Innovation in Social and Community Services

South Australians need to work together – with partnerships between government, business and community – to address social problems and ensure that community services achieve the best possible results.

In February 2014 the government released *Building a Stronger South Australia: A Modern Public Service.* It outlines a range of initiatives that support the public sector workforce and the broader community to work together – to introduce the community's own ideas and solutions to the challenges we face.

In September 2014 the government released a new economic vision for the state – *South Australia: the place where people and business thrive*. This vision is underpinned by 10 priorities that recognise the importance of innovation and the crucial role that the health and aged care sectors play in the South Australian economy.

Social innovation will be crucial to ensuring South Australia truly is a place where all people thrive. The South Australian Government is keen to deepen its relationships with the community service sector. Through a range of initiatives, the government is working to engage the expertise of people and organisations that work directly with those in the community who are most in need – so that services are designed, financed, and delivered in ways that produce the best possible outcomes – given that available public funding will always be finite.

Modern Public Service Policy:
http://stronger.sa.gov.au/#a-modern-public-service

SA Government's economic priorities:
http://economic.priorities.sa.gov.au

Social impact bonds

Social impact bonds are a way for external investors to finance early intervention programs to address social problems. Successful interventions lead to better outcomes for individuals and the community, and lower costs for government (and taxpayers) down the track. The saving is used to repay investors, with a return linked to the program outcomes.

In December 2013 the South Australian Government released a discussion paper on social impact investment, *Building a Stronger Society,* followed by a series of capacity-building workshops for non-government (NGO) service providers, *Laying the Foundations*.

The discussion paper generated strong interest in the community sector. The government has made a commitment that a social impact bond would not replace current government-funded service delivery. On the other hand, a social impact bond could be used to trial a new service or to extend an existing service that is currently funded by government. It could be applied to reach clients who haven't been receiving services – or to provide services at an earlier stage and address problems before they become bigger problems.

In November 2014, the government released an Expression of Interest, the first stage in a potential procurement process to identify partners and work out the details of a social impact bond trial: the focus area, the intervention program, and how the financial product would operate. Focus areas include health, child protection, recidivism, mental health and homelessness.

More information:
http://yoursay.sa.gov.au/yoursay/social-impact-bonds

The Expression of Interest closed on 20 February 2015. Responses are currently being evaluated.

Pay-by-results contracts

The government is also exploring "pay-by-results" contracts with NGOs as a way to trial a reward payment for organisations that demonstrate excellence. This will be trialled to encourage greater innovation within the community services sector.

A pay-by-results contract means that government payment is based on the outcomes achieved by the program. Outcomes need to be measured clearly and a baseline level of results needs to be established. If actual results are higher or lower than the baseline, this will be reflected in the payment amount.

Like social impact bonds, pay-by-results contracts promote quality service delivery and innovation. These contracts do not involve external investment finance, and they might apply to a broader range of community outcomes. They could also be used to trial interventions in regional areas that are particularly disadvantaged.

The government's recent Expression of Interest on social impact investment also called for proposals for pay-by-results contracts.

More information:
http://yoursay.sa.gov.au/yoursay/social-impact-bonds

The Expression of Interest closed on 20 February 2015. Responses are currently being evaluated.

SCOPE program

The Sustainable Community Organisations through Partnership and Engagement (SCOPE) Program has been designed to assist small NGOs to be better prepared to tender for state government grants and contracts.

This program will identify a number of Aboriginal and multicultural community organisations that have missed out on being funded, and explain tendering processes and assessment criteria to improve their chances to attract funding.

The program provides practical support in tender-writing skills, and also helps organisations understand how their governance and internal systems can help to build sustainability, capacity and quality.

SCOPE:
www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/services/community-development/sustainable-community-organisations

GRANTassist website

A single portal has been established to help people find information about all state government grants and assistance – for business and industry, and now also for communities, clubs and individuals. The community grant extension to the website was launched in September 2014.

GRANTassist:
www.grantassist.sa.gov.au

Unsolicited proposals policy

The government is keen to harness innovative ideas and work together with business and the non-profit sector to develop the state, create jobs and deliver high quality community services.

The government recently published a policy on unsolicited proposals. The policy encourages businesses and NGOs to put forward new ideas, and also sets out the parameters and probity principles for cases where the government might enter exclusive negotiations with a proponent, rather than issuing a public tender.

More information:
http://yoursay.sa.gov.au/yoursay/unsolicited-proposals-to-government

Community Challenges

The Innovation in Ageing Challenge is exploring a new way to allocate grants, coupled with mentoring and support to help applicants develop concepts towards project proposals that align to the needs of both community and government. The challenge is a partnership between the Office for the Ageing and the Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI).

The Innovation in Ageing challenge invited the community to put forward concepts addressing two questions:
- How can we enable Baby Boomers to actively participate socially and economically in the community approaching and during retirement?
- How can we increase connections for older people, especially those who live alone, to minimise the effects of social isolation?

Project ideas were assessed on their sensitivity to the needs and wants of end users, their potential to improve social outcomes and reduce social inequity, their funding sustainability and team capability. Shortlisted teams received development support from TACSI to take their projects from concept to polished pitch. Winning projects will receive seed funding for their project and ongoing mentoring to enable implementation during 2015.

Innovation in Ageing Challenge:
http://ageingchallenge.tacsi.org.au

Winning projects have been announced on the above website.

D3 Digital Challenges

Building on the success of the Unleashed Open Data Competition, the D3 Digital Challenges (discuss – design – deliver) will access untapped knowledge and expertise in the community. Aspiring digital entrepreneurs and experts in the community opportunities can co-design solutions directly with the SA Government.

The approach will bring digital entrepreneurs together with the challenge community to collaborate with government on the issues right from the start, when the problems and solutions are being defined, rather than later where the room to innovate is significantly reduced.

The first D3 Digital Challenge – improving access to parenting information – involves teams participating in workshops and pitching their ideas to panel of experts. The best idea will be awarded $10,000 to develop a pilot and proof of concept, with access to a business mentor.

More information:
http://yoursay.sa.gov.au/d3-challenges

Details of the next digital challenge will be announced shortly.

Participatory budgeting - Fund my Community

Participatory budgeting is a process of democratic deliberation and decision-making, where ordinary citizens decide how to allocate part of a public budget. Participatory budgeting allows citizens to identify, discuss, and prioritise public spending projects, and gives them the power to make real decisions about how money is spent.

The Charitable and Social Welfare Fund – commonly known as Community Benefit SA – receives $4 million per annum from gaming machine taxes (under the *Gaming Machines Act 1992*). This money is distributed to assist charitable or social welfare organisations across the state.

As part of the Better Together initiative, 'Fund my Community' will use $1 million from Community Benefit SA in 2014-15 – to trial participatory budgeting in South Australia, to evaluate whether participatory budgeting is an appropriate way to distribute the funds while meeting community need.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet has worked with not-for-profit community organisations to design the trial.

More information:
http://yoursay.sa.gov.au/fund-my-community

Applications close on 2 April 2015. Community involvement in assessing them will be open from 13 April to 4 May 2015.

Community Benefit SA:
http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/services/grants-for-organisations/community-benefit-sa

Fund my Idea

Fund My Idea offers regional communities grant funding of up to $50,000 (in total) for one or more local community projects as part of Country Cabinet. The community proposes the project ideas and votes for the best proposals on-line.

Fund My Idea has seen a very positive response with over 140 worthy ideas listed on the YourSAy website to date. The unique submission and voting format of this program makes it truly community-focused with citizens having their say to ensure funds are directed to best meet the community's economic and social needs.

The 'Fund My Idea' Country Cabinet Program is part of the $15 million enhanced Regional Development Fund. Projects have already been announced in Adelaide Hills, Mount Barker and Alexandrina, the Riverland, and West Coast regions.

More information:
http://yoursay.sa.gov.au/fundmyidea/

Calls for entries are currently open for ideas in Mid North, Northern Suburbs, Portside, and Southern Suburbs.

Human Services Partnership Forum

In 2009, the South Australian Government signed a *Stronger Together* agreement with key representatives of the heath and community services sector operating in the state. The Human Services Partnership Forum is a key dialogue forum for service delivery organisations, peak representatives and government to advance the sector, discuss issues of mutual concern, and improve the lives of South Australians.

The Partnership Forum has established a number of working groups.

The Not-for-Profit Sector and Government Partnership Working Group has been working on ways to reduce red tape for the sector through greater consistency in how grant funding is administered. This includes clarifying the distinction between 'grants' and 'procurement', the various government policies that apply to these things, and what is excluded. Work will be progressed through the Partnership Forum.

A second Working Group – on Private Sector Collaboration and Social Innovation – has been established to help community sector organisations collaborate more effectively with the private sector. This includes through social impact investment, philanthropic investment, experimental grant making, and ways to measure and evaluate social innovation.

Human Services Partnership Forum:
http://partnershipportal.sa.gov.au/hspf

This document was last updated on 26 March 2015.