

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE EVALUATION STEPS

Social Enterprise Impact Lab (SEIL) Research Team



CSI Swinburne SEIL Factsheet No.2.

EVALUATION STEPS TO CONSIDER

Taking a few steps to make your social enterprise (SE) evaluation successful will ensure that your time and resources are used wisely. While specific evaluation goals and needs differ between SEs^{1,2} current research identifies some similarities in the kinds of steps involved in successful social impact evaluation:

1. Engage with stakeholders to develop a shared vision of what the desired impact is, and how your SE or a specific program will contribute to this.^{1,2,3,4,5,6}
2. Establish the primary purpose of evaluation, and identify who the audience/users of your evaluation findings are.^{1,2,4,5,6,7,8}
3. Design and implement evaluation processes that align with your impact measurement needs and purposes, and provide credible evidence of impact.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7}
4. Use and share your evaluation findings.^{1,2,3,5,6,8}

Engage with the relevant people

Engaging with the people or communities your SE seeks to benefit is an important step in building informed consensus with your stakeholders about what the social impact aims are, and how your SE will contribute to achieving them.^{1,2,3,4,5,6}

Establish the evaluation purpose

Consider the main purpose and audience for your evaluation. Is it mainly for internal purposes so your team can learn and improve on current SE activities; or for external purposes like communicating social impacts to funders? This will help to determine the evaluation scope and approach.^{1,2,4,5,6,7,8} You can read more about evaluation approaches in Factsheet 3.

Design and implement accordingly

Your evaluation design and implementation should be informed by your engagement with stakeholders, and aligned with the agreed social impact goals and evaluation needs of your SE. The chosen evaluation measures should have a clear relationship to your SE goals, and provide strong evidence of the outcomes achieved.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} You can read more about choosing measures that matter in Factsheet 4.

Put your evaluation findings to work

Once your evaluation has been implemented and the relevant data gathered, it's time to analyse your findings and use them for your established purposes – such as improving your SE operations, or sharing evidence of your impact with others.^{1,2,3,5,6,8}

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Key resources for further reading

- [The Compass: Your guide to social impact measurement](#)
- [The Code of Good Impact Practice](#)

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