



S.C.O.R.I Innovation Hub Capstone Project: Regional Entrepreneurial Resource Perception Study and Gap Analysis.

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introduction

Entrepreneurial support resources are available in the Klamath Basin, but participation remains inconsistent.

This study explored:

- Awareness of existing resources
- Interest in learning about resources
- Need for additional support opportunities
- Areas where communication and outreach can improve

Goal: Identify ways S.C.O.R.I Innovation Hub can better serve entrepreneurs in the Klamath Basin

Background

Entrepreneurial support organizations play an important role in economic development by providing education, mentorship, networking opportunities, and business resources (U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission [SEC], 2024). S.C.O.R.I Innovation Hub connects entrepreneurs, students, and community members with resources that support:

- Business growth
- Innovation
- Education
- Networking
- Mentorship
- Community development

Objectives

- Measure awareness of entrepreneurial resources
- Measure interest in entrepreneurial resources
- Identify desired support services
- Develop recommendations for future action



Methodology

Focus Group

Trial questions for clarity

Participants

12 Downtown Klamath Falls business owners

Survey (quantitative)

18 Likert-scale questions

5-point response scale

Topics

Resource awareness

Resource interest

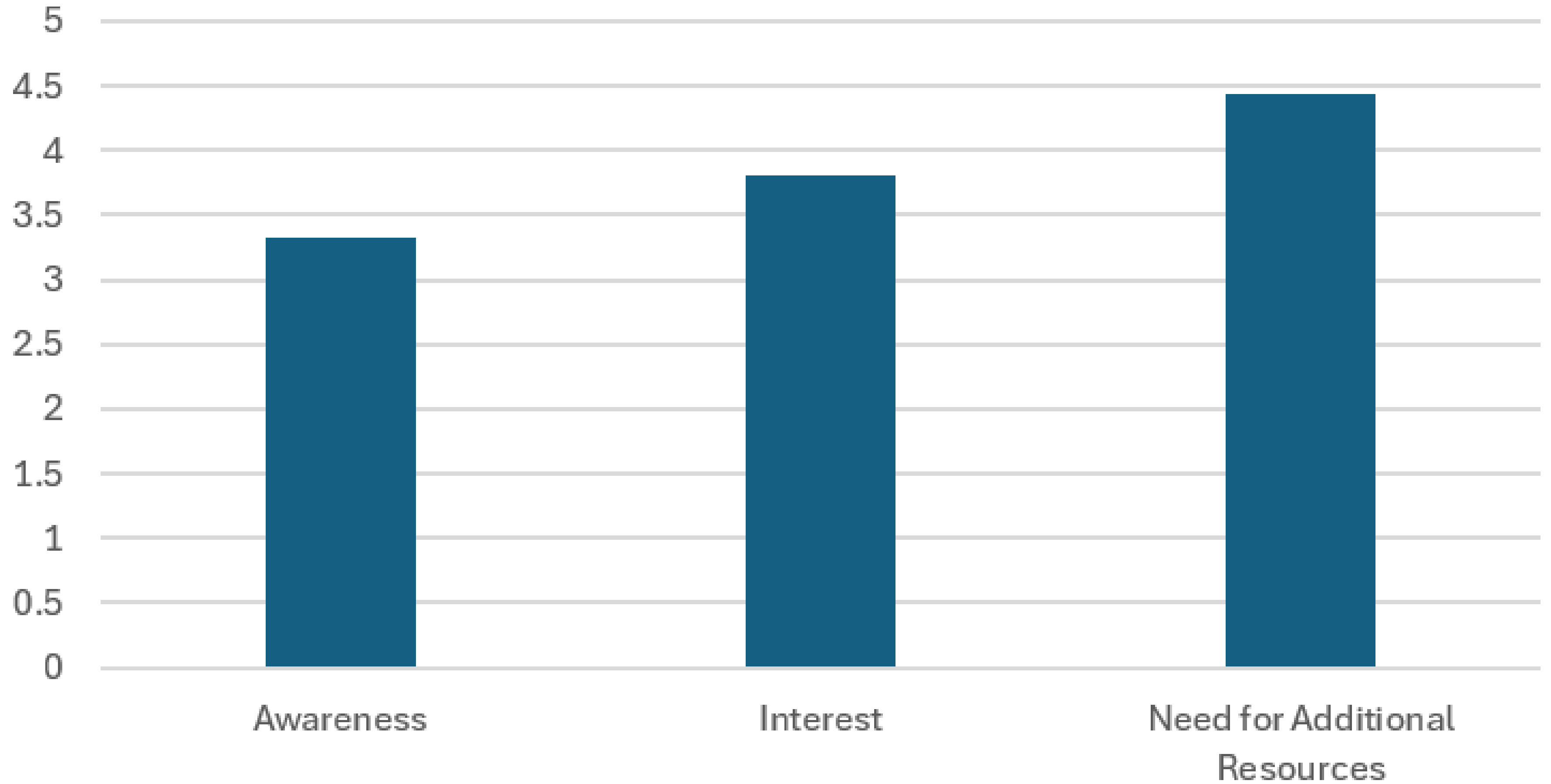
Additional resource needs

Additional Data (qualitative)

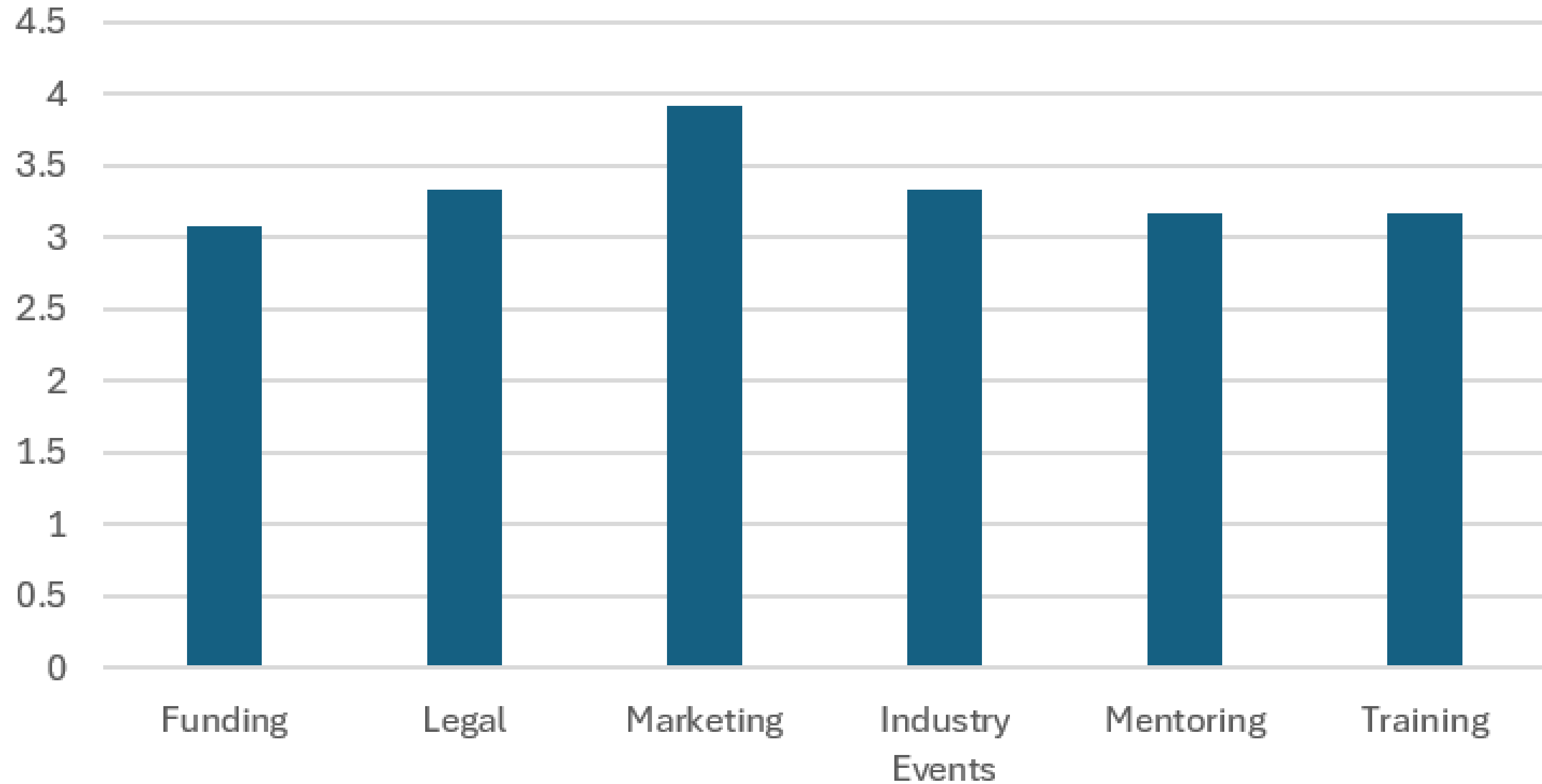
Open-ended question regarding desired resources



Overall Mean Gaps

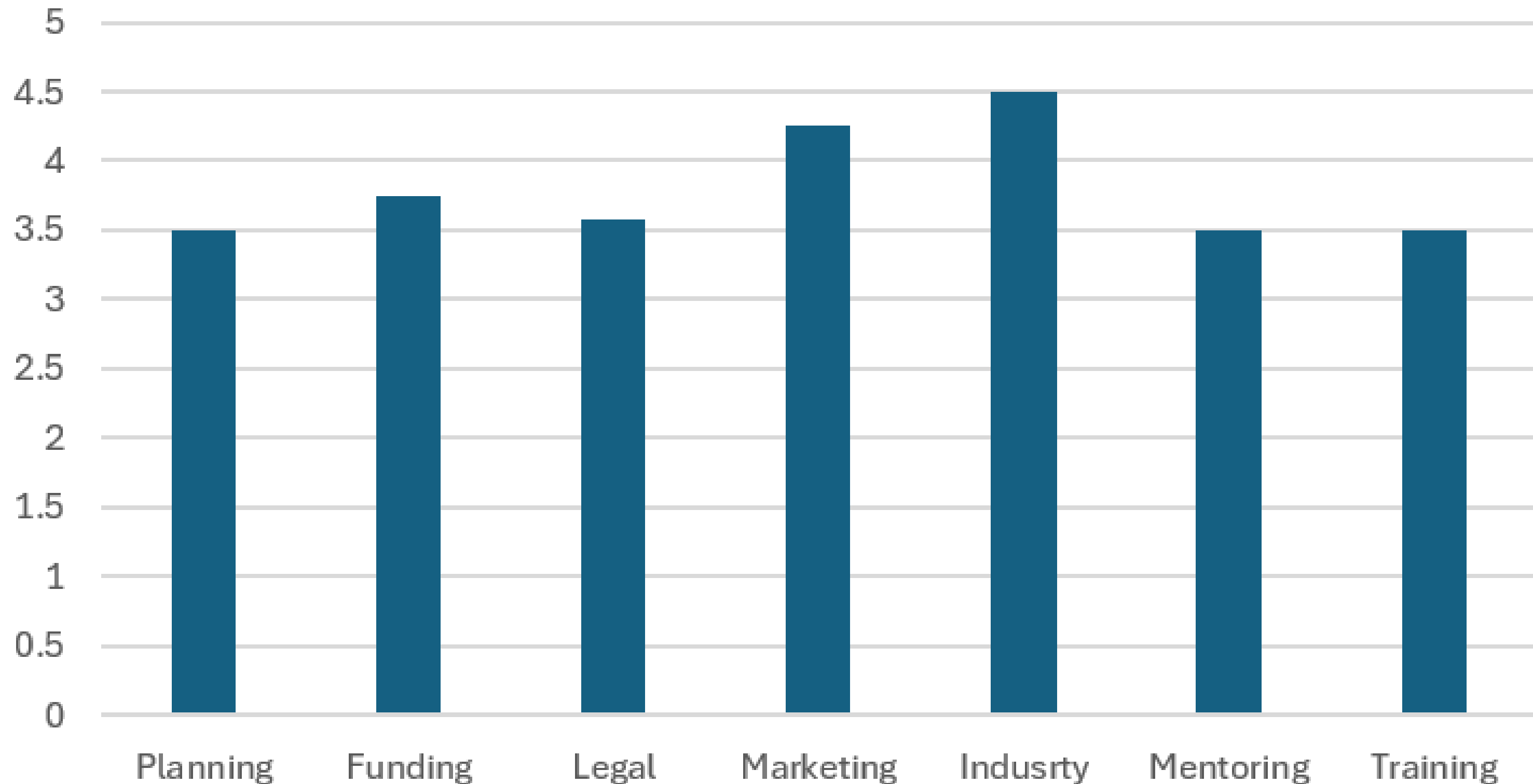


Awareness



Highest Awareness: Marketing Resources (3.92) Lowest Awareness: Funding Resources (3.08)

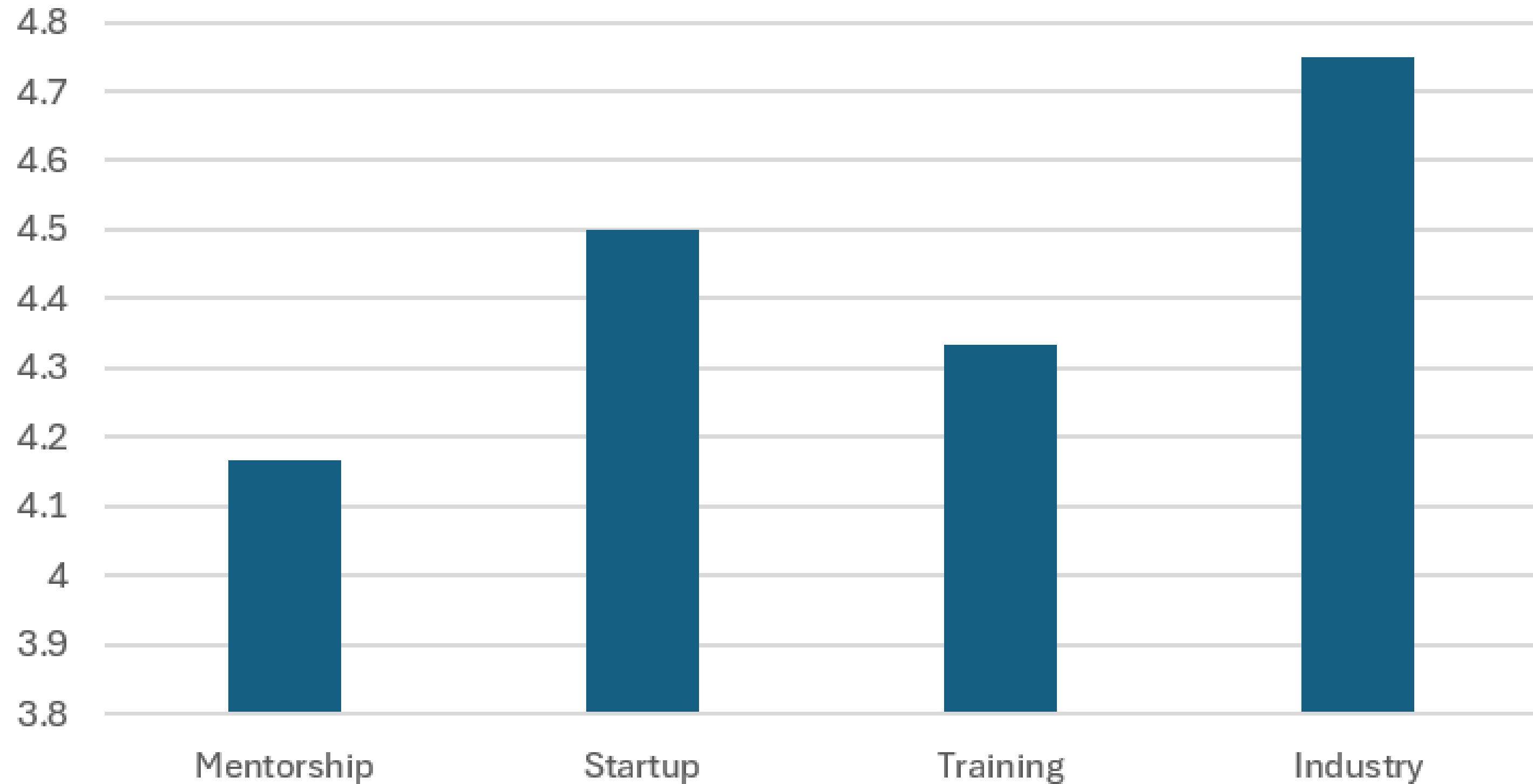
Interest



Highest Interest: Industry Events (4.50) Marketing Resources (4.25)

Lower Interest: Funding Resources, Mentoring Resources , Training Resources (3.50)

Additional Resources



Highest Score: Additional Industry Events (4.75)

Qualitative results

Theme 1: Networking & Events

Most common response

Theme 2: Business Education

Theme 3: Funding & Startup Support



Discussion Point 1

. There is a pattern of this throughout the categories and an overall gap with a mean of 3.33 for awareness and a mean of 3.8 for interest for all categories combined. The gap between awareness and need for additional resources was even greater with a mean of 4.44. While participants demonstrated only moderate awareness of entrepreneurial resources, they expressed higher levels of interest and a strong desire for additional entrepreneurial resources.

Discussion Point 2

Awareness of industry events was moderate ($M = 3.33$), while interest in participating in those opportunities was the highest score in the interest category ($M = 4.50$). This finding is further supported by the most common multiple open-ended responses being requesting additional networking events and better notification of events and networking opportunities. The strongest overall findings emerged from the additional resource needs category. Respondents expressed strong agreement that additional industry events were needed within the Klamath Basin ($M = 4.75$). This was the highest score recorded in the entire survey and suggests substantial demand for opportunities that bring entrepreneurs, professionals, and community members together.

What this means

These findings suggest that the primary challenge may not be a lack of entrepreneurial resources, but rather a lack of awareness and engagement with those resources.

Participants frequently requested better notification of events and opportunities, indicating that existing information may not be reaching audiences effectively. Research suggests that exposure alone does not guarantee awareness or engagement; communication is most effective when audiences notice, remember, and understand messages (Voorveld, 2021). Therefore, increasing engagement through repeated exposure, reminders, and more meaningful communication strategies may help improve participation in available entrepreneurial resources.

Limitations

It is important to consider limitations. The survey included only 12 participants, limiting the ability to generalize the findings to the broader Klamath Basin entrepreneurial community. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported perceptions, which may be influenced by personal experiences or individual interpretation of survey questions. Finally, the project focused on awareness, interest, and perceived needs rather than actual participation in entrepreneurial programs, meaning it could identify potential gaps but could not determine the specific reasons why individuals choose to engage or not engage with available resources.

Future Directions

uture research should expand the sample size and include a wider range of participants to provide a more representative understanding of entrepreneurial needs within the Klamath Basin. Additional studies could examine groups such as Oregon Tech students, aspiring entrepreneurs, and nonprofit leaders to identify differences in awareness and interest across populations. Future research should also investigate barriers to participation, including communication preferences, accessibility, and perceptions of available resources. Finally, more in-depth exploration of networking opportunities and event participation could help organizations better understand which programs and communication strategies are most effective for increasing engagement.

Conclusion

This study examined awareness, interest, and perceived need for entrepreneurial resources within the Klamath Basin. The findings revealed that while participants were only moderately aware of available resources, they expressed greater interest in learning about them and a strong desire for additional support opportunities. The largest needs identified were networking events, startup support, and improved communication regarding existing resources. Overall, the results suggest that increasing awareness and engagement may be more important than creating entirely new programs. By improving outreach, visibility, and communication strategies, S.C.O.R.I Innovation Hub can better connect entrepreneurs with valuable resources and strengthen support for business growth and innovation throughout the region.