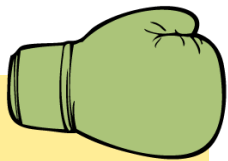




Investing to Grow Social Impact



SEED offers a one-two punch of internal capacity-building with rigorous impact mapping. The first “punch” is aimed at raising collaborative performance and developing long-term sustainability. The second “punch” guides leadership teams to reflect on performance, track results, and quantify social impact.



ONE: SEED’s Approach to Capacity Building

SEED offers “strategic coaching.” In a manner akin to sports teams, those leading community-serving initiatives benefit from coaching to discover and embody their full potential. Without strategic coaching, it is difficult for operational changes to stick, even when there is dissatisfaction with current results and openness to try new things.

A SEED coach elicits the team’s wisdom and continually reinforces its discoveries. **With the mirror of a coach making default behaviors visible, institutional inertia can be transcended.** The coach expands awareness of possibilities, invites exploration of new strategies, and instills practices that assure effective habits of interaction.

Leadership teams thrive with this type of support; they discover latent resources that can be readily tapped; they expand their view of what is possible. With continual reinforcement of new practices, teams can go out on a limb to test new strategies, find their footing in unfamiliar terrain and contribute to deep social change.

SEED undergirds its approach with user-friendly cloud-technologies.

First, internal capacity is assessed across four domains commonly associated with high performance: people, product, process and possibility.

As leadership teams achieve clarity about opportunities most in need of attention, internal capacity points are computed to serve as a baseline.

A Sustainability Plan is provided. **This guides investors to leverage timely technical assistance** precisely where it can add the most value.

Next, SEED elicits big dreams and guides leadership teams to articulate **what success looks like in one, three and five years**. Work plans are crafted to assure that daily work is aligned with long-term vision.

With work plans in place, strategic coaching is offered to **plant practices** that will deepen shared leadership and assure efficient coordinated action.

Typically, two members of each team are trained as SEED coaches. Increasingly, they assume responsibilities for the team's best practices to **become self-motivated and sustained** within the organization.



An outside eye is helpful for leadership teams to discern what they do best and celebrate it!

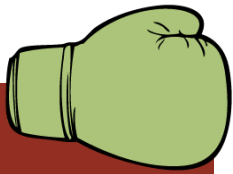
Over a multi-year partnership, organizations are accompanied to intentionally disrupt their usual ways of doing things. We **nurture a deeper bench of leaders**. We sharpen strategic thinking and communication skills. We trigger discovery and instill habits of more efficient collaboration. We plant tools that support imaginative team thinking, intentionality, and accountability.

SEED client partners benefit from complex shifts in their internal operations. They learn how to continually elicit their team's inherent wisdom, and to assure that new discoveries gain traction. Indeed our partners become higher functioning, more focused and able to meet their goals with less effort. (Testimony is provided at the end of this paper.)

Multiple leaders have commented:

"This is the first time we set goals together as a team and actually followed through to meet them."

SEED capacity-building investments typically yield a benefit-cost ratio of 10 to 1. In other words, for every \$10,000 dollars invested in SEED, \$100,000 of social impact is being realized by our partner clients that otherwise would not have occurred.



TWO: Thinking Differently About Impact Measurement and Valuation

To complement this focus on capacity-building, **SEED promotes the use of SEED Results Ladders™** as focusing tools. The ladders are used to clarify priorities for change, graph current and desired results, and track performance over time. **Wide-ranging results can be measured using this standardized approach.**

The underlying logic of the SEED Results Ladders™ reflects a hierarchy of progress that individuals, organizations and communities invariably achieve. As **organizations ramp up their performance** and successfully move more clients, partner organizations, and systems-level solutions up the respective ladders, **this translates to greater social impact.**

Win-Win-Win Benefits

By integrating capacity building with data collection as a one-two punch, we find tremendous interconnectivity.

- **Leadership teams sharpen strategy and deployment of assets.** They have greater likelihood of achieving deeper, wider impacts in the field, and they generate compelling impact data.
- Their constituents benefit from **enhanced services, deeper supports and encouragement.**
- **Investors can track** over time where and how **investment portfolios become more impactful.**

In sum, SEED's one-two approach allows us to both enhance and quantify the qualitative dimensions of what it takes to **create lasting impacts on pressing social problems.**

The combination of rigorous impact tracking with coaching to uplift team performance builds **institutional resiliency and sustainability, and grows social impact.**

We would venture to say that many of the 1.5 million US-based non-profits could apply this little bit of SEED to grow a lot deeper and wider results.

To scale SEED's reach, we are seeking investments to digitize our methodology. Contact Melinda Lackey (mklackey@seedimpact.org) to explore interest in this capacity-building opportunity.

Voices from the Field

Business Outreach Center Network: "SEED coalesced our leaders. It's not just a meeting of managers anymore. It's a real management team meeting. Our outcomes will increase in volume but what's more powerful is that our combined resources are better leveraged. New approaches will have a long-standing life, because we're creating a culture and protocols that will be easily maintained, long after we're gone. This was always our intention but other issues came up."

Good Old Lower East Side, Inc: "SEED got everyone invested by coming together to build a vision as an organization. It was great to consider where we want to see ourselves in five years and ask 'what do we need to do today to achieve short terms goals that will get us there.' Setting realistic objectives tied to a wish list has given us focus. Now there are some new people here. We've made some exceptional hires who can bring a lot to SEED's 'expect, like, love-to-see' planning process. Also, building more shared leadership will be important, so our ED is not carrying so much of the weight."

Hour Children: "SEED helped us put everything on a piece of paper, in our own words about what we are doing, how we are doing it, and where we want to go from here. It is incredible to be able to see what we have accomplished. This process forces us to think about things from very different perspectives. It makes us see things a different way. There are possibilities we couldn't see before. It increased my confidence level, being involved in this process, and that helps me deliver better services."

Riis Academy: "It is extremely valuable to be able to see where we are today, in comparison to where we were, and assess growth. It is powerful to know what is making progress... This has made all the difference for our team working together. When we say SEED, we think of the three leadership councils. These became our vision, and we're actively working to make them a reality."

Safety Net Project – Urban Justice Center: "Coming together as a team to define a long-term vision and create a work plan to expand the community of supports (and funding), were first steps towards getting dug out from under a lot of difficult challenges. We also held a very successful event that expanded our community of supporters and gave us confidence that we can produce (and even enjoy) hosting events. The self-assessment process forces the conversation, shared reflection, recognition of what we've achieved and what we need to do next. This is very efficient and productive. SEED has been a significant example for us of seeking strategic input, including from each other. Absent this process we would not take the time to do this in a way that is productive. We would appreciate if NYWF would allow us to repeat this diagnostic process on an annual basis."

Violence Intervention Program: “When we are with SEED, everyone has a voice; they can express what their goals are, and we have an open dialogue... Building a team to implement our client data base was significant. We now work towards consensus and have healthy debates. We start and end our meetings on time and accomplish our goals. We are much better at communicating and moving things, operating in a collaborative way as a team. SEED helped us to create the capacity to do that. We can continue to make improvement, to the point that we may not need SEED... We will not know the full impact until later, but in a very short time we’ve moved from being in a difficult position to being seen as a strong player in this field—each and every one of us has acted in a powerful way, and it’s all coordinated. People are saying, ‘VIP is doing good.’ That’s important.”

Young Women of Color Health Advocacy Coalition: “SEED provides an atmosphere for reflection and supports us to explore growth opportunities and new directions. It is meaningful to validate our successes and name them. We have great ideas, but with SEED we’re not just talking; SEED has helped us draw out and embrace the possibilities from our dialogue. This has helped us really regroup, restructure and reframe the work. We now have a broad community of girls, parents, friends, supporters and partner orgs who carry this vision. By next year we want to have a broad community who carry the work to realize it. SEED offered us a structure and methodology to develop ideas and bring our goals to life.”