



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

ILAS 'Value' Frameworks Methodological Workshop 15th September 2025

Social Return on Investment(SROI) and the Evaluation of Alternative Education Provision Interventions

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The UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre

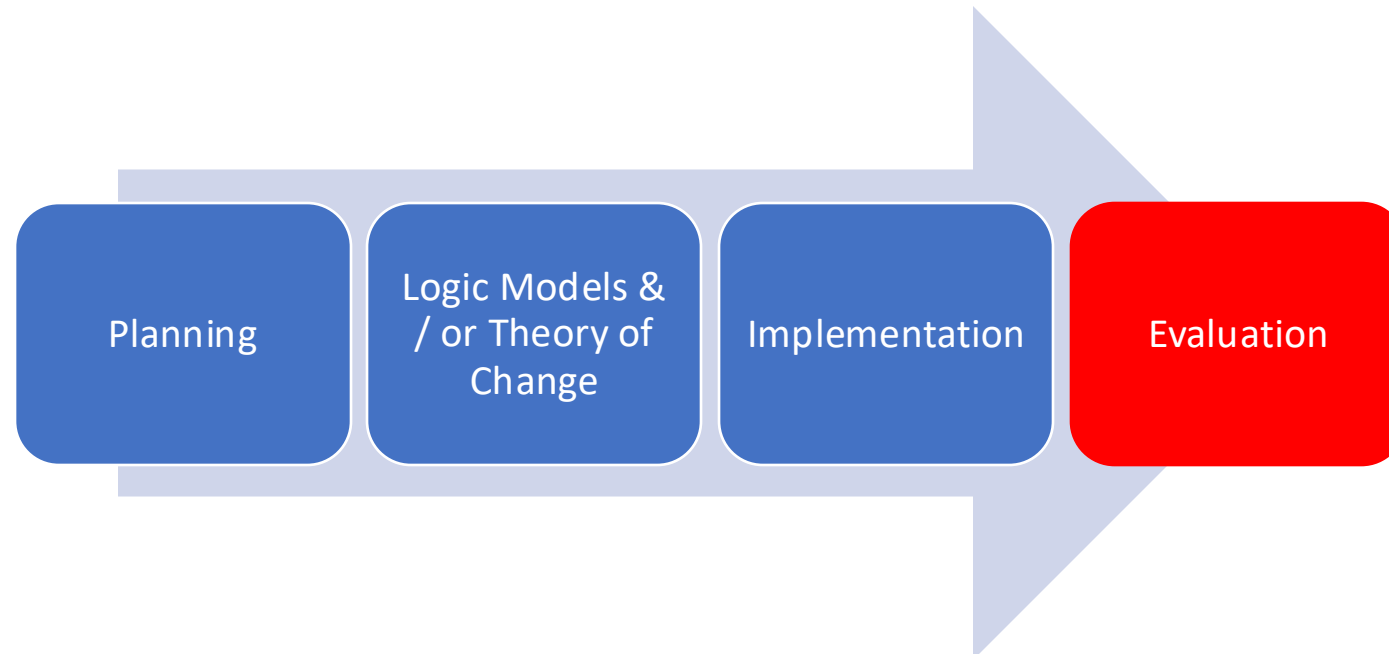
<https://www.universityofgalway.ie/cfrc/>



A note on Evaluation

What is Evaluation?

*“The use of social research methods to **systematically** investigate the **effectiveness** of social intervention programs in ways that are **adapted** to their political and organizational environments and are designed to inform social action in ways that **improve** social conditions”.* (Rossi et al., 2004, p.29).



A note on Evaluation

- In its simplest form, evaluation is about assessing the **VALUE** or **EFFECTIVENESS** of an intervention
- Every new intervention starts off with an **assumption of what will work** – i.e., a **tentative approach**, underpinned possibly by a **theory of change or logic model**
- However, no guarantees – Therefore, there is a **need to evaluate** at different stages.



A guide to Social Return on Investment

January 2012

- The go-to guide for SROI Studies
- <https://socialvalueuk.org/resources/a-guide-to-social-return-on-investment-2012/>

The SROI Network
Accounting for Value

Selected Readings

A Singular SROI Study

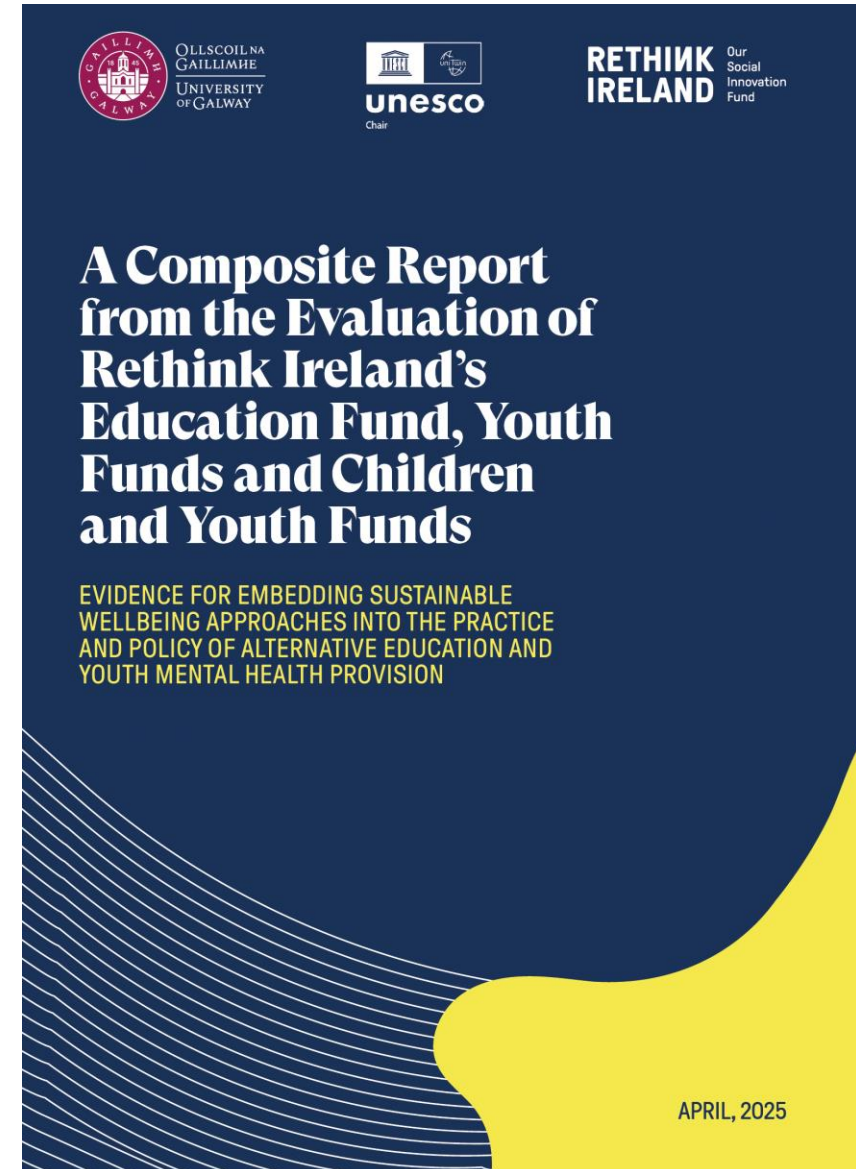
Jones, Carys, Gill Windle, and Rhiannon Tudor Edwards.
“Dementia and Imagination: A Social Return on Investment Analysis Framework for Art Activities for People Living With Dementia.” *The Gerontologist* 60.1 (2020): 112–123. Print.

Systematic Review

Corvo, Luigi et al. “The Social Return on Investment Model: A Systematic Literature Review.” *Meditari accountancy research* 30.7 (2022): 49–86. Print.

Our National SROI Study on Alternative Education (2025)

<https://rethinkireland.ie/whywellbeingmatters/>



Layout of Session

By the end of this session se will have explored:

Part 1 - What is Social Return on Investment (SROI) and where did it come from?

Part 2 - Steps in Undertaking an Evaluative SROI Study

Part 3 - Using SROI in a Study on Alternative Education Provision

Part 1: Social Return on Investment – What is it?

Social Return on Investment (SROI) **monetises social outcomes** and expresses them as a **ratio** related to the investment made (Vik, 2016)

Translation from a 'qualitative language on outcomes' into 'monetary language'

What does this mean in reality?

Monetising Social Outcomes

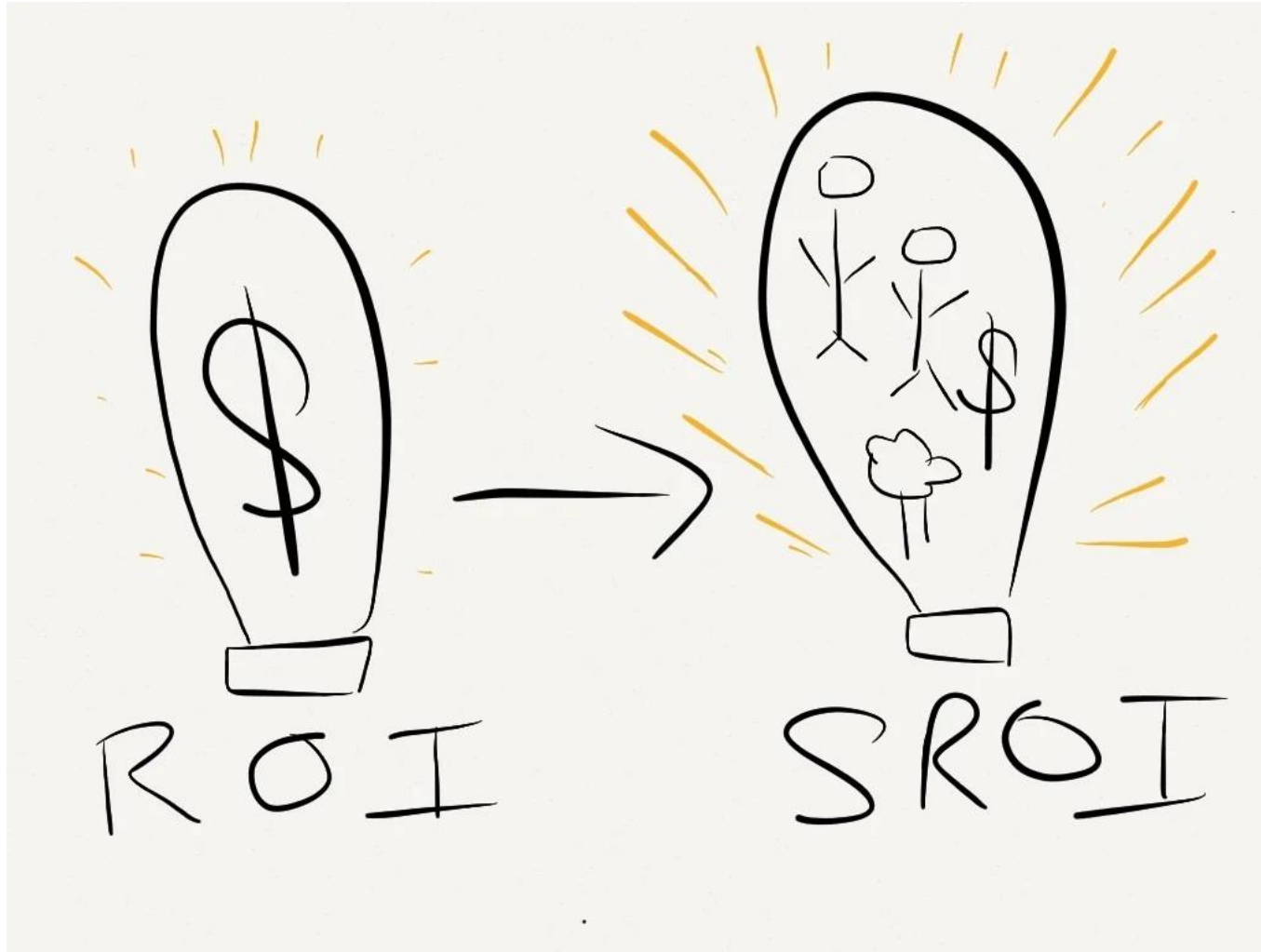
- Presenting **'value' in monetary terms**, accepted way of understanding in Western societies (e.g. Profit & Loss etc)
- Therefore, due to the focus on financial value, **many important outcomes** and results provided by organisations **go unnoticed** as they cannot be easily quantified and monetised (e.g. self-confidence...)
- However, with SROI, **social changes or outcomes are translated** into monetary terms – levels the playing field...



Monetising Social Outcomes



- SROI – core principles of improvement & accountability
[SROI] “... aims **to reduce inequalities** by including the **value of changes** in people’s lives into our **decision-making management information**, which is achieved by presenting them in numbers alongside the other numbers that we use when making decisions. This is therefore more of a **principle to produce these numbers** that represent **the lived experience** of people in our accounts and management information...” (Nicholls, 2012:6)



In the child, youth and community sector, daily activities
CREATE and DESTROY value



SROI – In Practice



The Gerontologist
cite as: *Gerontologist*, 2020, Vol. 60, No. 1, 112–123
doi:10.1093/geront/gny147
Advance Access publication November 23, 2018

OXFORD

Research Article

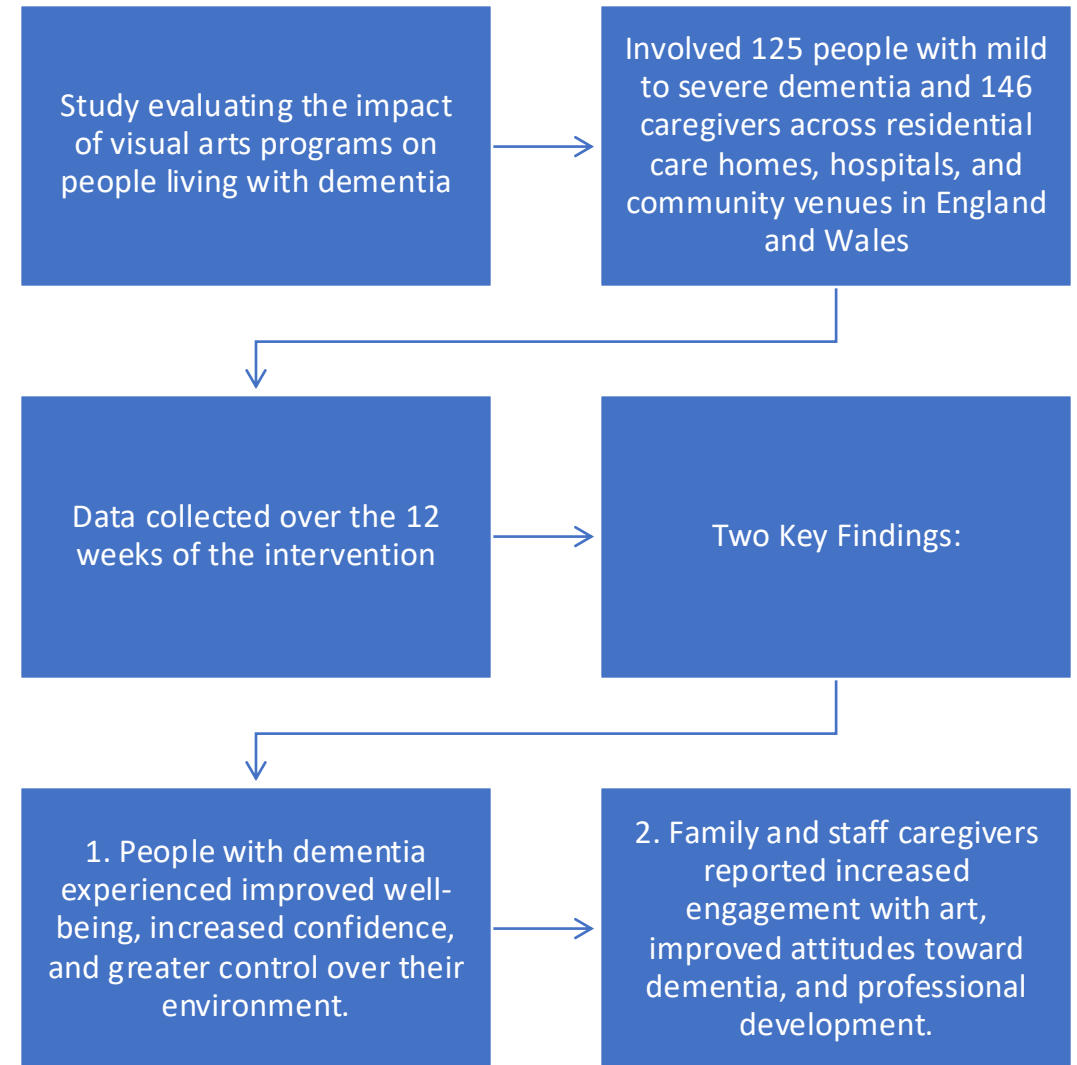
Dementia and Imagination: A Social Return on Investment Analysis Framework for Art Activities for People Living With Dementia

Carys Jones, PhD,^{1,*} Gill Windle, PhD,² and Rhiannon Tudor Edwards, DPhil¹

¹Centre for Health Economics and Medicines Evaluation and ²Dementia Services Development Centre, School of Health Sciences, Bangor University, Bangor, UK.

SROI analysis involved mapping outcomes, valuing changes, and calculating impact.

The program cost **£189,498** (\$279,320/€257,338) and generated a **social value of £980,717** (\$1,445,577/€1,331,814), equating to **£/\$/€5.18 of social value for every £/\$/€1 invested**



Social Return on Investment – What is it?

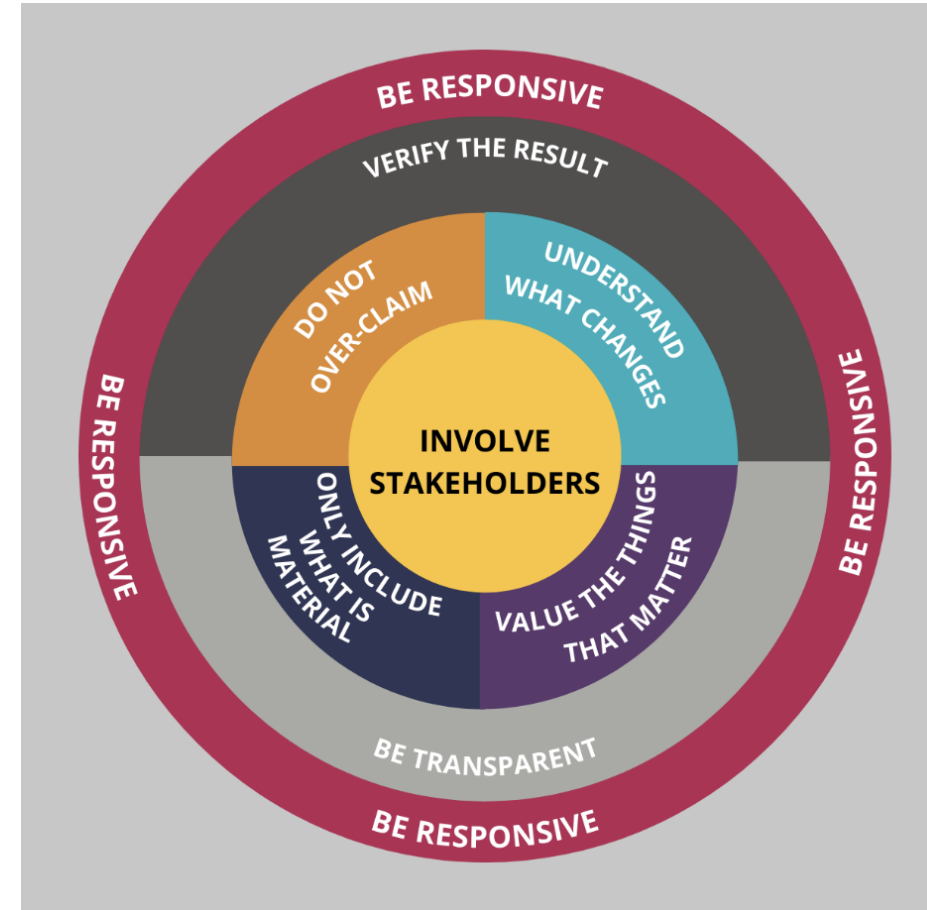
1. An **internationally accredited framework** - Social Value International (SVI) <https://www.socialvalueint.org/>
2. It uses a **principles-based methodology** for measuring and valuing social, environmental, and economic outcomes created by an activity or organisation
3. It seeks to understand and account for the **‘soft’** outcomes that do not have market value
4. **Engages key stakeholders** to determine the value they place on changes experienced and felt (Arvidson et al, 2013) as a result of an activity.
5. SROI provides a framework for calculating a ratio that represents the **social value generated** relative to the resources invested, allowing for a deeper understanding of impact and improved decision-making



The Global Network for
Social Value and Impact
Management

SROI's Underlying Principles

- + Principle 1: Involve stakeholders
- + Principle 2: Understand what changes
- + Principle 3: Value the things that matter
- + Principle 4: Only include what is material
- + Principle 5: Do not overclaim
- + Principle 6: Be transparent
- + Principle 7: Verify the result
- + Principle 8: Be responsive



Part 1: SROI — Where did it come from?

- **Social accounting and auditing (SAA)** provide a framework for ‘demonstrating social and non-financial performance, contribution and impact of **mission-driven organisations...**’ (Vik, 2017: 6). Recent emergence of the ‘**sociology of valuation**’ (Mazuryk et al, 2025)
- Why? Conventional financial accounting often **undervalues** this contribution
- Social Return on Investment is one of the most influential within SAA – **seen to be objective, robust and useful for benchmarking** – QUANTIFICATION
- Critique – can quantitative methods fit with the **complexity of social outcomes?** (Frumkin, 20023; Gibbon & Dey, 2011)

SROI – Where did it come from?

- SROI – started in the late 1990's in the US by the **Roberts Enterprise Development Fund (REDF)** – to capture and monetise the value created by its **employment programmes**
- Gibbon and Dey (2011) argue that it has become one of the most dominant **social performance frameworks** in the social enterprise sector
- Adapted for the UK by **New Economics Foundation** (Somers et al, 2005) and adapted later by Nicholls et al (2009, 2012) to a six-stage methodology
- Third Sector organisations – can help them demonstrate their '**added value**' (Arvidson et al, 2013)



SROI – Where did it come from?

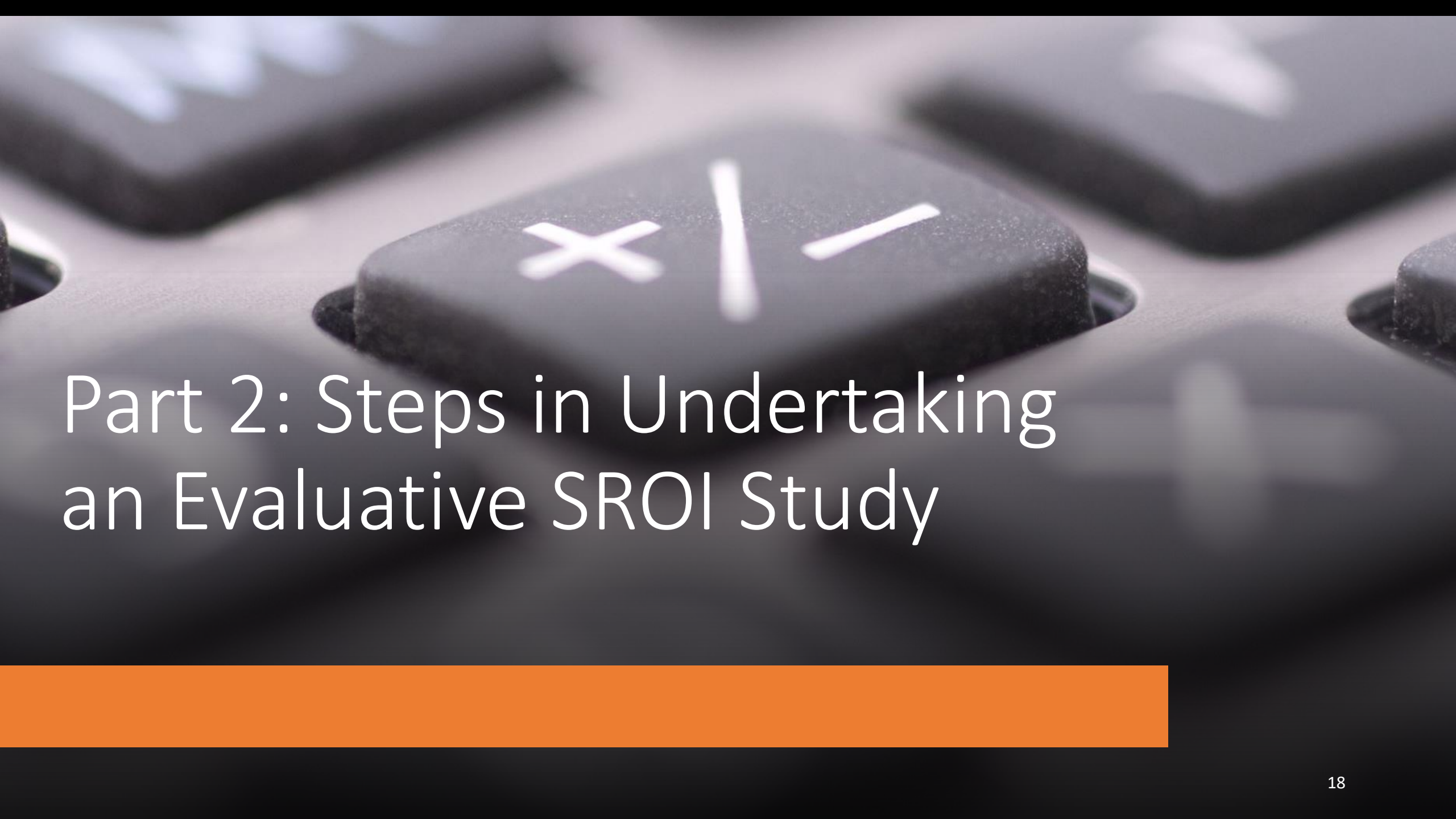
- Claims made about its overall purpose:

1. **A management tool** – Channelling organisational efforts and resources into high impact activities (Nicholls et al., 2009; Vik, 2017). A Practical day-to-day management tool

2. **Prove and Improve** via empirical evidence of effectiveness

3. Results can help investors, be they public or private, identify organisations and sectors that produce **greater impacts** (Somers et al., 2005) – **Maximise Impact**



A close-up, shallow depth-of-field photograph of a computer keyboard. The central focus is on a single black key with a white 'X' symbol. To its right, a portion of a key with a white vertical bar and a horizontal bar is visible. The surrounding keys are blurred, creating a sense of depth. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the keycaps.

Part 2: Steps in Undertaking an Evaluative SROI Study

Step 1 – Identifying Stakeholders

Names of Groups (e.g. Community, statutory and voluntary services, staff, participants, etc.)	What we think changes for them (why they are included)	Total number of people in this group	IF RELEVANT, what biases or differences might exist within each group that should be considered in the research, (e.g. sex, age, length involved, ethnicity, socio- economic background, etc). <i>Write Not Applicable if not relevant.</i>
Service Users:			
Children	Building Friendships	782	From 2- 13 Varied Male and Female
Teens	Confidence, Self-esteem, Positive mental Health	109	From 13- 18 Varied Male and Female. High Level of Sexual identification.
Young Adults	Training Opportunities, Life Skills, Friendships	29	From 18-25 Varied Male and Female
Siblings	Support, Friendship	56	3-14 Varied Male and Female
Parents	Support, Training, Information	689	Varied Race, Socio Economic,
Other Stakeholders:			
Staff	Employment, Job satisfaction	28	8 Male – 20 Female
Volunteers	Personal development, Giving back	70	16 Male - 54 Female

- Stakeholder Involvement Template
- Stakeholders should be involved in the process of determining the most important outcomes
- There will be a trade off between the resources you have available and the level of involvement that is possible across different groups

Step 2: Identifying well defined outcomes (WDO's)

- Well-defined outcomes describe a change in a circumstance, behaviour, capacity, awareness and attitude for a person or a group of people, and once identified, these are the ones that maximise social value (Social Value UK, 2012).

Chain of change

Qualitative Data Collection

- Identify Chains of Change
- Preliminary Outcomes
- Final well defined outcome

Quotations	Chain of Change	Interim Outcome	Outcome
it's all just based on the emotional development and well basically just development in general but mostly emotional development (FG1) because of SOAR, it taught me that whatever you're feeling is okay and obviously if you're like annoyed with something don't show it, but like all the time but just on your emotions I guess is what I'm trying to get at. (FG1) I can do that and like I can control it myself and like if everything gets out of hand I can just take a step back and like, think of like, what I've learned, which is like, good to know and it's just like, cos it's like just what everyone's been saying, it's such a safe space to like, know that, and like it's not all just in my head that people are also seeing that as well, so yeah (FG2)	Development- emotion control	Emotional management Coping?	Emotional management
in other sessions I'd would have stepped outside my comfort zone and then if I do something now outside of SOAR I'd be thinking if I was able to do that in SOAR I can do anything, well not anything, but I can do a lot more things now, you know (FG1) I feel like even like during the six months I'd always be going to a session like nervous but then I'd leave, like, the session with the biggest smile on my face and like the biggest like boost of confidence ever and I was like, like he said eh, you think about it now you're like, 'Ooh, if I said that in school and like do that in SOAR, what's the difference from there to now?' - they helped a lot like with like my confidence in general, like even now (FG1)	Nerves- Step outside comfort zone-support from SOAR- do more things in SOAR and outside SOAR- express more-boost of happiness- do what I like to do- know your worth	Self-confidence	Self-confidence



Step 3: Quantitative Data Collection & Analysis

Questionnaires



Has anything changed for you in the last year due to your involvement with DCU FUSE?

We talked to some participants of DCU FUSE before, and they told us about the changes that they have experienced as being part of the DCU FUSE Programme. We want to find out if you have experienced these changes too.

We would also like to know if these changes happened because of your involvement with the DCU FUSE Programme. We know that other things, for example, involvement in extracurricular activities, other projects or family, could contribute to these changes too.

We also understand that maybe you did not experience any change, and that is fine also.

7. Have you experienced any change in your sense of self-efficacy over the last year?

Self-efficacy means being able to recognise bullying behaviour, know what to do and take responsibility to intervene / take action. *

- ☐ Increased (more)
- ☐ Decreased (less)
- ☐ No change

8. Have you experienced any change in your levels of empathy over the last year?

Empathy means putting myself in somebody else's shoes and getting a sense of what it feels like if they are getting bullied. *

- ☐ Increased (more)
- ☐ Decreased (less)
- ☐ No change

Questionnaires

12. We would like you to think how much the DCU FUSE Programme contributed to these changes, or other activities or projects (for example, extracurricular activities, family) contributed to the changes.

For example:

1) If you think that another project or activity (NOT DCU FUSE) contributed to the change, then tick "It is not down to DCU FUSE".

2) If you think that the change would happen NATURALLY without your involvement in any activity then tick "It would happen anyway."

3) If you think that the change has happened A LITTLE BIT because of DCU FUSE, but also because of other activities or projects then tick "Some of it is down to DCU FUSE".

4) If you think that the change has happened A LOT because of DCU FUSE, but still thinking that other activities or projects contributed to this change, then tick "Most of it is down to DCU FUSE".

5) If you think that the change has happened ONLY because of DCU FUSE and no other activity or project, then tick "All of it is down to DCU FUSE".

If you did not experience any change, tick "Does not apply (No change)" *

	It is not down to DCU FUSE	It would happen anyway	Some of it is down to DCU FUSE	Most of it is down to DCU FUSE	All of it is down to DCU FUSE	Does not apply (No change)
Self-efficacy in relation to bullying behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Empathy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Feeling of safety in relation to bullying behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Self-confidence in relation to bullying behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Respect for others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Questionnaires

13. Look at the changes below and think how important the changes experienced through DCU FUSE are for you. Choose between numbers 1 to 5 to say how important they are for you.

Number 1 means that this change has no importance in your life and number 5 means that it has extreme importance in your life.

If you did not experience any change as a result of your engagement with DCU FUSE, tick "Does not apply (No change)". *

	1 (No importance to me at all)	2 (A little important)	3 (Somewhat important)	4 (Very important)	5 (Extremely important to me)	Does not apply (No change)
Self-efficacy in relation to bullying behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Empathy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Feeling of safety in relation to bullying behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Self-confidence in relation to bullying behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Respect for others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. If there are any other changes you experienced in the last year as a result of your engagement with the DCU FUSE programme that you want to share, please provide details below.

Enter your answer

Causality

	Coding	Frequency	Percent %
I think it would have happened anyway	100%	7	7
Some of it is down to the project	50%	3	1.5
Most of it is down to the project	25%	2	0.5
All of it is down to the project	0%	1	0

Perceived Change

	Frequency	Percent %
Increased	10	52.6
Decreased	2	10.5
No change	4	21.1
No response	3	15.8
Total	19	100

Ranking of Outcomes in order of importance

	Emotion	Belonging	Empathy	Maturity	SS	Confidence
1						
2						
3						
4				1=4		1=4
5		1+5				
6	1=6	1=6	1=6	1=6	2=12	1=6
7	3=21	1=7	4=28	3=21	1=7	1=7
8	3=24	3=24	3=24	2=16	1=8	3=24
9	4=36	3=27	5=45	4=36	6=54	2=18
10	5=50	7=70	3=30	5=50	5=50	8=80
	137/16=8.56	139/16=8.69	133/16=8.31	133/16=8.31	131/15=8.73	139/16=8.69

Ranking in order of importance

Ranking

	Emotion	Belonging	Empathy	Maturity	SS	Confidence
1						
2						
3						
4				1=4		1=4
5		1+5				
6	1=6	1=6	1=6	1=6	2=12	1=6
7	3=21	1=7	4=28	3=21	1=7	1=7
8	3=24	3=24	3=24	2=16	1=8	3=24
9	4=36	3=27	5=45	4=36	6=54	2=18
10	5=50	7=70	3=30	5=50	5=50	8=80
No response	3	3	3	3	4	3
	137/16=8.56	139/16=8.69	133/16=8.31	133/16=8.31	131/15=8.73	139/16=8.69

One person
assigned
confidence a 6

$$6 \times 1 = 6$$

Calculate total value = $6+21+24+36+50 = 137$
Divide by number of people who answered = $1+3+3+4+5 = 16$



Causality

How much of the change is the project responsible for?

Coding was created to standardise a value for each of the statements. The project's responsibility for the outcomes can range between 0 and 100%

Number of people that selected this option

	Coding	Frequency	
I think it would have happened anyway	100%	7	7
Some of it is down to the project	50%	3	1.5
Most of it is down to the project	25%	2	0.5
All of it is down to the project	0%	1	0
Total causality to deduct		13	9
Global causality to deduct		$X = (100 \times 9) / 13$	69.23

$$3 \times 50\% = 1.5$$

Calculate Totals by adding up each column

THESE CALCULATION IS DONE FOR EVERY WELL DEFINED OUTCOME

How to calculate global causality X



Total Value

Number of people in the questionnaire that said the outcome increased for them

Value obtained from the ranking in the questionnaire: "Please indicate on a scale of 1-10 how important each of the following outcomes are for you"

Outcomes	Quantity	Value	Causality	TOTAL VALUE
Emotional management	6	8.56	56.67/43.33	2225.43/100=22.25
Belonging	9	8.69	45.83/54.17	4236.64/100=42.37
Empathy	13	8.31	43.75/56.25	6076.69/100=60.77
Maturity	15	8.31	69.23/30.77	3835.48/100=38.35
Social Support	10	8.73	42.31/57.69	5036.34/100=50.36
Confidence	10	8.69	39.58/60.42	5250.498/100=52.5

First number = not down to the project

Second number = down to the project

Total = 100

Multiply across
(10 x 8.73 x 57.69=5036.337)

Divide answer by 100

Step 4: Anchoring via a Financial Proxy

Developing indicators to
turn WDOs into
monetary values

Financial Proxy

- A financial proxy is a **monetary value** assigned to social outcomes
- Why? These outcomes **lack a direct market price**
- Proxy then effectively translates intangible benefits like improved improved **self confidence** or better **social networks** into a financial cost.
- This allows for the calculation of the total value created by an intervention, enabling a comparison between the social value generated and the investment required

Irish Anchor for our Study

Self Confidence:
€7778

- Based on self-confidence as a common well- defined outcome across the projects, an Irish anchor or financial proxy was developed for the SROI calculations - to turn WDOs into monetary values
- Contextually developed for Ireland
- Based on self-confidence as a common well- defined outcome across the projects
- The Irish Anchor therefore is a symbolic representation of the value of wellbeing in Ireland

Anchoring

- Contextually developed for Ireland by our Team for the first time. Work led by **Dr. Leonor Rodriguez** (UCFRC) and **Tim Goodspeed** (SVUK)
- Method used a technique known as **wellbeing valuation** (Valuation Techniques for Social Cost Benefit Analysis, DWP 2011), using population life satisfaction data.

Self
Confidence:
€7,778

This figure represents the increased amount of income someone would need in a year, in order to get the same increase in their happiness, wellbeing or quality of life that they experienced as a result of **increased confidence**



Calculate the proportion/ ratio

Outcomes	TOTAL VALUE	Anchor	Monetary Value	Monetary Value
Employability Skills	26.29		$(7778 * 26.29) / 6.64 = X$	€30,795.73
Future Outlook	50.31		$(7778 * 50.31) / 6.64 = X$	€58,932.41
Maturity	41.74		$(7778 * 41.74) / 6.64 = X$	€48,893.63
Self-confidence	6.64	7778	6.64×7778	€51,645.92



Step 4: Add to the value map

<https://socialvalueuk.org/resources/sroi-value-map/>

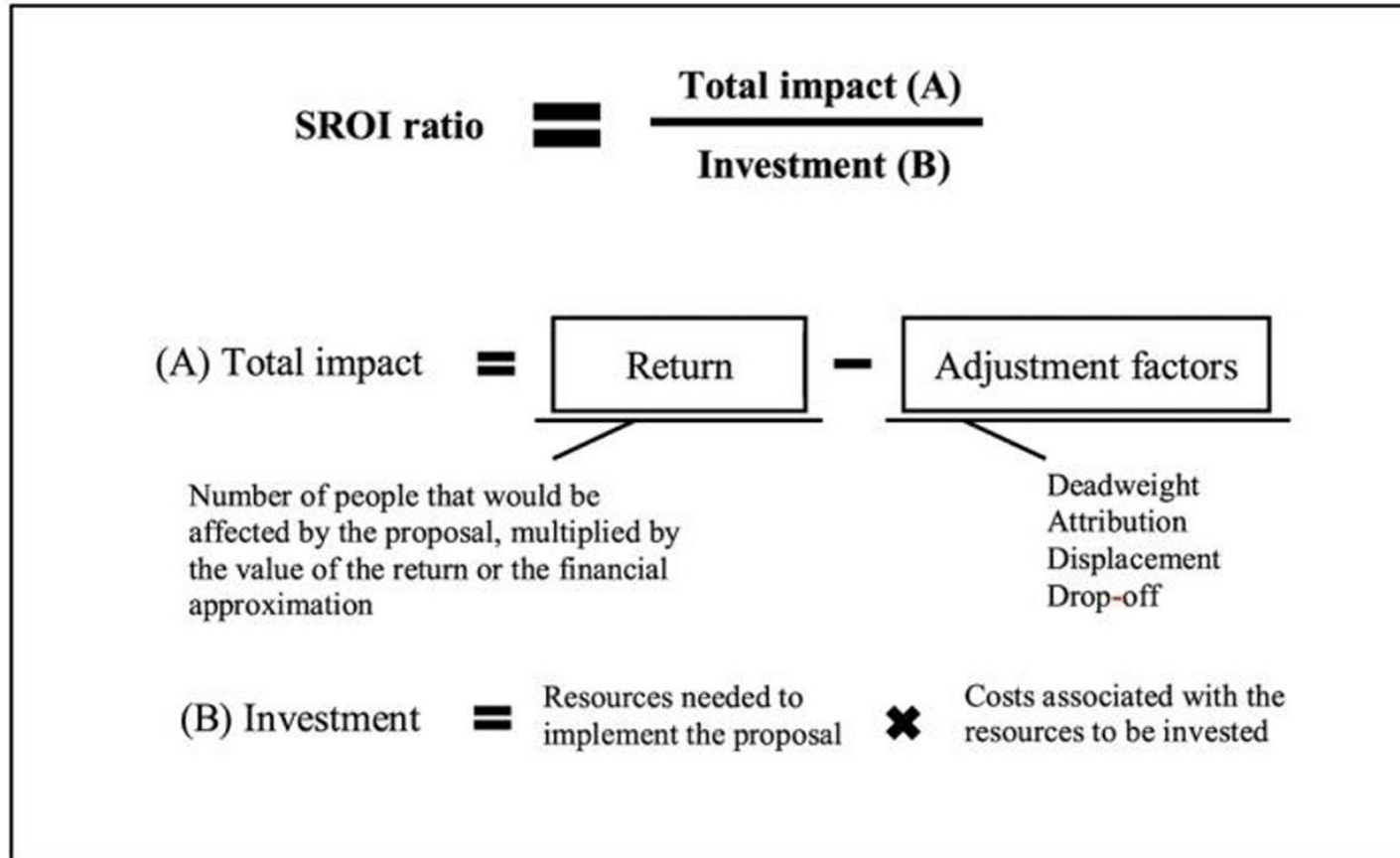


Figure 2: SROI calculation (Merino et al, 2020)

A Summary of the Data Collection Process within SROI



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Table 3.5 – Summary of the implementation process of the SROI study with awardees

STEPS		PROCESS
1	Duration of the activities in the scope	This SROI analysis consists of the evaluation of three years' delivery of the activity from 1st of January 2017 to January 2020.
2	Input/Scope	This SROI focused on both the Rethink Ireland Grant and any other funding received by projects and related activities.
3	Stakeholders	To create baseline data in this phase of the evaluation, qualitative consultations with stakeholders included a wider variety of project beneficiaries including project participants, parents, staff, volunteers, business partners, policymakers, Youth Advisory Board and alumni. However, the SROI in this report is focused exclusively on project participants. ²⁸ A total of 21 focus groups across the three clusters are included in the analysis.
4	Qualitative Data	Qualitative data (focus groups and interviews) was analysed based on the guidelines provided by SROI to identify 'well-defined outcomes'. All 'well-defined outcomes' originate from a 'chain of events' that can be tracked to identify other outcomes that lead to these in a chain of causality. These chains were identified first by one member of the research team. A second member of the team also completed the analysis. Both sets of data were compared and contrasted until a consensus was reached, and the well-defined outcomes were defined, labelled, tested for materiality and subsequently included in the SROI.
5	Quantitative Data	A standardised measure was identified for each well-defined outcome. Participants were then invited to complete an online survey focusing on ranking the well-defined outcomes in order of importance, and provide a self-report of their current levels for each of these outcomes. These outcomes were measured using validated scales ²⁹ .

Part 3: Using SROI in a Study on Alternative Education Provision



Context: Persistent Educational Inequality

- **Educational inequality is a persistent feature** in the Irish education system (Cahill, 2020); students from different socioeconomic backgrounds attain different educational outcomes
- For example:
 - A ratio of **4.9 students from disadvantaged areas to 10 students from affluent areas** attend third-level institutions (this rate varies across institutions) (O'Shea 2020) and **92% on average**, complete their second level education
 - Since the formation of the Irish State, the Government's response to the OECD 'Investment in Education' Report (1965) **was the only period when education was a primary governmental priority** resulting in a major transformation of Irish education (O'Sullivan 2005; Fleming, Harford, and Hyland 2022)
 - Interventions supported by government and designed to address educational inequality in Ireland have focused primarily on reforming **school-goers' experiences and providing resources at the school level**. However, there has been less focus on the **structural inequalities** that have caused diverse student outcomes (Cahill 2020)

Context: Persistent Educational Inequality

- In International terms, while Ireland has a high post-primary *school completion rate*, with 92.3% of students completing the Senior Cycle, **8%** do not complete their formal education?
- **Educational inequality remains a a persistent feature for some, particularly the 8%** (Cahill 2020)
- Government Response from 2005 - the **Delivering of Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) Plan** - tackles the educational inequalities of students attending schools in economically less affluent areas
- Gap still remains...

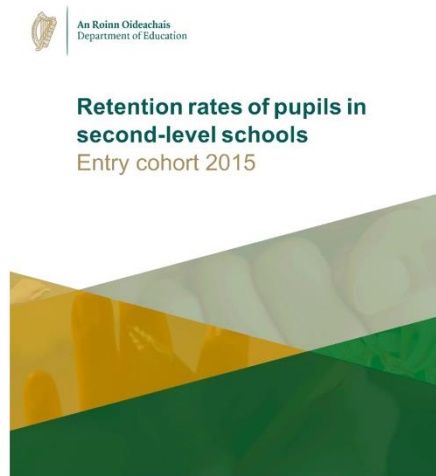
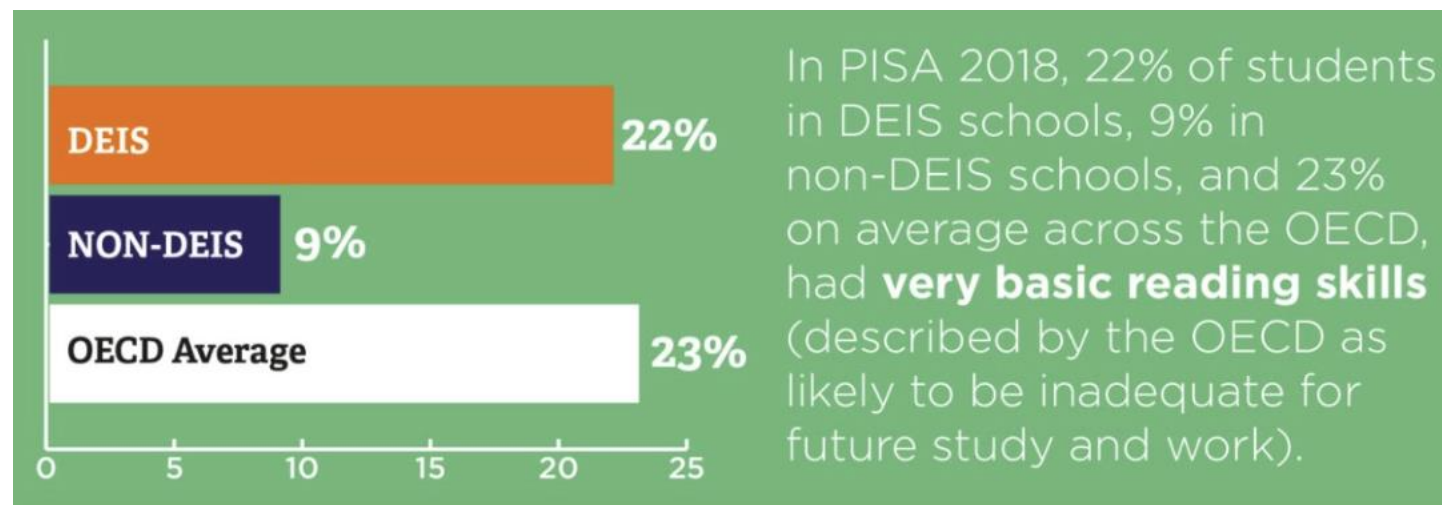


Table 3 Retention rates, by milestones, by DEIS status, 2015 cohort

Milestone	DEIS		Non-DEIS		All Schools	
	Pupils	Retention rate (%)	Pupils	Retention rate (%)	Pupils	Retention rate (%)
Entry cohort	13,097	100	49,151	100	62,248	100
Junior Cycle Year 2	12,972	99.0	48,884	99.5	61,856	99.4
Junior Cycle Year 3	12,825	97.9	48,631	98.9	61,456	98.7
Junior Certificate	12,589	96.1	48,096	97.9	60,685	97.5
Senior Cycle Year 1	12,253	93.6	47,209	96.0	59,462	95.5
Senior Cycle Year 2	11,666	89.1	45,807	93.2	57,473	92.3
Leaving Certificate	11,282	86.1	46,054	93.7	57,336	92.1



‘Falling through the Cracks’ – A Response

Finding innovative solutions to persistent social problems – poor **Educational outcomes** for some as well as **poor youth mental health outcomes**.

Three Funds (2017 and 2022) - the **Education Fund**, the **Youth Funds** and **Children and Youth Funds**

Growth capital and business supports to 39 Awardees.

An Academic evaluation ran in parallel – to **create strong social impact data**

A note on Evaluation?

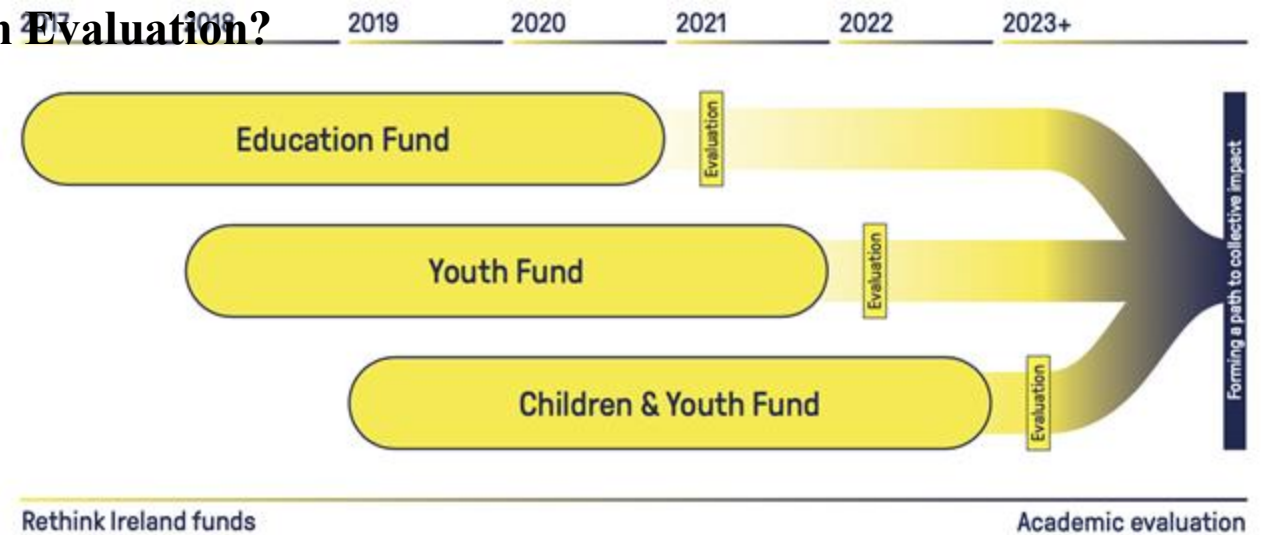
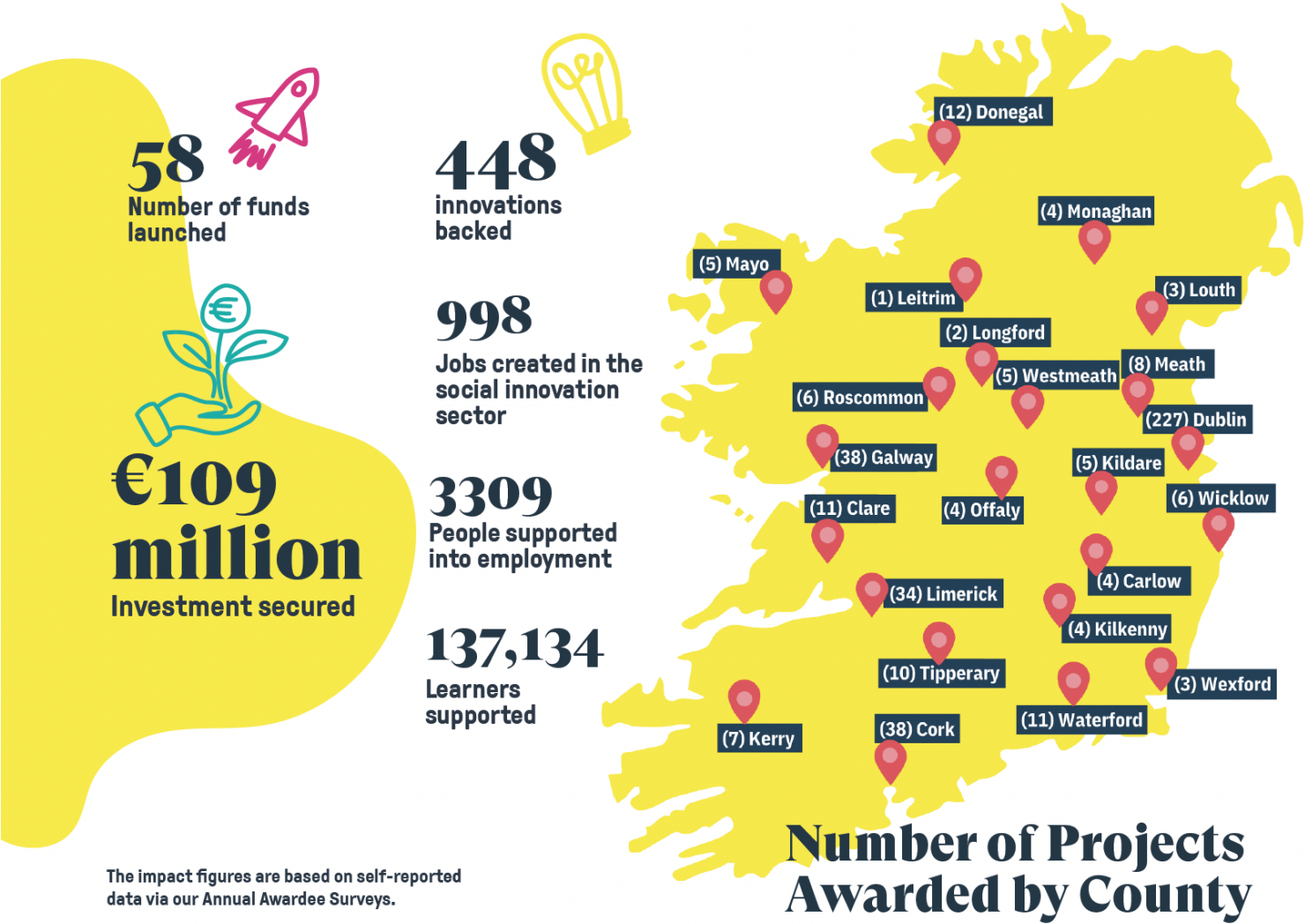


Figure 3.1 – Rethink Ireland Infographic - 2024



Alternative Education in Irish Policy

- Alternative Education has neither been defined nor recognized in Ireland until very recently - **HIDDEN**
- The Dept of Education published its first ever review of Alternative Education in October 2022
- They defined it '**a provision of education, outside of the mainstream school setting, for children who have become disengaged from mainstream education**' (Department of Education, 2022)
- The review focused on services catering for young people aged 15 and under – 23 projects in total
- It found that the AE sector remains vulnerable in terms of funding, sustainability and governance – recommendations on foot of that (Department of Education, 2022)
- The review however did not include all alternative education projects of which there are many, (e.g., projects serving those over 15 years of age)

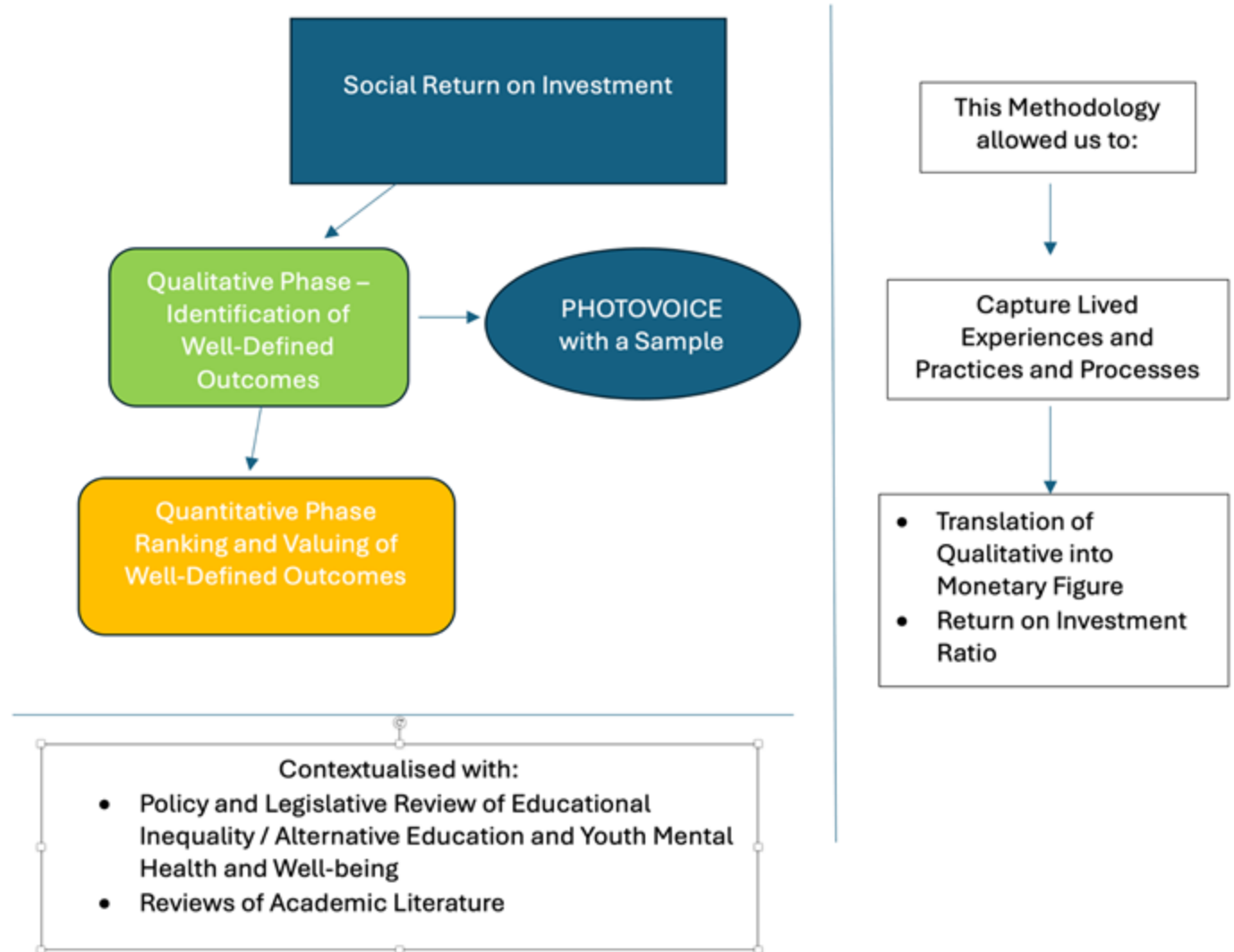


An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Review of Out-of-School Education Provision

Evaluation Methodology

- Underpinned by a **Developmental Approach**
- Opening the **Black Box** of service provision by Awardees
- Framework **co-designed**



Capturing the ‘Enabling Actions’ of Awardee Projects and Participant Outcomes

- **Q1 - HOW DO AWARDEES SUPPORT THEIR PARTICIPANTS?**
 - In each of the three Fund-level evaluation reports, we presented data showing how each Awardee project supported their participants in various ways
- Guided by Te Riele et al’s(2014) model on **ENABLING ACTIONS** – identified **PRACTICES, PROCESSES and ACTIONS** - Table 3.1 from Qualitative Phase of SROI Study - **LIVED EXPERIENCES**
- First time we have this kind of data on this scale in Ireland (*i.e. number of projects, length of study, collation of data into macro level*)

Table 4.1 - A summary of the practices, processes and actions used by Engage in Education to support their participants

Awardee	A Summary of the Practices and Processes Used by Awardees with Participants	Key Actions
Engage in Education	Engage in Education provides holistic support to participants, including financial assistance (covering tuition, laptops, and college-related expenses), emotional and practical guidance, and tailored educational interventions. The programme offers structured pathways through three initiatives: <i>Nurture, Compass, and Engage</i>, supporting students from late primary school to higher education. Key activities include individualized tutoring, summer courses, extracurricular activities, and college visits, which inspire students and make higher education more accessible. Additionally, the programme empowers parents with information on educational pathways, application processes, and financial supports, fostering a collaborative approach to student success. Engage in Education exemplifies how a structured support system can unlock potential, foster resilience, and drive meaningful social change by empowering young people to pursue education and a better future.	Engage in Education employs a comprehensive set of actions to support and empower its participants: 1. Personalised Tutoring and Grinds: - One-on-one academic support is offered to help students improve in challenging subjects, especially in preparation for important exams like the Leaving Certificate. 2. Financial Assistance and Material Support: - The programme covers fees for extra tuition, provides essential equipment such as laptops and tablets, and often organises free transport for college visits. 3. Workshops, Courses, and Informal Learning Activities: - Students participate in summer camps, sports activities, language and business courses, and other enrichment programmes that make learning more engaging and enjoyable. 4. College Visits and Exposure to Higher Education: - Engage in Education arranges visits to further and third-level institutions, helping students visualise campus life and reducing barriers to pursuing higher education. 5. Information, Guidance, and Emotional Support: - Staff work closely with both students and parents to navigate application and admission processes, discuss different pathways (e.g., PLC courses, university routes), and provide ongoing motivation and mentorship. 6. Parental Engagement and Empowerment: - By offering information sessions and resources, Engage in Education supports parents in understanding the educational system, boosting their confidence and involvement in their children’s academic journey.

CAPTURING THE 'ENABLING ACTIONS' OF AWARDEE PROJECTS AND PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

OUTCOMES



Often the case that 'people projects' often develop their outcomes based on a funding call. Become **engrained and repeated** year-on-year regardless of need...

In our SROI Study we found a considerable disparity between '**Management led Project Outcomes**' and outcomes that were '**Most Valued**' by Participants



Some projects had up to an **80% mismatch**. Programme not doing the '**most good**'. Why?

Opportunity now for Projects to examine their delivery in light of the WDO's

More than a corrective Measure or choice

- The scope of Awardee Projects' work shows that they do not serve only as **out-of-school educational provision**:
 - Some projects see the onus of change in students' behaviour (Child at-risk approach);
 - Some projects see the onus of change in structure (Choice approach);
 - Many projects work as corrective and support to mainstream schools (onus of change: education system as such)

Awardee Projects:

- Focusing **on strengths and interests in a holistic way**.
- Paving the way to **success** for young people (Whatever that looks like for them)
- Serving to add to **enrich / complement or indeed fill a gap** within the mainstream education system.

Capturing Participant Outcomes

- Q2 - WHAT OUTCOMES DID PARTICIPANTS ACHIEVE?
- SROI methodology helped identified the **specific outcomes participant had achieved** as a result of being involved in their respective projects.
- When these outcomes were collated across the three Funds - **16 outcomes categories emerged**
- So what? HOW & WHAT - IMPACT



Theme 3 - Mapping Participant Outcomes onto Ireland’s Well-being Framework and Measuring Social Value

- We found that the total social value generated across all three Funds was €145m, with a total cost of €18m over three years. Therefore, the social return on investment is in the range of **around 1:8**. This means that for every Euro of investment, there was **€8 of social value created** for participants.

Table 4.5 – Total investment made, overall social return on Investment and social return on investment ratio for the three Funds combined

	EDUCATION	YOUTH	CHILDREN & YOUTH	TOTAL
Investment	€7,790,285	€7,630,113	€2,758,204	€18,178,602
Social Return	€68,365,589	€59,679,762	€17,234,137	€145,279,487
SROI	€8.8	€7.8	€6.2	€8.0

Mapping Participant Outcomes onto Ireland's Well-being Framework and Measuring Social Value

Q2 HOW DO AWARDEES SUPPORT PARTICIPANT WELL-BEING?

- **Well-being** at the heart of the practices and processes and supported by the data.
- ‘*Understanding Life in Ireland: The Well-Being Framework*’ (2023)
- **GDP only – doesn’t Capture the richness of people’s lived experiences.**

Table 4.4 – Mapping of Well-defined SROI Outcome categories onto selected dimensions of the Well-being Framework

SROI OUTCOME NUMBERS	WELL-DEFINED OUTCOME CATEGORY	SELECTED DIMENSIONS FROM THE WELL-BEING FRAMEWORK
20, 21 15a, 15b	Category 3 – Less Stress Category 5 – Emotional Regulation	Dimension 1: Mental and Physical Health
3a, 3b 11a, 11b, 16a, 16b 1, 23 18 8, 19 12a, 12b	Category 8 – Future Outlook Category 9 – Pride and Achievement Category 10 – Self Confidence Category 12 – Empowerment Category 14 – Maturity and Independence Category 16 – Resilience	Dimension 2: Subjective well-being
17a, 17b 6, 10a, 10b 14	Category 2 – Communication Skills Category 7 – Education and Employment Skills Category 13 – Leadership Skills	Dimension 3: Knowledge, skills and innovation
22, 28 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 24 2, 7a, 7b, 25 13a, 13b, 13c 9	Category 1 – Community Engagement Category 4 – Social Inclusion / Exclusion Category 6 – Empathy Category 11 – Social Skills Category 15 – Improved Family Relationships	Dimension 4: Connection, community participation

Table 4.8 – Total Social Value Generated by Well-defined Outcomes for Dimension 2 – Subjective well-being.

	Dimension 2	Education Fund	Youth Fund	Children and Youth Fund	TOTAL	D2 Total
Self-Confidence	2	€9,709,923	€6,754,678	€4,185,539	€20,650,140	€63,519,304
Maturity and Independence	2	€14,995,365	€4,402,497	€682,810	€20,080,673	
Future Outlook	2	€10,809,015	€400,016	€1,100,551	€12,309,582	
Pride / Achievement	2	€2,202,030	€4,113,494	€1,380,927	€7,696,452	
Resilience	2	€269,815	€1,767,406	€398,875	€2,436,096	
Empowerment	2			€346,361	€346,361	

- We found that €63m of social value was generated for participants because of achieving six particular outcomes.
- The social value achieved for **Dimension 2 Subjective well-being**, represents 44% of the overall total of €145m, making it the largest category of social value from across the three Funds
- Therefore, we know now that these Funds have created the most amount of social value in this Dimension area.

Theme 3 - Mapping Participant Outcomes onto Ireland's Well-being Framework and Measuring Social Value

Participant Outcomes and the SDG's

- The social value created by the three Rethink Funds speaks directly to achieving the UN's primary SDG aspirations.

Table 4.7 – Mapping of Well-defined SROI Outcome categories onto selected dimensions of the Well-being Framework, with Primary and Secondary SDG affiliation

SROI OUTCOME NUMBERS	WELL-DEFINED OUTCOME CATEGORY	SELECTED DIMENSIONS FROM THE WELL-BEING FRAMEWORK	PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SDG AFFILIATION
20, 21 15a, 15b	Category 3 – Less Stress Category 5 – Emotional Regulation	Dimension 1: Mental and Physical Health	  SDG 3 - Good Health and Wellbeing (P) SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities (S)
3a, 3b 11a, 11b, 16a, 16b 1, 23 18 8, 19 12a, 12b	Category 8 – Future Outlook Category 9 – Pride and Achievement Category 10 – Self Confidence Category 12 – Empowerment Category 14 – Maturity and Independence Category 16 – Resilience	Dimension 2: Subjective well-being	   SDGs 1 and 2 - No Poverty; No Hunger (S) SDG 3 - Good Health and Wellbeing (P)
17a, 17b 6, 10a, 10b 13	Category 2 – Communication Skills Category 7 – Education and Employment Skills Category 13 – Leadership Skills	Dimension 3: Knowledge, skills and innovation	  SDG 4 - Quality Education (P) SDG 10 - Reduced Inequality within and among Countries (S)
22, 28 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 24 2, 7a, 7b, 25 13a, 13b, 13c 9	Category 1 – Community Engagement Category 4 – Social Inclusion / Exclusion Category 6 – Empathy Category 11 – Social Skills Category 15 – Improved Family Relationships	Dimension 4: Connection, community participation	   SDG 3 - Good Health and Wellbeing (P) SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities (S) SDG 16 - Peace Justice and Strong Communities (S)

Note: (P) relates to Primary Affiliation and (S) to Secondary Affiliation

Table 4.8 – Total Social Value Generated by Well-defined Outcomes for Dimension 2 – Subjective well-being.

	Dimension 2	Education Fund	Youth Fund	Children and Youth Fund	TOTAL	D2 Total
Self-Confidence	2	€9,709,923	€6,754,678	€4,185,539	€20,650,140	€63,519,304
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Resilience	2	€269,815	€1,767,406	€398,875	€2,436,096	
Empowerment	2			€346,361	€346,361	

So what?

What do these big numbers tell us?

- They are not real money, not a financial return.
- They represent an important missing piece in the numbers we have and use in society: wellbeing. Traditional definitions of success give us numbers for profit and GDP. If we are not careful, students become measured by just their ability to contribute to economic growth.

Not the value of life, the universe and everything



- These figures prove that Rethink, funds and projects create positive impact and value, in terms of wellbeing.
- But they don't capture everything, and the number isn't everything:
 - Compared with financial accounting, it's still a young methodology, and it's not perfect.
 - We tried to be proportionate.
- Therefore, they do not represent any league table by which we can directly compare projects, funds, or compare Rethink with the returns of any other investor.

What next?

- As well as **proving** something (that was missing in our financial figures) the figures are also useful for **improving**:
- They are not any absolute objective truth on their own; but they do provide a useful index for any project or fund on which to build.
- Now the relative value of outcomes is revealed, and which are of the greatest value, there is an opportunity to focus resources on activities that create the most valuable outcomes to increase the value we can get out of each € of investment.

A Model?

- The Compass **articulates multiple levels** – by individual learners, education practitioners, system leaders, policy designers and institutional decision-makers.
- It sets out a **types of competencies** students need to thrive in 2030 - “*the fundamental conditions and core knowledge, skills, attitudes and values...*”
- It acknowledges the importance of **formal, non-formal and informal learning** alongside education that is bounded by formal curricula and instructional strategies.
- well-being as conceptualised by the Learning Compass centres on the **individual’s acquisition of core competencies across their various areas of learning and social ecologies** – **Student Agency & Co-Agency**



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A Model?

- The Learning Compass 2030 suggests that students need core foundations, described as “*the fundamental conditions and core knowledge, skills, attitudes and values...*”. This core knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for 2030 not only focus on formal learning and education but on physical and mental health and social and emotional skills.
- Using language from the Learning Compass 2030, we can now **value the importance of supporting the development of individual agency and co-agency**
- Therefore, we would argue that Awardee Projects have been shown to support the development of **crucial knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in their participants** to achieve individual well-being and ultimately better well-being for society at large.



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A Critique of SROI

1. Investing based on higher SROI Score

- Decisions that aim to ‘pick winners’ (Zappala and Lyons, 2009)
 - Vik (2017) argues that investors need to be cautious when deciding – interventions with higher SROI – may not reflect the truth. Dumped down, one dimensional understanding of an organisation (Gibbon & Dey, 2011)
 - More appropriate to understand the trajectories and typologies of their service users.

2. Quantification & Monetisation

- Mazuryk et al (2015) argue that SROI not just limited in this way – it incorporates trained judgement, qualitative research and quantification – ‘...which collectively contribute to its holistic approach to measuring social impact’



A Critique of SROI

3. Money-Metric language

- Fear of marketisation of stakeholders and non-profits (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004) – Subjects of investment (de St Croix et al (2020)
- Deterioration of ‘distinctive contributions’ that they can make...(Arvidson et al, 2013).

4. SROI as a multi-pronged Approach

- Is a flexible framework that can address many agendas (ibid)
 - Project Management tool
 - Empowerment
 - Accountability





Is it a good idea to use SROI at the fund level?

POSITIVES

P1. Stakeholders' voice is brought to the centre and the SROI ratio expresses the currency of 'social value' for them (Arvidson et al., 2010: 6);

P2. The developmental nature of the SROI - helps projects to develop their practice in line of what participants value most. Variation between ToC Outcomes and WDO's

P3. The figures are good-enough indications of social value, for use in the making of research and policy-informed decisions

P4. Translating most-valued outcomes into monetary language, levels the playing field between the disciplines

P5. Rethink Ireland's support for robust evaluation and SROI (x 3 Funds) - Pathway to collective action – voice for the hidden Alternative Education sector – ongoing Communities of Practice

CHALLENGES

C1. The SROI figures are not absolute:

- Issues around translating changes in people's lives into figures is only a part of their story - The currency of social value needs to be read together with the qualitative evidence;
- The total investment figure includes only the value for participants – could be other value not accounted for

C2. Sustainability for Awardee Projects in continuing to use SROI post evaluation

- Expertise in Evaluation & developing the anchor
- Knowing how to use their individualised data and what it means
- Cost (SVUK, 2021)

C3. Impact of actual SROI data on policy- making process. Additional studies PLUS Longitudinal tracking needed.

C4. Direct comparison of social value figures across the Awardee Projects is inappropriate - differences across the projects in connection to their costs, their participants' needs and size.



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