



# 14:19 Fund - Evaluation Values and Principles

**It is important to us that charities we invest in are able to prove their impact.**

There are two reasons for this:

1. Charities need to be able to understand what they deliver and the changes this brings in young people's lives in order to know if they are having the impact they intend; this in turn allows them to refine and improve their delivery.
2. We will need to report the results achieved by the charities we work with to investors.

Evaluation is not a neutral word; it brings out strong responses in people. Often charities and workers can feel very hostile to the concept of evaluation, thinking that it is something that is imposed from the outside, and used to 'catch them out' or utilised by funders as an excuse not to continue funding. This is not how Inspiring Scotland sees evaluation.

**It matters to us that the lives of young people supported by the charities that we invest in change for the better, and that we can show this to the wider world.**

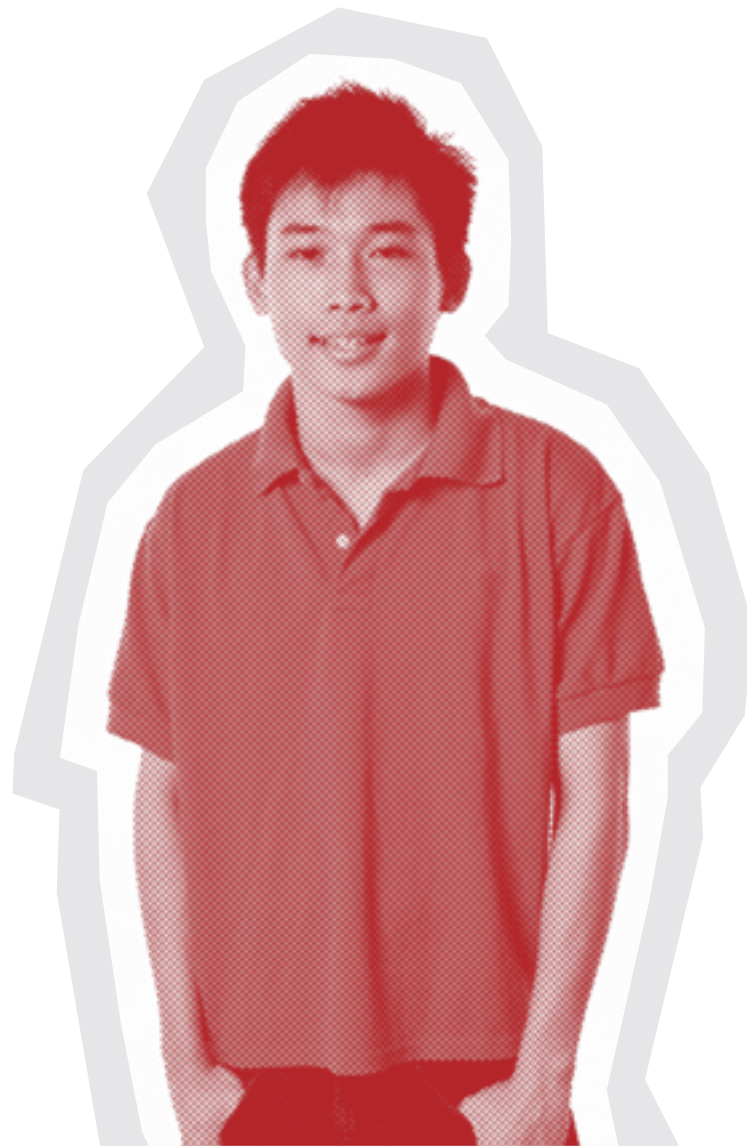
In recent decades too much time has been taken up with bureaucratically monitoring things that don't matter as opposed to the true effect work has. We have all fallen into the trap of counting what we can measure instead of measuring what counts.

We recognise that shifting from a 'monitoring mindset' to measuring the impact of activities in the organisations we invest in may not be easy or quick to achieve. But it is very important to us that the organisations which approach us for investment have the appetite and desire to really understand and measure their impact. We will work with the charities we invest in so that their measurement of their own impact reaches a very high standard.

Young people who are currently at risk of not being able to make the most of their talents and skills may be on a long pathway towards being able to reach the maximum of their potential. The services you deliver to assist them may mean that you are not with them for that entire pathway.

However it is important to us that the whole journey is recognised and that you understand what part you play in their journey. You should know how your work contributes to the young people you work with achieving their potential.

There are some fundamentals we hope to see in service design from organisations that engage with us – these are set out on the following page. You may not be in a position of being able to demonstrate all of these, but we do need you to show us how you have considered these points and what you need to fully integrate them in your work. We will be able to help you, where necessary, to improve your ability to prove your impact.



In order to demonstrate the impact of a service some key things need to be in place:

### **A basic logic model for your service.**

This means showing that it is logical that if you undertake activity X with a young person its impact would be Y. An example is that if you provided numeracy training it would be logical to expect a young person's ability to count and be comfortable with numbers to improve; however if you provided them with a salsa dancing class it wouldn't be logical to expect them to have improved their literacy, but other elements may have improved such as team work skills, or basic fitness.

### **Evidence of need.**

All our investment will be made in areas where there are plenty of young people who need your support, so we are not expecting you to recycle data on deprivation to us. What we want to see from you is an understanding of the needs and gaps in the lives of the young people you wish to work with, and how you will meet that need to help them on a pathway to successfully engaging with education, training or, once they are 16 or older, work.

### **An understanding of the theoretical basis of your intervention.**

There will be reasons why the young people you wish to work with are struggling; their backgrounds and lives will have created the difficulties they now face. We want you to show us that you understand how the activities you wish to deliver match with the consequences of the poor start that these young people have had, and are tailored to meet their needs and to help them develop and grow to meet their potential.

### **Some measurement of your activities.**

In order to manage and review the services you deliver it is important for you to be able to capture the volume of the activities you deliver and how many young people you are working with, as well as some of their personal characteristics, such as age and background. However, this data needs to be useful to you, and to feed into internal review processes rather than just being recorded then ignored, never to see the light of day again.

### **Ways of illustrating the impact of your support on a young person.**

You will need to be able to capture the change you have brought about in a young person's life. This will require some basic baseline measurement of where they are when you start working with them, and then snap shots of their progress at regular intervals during their time with you. It will also be important to us that you have started to think about how you could measure your impact on a young person's life a while after you have finished working with them, to see the lasting impact of your work.

### **An understanding of a young person's journey, and your role in it.**

You are unlikely to be the only organisation providing support to any young person; they may be working with other specialist services, or at school or college. You need to know how your service fits with what else is going on in the lives of the young people you work with, and ensure you are not cutting across someone else's work or leaving gaps that make a young person vulnerable. You will need to understand how your work is complementary to other work being delivered for the same group of young people in the geographic area/s where you will be working.

It is important to us that we invest in organisations where staff at all levels understand the importance of evaluation and measuring their impact of their work, and see it as a fundamental part of everyone's job and not just someone else's responsibility. But we recognise that measuring the impact of a service is not always easy, which is why we will be working with Evaluation Support Scotland to help us, and you, build internal skill and capacity around proving impact.

