

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

	Criteria	Weightings	Pre-Developing 1	Developing 2	Meets* 3	Leading 4	Pioneering 5
Components of social investment	Outcomes	15%	Your organisation's proposal expresses an intention to improve outcomes but does not yet clearly specify what change is expected, for whom, or how success would be recognised. Outcomes are broad, aspirational, or framed as activities rather than measurable change.	Your organisation's proposal identifies intended outcomes aligned to the Fund's priorities and describes the type of change expected for participants. However, outcomes are still high-level, loosely defined, or not yet clearly measurable, and links between activities and outcomes are still emerging.	Your organisation's proposal clearly defines specific, measurable outcomes that describe the changes expected for participants. Outcomes are aligned with one or more Social Investment Fund priority outcomes and are specified in a way that enables assessment of progress or change over the life of the initiative, at a level appropriate to its scale and context.	Your organisation's proposal defines outcomes with a high degree of clarity and confidence. Outcomes are strongly aligned with the theory of change and priority outcomes, and are supported by reliable baseline or proxy information that enables meaningful assessment of change, including analysis across relevant groups where appropriate.	Your organisation's proposal defines or measures outcomes in ways that are useful beyond the individual initiative. This may include outcome definitions or indicators that are designed or adapted so they can be understood, compared, or reused by others working in similar contexts, with potential to inform replication, scaling, or future commissioning decisions.
	Cohorts	15%	Your organisation's proposal identifies an intended population or need but does not yet clearly define a priority cohort or explain how participants will be identified, reached, or enrolled. Access pathways are unclear, aspirational, or reliant on assumptions rather than established relationships or processes.	Your organisation's proposal defines a priority cohort and outlines a plausible approach to identifying and reaching participants. Referral or access pathways are described but are still early, untested, or not yet operating at scale. While the approach is credible in principle, there is limited evidence that it will work reliably or reach the intended number of participants over time.	Your organisation's proposal clearly defines the priority cohort(s) the initiative will support and explains how participants will be identified, referred, or enrolled. Referral or access pathways are appropriate to the proposed model and demonstrate a realistic, evidence-informed approach to reaching at least 250 participants aligned with the Fund's priority cohorts over the life of the programme. Your organisation's proposal shows awareness of equity and access considerations and outlines basic steps to address them.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates a high level of clarity and reliability in defining, reaching, and enrolling the priority cohort(s). Referral or access pathways are established or agreed with partners, with evidence that they will reach the required scale. The initiative uses data to monitor access and enrolment and to understand who is being reached, supporting accountability and attention to equity.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates cohort and referral pathway approaches that go beyond established practice. Access to services is intentionally designed, coordinated, or governed with partners (such as iwi, communities, or other organisations) to improve equity, transparency, or understanding of who is reached and who is not. These approaches show potential to inform or be adapted by others working with similar cohorts.
	Theory of change	15%	Your organisation's proposal describes activities or services but does not yet clearly explain how these are expected to lead to improved outcomes. Assumptions about change are implicit or taken for granted.	Your organisation's proposal outlines a basic Theory of Change that explains how activities are expected to contribute to outcomes. Key assumptions are identifiable, but the pathway is still high-level or not yet well tested.	Your organisation's proposal presents a clear and logical Theory of Change that explains how the proposed activities are expected to lead to intended outcomes. The causal pathway is coherent and plausible, supported by evidence, experience, or community insight, and provides a credible foundation for programme design and evaluation.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates a well-developed Theory of Change that is grounded in evidence or practice and used to guide how the initiative is designed and delivered. Assumptions about how change occurs are explicit and reflected on over time, supporting learning, adaptation, and evaluability within the initiative.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates a Theory of Change that is intentionally co-developed or jointly owned with communities, iwi, or partners. The change logic integrates diverse knowledge and perspectives and is designed to deepen shared understanding of how change happens in complex contexts, beyond a single organisation or initiative.
	Continuous learning	15%	Your organisation's proposal expresses openness to learning but does not yet describe how learning would be generated, reflected on, or used to improve practice.	Your organisation's proposal describes basic learning processes (e.g. reflection, feedback, monitoring) and shows intent to use learning to improve delivery, though systems are still informal or early stage.	Your organisation's proposal clearly explains how data, feedback, and learning will be used to support ongoing improvement in delivery and participant outcomes. Learning processes are intentional and structured, with regular opportunities to reflect on performance and adapt practice over time. Learning is part of normal delivery activity within the initiative.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates that continuous learning and improvement are embedded in organisational practice. Data and feedback are routinely analysed and used to guide adaptive changes to delivery, workforce practice, or participant engagement. Leadership supports learning, and there is evidence that learning leads to sustained improvements over time.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates learning approaches that go beyond organisational improvement. Learning is intentionally designed or governed with partners (such as iwi, communities, or other organisations) to support shared reflection, sense-making, or adaptation in complex contexts. These approaches show potential to strengthen collective understanding beyond a single initiative.
Social Investment Fund-specific	Sector-wide learning	15%	Your organisation's proposal focuses primarily on delivery within your organisation, with limited consideration of how learning might be shared or contribute beyond the initiative.	Your organisation's proposal recognises the value of sharing insights and describes early ideas for contributing learning to the wider sector, though mechanisms are informal or not yet well developed.	Your organisation's proposal includes a clear and intentional approach to generating learning that could be relevant beyond the initiative. It builds on existing evidence or practice and identifies what will be tested, learned, or documented, with a plan to share findings with peers or the sector.	Your organisation's proposal positions learning as a deliberate contribution to the wider sector. It introduces new or improved approaches and includes clear plans for capturing, validating, and sharing learning in ways that support replication, adaptation, or broader use.	Your organisation's proposal is explicitly designed to support system-level learning. Learning is co-designed or governed with partners (such as iwi, communities, funders, or sector organisations), integrates multiple ways of knowing, and is intended to influence how learning is produced, shared, or used across the system.
	Community connectedness	15%	Your organisation's proposal references community or whānau but does not clearly describe how communities are involved in shaping, delivering, or refining the initiative.	Your organisation's proposal describes meaningful engagement with communities or lived-experience groups and shows how community insight informs delivery, though influence may still be limited or informal.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates a sound understanding of the community and includes existing relationships or credible plans to establish them. Engagement is intentional and appropriate to the initiative, with clear mechanisms for community input that support effective delivery.	Your organisation's proposal reflects strong, trusted relationships with the community. Community voice meaningfully informs how services are designed, delivered, and adapted, and engagement is culturally responsive and embedded in practice.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates community ownership or shared governance, with communities actively involved in leadership, decision-making, and learning. The initiative contributes to strengthening community capability or systems beyond the immediate programme.
	Delivery confidence	10%	Your organisation's proposal outlines intended activities but provides limited information about your organisation's readiness, capability, or systems to deliver at scale.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates a credible delivery approach and organisational capability to implement the initiative, though some elements (e.g. workforce, systems, partnerships) are still developing.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates credible delivery capability. Your organisation has relevant experience, appropriate systems, and clear plans in place to deliver the initiative as proposed. While some systems may still be maturing, there is reasonable confidence that delivery can be managed effectively.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates strong delivery capability, with a proven track record of delivering similar initiatives at scale. Systems, governance, staffing, and quality assurance processes are well established, and performance data shows reliable delivery and responsiveness to risk or change.	Your organisation's proposal demonstrates delivery excellence that goes beyond the individual initiative. Your organisation contributes to strengthening delivery capability, standards, or practice across the sector, supporting others to deliver effectively and reliably.