (n=6)



Eighty-one per cent of respondents from cohort 2 experienced long-term unexpected benefits from the program, including:
Categorised unexpected benefits (n=13)



Eighty-one per cent of respondents from cohort 3 experienced long-term unexpected benefits from the program, including:
Categorised unexpected benefits (n=16)



Despite many positive impacts, six respondents from Cohort 3 noted setbacks or other challenges induced by participating in the program.

Long-term setbacks were all related to negative step-up leader experiences or organisational disruptions. Some participants mentioned additional challenges, which, although not long-term setbacks, are still noteworthy.

Long term setbacks included (n=3):

“

Competitive behaviour from the Executive team and Step Up Leaders.

”

“

Difficulties in my relationship with the step-up leader - changes in my way of working and leadership style has caused issues and some tension between us.

”

“

Disruption of the organisation

”

Participant challenges included (n=3):

“

As a COSS CEO you will almost certainly find yourself in a cohort where at least someone else involved is one of your member organisations and may also be playing a governance role (e.g. on the Board of the COSS) in relation to your own work. This is tricky to manage - especially if the relationship is already troubled.

Now I think this was ok in my instance, but we should be cautious. We should check where conflict might already be present in potential cohorts and address if required.

”

“

I wanted to record that it was harder work than I expected - and the sabbatical, which looked at first like a wonderful opportunity to rest, was still considerable work. This is NOT a setback, but was unexpected.

”

“

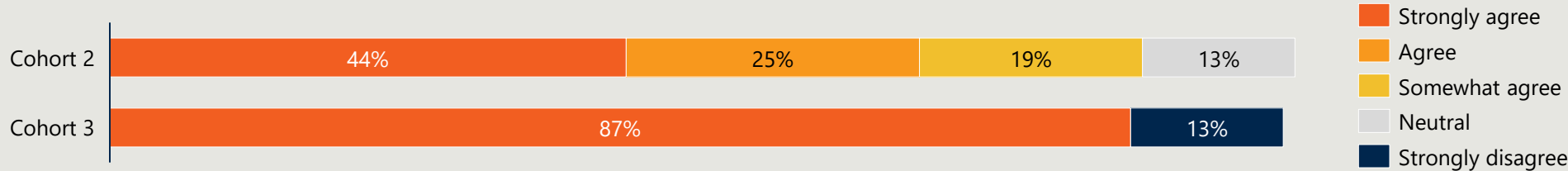
How will I be able to maintain the deeper collegial relationships which are fundamental

”

Cohort 2 participants valued the opportunity to reconnect with their peers and share their reflections at the alumni event.

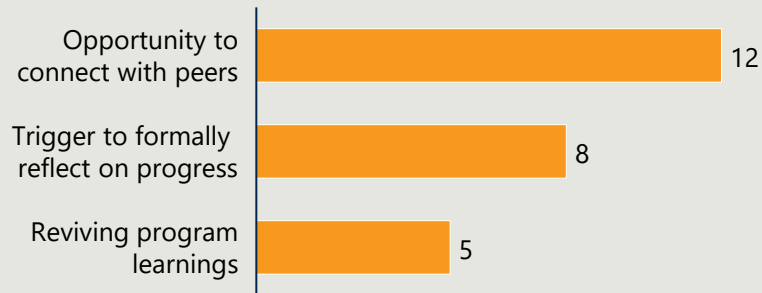
The event facilitated a space where participants could reconnect, share their challenges and reinforce their learnings.

I found the alumni event valuable.



What did you like about the alumni event?

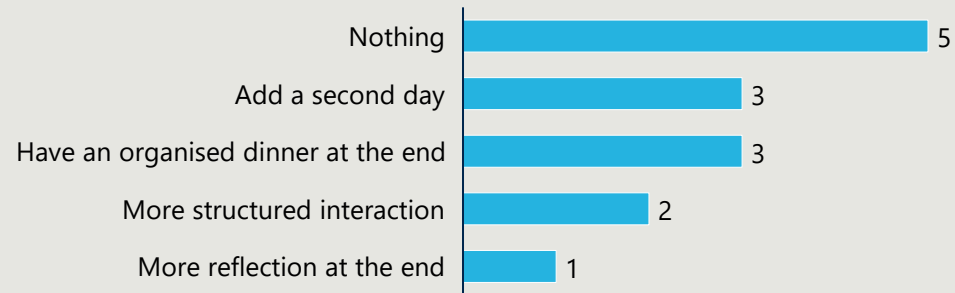
Categorised responses (n=16)



“ You could feel the depth of collective experience without any hint of ego. It was less like a networking event and more like sitting in on a high-performing think tank—rich dialogue, positive energy, and a refreshing reminder of the power of surrounding yourself with smart, good humans. ”

What would you change about the alumni event?

Categorised responses (n=13)



“ I'd make it two days and reach out to attendees for any key discussion areas they would like to have. I think having an organised dinner/drinks (the crew did this in the end anyway) would also be a great addition. ”

Participants from cohorts 1 and 2 also received a survey two years after their program completion.

Only cohort 2 were surveyed in this round of evaluation. Cohort 1 results from prior round are included for comparison points.

Cohort 2 answered the following questions:

Demographic questions

1. Are you still with the same organisation as when you undertook the SILA program?
2. What is your current role?
3. How many years have you acted in a CEO role?
4. How large is your organisation by revenue?

Significant and enduring impacts

5. What has been the most significant and enduring impact of the program on you as a leader?
6. What has been the most significant and enduring impact of the program on your organisation?
7. What has been the most significant and enduring impact of the program on how you make a difference in the social purpose ecosystem?

Maximising long-term benefits

8. What is the one piece of advice you would give to CEOs who have recently completed the program how to make the most of the program?
9. What is the one change you would recommend to SILA to maximise the long-term benefits of the program for participants?

Overall assessment

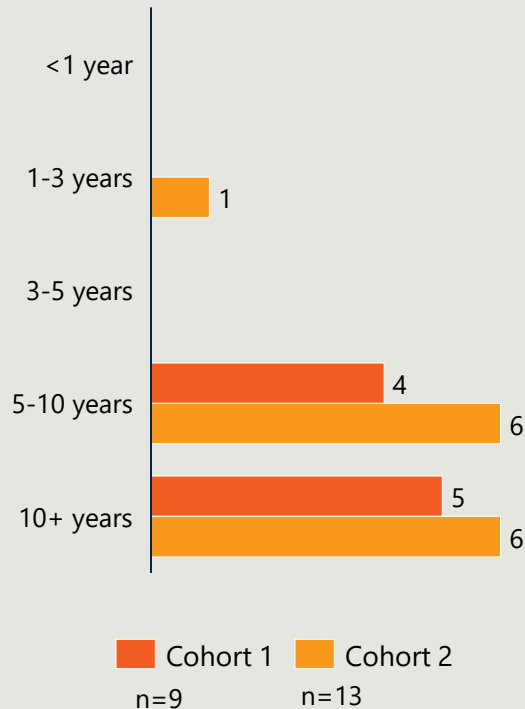
10. The investment of time and effort by myself and my organisation into the program was justified. (7-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree)
11. How likely is it that you would recommend the SILA program to another social purpose sector CEO? (Numbered scale from 1-10)
12. Any additional feedback?

Seventy-three per cent of respondents were still with the same organisation two years on.

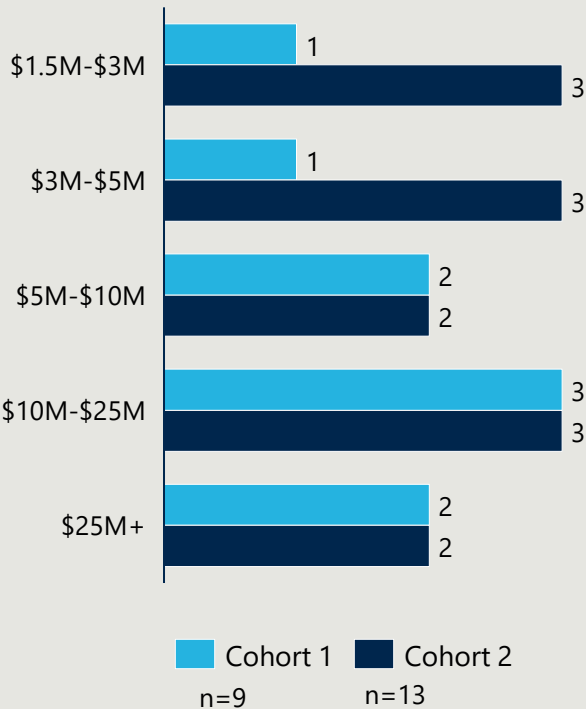
Nine participants from cohort 1 and thirteen participants from cohort 2 participated in the two year alumni survey. Seven of the nine respondents from cohort 1 and nine of the thirteen respondents from cohort 2 were still with the same organisation as when they completed SILA.

Two years on from the program, six respondents across cohorts 1 and 2 had left their organisation. Their new roles varied.

How many years have you acted in a CEO role?



How large is your organisation by revenue?



New roles of participants who left their organisation:

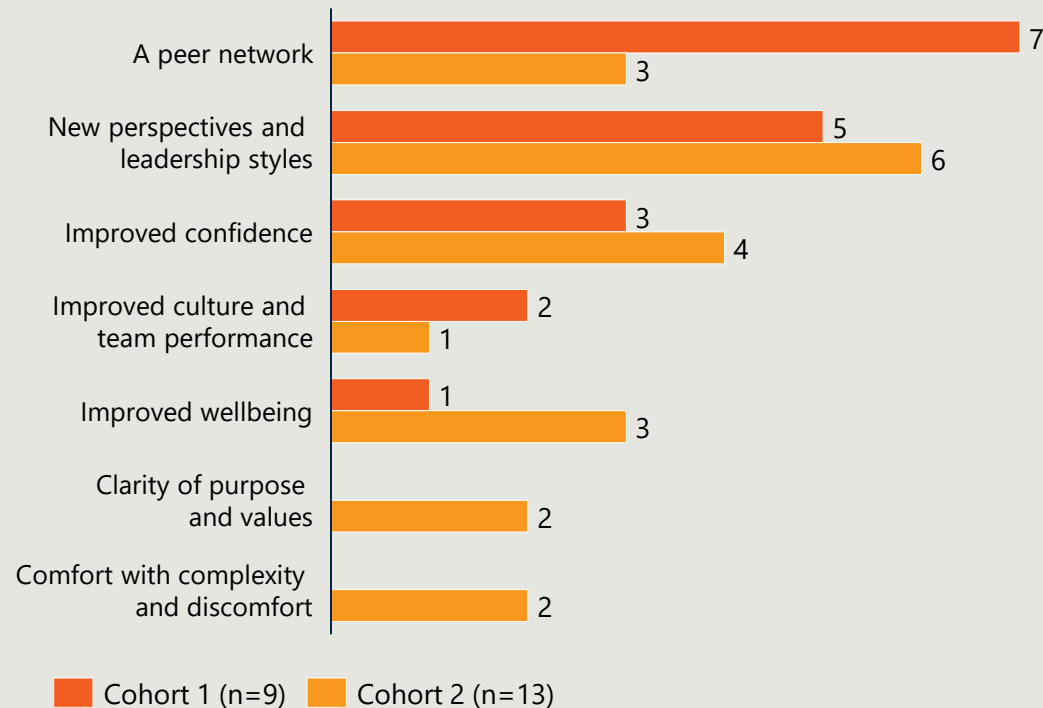


Building a peer network and new perspectives and leadership styles were the most significant and enduring impacts of the SILA program.

Two years on, SILA alumni across cohorts 1 and 2 still reflected significant positive impacts of the program.

What has been the most significant and enduring impact of the program on you as a leader?

Categorised responses



“

The friendships and connections I made. Also the tools I learned. I am much more comfortable sitting in the discomfort now - and I have a more clear understanding of what my values are and how far I am willing to compromise.

-Cohort 2 CEO

”

“

My conscious embrace and embodiment of the opportunity and responsibility in how I cultivate leadership.

-Cohort 2 CEO

”

“

A greater understanding of myself - my values alignment, strengths and my purpose in where I wanted to be to effect change in the eco system. It gave me a toolkit that provided both ideas and points of reflection. The sabbatical was the great game changer for me. I saw the organisation in a different lens when I returned which gave me a greater balance in making the decision to leave.

- Cohort 2 CEO

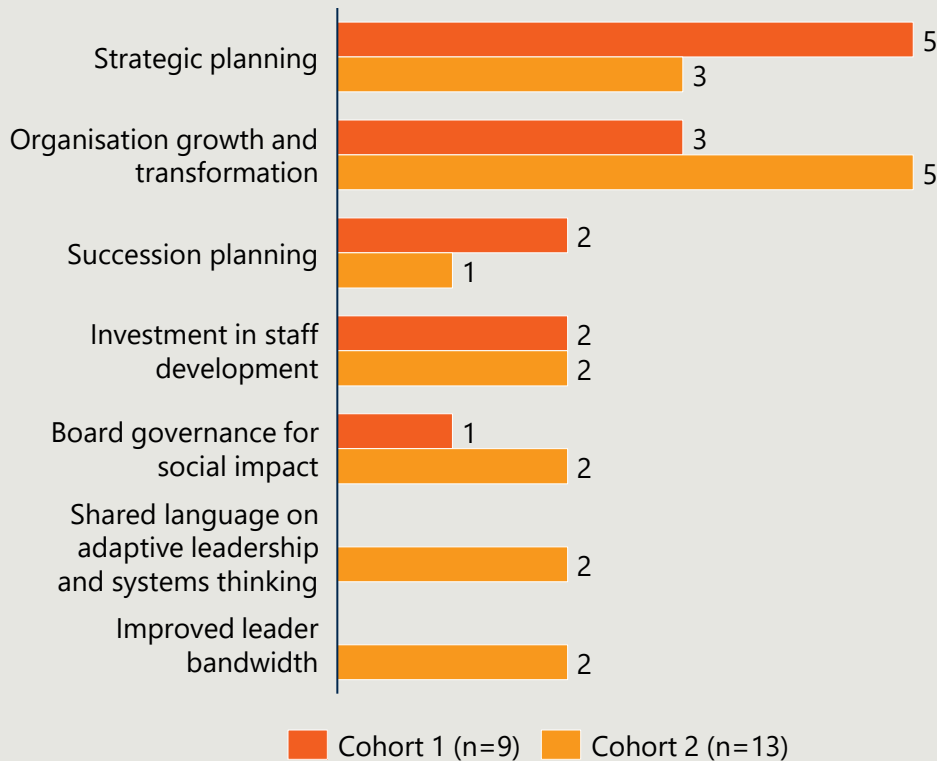
”

The program had a long-term impact on organisational strategy.

Two years on cohort 2 alumni attributed shifts in organisational approach and strategy to the SILA program. They also reflected on increased organisational capability and capacity.

What has been the most significant and enduring impact of the program on your organisation?

Categorised responses



“ The organisation takes a more systems approach to solving problems. We are less reactive, and more considered in how we maximise our impact and work together.

- Cohort 2 CEO ”

“ The step-up leader moved on to a CEO role.

- Cohort 2 CEO ”

“ If I had to narrow it down to the most significant and enduring impact, it would be a change in my approach [which has led] to changes in the system. People were able to grow and develop, filling the spaces that I had vacated by being clearer about my role and what it required, it really highlighted just how important the notion of working on the business not in the business is.

- Cohort 2 CEO ”

“ I think it's that I didn't burn out when I was probably likely to and instead became a much more honest, mature and grounded leader.

- Cohort 2 CEO ”

The benefits of the program extended beyond individual CEOs to positively impact the social purpose ecosystem.

Two years on alumni attributed their increased systems understanding, networks and confidence within the ecosystem to the SILA program.

What has been the most significant and enduring impact of the program on how you make a difference in the social purpose ecosystem?
Categorised responses



“ I take a broader view now beyond just that of my organisation to think about how the system as a whole is operating, and which bits we can each take on. ”
-Cohort 2 CEO

“ By taking a more global perspective, and through the SILA program, I am able to make better use of the political capital that I've built to shape policy, drive change and contribute to shaping conversations about key issues. In the past I tended to hold the political capital that I'd built, just in case there was a more important issue or reason to use it on in the future. ”
-Cohort 2 CEO

“ I am louder and less timid when naming social injustice. ”
-Cohort 2 CEO

“ I've got ongoing connections with other CEOs I met in the program and this has developed into new partnerships. ”
-Cohort 2 CEO

Participants still highly valued the program two years on.

On average, out of 10, respondents in **cohort 1** scored the likelihood that they would recommend the SILA program as **9.78**.

On average, out of 10, respondents in **cohort 2** scored the likelihood that they would recommend the SILA program as **9.85**.

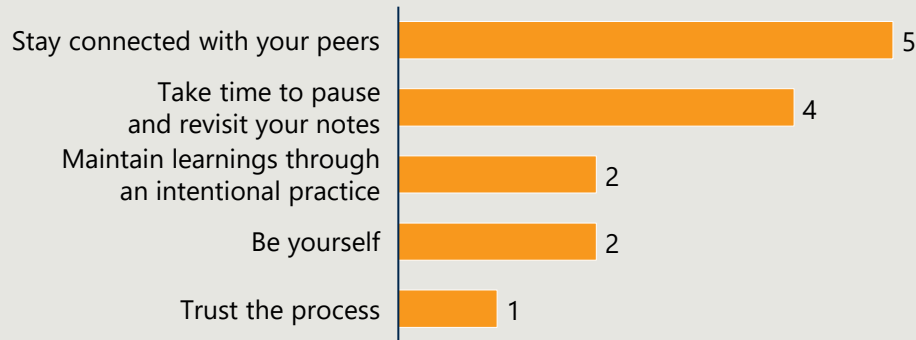
The investment of time and effort by myself and my organisation into the program was justified.



The most common piece of advice from alumni was to stay connected with program peers.

Alongside advice offered, seven respondents noted key opportunities to improve the program for future cohorts.

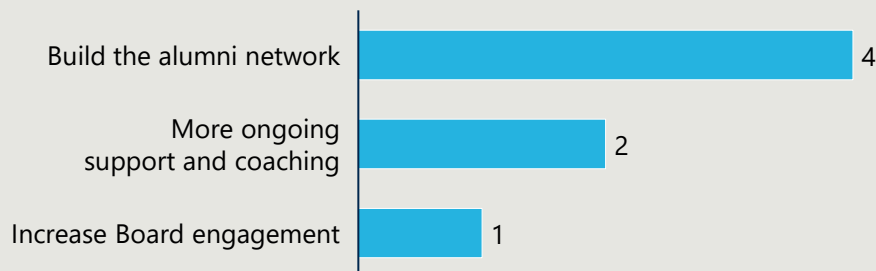
What is the one piece of advice you would give to CEOs who have recently completed the program on how to make the most of the program?
Categorised responses (n=13)



“ Stay connected with your other CEOs. There is a shared language you have to help navigate future issues. ”

“ Develop a reflective practice that includes using the material from the program. It is easy to slot back into life as usual. But developing something intentional and trying hard to maintain it helps. ”

What is the one change you would recommend to SILA to maximise the long-term benefits of the program for participants?
Categorised responses (n=7)



“ Extending the coaching component may assist with maximising the long term benefits. ”

“ It would be great to have an annual alumni conference and connection event across the cohorts. I'm happy to help set it up! ”

“ Some form of Board engagement not a survey ”

Participants still express gratitude for the program and recognise its transformational impact.

Any additional feedback?

“

Two CEOs I recommended the program to have since completed it.

”

“

SILA remains the single best learning experience I have ever undertaken (and there's been a few). I really can't thank you all enough for making it possible.

”

“

Just gratitude!

”

“

I continue to feel very grateful for this experience

”

“

I genuinely loved this program and it changed how I lead.

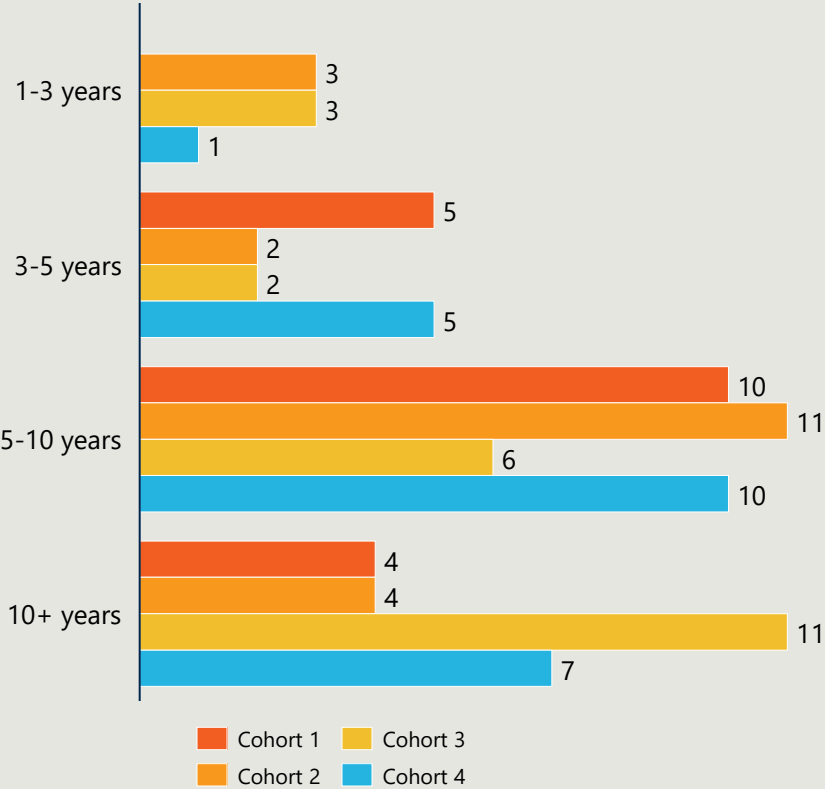
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Appendix I – Cross-cohort overall summary and comparison

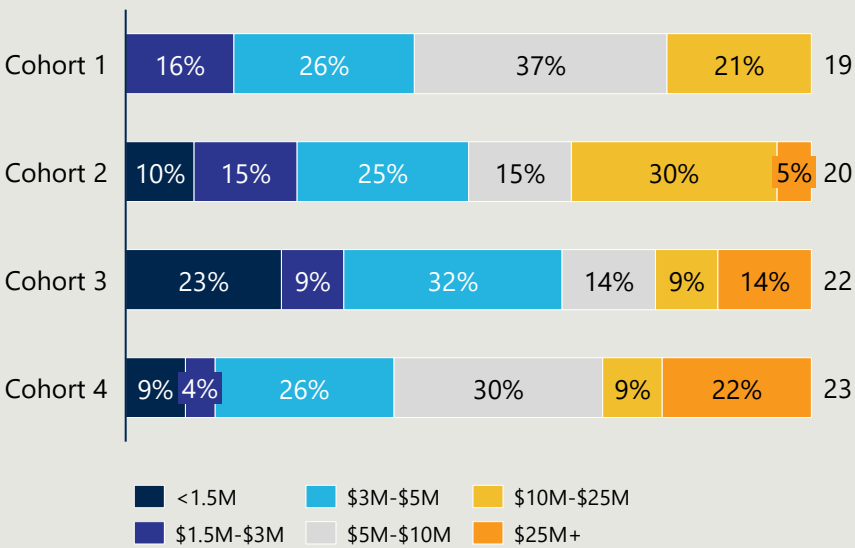
Average organisation size and CEO tenure has varied for each cohort since SILA began.

Seventy-five per cent of cohort 4 participants had been in their roles for more than five years. Cohort 4 also had the largest proportion of big organisations, with 25 per cent reporting a revenue over \$25 million.

How many years have you acted in a CEO role?



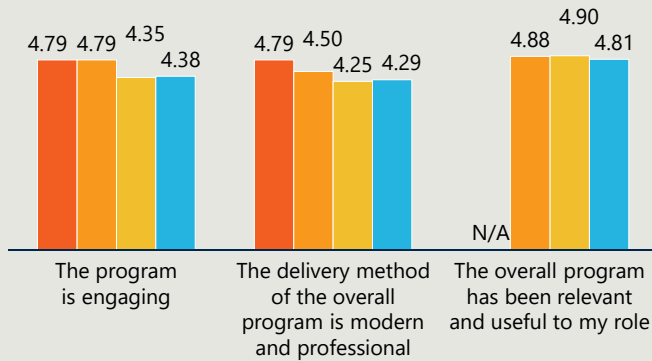
How large is your organisation by revenue?



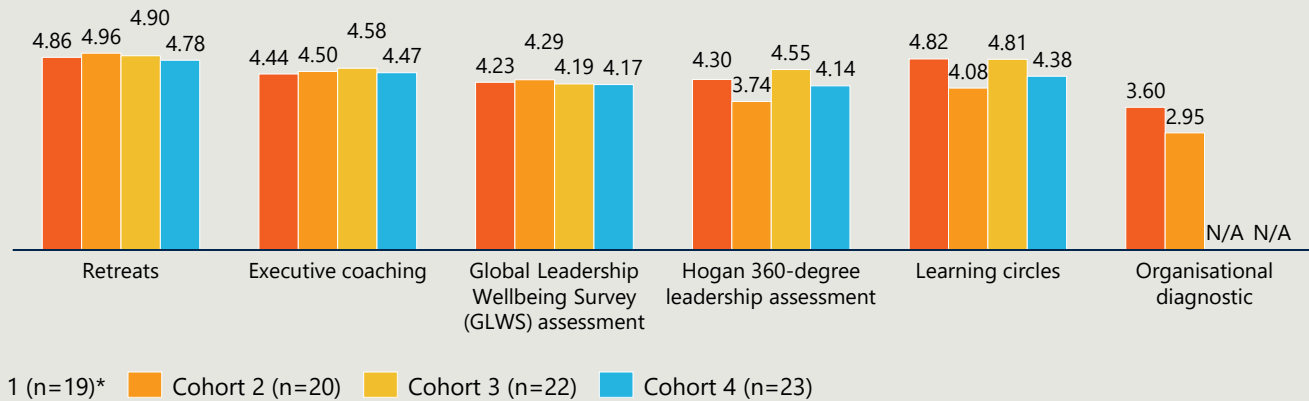
Source: Post-program survey data for Cohort 1 (n=19) , 2 (n=20), 3 (n=22) and 4 (n=23).

Participants generally rated the overall program and its elements consistently and positively across cohorts.

Overall program feedback across cohorts.



Program elements feedback across cohorts.



* Average scores are taken from cohort 1, 2, 3 and 4 post-program surveys. Scores from cohort 3 and 4 were recorded on a seven-point scale and have been converted to a five-point scale for the comparison.

Program feedback has slightly dropped across cohorts in engagement, delivery method and program relevance and usefulness for cohort 4, but remains high. Participants across cohorts have varied in the value they perceive across different program elements:

- **Retreats:** Participants across cohorts consistently perceived retreats most positively.
- **Executive coaching:** All cohorts generally saw great value in this program element, with cohort 4 rating it second most highly.
- **GLWS:** Participants across cohorts shared similar positive views on the value of the GLWS, with cohort 4 rating it the least favourably.
- **Hogan 360:** Cohort 2 participants saw less value in the Hogan than cohorts 1, 3 and 4 who rated this assessment positively.
- **Learning circles:** A program improvement recommendation from cohort 2 was to improve the design and delivery of the learning circles. Cohort 3 participant data shows that participants saw great value in the learning circles. While there was a slight drop in cohort 4, participants still rated it highly.
- **Organisational diagnostic:** The organisational diagnostic tool and facilitated workshop element was removed as cohorts consistently struggled to see value in this program element. This element was removed for cohorts 3 and 4.

Appendix J – Cross-cohort capacity funds analysis

Capacity funds were spent mainly for backfilling and professional development across cohorts.

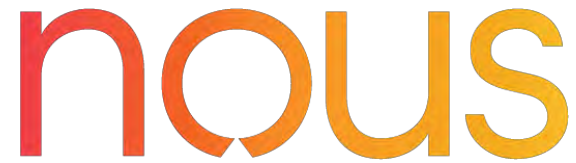
- SILA participants from each cohort shared what they spent or planned to spend their capacity funds on.* The below analysis draws insights on how cohort participants spent or intended to spend their capacity funds.
- This information could be shared with participants to support decision-making around capacity funds usage and address suggestions for guidance around capacity funds.

Overall capacity funds usage or intended usage across cohorts.



* Post-program participant survey asks participants "At a high level, what did your organisation spend the capacity funds on?" – used for cohorts 1, 2, 3 and 4 data.

^ Includes logistics and operating costs, financial and legal advice, staff retreats, systems upgrades, brand development, interstate travel, conferences and other organisational investments.



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750

PEOPLE

75

PRINCIPALS

9

OFFICES