



# INSPIRING IMPACT

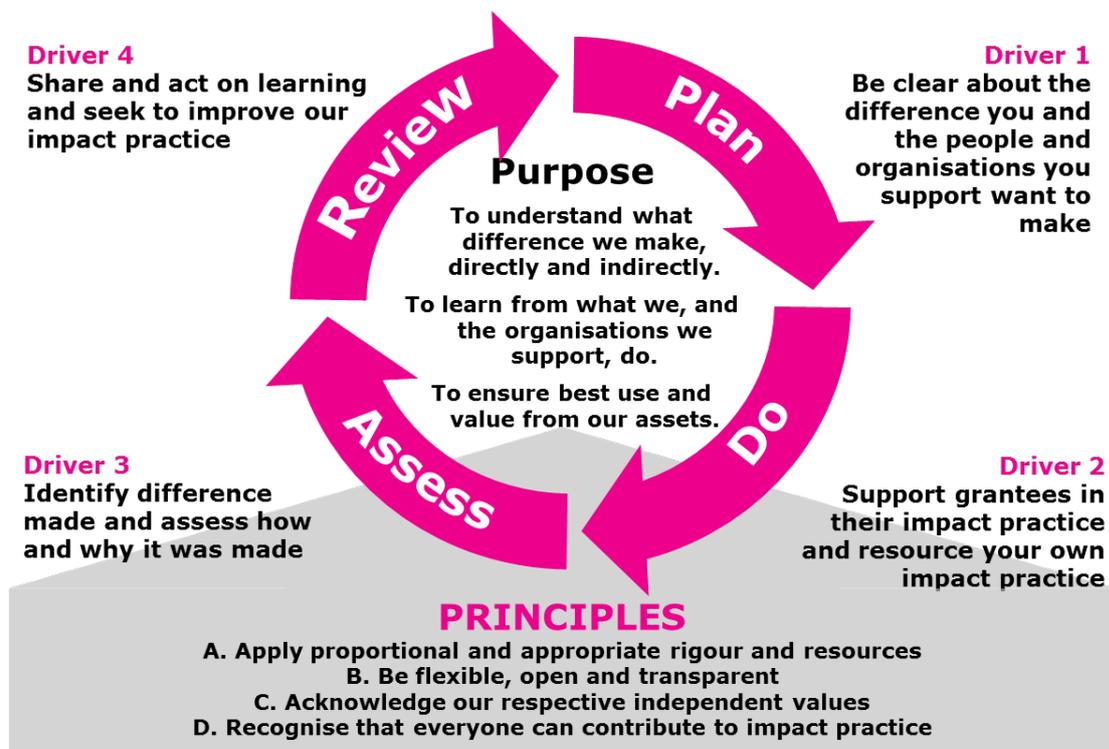
**Inspiring Impact** aims to change the way the UK voluntary sector thinks about impact and make high-quality impact measurement the norm for charities and social enterprises by 2022. Our work with funders aims to help them think about how they measure their own impact, and how they can help their grantees do the same. Visit [inspiringimpact.org](https://inspiringimpact.org) to find out more.

## Funders' principles and drivers of impact practice

Through providing grants—or other forms of investment and support—funders enable individuals, charities and social enterprises to make a difference. Impact practice refers to the activities a funder or grantee does to focus on the difference it makes and is often considered in a cycle of planning, doing, assessing, and reviewing. In a diverse funding community, impact practice takes many forms. The *Funders' principles and drivers of impact practice* aims to provide a starting point for discussions and offer a framework for funders to consider their impact practice, upon which a bespoke approach can be built or developed further.

Funders may want to know about impact for a number of reasons: to understand the difference they make, directly and indirectly; to learn from what they, and those they fund, do; and to ensure they make the most of their resources.

Funders have a critical role to play in shaping behaviour around impact practice. Their approach and support strongly influences practice among their grantees and investees. This framework is designed to encourage good impact practice and to offer practical and useful guidance for funders, and to help funders promote good impact practice amongst the organisations and people they support.



The framework is underpinned by **four key principles** for all involved: apply proportional and appropriate rigour and resources; be flexible, open and transparent; acknowledge our respective independent values; and recognise that everyone can contribute to impact practice. At the heart is the purpose of impact practice. Read more about the four drivers overleaf.

## Drivers of good impact practice

A key driver of activity has been identified within each stage of the impact practice cycle. Below are suggested practical actions for funders in respect of each of the drivers:

### Planning

**Driver 1: Be clear about the difference you, and those you support, want to make.**

- Define and articulate the difference you intend to make.
- Seek to understand the difference the people and organisations you support intend to make, and the contribution your support will make to this.
- Identify the type and level of evidence needed to assess the difference made.
- Communicate intended impact and discuss impact practice with people and organisations you support.
- Explore a range of research methods and impact assessment tools.
- Consult with stakeholders in the development of your approach.
- Seek to identify sources of shared data and the potential for shared measurement.

### Doing

**Driver 2: Support people and organisations in their impact practice, and resource your own impact practice.**

- Think 'impact' and invest resources in making a difference.
- Put in place systematic approaches for gathering relevant evidence for your own work.
- Encourage applicants to cost in an appropriate level of external or self-evaluation in funding proposals, or embed impact assessment in a 'funding plus' support package.
- Work with the people and organisations you support to enable them to gather relevant evidence.
- Engage and collaborate with others, and seek to use shared measurement approaches as appropriate.

### Assessing

**Driver 3: Identify the difference made and assess how and why it was made.**

- Take steps to ensure that the data you gather and evidence you report is robust.
- Seek to assess the contribution that your funding has made to the people and organisations you support.
- Explore what others are doing in the field.

### Reviewing

**Driver 4: Share and act on learning and seek to improve impact practice.**

- Share learning with the people and organisations you support and other delivery stakeholders to help inform their impact practice.
- Seek to identify who else might benefit from the learning.
- Share learning with external stakeholders to help inform policy development where appropriate.
- Use learning from impact evidence to inform your strategy and policy, and to help prioritise your grant-making and support.
- Regularly review your impact practice.
- Seek feedback from people and organisations you support on your impact practice.
- Offer feedback to people and organisations you support on their impact practice.
- Amend your impact practice in light of feedback and learning.

## Read more...

Read the full *Funders' principles and drivers of good impact practice*, and the *Code of good impact practice*, at [inspiringimpact.org](http://inspiringimpact.org)

Produced by ACF for Inspiring Impact, 2013

