



COVE

centre for ocean  
ventures & entrepreneurship

INTERNSHIP REPORT  
2022

## OVERVIEW

After two previous successful summer internships, COVE's Workforce Initiative has continued to scale and innovate the program for 2022, with a marked increase in interns and doubling the number of employers and mentors from 2021.

Recognizing the value of the program for both the students and ocean technology companies in Atlantic Canada, COVE expanded the internship model to include host companies in Newfoundland (NL). This work-integrated learning opportunity offers a gateway for new talent to gain experience in the ocean sector and build on their skills through experiential project-based work.

## KEY FINDINGS

1. Increased the number of participants from 20 in 2021 to **35 interns** and **double the host companies**.

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2. **54%** of interns coming from **underrepresented groups**.

3. Increased number of students with diverse disciplines, including **marine biology, marketing, and statistics**.

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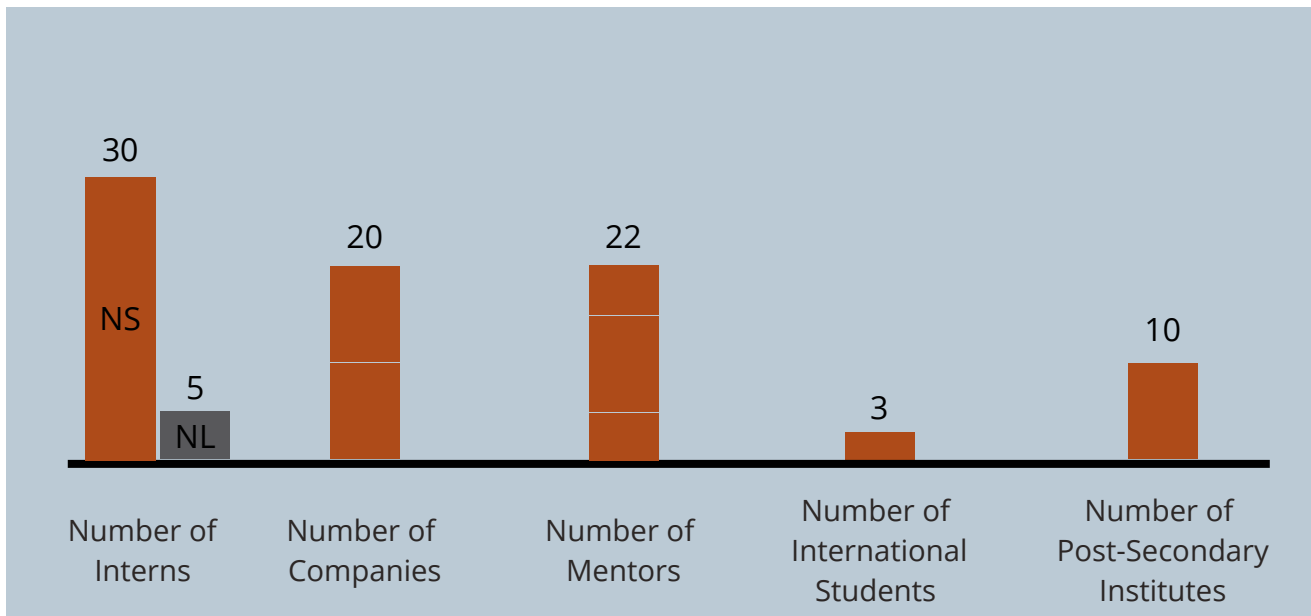
4. Successfully expanded the Internship Program into Newfoundland with **5 interns** and **3 host companies**.

5. Developing additional Internship Program initiatives, including: **High-school mentorship, Employer training opportunities**, and **continued expansion** to other provinces.

THANK YOU TO OUR COVE 2022  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FUNDERS:



# 2022 INTERNSHIP BY THE NUMBERS



Participants from underrepresented groups

# THE INTERNS

The scaling of the program to 35 interns also increased the representation of students from various disciplines and educational institutions across Canada. Interns were recruited from ten post-secondary institutions: NSCC, Mount Saint Vincent University, Dalhousie University, St. Francis Xavier University, Saint Mary's University, College of the North Atlantic, Memorial University of Newfoundland, University of British Columbia, University of Waterloo, and Harvard University.

The students represented a unique mix of strengths and skill sets coming from a wide range of academic backgrounds, including; Statistics, Law, Computer science, Business, Mechanical engineering, Electrical engineering, Ocean Technology, Master of Business Administration, Environmental sciences, Marine biology, Computer engineering, and Marketing.

COVE embeds the principles of diversity and inclusion in all workforce initiatives; the Internship Program is a capstone example of this effort; 54% of the COVE interns came from underrepresented groups (female-identifying or BIPOC), including three international students.





# MENTORSHIP

To further facilitate integral professional development experiences for the students, the Mentoring component of the Internship also expanded. Interns were matched with 22 mid-career and senior-career professionals within industry. The mentorship component of the program provides added value for the students to develop their professional network, build connections and receive ongoing coaching and mentoring interactions along their Internship and further career path.

As a new addition to our program for 2022, COVE interns were also given the opportunity to pass on their experience and knowledge to high school students in Newfoundland. As part of the Ocean Careers Immersion Program led by Oceans Advance in St. John's, NL, 13 of our interns were matched with high school-aged youth participating in work placements within the maritime sector in NL. Interns met with the high school students weekly over the final month of their internships. This exchange and peer mentoring experience provided additional insight and support to the high school youth navigating their summer placements.





# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To further facilitate a positive learning experience, COVE hosted five professional development sessions for the interns within the first half of their work-integrated learning. These sessions complement the interns' work placements by providing "bite-sized learning" on skills needed to successfully execute a project and work within a professional setting.

## Session Title

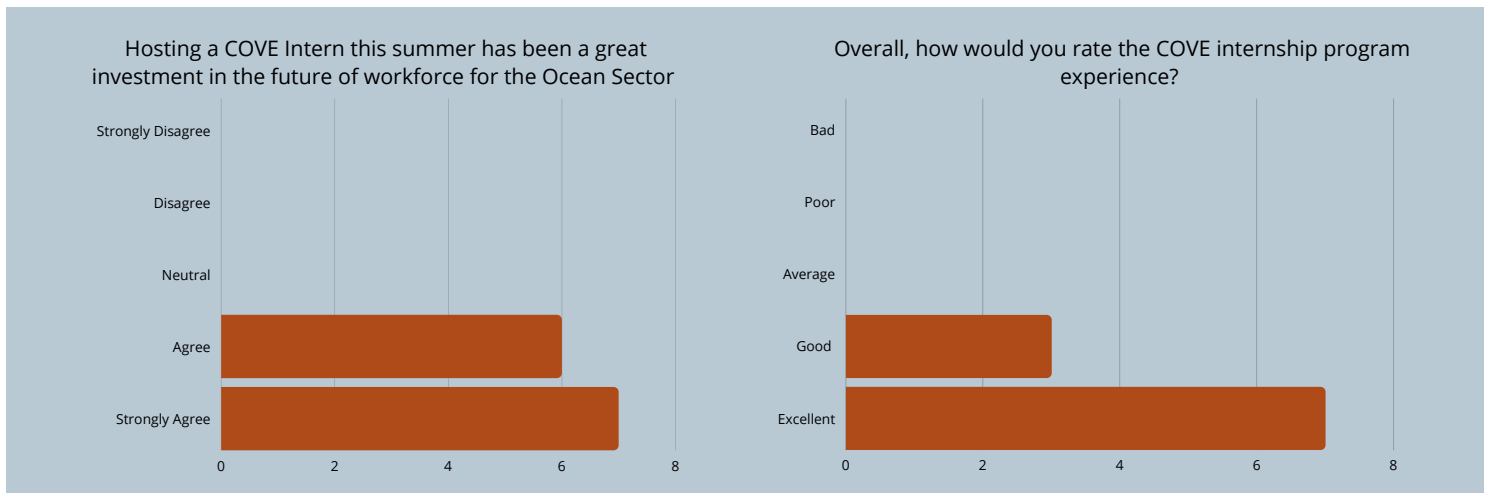
## Presenter

Introduction to Project Management	Ogaga Johnson	Project Management Educator and Consultant
Effective Communication Skills	Levi Morrison	Ulnooweg Education Centre
Design Thinking Foundations	Ramy Nassar	1000days out
Early Career Leadership Skills	Pat Sweet	Engineering and Leadership
Entrepreneurship and Start-ups	Eric Siegel	Ocean Frontier Institute

# FEEDBACK

Throughout the internship program, feedback was acquired from interns, host companies, and mentors to ensure satisfaction from all parties involved. An overview of the responses was compiled and summarized below:

## HOST COMPANIES:



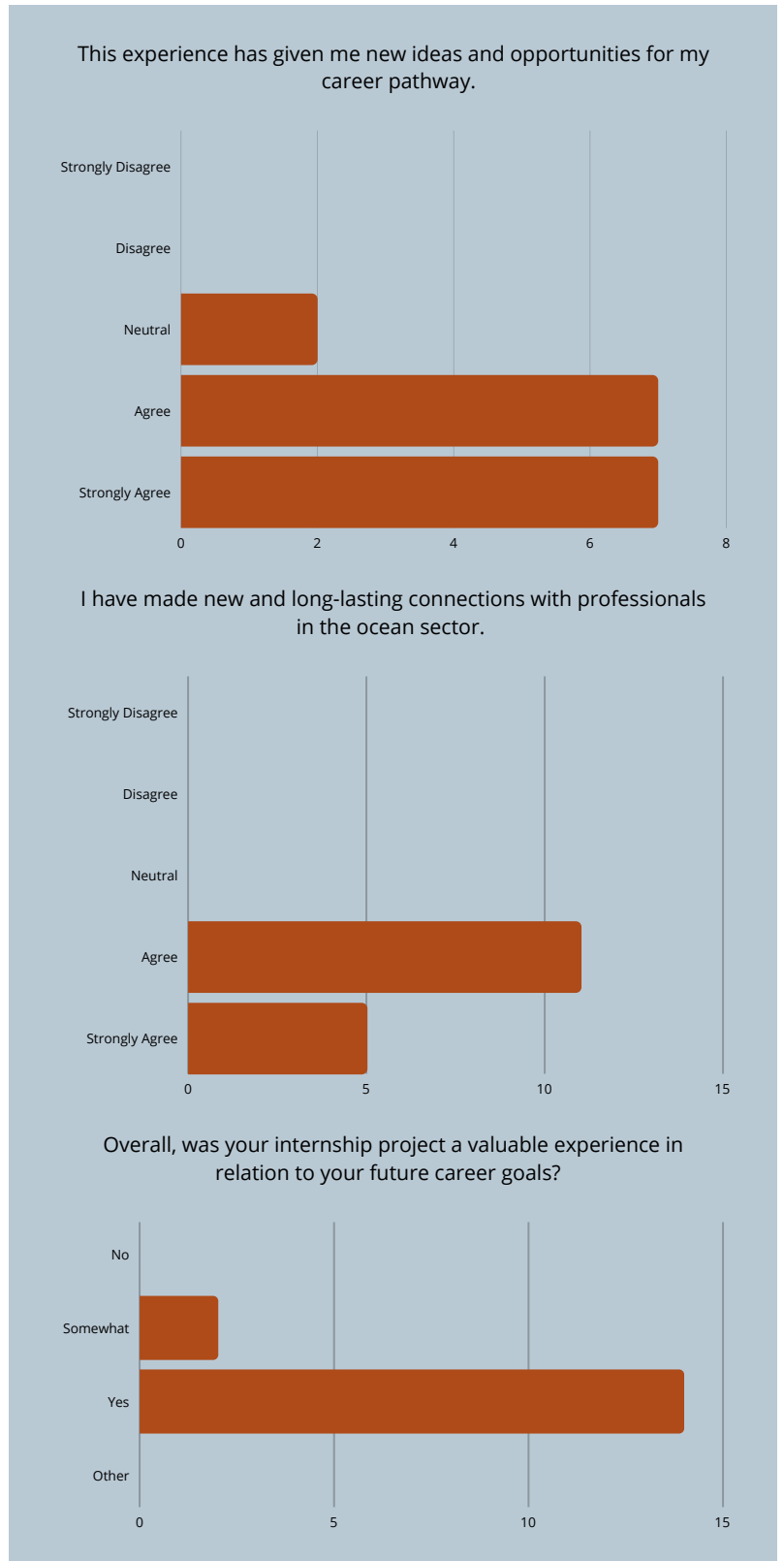
\*Surveys were distributed to 20 host companies with 10 responses received



## INTERNS:



"I've really liked having the opportunity to be immersed into the ocean sector, which was entirely unknown to me prior to this internship. Learning about all the different kinds of companies and jobs that exist has been incredibly helpful for thinking about future career paths." - Intern 2022

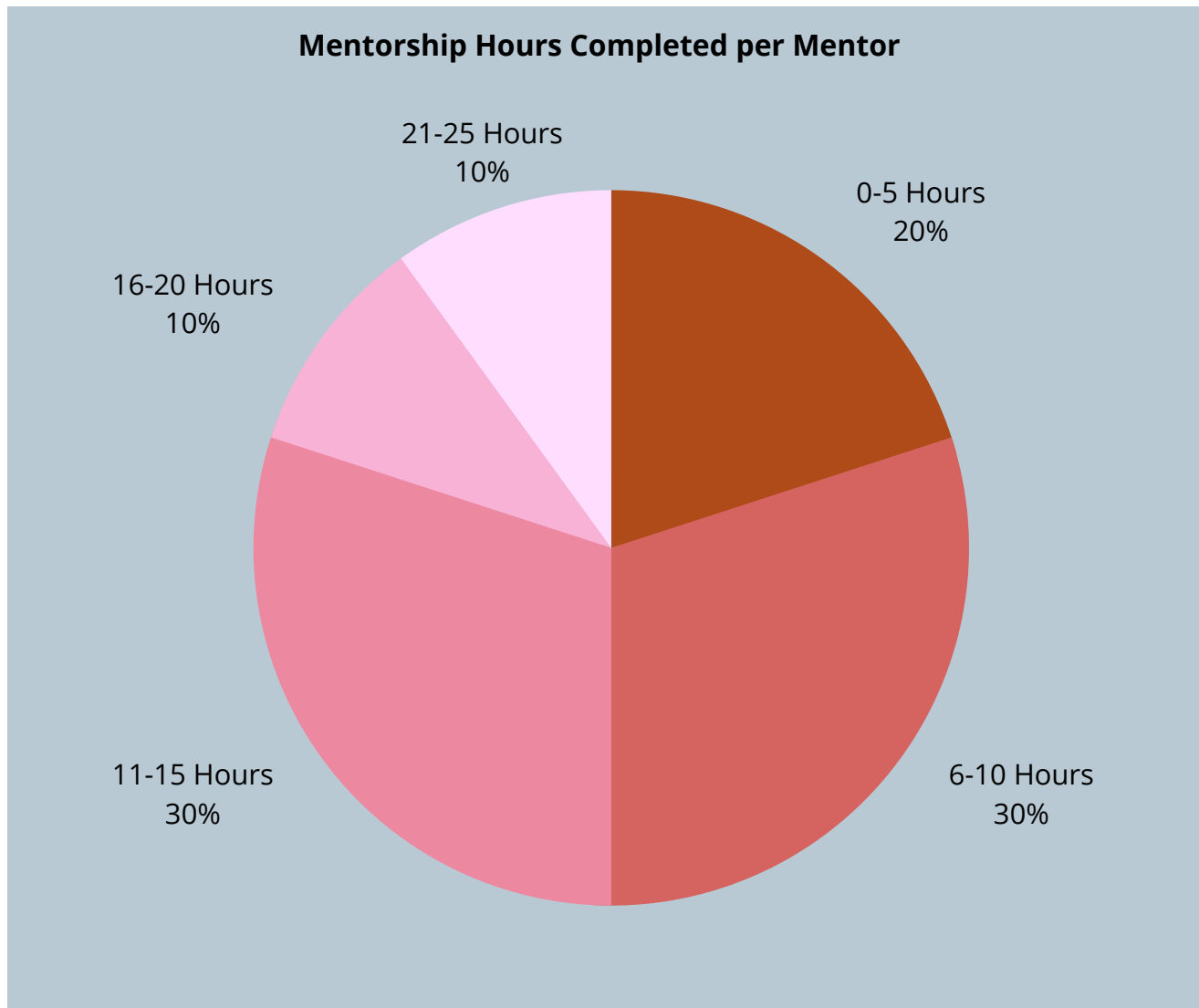


\*Surveys were distributed to 35 interns with 16 responses received

## MENTORS:



It was rewarding to get to know my mentee, hear what his career aspirations were, offer him advice and stories based on my experience and see what his take on things was. I feel proud and happy for him and think he will go on to have a great career.” - Mentor 2022



\*Surveys were distributed to 22 mentors with 10 responses received



## LOOKING FORWARD

As a commitment to our funders, host companies and students participating in the COVE Internship Program, year-over-year program components are reviewed/reassessed. Revisions and additions to the program are included to innovate and add value to the entire experience for interns and the host companies. As stated in the previous section, throughout the internship experience (via mid-point and final surveys as well as qualitative interviews) we collect insightful feedback from all stakeholders (Mentors, Interns and companies). This data informs program improvement, as well as expansion and additions to program development offerings; to ensure COVE interns meet the challenges of the changing world of work and the competencies required for early career youth to be successful; not only in their COVE internship but along their career journeys.

Peer Mentoring High School Students



Employer Learning Opportunities



More Structured Mentorship



Provincial Expansion



In the summer of 2022, COVE interns provided mentoring for high school students in Newfoundland. On the heels of this successful peer mentorship pilot, this component will be added to the COVE Internship program in 2023. It will be valuable to the high school students to gain insight into careers in the ocean sector and be an opportunity for interns to pass on their learnings and build their confidence as they develop leadership and communication skills to further their own careers. Recognizing the willingness of interns to volunteer their time as peer mentors also demonstrates their interest in further developing their networking skills. The mentoring will be conducted online, or in person based on the location of the COVE intern mentors. We hope to build this into the program over May and June while high school students wrap up the school year and consider next steps in their career journeys.

Through one-on-one meetings conducted with the host companies, it was identified that employers would appreciate professional development training to ensure they are providing an inclusive and positive working environment. For the coming year, COVE will create bite-sized learning opportunities for employers to set them up for success in supporting interns and the next generation of early career professionals. A mini-series of webinars and workshops will be offered focusing on the topics of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), Leadership, and Connections within an Intergenerational Workforce.

Both interns and mentors identified the need for additional support and a more structured framework for the mentoring component of the internship. In order to ensure both parties are getting the most out of the experience, COVE will introduce a third-party company to set up the mentoring program through all phases, including mentor/mentee onboarding, and training supported by an engagement platform to guide the mentors and interns with suggesting themes, key topics, and sample questions. This more finalized and managed mentoring program will assist in developing a strong mentor-mentee relationship over the 4 months and will allow for a seamless and more engaging experience for both Mentors and interns.

After a successful expansion into Newfoundland, COVE anticipates internship placements to continue in NL in 2023. Recognizing the positive impact the internship has on early career talent development in the ocean sector, COVE hopes to secure additional host companies on the Island. In addition; COVE has sights on expanding the Internship Program to the west coast, supporting the ocean sector across Canada, with a tentative plan to provide internship experiences for 2-3 interns in British Columbia.



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