

Frequently Asked Questions

Social Innovation Seed Fund
2018-2019

1. What does the Social Innovation Seed Fund Committee look for in an application?

We look closely at the potential social and environmental impact of a project. Applications that address the following are well-positioned to be funded:

- The proposal is based on comprehensive research about an issue.
- It is a pilot project that has a vision for the future.
- The student or team has demonstrated their ability to complete the proposed project and described areas in which they might need help.
- The project proposal has been sufficiently tested and receiving funding at this point will make a meaningful difference for SFU and/or its communities.
- The proposal includes strong Impact Goals and Indicator Measures (more information below).

Successful Social Innovation Seed Fund applicants address challenges with new ways of thinking and support student development of changemaking skills. Social innovation and transformation take time. Your proposal can be one piece of a longer-term process.

2. What is an impact goal?

“Impact goals” are statements that describe the projected long-term outcomes of your initiative, venture, product, program, or process. What do you hope will be different in the world, 5 years from now, if your project is a success? While creating your impact goals, you may find it useful to consider the following guiding questions:

- What will have changed for your target community (or target system) in 5 years?
- How will things look or feel different?
- What will now be ‘normal’ which wasn’t before?

Impact goals can be ambitious, aspirational, and do not need to be immediately measurable.

3. What is a SMART project goal?

SMART Project goals are what you want to achieve within the project scope proposed in this application. Likely this means you are looking at a short (3-9 month) horizon. Your project goals should be SMART, and you should limit these to 2 or 3 goals:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Results-focused
- Time-bound

How will you measure your success?

You should plan ahead to consider how you will measure whether your project is achieving its goals as anticipated. This might mean that you need to begin with collecting some baseline data now, so that you can measure the change due to your project. Here we would like you to articulate how you will measure your progress towards your identified goals. If you find yourself struggling to describe how you will measure your progress, you might need to revisit your goals to make them SMARTer.

4. Can you provide an example of an Impact Goal and corresponding SMART indicator measures?

Example	Impact Goal	SMART Project Goals
	<p>In 5 years, Burnaby will have a complete map of all fruit, seed, and nut-bearing trees and shrubs, and the community will be positively engaged in harvesting and sharing these resources with one another to supplement their store-bought food.</p>	<p>Tracking the following metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal 1 - By December 2019, we will have engaged 15 homeowner in 4 workshops where we discuss how to document their fruit, seed, and nut-bearing trees. Of those homeowners, at least 12 of them register within our database. ● Goal 2 - By April 2020, at least 500 kgs worth of fruit, seeds, and nuts will have been harvested by our network members and logged within our database 20 SFU students sign up to participate in our pilot program.

5. What does the Social Innovation Seed Fund not fund?

- Research or research-related travel expenses;
- Long-term projects (i.e. several years) with an established community presence;
- New projects from established groups with strong access to other funding revenues.

6. Who is reviewing my application?

Your application will be reviewed by an internal committee co-chaired by Embark Sustainability and RADIUS SFU. The committee is comprised of active SFU students, recent alumni, and a faculty/staff member. They meet shortly after each round deadline.

7. I'm a [Change Lab](#) student. What funding is available to me?

If you're a current Change Lab student or recent program alumni, there is a pool of funds that is allocated specifically to the project you develop over the course of the semester. Please be sure to mention this in your application. We encourage you to apply!

8. I recently graduated from SFU. Can I still apply?

You are eligible to apply if you are submitting an application within six months of your convocation date. You are eligible to apply if you are submitting an application and are an Embark Associate Member. To become an Associate Member, please visit www.embarksustainability.org/support.

9. I'm funded!...Now what?

- Disbursement of funds: We will usually disburse funds in two payments: 50% as soon as we get your signed funding offer back, and 50% after you submit your Learning Report and blog post. Please note that Embark may take 3-4 weeks to issue your cheque; when cashflow poses a serious challenge, please let us know and we will do what we can to support you!
- Requested materials: When you choose to accept our funding offer, we'll ask you to send the following to us at your earliest convenience:
 - A photo of your project team (or headshots of project team members);
 - 1-2 sentences describing your project;

- 1-2 sentences about the team running it; and
- Links to any websites or social media connected to your project that you would like us to help promote.

Please note that these materials will be shared publicly through RADIUS and Embark's blogs and online networks — we want to celebrate the work you're doing!

If you have any questions about Seed Fund eligibility or the application process, you can contact the Embark Co-Chair at info@embarksustainability.org.