



2014 Grant Competition

Evaluation and Evidence Webinar



Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction of Presenters
- Evaluation Requirements
- Grantee Perspective
- Evaluation Selection Criteria
- Q&A

Why the SIF?

“The bottom line is clear: **solutions to America’s challenges** are being developed every day at the **grass roots** – and government shouldn’t be supplanting those efforts, it should be **supporting those efforts**.

“Instead of wasting taxpayer money on programs that are obsolete or ineffective, government should be seeking out **creative, results-oriented** programs ... and helping them **replicate their efforts** across America.”

-President Obama, June 30, 2009



Our Approach

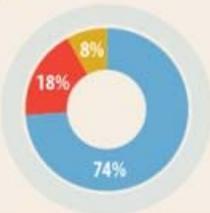


Growing Investment & Impact

SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND EVIDENCE AND EVALUATION OVERVIEW

STEP 1: STARTING WITH EVIDENCE

PROGRAMS ARE SELECTED THROUGH AN OPEN COMPETITION, AND MUST SHOW AT LEAST A PRELIMINARY LEVEL OF EVIDENCE AT ENTRY*



PRELIMINARY
MODERATE
STRONG

*Assessed by SIF Grantees

STEP 2: INVESTING IN RIGOROUS DESIGNS

\$60 MILLION IN EVALUATION INVESTMENT

72 EVALUATION DESIGNS*

47%
QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL



19%
NON-EXPERIMENTAL

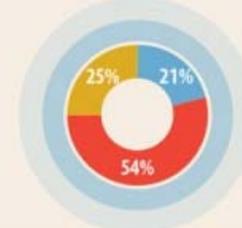
33% EXPERIMENTAL

EXPERTS PROVIDE SUPPORT AND VET DESIGNS

*As of January, 2014.

STEP 3: ENDING WITH STRONGER EVIDENCE

PROGRAMS AIM FOR HIGHER LEVELS OF EVIDENCE BY PARTNERING WITH EXTERNAL EVALUATION TEAMS TO IMPLEMENT DESIGNS



PRELIMINARY
MODERATE
STRONG

THIS APPROACH WILL IDENTIFY INNOVATIVE AND EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS, BUILD HIGH-IMPACT ORGANIZATIONS FOCUSED ON RESULTS AND PRODUCE BEST PRACTICES THAT WILL STRENGTHEN THE ENTIRE SOCIAL SECTOR.

Stages of Development

Start-up

Nascent

Promising

“Proven” as effective

SIF Focus: Promising Interventions

- At least preliminary evidence of results
- Ready for more substantial evaluation
- Poised for expansion to more people or new communities in need of promising innovations.

Role of Evidence & Evaluation

Reliance on valid evidence is a fundamental tenet of the Social Innovation Fund, which employs evidence and evaluation in two primary ways:

1) To select the best intermediaries and subgrantees

- Intermediaries: Previous track records of using evidence to assess effectiveness and drive impact
- Subgrantees: Promising program models with at least “preliminary” evidence of results

2) To grow the body of evidence about which program models actually work

- Both intermediaries and subgrantees commit to increase evidence base through rigorous subgrantee evaluation plans for each program model
- Commitment to achieve “moderate” or “strong”

Evidence Framework

Preliminary

Evidence from studies that is based on a reasonable hypothesis supported by research findings. Examples are outcomes evaluations or studies that measured components of a program's theory of change, and others.

Minimum level of evidence required to receive SIF funding

Moderate

Evidence from studies that can support causal conclusions but have limited generalizability or studies with high external validity but moderate internal validity.

All grantees must reach moderate in 3-5 years.

Strong

Evidence from studies that support causal conclusions and, that in total, include enough of a range of participants and settings to support scaling up to the state, regional, or national level.

For more information and examples of qualifying studies, see pgs. 16-17 in the NOFA.

Evaluation Requirements

1. Select subgrantees with at least preliminary evidence of effectiveness

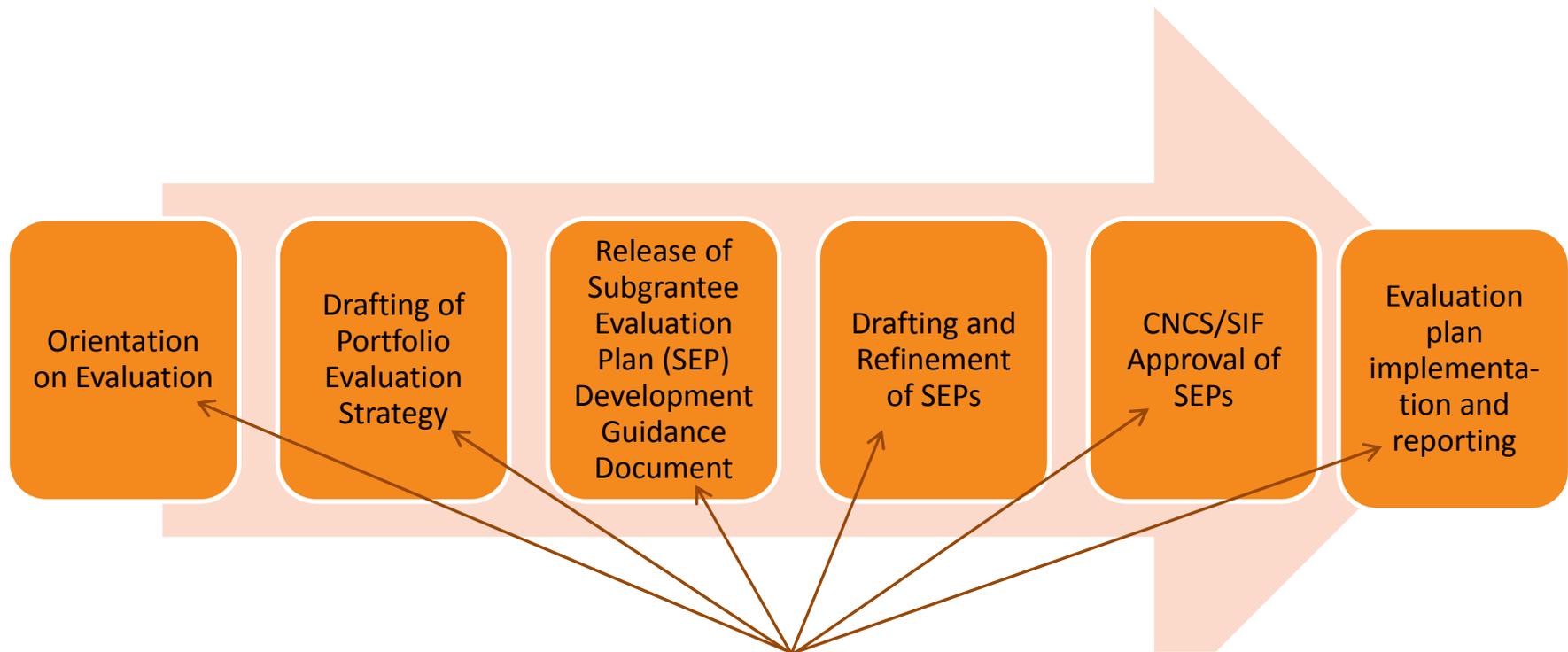
- Assess level of evidence at entry in consultation with CNCS and its evaluation technical assistance provider

2. Execute systematic evaluation to increase evidence base

- Develop an overall *evaluation strategy* for their portfolios
- Work with subgrantees to develop *subgrantee evaluation plans* for each funded program model that will measure and increase its evidence base
- *Implement individual subgrantee evaluation plans* and report progress
- Provide *evaluation capacity building and technical assistance* to their subgrantees
- *Share results* of conducted evaluations by submitting evaluation reports
- *Collaborate with CNCS* throughout the process

3. Grow impact of program models through expansion or replication

Evaluation Program Process



CNCS provides guidance, feedback, technical assistance to grantees, subgrantees and their evaluation partners and monitors their activities over time.

Additional Considerations

Use of Contracted Evaluation Experts: Intermediaries should strongly consider working with evaluation experts and/or require their subgrantees to contract with such experts.

Funding for Evaluation Activities: Intermediaries and their subgrantees are expected to allocate appropriate resources to cover the many activities related to the evaluation of each program model's effectiveness.

CNCS Role: CNCS will provide technical assistance on the design, implementation, and monitoring of their subgrantee evaluation plans. We want you to succeed!

Long Term Success



Long term success of the SIF will mean proving it has contributed to increasing:

- **The number of nonprofits implementing evidence-based programs**
- **The strength of evidence among funded programs**
- **The impact of funded models on program beneficiaries**

Grantee Perspective



Ayo Atterberry

Director of Outcomes, Assessment, and Learning
Venture Philanthropy Partners

Evaluation Selection Criteria

Program Design

- Interventions with at least preliminary evidence that can advance to at least moderate
- Subgrantees with capacity to implement rigorous evaluations
- Approach for ensuring rigorous evaluations

Organizational Capability

- Experience and capacity to adequately support the rigorous evaluation

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

- Budget sufficient for rigorous evaluation and subgrantee support

2014 NOFA: Funding & Key Dates

- Up to \$65.8 million total for all 2014 grantmaking
- Grants between \$1 – 10 million
- 3-5 year project periods; Three years upfront funding likely

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- Notice of intent due **March 24, 2014** (encouraged)
 - Application due **April 22, 2014 by 5 pm eastern**
 - Grant awards: August 2014

Key Documents & Resources

www.nationalservice.gov/SIF

Click on: 2014 Notice of Funding Availability

- NOFA and application instructions
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Quick guides, including **Budgeting for Rigorous Evaluation** and **Subgrantee Evaluation Planning Process**
- Upcoming webinars



Questions

How to Reach Us



Email: innovation@cns.gov

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Updates: Sign up at www.nationalservice.gov/sif