



Adapted from [Strategyzer's Value Proposition Canvas](#).

You may be familiar with the phrase “jobs, pains, and gains,” and you may also have used a tool from Strategyzer called the “Value Proposition Canvas.” The tool helps businesses determine what value customers are looking for. We have adapted this tool here to the context of entrepreneurial ecosystem building, to help you determine the value that ecosystem stakeholders and intended beneficiaries are seeking.

Start the Conversation:

- Gather some key stakeholders in your ecosystem to explore the value that beneficiaries are expecting from participation in your ecosystem. You can gather stakeholders in a face-to-face or virtual meeting. You might also consider whether it's possible to carry out this “conversation” asynchronously via email, a discussion board, or across a series of one-on-one or small group discussions.
- Be sure to include at least one entrepreneur in your conversation. As the primary beneficiaries of the value that your ecosystem creates, it's vital that entrepreneurs participate in the conversation.
- Start by asking conversation participants if they've experienced the phrase “jobs, pains, and gains,” and/or used the Strategyzer Value Proposition Canvas. Ask what participants have liked, or not, about the use of these ideas.
- Explain that this tool has been adapted from that canvas, and instead of talking about customer jobs, pains, and gains, your conversation will focus on the jobs, pains, and gains of *one beneficiary group* of your ecosystem. You may find that you and your ecosystem partners wish to repeat the conversation later, focusing on other beneficiaries of your ecosystem. But each “jobs, pains, and gains” conversation should focus on one beneficiary group.
- As a group, decide on what beneficiary you'd like to focus on. Entrepreneurs are, of course, the primary beneficiary of our entrepreneurial ecosystem building efforts. But there are others who benefit, too (local government, communities, nonprofits, etc.). You'll likely want to focus on entrepreneurs the first time you have this conversation. Fill in the beneficiary group you are focusing on at the top of the Conversation Notes.

Just Getting Started?

If you and your colleagues are just beginning to engage your college or university in ecosystem building, you may feel the need to do some groundwork before you dive into conversations. Take a look at [Getting Ready for Ecosystem Conversations](#) for ideas and considerations for engaging both your internal ecosystem as well as with external partners.

Build an Equitable Ecosystem!

Ecosystems thrive when they are inclusive, fostering connections, conversations, and cultures that embrace the entire community. Before undertaking this or any of the conversations on C-CUBE, review [Centering Access, Belonging, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity in Ecosystem Building](#). Apply the five questions under “Putting it into Action” as you plan this conversation.





- Lead a conversation about each of the boxes in the Conversation Notes. Be sure that all the participants in your conversation have a chance to share their ideas. First, focus on “JOBS” and the related question. Then move on to “PAINS” and “GAINS.” Then, based on the conversations you’ve had about the elements above, discuss the questions under “ECOSYSTEM SUPPORT,” “ECOSYSTEM PAIN RELIEVERS,” and “ECOSYSTEM GAIN CREATORS.”
- Discuss the notes you’ve taken. How will what you learned in this conversation help you consider ways to grow and improve your ecosystem?





Conversation Notes

Beneficiary of Your Ecosystem: _____

If this is the first time you and your ecosystem partners are having this conversation, you will likely want to focus on entrepreneurs, the primary beneficiary of your ecosystem.

JOBS	PAINS	GAINS
<i>What goals do beneficiaries have? What tasks are they trying to accomplish?</i>	<i>What challenges or difficulties do beneficiaries face in trying to achieve goals or accomplish tasks?</i>	<i>What benefits would beneficiaries like to get as part of accomplishing goals? What benefits might surprise them?</i>
ECOSYSTEM SUPPORT	ECOSYSTEM PAIN RELIEVERS	ECOSYSTEM GAIN CREATORS
<i>How does or can the ecosystem provide support to beneficiaries in achieving goals and accomplishing tasks?</i>	<i>How does or can the ecosystem mitigate the challenges or difficulties that beneficiaries face?</i>	<i>How does or can the ecosystem create benefits for beneficiaries?</i>

