



# INSPIRING IMPACT

## Inspiring Impact

The Code of Good Impact Practice has been developed through a sector-wide public consultation and the input of a working group of 17 organisations. It was produced by NCVO as part of Inspiring Impact, a programme that 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.

Find out more and read the full Code of Good Impact Practice at [www.inspiringimpact.org](http://www.inspiringimpact.org)

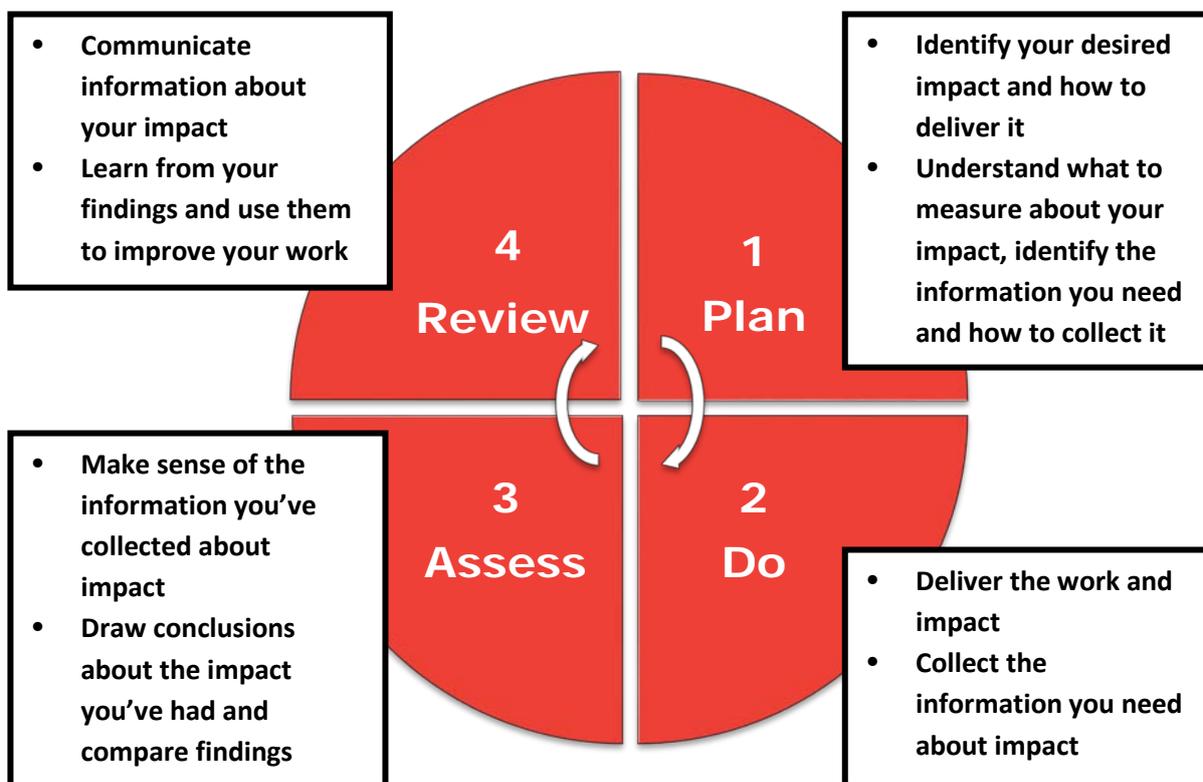
## The Code of Good Impact Practice

Impact is the difference you make. By focusing on your impact, you can make more of a difference through your work. This means planning what impact you want to have and how best to achieve it, collecting information about your impact, assessing what impact you're having, communicating this information and learning from it. We call this cycle of activities impact practice. This includes, but is significantly bigger than, the tasks of measuring, monitoring and evaluating impact.

The **Code of Good Impact Practice** provides broad, agreed guidelines for focusing on impact. It sets out a cycle of impact practice and a series of high level principles to follow. Each principle includes a brief description of how your impact practice would look if you were applying the principle, an explanation of why it is important and some ideas about how to implement it.

## The cycle of impact practice

There are four main areas of activity that make up impact practice:





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### 1 **Take responsibility for impact and encourage others to do so too.**

Impact is embedded in the culture of your organisation. All staff and volunteers see it as their responsibility to create impact through their work, to play their part in showing how their work makes a difference and sharing what they learn from it with others. Leaders of your organisation see delivering impact as their primary responsibility and duty.

### 2 **Focus on purpose.**

You're clear about your purpose as an organisation: the difference that you exist to make. You're able to explain your expected impact in meeting this purpose. You can describe how you will create this impact, plainly and in ways that everyone can understand.

### 3 **Involve others in your impact practice.**

At all stages of impact practice you look for appropriate opportunities to involve others. As a minimum this includes involving those with direct experience of the organisation's activities. It could also include other organisations doing similar work or funders.

### 4 **Apply proportionate and appropriate methods and resources.**

You're realistic in your impact practice—you apply time, effort and methods proportionate and appropriate to the scale and scope of the work. If necessary, you keep things simple and do what you can to focus on impact. You choose methods that fit with the values and ethos of your organisation, and you're clear about the purpose of collecting impact information, who will use it and for what.

### 5 **Consider the full range of the difference you actually make.**

You keep in mind that you might have an impact beyond your intended beneficiaries, a negative as well as a positive impact, or impact that you hadn't planned. You acknowledge that in some cases you have to balance positive impact on your beneficiaries with negative impact on others. You seek to understand if your work is having a longer term or wider impact than anticipated. Equally, you know that changes you see may have occurred without your involvement, be short term, or be the result of the work of others.

### 6 **Be honest and open.**

You're honest and open about the impact you plan to have, and your findings on the difference you have or haven't made, as well as what you have learnt from these findings and how you will act on these lessons. You're also honest and open about the scope of your impact practice. You and your funders discuss what hasn't gone so well and learn from it.

### 7 **Be willing to change and act on what you find.**

You're ready to change as a result of finding out what impact you are or are not having, and to accept you may not be having the impact you intended. You commit to learning from your impact assessment and you actively use it to inform planning and action. Your funders are also willing to learn and change.

### 8 **Actively share your impact plans, methods, findings and learning.**

You communicate your impact plans, methods, findings and learning to ensure others know what you're trying to achieve and to contribute to a wider view of what does or doesn't work. You share appropriate information inside and outside the organisation. You acknowledge the limitations of your findings.