



Vision, mission and 2 year  
strategy

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## Vision

Our vision is for people who are delivering social good to be able to use meaningful accurate valuation to not just estimate but evidence their impact. Where clear, transparent valuation is used to inform decisions on awarding, winning and managing our goods, works, services, and business decisions, and where our publicly funded data and research is available, usable, and used to inform our impact valuations.

## Mission

Our mission over the next 2 years is to build and promote a **credible, progressive valuation framework** for anyone who wants to take a **stakeholder focused approach** to their impact measurement.

### The framework will be:

- **Open and transparent** - freely available to all and transparent in its valuation practice.
- **Pragmatic and practical** - making good quality valuation accessible, useful, and used.
- **Sustainable and progressive** - built in partnership with, and managed by, expert impact practitioners aiming to grow its value.

## MeasureUp Principles

**The MeasureUp principles inform the development of the valuation framework and overall approach.**

1. Value accuracy, not just the size of the numbers.
2. Be openly available to all. Not hidden behind paywalls.
3. Source values from what already exists, with a wide range of contributors, in line with best present standards.
4. Be honest and transparent about where the numbers come from, any limitations, and any updates.
5. Be accessible, aim to make valuation easier to understand.
6. Show the way to better quality measurement, but don't be dogmatic.
7. Procurement is important, but it isn't everything.
8. We recognise social value as wellbeing in line with the UK Treasury Green Book, as well as economic gains.
9. Help everyone move from simply estimating social value towards actual evidence of impact on wellbeing.

## Where are we now? (diagnosis)

### Framework/ practice

Currently MeasureUp is in an MVP (minimum viable product) state. It has an initial set of published values (21 in total) spanning 7 of the 10 UK national dimensions of wellbeing<sup>1</sup>, with 6 additional values in draft format. The spread and usefulness of the current value set is still to be tested. There is also a longlist of areas to explore to include in the framework. There are notable omissions to the set around environmental values, supplier/supply chain, and EDI related values.

Each value has alignment to the Central Government Social Value Model themes, outcomes, and MACs, and the SDGs. Alignment with the upcoming National Procurement Policy Statement themes will be necessary in early 2025, and alignment with the GRI standards is under consideration.

At this point in time, for the founding partners it is useful as an engagement tool with prospects, a starting off point for engaging with and understanding valuation possibilities.

For the small number of organisations using it, it is offering an alternative valuation approach. It is very early stages with this so in both depth of these organisations practice, and breadth across numbers using MeasureUp there is a long way to go. There has been no reporting done including MeasureUp. Yet!

### Our partners, supporters, and resourcing

We have a set of committed founding partners, and a great Advisory Group. The Advisory Group consists of social value and valuation expert practitioners and trainers, key client users of Impact and first adopters of MeasureUp, partner representatives, those aiming to develop valuation practice for a particular geography, and representatives from particular target user groups.

Since public launch, we have a growing community of supporters who are engaging with the MeasureUp media content, as well as signing up to the newsletter and values updates (48 as of 16 October). On October 23, 515 people were signed up to the public launch webinar, with over 300 attending live on the day.

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<sup>1</sup> Currently, the most covered dimensions are What We Do relating to work, and societal, and leisure activities; Where We Live relating to our homes, as well as surrounding neighbourhoods facilities and infrastructure; Health; Environment; and Education and Skills. There are 2 other dimensions with 1 value currently, Relationships, and Personal Wellbeing. The other dimensions are Personal Finances, Economy, and Governance. The aim will be to have at least 1 value under each dimension, but pragmatically there will likely always be more under the most relevant dimensions from a users perspective.

We do not have the endorsement of an independent body, standards setter, Government, or Non-Governmental Organisation that could guide users towards this valuation option. There is a choice to be made on how actively we put efforts into this avenue towards up take.

At this point in time, the resourcing of MeasureUp is predominantly sitting with one of the founding partners (Impact) so there is a question to be addressed on how to maintain a sustainable level of resource in the next 2 years to progress with our mission.

For the Partners we will need to be clear on what benefit each gain from involvement, as well as what areas each can support with. There could also be a question of seeking further partners to support areas where there is a gap, e.g. a funding gap, a methodology or practice gap, or an access to market gap.

## The current landscape

MeasureUp has developed over the last two years in a social value landscape with an increasing number of competitive software providers who ringfenced the creation of and access to sets of values that people and organisations could use to start their social and environmental impact valuation journey.

MeasureUp offered in the face of this a transparent ('lifting the lid on the blackbox of valuation') and free alternative to these options.

Now at the time of launch, there is an increasingly complex landscape with more valuation options being published, increased scrutiny of the values that are being used, more sustainability, ESG, social value and impact reporting requirements being launched, and an increased need for transparency and clarity to support practitioners, sustainability teams, and organisations to navigate and respond to all of this.

Organisations such as the Open Social Value Bank (Denmark)<sup>2</sup>, US Social Value Bank, and the IFVI (international)<sup>3</sup>, are all publishing value factors individually or in sets. There is also a new Impact Valuation Hub launching administered by Social Value International<sup>4</sup>. While this approach should benefit the practice community, it does also allow these values to be incorporated into other 'private' value sets.

There is also an increasing recognition of the importance of wellbeing (increasingly recognised that social value is defined in relation to changes in wellbeing) and its distinctness from economic, or fiscal value. This means there is a need and desire for more wellbeing valuation, and differentiation of wellbeing valuation from other valuation approaches.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://en.opensocialvaluebank.com/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://ifvi.org/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.impactvaluationhub.org/>

Another continuing area of importance for MeasureUp is procurement legislation in the UK. This is still a significant, if not the biggest, driver of social value practice across the country, so for MeasureUp to progress, succeed, and become embedded understanding practically how it can support practice in procurement is going to be imperative.

A question in the face of this increasingly complex landscape is where does MeasureUp fit.

Are we wanting to be a framework that is complementary OR a one stop shop OR ..... - a difficult point to unpick...

It is unlikely that any one framework will fulfil every use case or user need. Through continuing to be clear on what MeasureUp does do, we can aim for being the best option for what is covered by this framework whilst not claiming to service every valuation, measurement, or reporting need.

## The current market

The market itself has also shifted since the start of MeasureUp development. An increasing number of practitioners, sustainability professionals and teams, and organisations are looking for valuation options that are more transparent, more representative of actual change in outcomes or impact, and based on evidence not just estimation.

There are also an increasing number looking for support on where to start.

On the negative side, there is a real risk of social value losing trust and validity in the UK due to the wild west of unclear options being used. There is understandable criticism of unclear valuation, mixed methods without explanation, and misrepresentation or misunderstanding of value creation. An example of this, the recent open letter to the UK LGA expressing damage done by current practice to the VCSE sector, and particularly with the National TOMs systems overuse or misuse in procurement when not the suitable or only option: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C-Emcjsxv8ZIQ\\_0VPa\\_bmRHIMBmuCywgBW5-PWfk4Vkg/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C-Emcjsxv8ZIQ_0VPa_bmRHIMBmuCywgBW5-PWfk4Vkg/edit?usp=sharing)

There is also a limit in available values, with an over representation of value options related to work, as well as lots of coverage of fiscal (Government cost) values (e.g. the GM Unit Cost Database). At the same time areas that our UK data shows affects our wellbeing are underserved, cultural activities, reading, basic skills, relationships and time with family, friends, or loved ones, educational support in key areas like STEM activities, activities we spend our time on such as religious or spiritual time, crafts, arts, gardening, leisure, sport or physical activity, time in nature, safety, transport, equality. These are all less well covered in already available valuation frameworks.

There is also a gap in data as well as valuation in understanding the impact on different communities, geographies, and demographic groups. There is a huge amount of effort

at a corporate level on diversity or EDI activities yet the reflection of this in valuation frameworks is currently minimal.

There are many trying to 'do' the work that are frustrated with these framework limitations that lead to the things included becoming what people do in order to gain recognition for their social value efforts, rather than being able to value the important things they are doing and evidence that, which can then be prioritised and improved creating more value overall.



## Strategy

### What do we want to achieve in 2 years' time?

The key to the success of the Measure Up Framework is creating a virtuous circle that allows us to both improve the quality of the framework and increase its level of adoption.

#### **To create this cycle we will...**

1. Engage with organisations who want to adopt progressive impact practice.
2. Understand how MeasureUp could meet their needs.
3. Use this understanding to increase the breadth and depth of, value of, and level of adoption of, MeasureUp.
4. Align the partner's interests with the above aims to create sustainable investment in continued development.

## Our Policy

#### **Our policy to achieve our strategy is split into two key areas:**

- Developing the framework itself
- And***
- Increasing the accessibility, usefulness, and use of the framework

## The MeasureUp framework

We want the framework to become a credible progressive alternative, for anyone who wants to take **a stakeholder focused approach** to their impact measurement and valuation.

### For this, we need:

- A framework of common social and environmental activities & outcomes
- Well researched values that prioritise stakeholder experience and wellbeing
- Coverage of the key priority areas for government, business, and VCSE purposes
- Graded levels that enable users to take practical steps towards more accurately estimating and evidencing social value

### The framework will:

#### Be principle-led, and human-focused

**Our value set will always align to our principles** and aim to be in line with the Social Value Principles and Green Book guidance.

It will allow multiple valuation lenses, but prioritise impact on stakeholders, wider society, and the environment.

It will be informed by public data and research and empower its users to include the voices of those who experience the impact in its valuation.

MeasureUp takes an active position on equality, equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion. This will be reflected in the valuation framework with the values ultimately incorporating a clear understanding of EDI factors in each value and/or in specific values related to EDI, so that users can support their EDI efforts through value assessment, and so that our commitment to equality is actively promoted.

## Have a broader and deeper range of values

We will expand the range of values available in terms of **breadth** (number of outcomes valued) and **depth** (accuracy of value estimation).

### Breadth

**To expand the breadth we will focus on areas that:**

- are impacting our wellbeing, linked to the 10 dimensions of wellbeing (as defined by the ONS)
- will be priorities in UK procurement
- are the most common social value generating activities businesses carry out under their social value strategies
- are most common social value generating activities from the VCSE sector

### Depth

**To expand the depth we create an increasing set of defined adjustments for each value, based on:**

- the most important factors that significantly affect the value for the activity or outcome in question (based on the most up to date currently publicly available data or research.)
- an active commitment to defining the differences for people based on EDI factors and recognising the disproportionate impact of inequalities on those most affected, starting with the protected characteristics as defined by the Equalities Act.

### Next actions

- Draft out the 'ideal' value set
- Plan how to add breadth and depth in order to reach this

## Be optimised for accessibility

The framework will be freely available and open to all, collaborative and continually developed in a way that is accessible, informs and empowers our users.

By 'accessibility' - we mean that the values are easy to understand, easy to use, and transparent as to how they have been determined.

The framework will be built to accommodate users of varying levels of experience, to be used by people in different roles and with different needs, and working from basic estimation to advanced measurement.

The framework will be designed with specific cross sector use cases in mind, including:

- within procurement processes that prioritise social outcomes and wellbeing
- as part broader, impact lead decision making process
- to champion the embedded social value of VCSE organisation activities

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*“Simple, not simplistic. Transparent but substantial”*

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### Next actions

Identify priority use cases and respective accessibility needs

## Promote good impact practice

**We will always emphasise that the framework is (only) a part of good, holistic impact practice, and ensure that it develops in a way that supports that practice.**

This means maintaining a strong emphasis on the 'levels' of measurement and promoting knowledge and capacity building within organizations, and at the same time being transparent about its process and open about its limits.

To facilitate long term impact management and drive better decision-making in organisations it will emphasise distance travelled and long-term impact over narrow, short term predicted impact.

## The adoption of MeasureUp

**For the framework to be sustainable we need recognition and adoption across public, private, and civil society including:**

- Individual Practitioners or Consultants (as part of their own practice)
- Organisations (as part of their corporate impact management practice)
- Those involved in procurement and contract management processes where impact is a consideration

Critical to this is our ability to **tell the story of why MU is different**, increasing our chances of adoption, and of affecting wider change in valuation practice.

## Make it easy to access and easy to use

The framework will be designed to be adopted and implemented (as well accessible, as stated above.)

This involves offering straightforward routes to adoption for decision-makers, and allowing implementors to 'self-serve' and easily use the framework to meet their needs.

The Beta testing phase made it evident that more support for using MeasureUp would greatly improve the use and uptake of the framework in practice, including:

- Case studies and examples of real-world usage
- More guidance and explanation of how to use each value in different circumstances
- Training or workshops to teach the methods underpinning MeasureUp, and how to use it in practice.
- Practical advice on how to meet the research standards to add values to the framework

## Next actions

- Identify the most effective ways we can achieve ease of access and ease of use
- Partners to integrate MeasureUp into onboarding and support for prospects and new clients, particularly those looking for valuation support.

## Ensure it is meeting user needs

**As well as making Measure Up easy to adopt and use, we also have to ensure it offers real value. This means identifying use cases across the organizations we want to work with.**

We know gaining support from Government (local & central) means it could be used as part of the public procurement process – hence it needs to offer value to procurement and operational officers, as well as higher level procurement and commissioning decision makers.

We also need to understand use cases and benefits to the private sector, and the commercial imperatives that drive them.

Another way to increase its value (and credibility) is to connect to external standards and regulations, so that users can gain efficiency across complex reporting through 'ready made' alignment of key reporting framework and standards.

Importantly, MeasureUp could be a free resource for the VCSE sector to communicate their own embedded social value, and offer a potential route engaging other bodies who recognise MeasureUp in investment in or funding of the social value of the VCSE sector.

### Next actions:

- Define use cases to develop
- List standards we may want to align to

## Build a community

We know that MeasureUp will appeal the most to expert practitioners or consultants who are frustrated with the limitations of current valuation options. **There is an opportunity to build a community of like-minded practitioners working together to drive activity in addition to valuing outcomes.**

To empower this community, we need to engage with and support them as early adopters, increasing the value of MeasureUp to them so that they can use it in their own practice with their own clients.

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*“One genuine advocate is worth ten conscripted users”*

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### Next action:

Identify how we can promote to and empower use by expert practitioners



## Increase its credibility

**We need to increase confidence in the adoption of the framework through development of, or alignment to accreditation.**

A continuing aim for MeasureUp should be to research and establish relationships with appropriate experts, institutions, and bodies.

Gaining recognition of MeasureUp by industry experts and institutions or an endorsement body can accelerate the adoption of MeasureUp. This could be a trade body for a certain sector, a membership body for an area of practice, a standards setting body, or a body with commissioning, funding, or investment power.

The progressive nature of the framework links to the standard of the practice undertaken to evidence the impact and value, not just the size of the value claims themselves – we need to clearly express why this is preferable throughout our communications.

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*“Bigger values do not mean more impact – we need to explain why”*

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### Next actions

Identify the most valuable endorsement or accreditation

## Make it Sustainable

**To succeed, we need to ensure the organisation behind the framework is able to operate sustainably.** Initial development has been funded and resourced by partners, but now that the framework is live, we need a plan that will work in the long term.

This means the ongoing investment has to benefit partners, so partners will continue to invest. Beyond the strategy there needs to be a management and development plan and appropriate resources required to maintain this. These resources required can be secured through partner resourcing or external funding, but always with a view to the longer term.

Increased adoption will also increase our sustainability options - by making MeasureUp a useful and used part of organisation's impact practice it will become a resource that needs to be maintained.

## Summary

### Framework

- Be principle-led, and human-focused
- Have a broader and deeper range of values
- Be optimised for accessibility
- Promote good impact practice

### Adoption

- Make it easy to access and easy to use
- Ensure it is meeting user needs
- Build a community
- Increase its credibility
- Make it Sustainable