

BARRIERS TO EVALUATION

Demonstrating social impact is a core need among social enterprises (SEs), but recent research mapping social enterprises in Victoria, Australia finds that organisational capacity and cost are the biggest barriers to evaluation (1).



Many organisations note that impact measurement is difficult, and report being unsure how to measure or evaluate impact effectively (1). These challenges suggest a need to support social enterprises to build evaluation capacity, and consider how costs can be reduced (1).

WHAT IS SEIL?



Social Enterprise Impact Lab (SEIL) is a ground-breaking action research collaboration between the Centre for Social Impact (CSI) Swinburne University of Technology, the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation and Family Life. This project is exploring and innovating evaluation practice at five participating organisations:



WHAT DOES SEIL AIM TO DO?

SEIL is examining the effectiveness of different approaches to evaluating and reporting social impacts. SEIL's five participating social enterprises are working with each other and with CSI Swinburne researchers to grow our collective knowledge of achievable, affordable and effective social impact measurement and evaluation.



SEIL is sharing the knowledge gained with the broader social enterprise sector, and creating an online data dashboard that social enterprises can use to monitor and communicate their impacts.

OUR PROCESS



CSI Swinburne researchers have been working with SEIL's participating organisations to support:

- Review of existing evaluation practices
- Theory of change development/evolution
- Workshopping indicators for impact measurement
- Collaborative workshops on whether some shared indicators might be possible and useful
- Development of an online data dashboard

OUTCOMES SO FAR

- All participating organisations have developed an updated theory of change document.
- Knowledge and experiences of SE evaluation have been shared through the www.seil.com.au blog.
- Three factsheets on SE evaluation are published on the SEIL website.
- We are developing an outcome indicators bank that SEs can use.
- Version 1.0 of the online data dashboard is now being tested.

