



Social Investment Fund

Application Guide for organisations

Pathway One: New Investment (Round One)

This guide provides information for you on how to navigate the Registration of Interest (ROI) step in the application process.

If you are shortlisted, further guidance will be provided to you about submitting an RFP response.



In this guide

Topic	Page
Overview and timeframes	3
Social Investment Fund overview	4
Pathway One: New Investment (Round One) overview <ul style="list-style-type: none">Population groups (cohorts) for Round OneKey timeframesWho can apply	6
Check your organisation’s fit	8
The application process	
Accessing the application portal	12
Step 1: Complete pre-registration eligibility	13
Step 2: Complete ROI submission sections	14
Step 3: Submit application	16
Next steps	16
Appendices <ul style="list-style-type: none">Appendix A: Assessment FrameworkAppendix B: ResourcesAppendix C: Cohort Explorer	17





Overview and timeframes

Fund Overview

What is the Social Investment Fund?

In April 2025, Cabinet established the Social Investment Fund (the Fund) which will:

- invest early to help New Zealanders overcome a range of challenges to achieve their goals
- work in partnership with social sector organisations, iwi and other agencies
- enable us to test, demonstrate, and scale the social investment approach
- focus on priority outcomes and cohorts agreed by Ministers.

Read more information on the SIA website about the [Social Investment Fund](#), the [Social Investment Agency](#) and the [social investment approach](#). See Appendix B for further resources.

What is the scope of the Fund?

The Social Investment Fund contains four investment pathways, each designed to support the Government’s social investment priorities and improved social outcomes.

<p>Pathway One: New Investment (this guide)</p> <p>The commissioning of evidence informed innovative services and programmes that exemplify the social investment approach and align with priority groups and outcomes.</p>	<p>Pathway Two: Contract Consolidation</p> <p>Social sector organisations can request the consolidation of multiple contracts across several agencies into one or more outcomes-based agreements, simplifying administration and focusing on measurable outcomes.</p>
<p>Pathway Three: Community commissioning</p> <p>A model where decision-making authority for social service investment is devolved to local leaders, empowering communities to tailor solutions to their specific needs.</p>	<p>Pathway Four: Co-investment</p> <p>Partnerships with philanthropic organisations or other funders to co-invest in initiatives that amplify collective impact and drive innovation.</p>



What are the priority outcomes?

The Fund aims to support measurable improvements across key outcome domains that align with the Government's priorities (the nine Government Targets, the Child and Youth Strategy and the Employment Action Plan). By focusing on these broad domains, the Fund will invest in initiatives that both help people and families to achieve their goals and support the achievement of Government's broader objectives. These domains include:



1. Improved Health

Reducing serious health events and preventing hospitalisations that are potentially avoidable.



2. Greater Safety

Reducing the need for children to be placed in state care, as well as decreasing rates of violent crime, youth crime, family violence and sexual violence.



3. Ensuring stable and secure housing

Reducing the need for emergency housing.



4. Improving knowledge and skills

Improving attendance in education and supporting the attainment of qualifications.



5. Growing income and wealth

Enabling individuals to achieve higher incomes, improving financial security and wealth over time.



6. Supporting people into work

Increasing employment and reducing reliance on the benefit.



New Investment pathway (Round One) overview

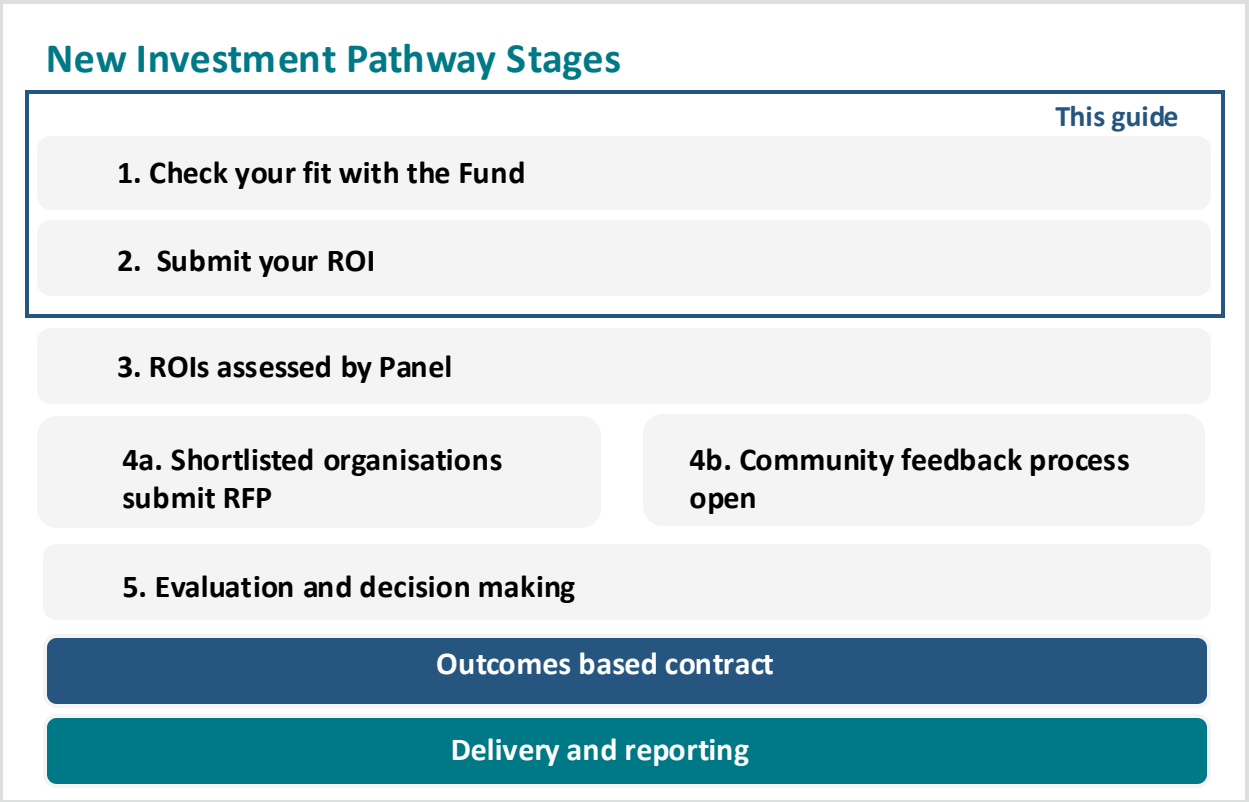
The New Investment pathway is designed for initiatives that focus on priority outcomes and population groups (cohorts) *and* strongly demonstrate the social investment approach.

Round One of the New Investment pathway will fund around six initiatives that will reach the population groups detailed on page 7. Each initiative will need to reach and support a significant number of people to enable a robust evaluation. Given this need for scale, and typical approaches to supporting the priority population groups, we estimate that initiatives will require total funding of between \$0.5m and \$2.0m per year.

The first round of the New Initiative pathway will open on 25 August 2025. A two-step process will be used. The first step is a Registration of Interest (ROI) process where organisations will submit an ROI via the online portal. This first step is the focus of this guide.

At the first step, organisations will need to assess themselves against the assessment framework (provided in Appendix A of this document).

In the second step, organisations that are shortlisted will be invited to submit a proposal. At this stage, there will be a short period of community consultation, which will enable feedback to be provided on shortlisted proposals. This two-step process is designed to reduce the time that organisations spend on proposals that are unlikely to be successful.



Key Timeframes

Below are anticipated key timeframes for the ROI process, including shortlist notification timeframes.

Date	Item
25 August 2025	ROI applications open for submission via the online portal.
11 September 2025	Final date for organisation to submit questions regarding the ROI process.
23 September 2025	ROI submissions close.
10 October 2025	Organisations can expect to be notified whether they have been shortlisted by 10 October. If shortlisted, you will be asked to confirm that you will submit a full proposal.
10 October 2025	Shortlisted organisations will be able to submit full proposals via the online portal.
10 October 2025	Community consultation on shortlisted proposals begins.
31 October 2025	RFP submission closes.

Who can apply to the Fund?

We partner with organisations delivering health and social services across New Zealand. This includes:

- Registered charities and not-for-profit organisations
- Iwi and Māori organisations
- Whānau Ora providers
- Pacific organisations
- Community groups and trusts
- Social enterprises focused on health and social outcomes
- Other organisations with a primary purpose of delivering health and social services



To be eligible, organisations must be legally registered entities in New Zealand that can enter into contracts and have systems to safely collect and share participant information. We're committed to working with organisations at different stages of capability and we will support successful applicants to meet our data and evaluation requirements.





Check your organisation's fit

Considerations before you apply

Have you completed the pre-application checklist?

Before you apply, we recommend you read the following information on the [Pathway One: New Investment \(Round One\)](#) page of the SIA website to identify whether this round might be suitable for your organisation:

- ☐ Read about the priority outcomes and cohorts for this funding round
- ☐ View the Assessment Framework
- ☐ Watch the video overview of the selection criteria
- ☐ Complete the self-selection exercise
- ☐ Read the Quick Guides to get an understanding of the selection criteria

Does your organisation meet the pre-conditions?

Each organisation will be required to meet all the pre-conditions below for their proposal to be evaluated. Pre-condition evidence will not be required during the ROI stage. However, if your organisation is shortlisted, evidence will be collected.

Application Pre-conditions	
1.	Legal status: Is your organisation registered as a legal entity in New Zealand? (Evidence could include an NZBN or other equivalent legal documentation).
2.	Organisational scale: Does your organisation(s) have an annual turnover of \$500,000 or more? (Evidence could include an IR3 tax return, a letter from your accountant, Charities register document or equivalent).
3.	Community Relationships (community assessment): Have you previously worked with a target cohort or community? Do you have established relationships with community stakeholders? (Evidence would be collected via the community consultation phase).
4.	Data sharing: Does your organisation agree to share the following data with Stats NZ's Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) for the service?: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Personal identifier(s):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>If you're already collecting and using a government unique identifier:</i> We work together to determine the minimum data needed, which typically includes the date service started, the date service ended, and the unique identifier.<i>If you're not collecting a government unique identifier:</i> We work together to determine the minimum data needed, which typically includes the date service started, the date service ended, full name, date of birth, and address.Start date: The date the individual began working with your organisationExit date: The date the individual ceased working with your organisation Any personal data shared is sent directly to Stats NZ through safe and secure processes. Personal information - whether unique identifiers or names and addresses - is used only by Stats NZ staff to link data with other government data in the IDI. This information is not used for any other purpose, and only the Stats NZ data linking team can access or handle this personal data.

For collective applications, one organisation can provide their details at this point in the process. If a collective application is successful, we will collect the details of other organisations.



Have you considered alignment to Round One priority cohorts?

In June 2025, the Social Investment Fund Ministerial Group (SIFMG) confirmed the below priority cohorts (population groups) for New Investment Round One. The cohorts have been prioritised based on government priorities and evidence indicating the heightened likelihood of adverse outcomes in health, education, safety, and overall wellbeing.

We have developed a dashboard tool that you can access for more information on the cohorts. See Appendix C for the link to the Cohort Explorer dashboard and guidance for use.

1

Children whose parent(s) are currently or have recently been in prison

2

Children of parent(s) who experienced the care system

3

Children that were stood down or suspended from school when they were 12 or younger

Have you reviewed the Assessment Framework?

The application process within the portal is aligned to the New Investment Assessment Framework (Appendix A). It may be helpful for you to review this framework well ahead of the ROI close date and prior to completing your application through the online portal.

There are areas which may require pre-work and/or collaboration with others to formulate responses required in the application for your proposed initiative, such as your theory of change.

Appendix B includes links to quick guides with for further information regarding some areas of the assessment framework, including:

- Understanding how we use outcomes
- Understanding Theory of Change and logic models
- Continuous learning
- Data, learning and impact for the Fund

Criteria	Description	Developing	Meets	Leading
Investment case	Investment case	The proposal includes high level outcomes and objectives. There is an opportunity to include in the business case a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes specific, measurable outcomes that are aligned with the priority cohorts and a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes specific, measurable outcomes that are aligned with the priority cohorts and a credible impact and measurable outcomes.
	Outcomes	The proposal demonstrates understanding of the population group that will be supported by the initiative. It is clear that the proposal includes one or more of the priority cohorts in a credible way that the initiative will support them to achieve positive outcomes.	The proposal is clear on the priority cohorts that it intends to support and there is a credible plan for reaching and working with priority cohorts. It is clear that the proposal will meet more than 50% of the priority cohorts in a credible way that the initiative will support them to achieve positive outcomes.	The proposal demonstrates the organization's understanding of working with the priority cohorts and includes relevant pathways, activities and outcomes that will support them to achieve positive outcomes.
	Theory of change	The proposal includes a theory of change, providing a logical framework to link goals. There is an opportunity to further strengthen the connection between outcomes and objectives by providing evidence that demonstrates a credible pathway to success.	The proposal presents a coherent theory of change that outlines the connection between outcomes and objectives. Some evidence is provided to support the theory of change, including data, research and evidence that demonstrates a credible pathway to success.	The proposal presents a comprehensive, well-evidenced theory of change that is clear, logical and supported by strong evidence. The theory of change provides a clear, logical pathway for outcomes, including clear evidence that demonstrates a credible pathway to success.
	Continuous learning	It is clear that learning will be captured and used to improve the initiative and its impact.	The proposal includes a plan for capturing and using data to improve the initiative and its impact.	The proposal includes a plan for capturing and using data to improve the initiative and its impact.
Investment case	Investment case	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.
	Outcomes	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.
	Theory of change	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.
Investment case	Investment case	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.
	Outcomes	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.	The proposal includes a credible impact and measurable outcomes.



Application process

Round One ROI application process

Accessing the application portal

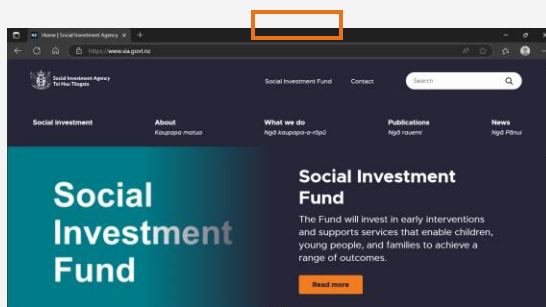
The application process is run through our online application portal. A link to the portal is available on the [Pathway One: New Investment \(Round One\)](#) page of the SIA website, sia.govt.nz.

To find this page on the SIA website, click on the Social Investment Fund link at the top of the homepage, then click on the Pathway One page. The link to apply will be visible on the page.

1. Go to the SIA website:
www.sia.govt.nz

2. Select “Social Investment Fund”
at the top of the homepage

3. Select the link to the Pathway
One page



Getting started

When you click on the link, it will take you to the application portal. Select the New Investment application option to begin your application.



Saving your application as you go

Once you have passed the pre-registration eligibility portion of the application in the online portal, you will be able to save and leave your application whenever you need. Simply press save and exit the site. You will receive an email with a link that you can use to re-enter your application.

If you have any issues with the portal, please contact: info@sia.govt.nz





Step 1. Complete pre-registration eligibility



You will be prompted to answer the pre-registration questions to determine if you are eligible for Round One of the New Investment pathway. Please fill in the fields or use the drop-down options as prompted.



When your answers to qualifying questions are completed you will be informed whether you are eligible for New Investment Round One funding. If you are eligible, the system will take you through to the registration portion of the application.

If you are not eligible for Round One funding, you will be invited to sign up to register your interest in the Fund to see when we open future pathways to partner together.





Step 2. Complete ROI submission sections

Now you have completed the eligibility portion of the application you should automatically be able to begin populating the remainder of the ROI sections. You will be guided through a series of questions in the Portal over multiple pages. For this section, please be aware that:

- It is important that you have the authority on behalf of your organisation(s) to submit this application. **If you do not have the authority your application will not proceed.**
- If your application is moved through to the RFP stage, **your organisation(s) name will be published** alongside your proposal summary and the location your proposal will be delivered in, for community feedback.

Please refer to the table below for further information or quick links relevant to the sections of the ROI.

Section	Information
Registration	In this section we are seeking to understand more about your organisation such as legal entity information and contact information. If you cannot confirm that you have the authority to submit the application on behalf of your organisation you will not be able to proceed with the remainder of the application.
Proposal	You will be prompted to provide a brief outline of your organisation's proposal e.g. "we seek [A] funding to deliver [B] outcome(s) to impact [C] cohort in [D] location." Please note, this summary will be published on SIA's website if your proposal is shortlisted.
Outcomes	This section is about how your organisation will make a positive impact on social investment priority outcomes. The outcomes are listed on page 5 of this document. You can also find further information on how we use outcomes in our quick guide (link provided in Appendix B)
Cohorts	This section is about how your organisation will reach a social investment priority cohort. The three cohorts for Round One are listed on page 9 of this document. We would like to understand information surrounding which cohorts the initiative will target, how many participants the proposal will support, and how the participants will be identified.



Section	Information
Theory of change	A theory of change is an explanation of how and why an intervention is expected to lead to better outcomes for a target cohort. It maps the pathway from activities to outcomes. To understand more about theory of change please refer to the theory of change quick guide (link provided in Appendix B)
Continuous learning	In this section, we would like to understand more about your organisation's learning practices and policies. Embedding continuous learning practices helps you understand what's working, for whom, in what context, and why. For further information on continuous learning, why it matters and what we are looking for in proposals, please refer to the Continuous Learning quick guide (see Appendix B).
Sector-wide learning	Sector-wide learning is about your approach to design, funding and delivery of your service, and whether you will be creating a learning opportunity for the wider social sector.
Ability to work in the community	This section is about your organisation's relationships and trust with the community it will be working in and with. We want to understand the relationships you hold and the strength of those relationships. Alternatively, if you intend to build community stakeholder/partner relationships, we would like to understand how you will establish them.
Ability to deliver the proposal	This section is about your organisation's ability to deliver the proposal. It is important that we gain an understanding of whether you have the experience and resources available to you (or a plan to obtain them) to deliver your service.



→ Step 3. Submit application

When you have answered all required areas of the application you will reach a page where you can submit your application form. At this stage, please ensure that you have reviewed your answers prior to submission as you will be unable to make amendments when the form has been submitted.

You will be prompted to complete a declaration prior to submitting your ROI. As part of this declaration, you must review and approve our Terms of Use. These are available on our website.

Upon submission you will receive confirmation of your submission, your application number and who you can contact regarding your application.

Next steps

If your application is shortlisted, you will be provided with further guidance on the next steps in the process and given details on how to submit your RFP documentation.

If you have any queries, please first read our prepared Frequently Asked Questions (see Appendix B). If you cannot find the information you are looking for through the FAQs or our quick guides, then please contact: info@sia.govt.nz

Thank you

We greatly appreciate the time you have taken to engage with this process.

This is our first New Investment funding round. We can only invest in a small number of demonstration initiatives to help us test and scale the social investment approach at pace. However, this work will pave the way for changes that will benefit the wider social sector.

There will be future rounds and there are other Fund pathways. Please stay in touch with us, even if you are not the right fit for Round One.

The Social Investment Fund is designed to work differently to ensure government, the social sector and other partners can work smarter to make a positive difference in the lives of New Zealanders. We've heard from the sector that they want to work differently with government, and we're committed to doing that through the Fund.

Ngā mihi nui





Appendices

Appendix A: Assessment Framework

Social Investment Fund Assessment Framework for New Investment (Round One)

[View the Assessment Framework \[pdf\]](#)

	Criteria	Description	Developing	Meets (Minimum requirements for proposals to be funded during round 1)	Leading
Components of social investment	Outcomes	Focus on social investment priority outcomes.	The proposal includes high-level statements on outcomes. There is an opportunity to build on this foundation by identifying specific, measurable outcomes.	The proposal outlines specific, measurable outcomes that are well aligned with one priority outcome or reasonably aligned with multiple priority outcomes.	The proposal identifies specific, measurable outcomes that align strongly with several priority outcomes, as well as other outcomes participants value. The outcomes are clearly tied to the theory of change and evaluation approach.
	Cohorts	Will reach a significant number of the social investment priority cohort(s).	The proposal demonstrates understanding of the population group that will be supported by the initiative. It is likely that this group includes one or more of the priority cohorts. It is unclear <i>how</i> that the initiative will reach more than 250 participants over the course of the programme, and participants are well-aligned to one or more of the priority cohorts.	The proposal is clear on the priority cohort(s) they intend to reach and there is a credible plan for reaching and working with a priority cohort(s). It is likely that the initiative will reach more than 250 participants over the course of the programme, and participants are well-aligned to one or more of the priority cohorts, which will enable a robust evaluation.	The proposal demonstrates the organisation's track record of working with the priority cohort(s) and includes referral pathways agreed with partners. The initiative will easily reach enough of the priority cohort(s) to enable a robust evaluation.
	Theory of change	Proposal has evidence that the intervention works, and the theory of change is plausible.	The proposal introduces a theory of change, providing a foundational framework to build upon. There is an opportunity to further strengthen the connections between activities and outcomes by providing evidence that demonstrates a clearer pathway to impact.	The proposal presents a coherent theory of change that outlines the connections between activities and outcomes. Some evidence (including academic research, mātauranga Māori, or practice-based evidence) to support those connections is provided. The theory of change could form the basis of a robust evaluation.	The proposal presents a comprehensive, well-articulated theory of change that is clear, logical, and supported by strong evidence. The theory of change provides a robust framework for evaluation, including clear indicators for tracking intermediate outcomes.
	Continuous learning	It is clear how learning will be captured and used to improve reach and impact.	It is clear that progress data will be captured and recorded but it is not clear <i>how</i> insights and learning will inform practice and service improvement as there is little evidence of an established learning culture within the organisation.	The proposal sets out clearly how data, insights, and learning will be used to support practice and service improvements, and how this builds on the organisation's proven learning approach.	The proposal will build on the delivery organisation's proven approach to using data, insights and learning to support service and practice improvement.
Social Investment Fund-specific	Sector-wide learning	Proposal includes innovative approaches to design, funding and delivery of social services – creating a learning opportunity for the wider social sector.	The proposal includes some novel features. The lessons learned will add to the evidence base of what works and why in New Zealand.	The proposal tests or demonstrates solutions build on existing research evidence, with respect to service design, delivery and funding. There is clear potential for the wider social sector to gain valuable new insights or learning.	The proposal includes potentially transformational elements. There is a high likelihood that the social system will gain significant insights and learning, which could be used to benefit the wider social sector.
	Community connectedness	The delivery organisation(s) has the relationships and trust needed to work in and with the community and other partners.	The delivery organisation(s) has a developing understanding of the community(s) they will work in and a clear plan for how they will build the relationships they need to be successful.	The delivery organisation(s) has a good understanding of the community(s) they will work in and has existing relationships that can be strengthened to enable success. There is a clear plan to establish any relationships required to support the initiative (eg establishing referral pathways).	The delivery organisation(s) has deep knowledge of the community. They are well-known, respected, and have strong, trusted relationships with providers and key stakeholders, which will support the successful delivery of the initiative.
	Delivery confidence	The delivery organisation(s) have a proven track record – they have successfully delivered similar initiatives before.	The delivery organisation(s) has limited experience of delivering initiatives for the priority cohort at scale. However, their track record in other areas provides some confidence.	The delivery organisation(s) has recent or ongoing experience of delivering similar initiatives in terms of scale and cohort.	The delivery organisation has a strong track record of delivering successful initiatives at scale to the priority cohort(s) and / or groups of the population with similar challenges. Appropriate accreditation or certification is already in place (e.g. Health Cert, Te Kahui Kahu).



Appendix B: Resources

Refer to the SIA website www.sia.govt.nz for information and resources to help you prepare your application. Here is an outline of the resources you can find on each page on the website.

Information about the Social Investment Fund

The [Social Investment Fund](#) page has the following information:

- Links to the four pathway pages
- FAQs about the Social Investment Fund [Social Investment Fund FAQs](#)
- Links to Fund pages:
 - [Demonstration initiatives](#)
 - [Webinars](#)
 - [Register your interest for Fund updates](#)
- Factsheets:
 - What is social investment?
 - About the Social Investment Agency
 - Demonstration initiatives

Information about Pathway One: New Investment (Round One)

The [Pathway One: New Investment \(Round One\)](#) page has the following information:

- **Online Application Form link**
- Application Guide (this document)
- Key dates
- Assessment Framework and selection criteria for applications
- Video overview of the assessment framework
- Self-selection exercise so you can assess your eligibility for this round of funding before applying
- Quick Guides to help you understand aspects of the selection criteria:
 - Understanding outcomes
 - Understanding Theory of Change and logic models
 - Impact and continuous learning
 - Data, learning and impact for the Fund

More information about social investment

For more information on social investment, see:

- [What is social investment?](#)
- [Social investment FAQs](#)



Appendix C: Social Investment Fund Cohort Explorer

The Social Investment Fund Cohort Explorer is a data tool that organisations can use to draw insights on the selected priority cohorts (population groups).

The Cohort Explorer provides information on demographics and geographic distribution. It collates data sourced from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) into visual dashboards. Users can engage with the dashboards to gain insights into the demographics of Fund cohorts within their location.

Demographics	Provides insights on the number of children and young people in a selected location and cohort. This can be broken down by age, sex, ethnicity and socio-economic deprivation.
Geography	Provides insights on the density and distribution of the selected cohort by location.

Click on the link below to open the Cohort Explorer dashboard.

[View the Social Investment Fund Cohort Explorer](#)

Navigation

Introducing the Social Investment Fund Cohort Explorer

Demographics

Geography

Notes

FAQ

Reset

This explorer collates data sourced via the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) into visual dashboards. Organisations can engage with the dashboards to gain insights on the demographics of social investment fund cohorts within your location.

We have identified cohorts with high and complex needs, where there is strong potential to improve outcomes aligned to targets and government priorities.

Description and features of each tab

- **Demographics:** provides insights on the number of children and young people in the selected cohort in the location of interest, including insights on their age, sex, ethnicity and the socio-economic deprivation of the area where they are living.
- **Geography:** provides insights on the density and distribution of the selected cohort by territorial authority

Suppressed: If a location has fewer than 20 people who meet the selected criteria, no data will be displayed. You can select multiple locations.

Data as at **March 2025**

Please select the cohort and location you are interested in:

Cohort: Children whose parent(s) are currently or have recently been in prison

Location¹: Buller District

Children aged 0 to 17 who have had one or more parent imprisoned (incarcerated or on remand) in the past five years.

1 Territorial authority and local board

OK

Content

Provides an overview of the tool, including its purpose, and explains the function of each dashboard page to guide user navigation

Step 1: Filter by cohort

Use the dropdown to choose the group of interest

Step 2: Filter by location

Use the dropdown to choose one or more areas to explore

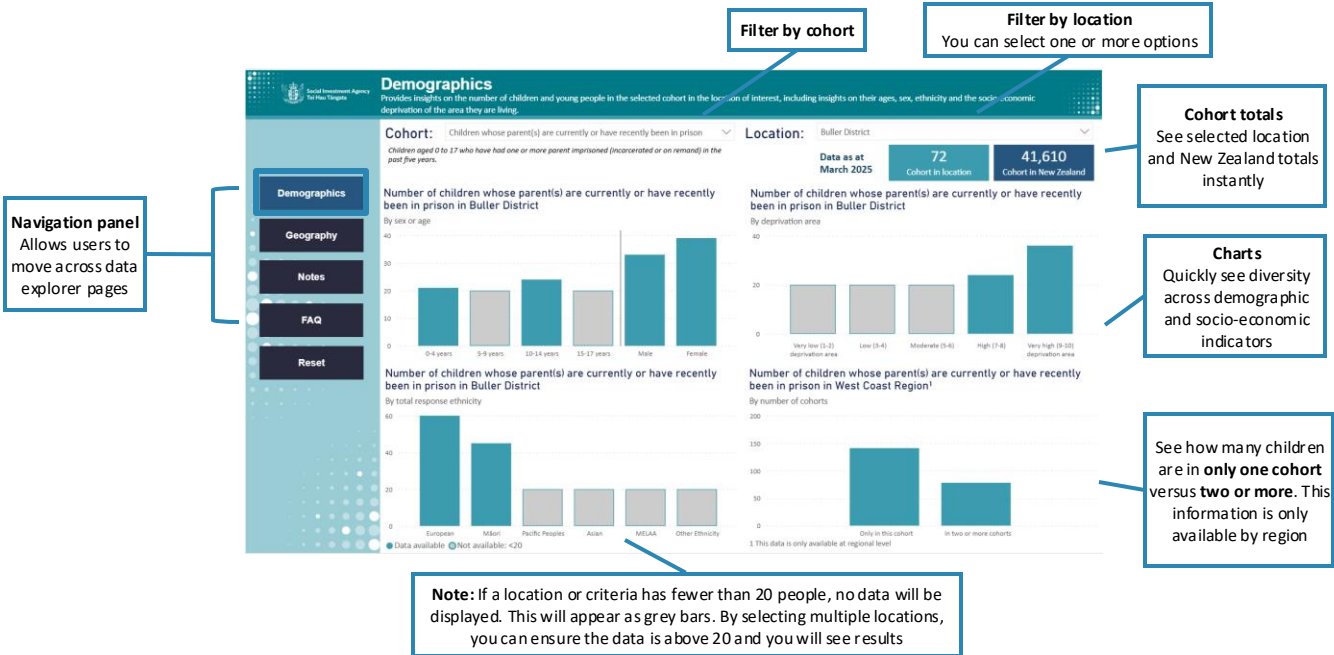
Step 3: Click "OK" to load the dashboard

Social Investment Agency | Toi Hau Tāngata

20

Social Investment Fund Cohort Explorer features

Demographics



Geography

