

What is the Social Investment Agency?

1 July 2017



People at the centre

Social investment is about understanding whether public services are delivering the right results – for New Zealanders and for the country.

Cabinet's definition of social investment

Putting the needs of people who rely on public services at the centre of decisions on planning, programmes and resourcing by:

- setting clear, measurable goals for helping those people
- using information and technology to better understand the needs of people who rely on social services and what services they are currently receiving
- systematically measuring the effectiveness of services, so we know what works well and for whom, and then feeding these learnings back into the decision-making process
- purchasing outcomes rather than specific inputs, and moving funding to the most effective services irrespective of whether they are provided by government or non-government organisations (NGOs).

What is the Social Investment Agency (SIA)?

The SIA is responsible for supporting the social sector to take a social investment approach, providing whole-of-system advice, and testing and trialling new approaches.

We report to the Minister Responsible for Social Investment [Hon Amy Adams](#).

What is social investment?

Social investment is about improving the lives of New Zealanders by applying rigorous and evidence-based investment practices to social services, with agencies and the social sector collectively making better decisions about where to put their investments to get better results for targeted populations.

People are at the centre of a social investment approach. It's about providing the right services, to the right people, at the right time.

It's called *social investment*, not spending, because it's about investing resources upfront to enable people in need to thrive over the longer-term.

How will it help?

A social investment approach will help agencies to better understand the needs of New Zealand's most vulnerable, allowing services to be adjusted accordingly.

Note: some agencies are already using social investment principles in their day-to-day activities.

The SIA supports the social sector to take a collective approach and help create lasting change by:

- Putting the people we assist at the centre of everything we do
- Using data and analytics to invest in what is proven to work.

Who is the social sector?

The social sector includes government agencies, community partners, service providers, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), charities, Crown Agencies, local government, district health boards ... the list continues.

An integral part of New Zealand society, the social sector supports all New Zealanders by investing in their education, health and wellbeing so they can live fulfilling and productive lives. But some people need more support to enhance their quality of life.

The social sector also invests in communities so they can enable people to thrive and help them when they need support.

How will the SIA support agencies?

We're designing and building the architecture to support the social sector to implement a social investment approach, to deliver better outcomes for New Zealanders.

- Building a Data Exchange to enable the safe and secure sharing of data across the social sector (see separate fact sheet).
- Developing robust and consistent methods for analysis and creating shared tools for agencies.
- Supporting agencies to make consistent and greater use of data and analytics.
- Shifting to an integrated social investment system where social investment principles are carried through to routine agency and frontline decision-making and where data analytics, evidence, liability management, return on investment and other aspects of a social investment approach are embedded in every day agency practice.

Vision

Improving the lives of New Zealanders by investing in services we know work and managing the longer-term costs to Government.

Mission

Enabling a collective approach to investing in what works to improve the lives of New Zealanders, creating lasting change.

More information

For more information, please visit www.sia.govt.nz.

Email the SIA at info@sia.govt.nz.