

Ref code	Organisation Name
	Social Finance
Background to organisation	
<p data-bbox="220 353 1374 427">*Full proposal in separate document titled “CONFIDENTIAL – Systems Change Proposal – Social Finance 070624“</p> <p data-bbox="204 472 1374 779">Social Finance are a not-for-profit organisation that works with partners to design, fund, and scale solutions to complex social problems. We have a broad set of skills – including community voice, innovative finance, systemic and strategic thinking, data and digital, and partnership building – which we bring together to create impact, such as transforming responses to perpetrators of domestic abuse and innovating new models of care for older people with complex needs. In recent years, the organisation has increased its focus and expertise on children and young people – particularly children and young people that are “invisible” to the system.</p> <p data-bbox="204 824 1366 898">As Social Finance is not a registered charity (though it is a not-for-profit organisation) we do not have a charity number. We have 129 paid employees and two volunteers.</p>	
Governance	
<p data-bbox="204 1021 1374 1171">Social Finance has 12 Board Members, including Social Finance’s CEO Adam Swersky, who meet on a quarterly basis. Across our board members, we have a broad set of skills and expertise including: systems change, organisational development, corporate finance, innovative finance, influencing public policy and human resources.</p> <p data-bbox="204 1216 1350 1406">Standing items for Board discussion include: equity, diversity and inclusion, risk and compliance, a business activity report (including a people update), and an updated financial projection against budget. Each Board meeting includes a focus on an impact area – this is an opportunity to showcase to the Board the work across the organisation that is actively delivering against our mission of lasting and widespread change.</p> <p data-bbox="204 1451 1358 1675">The Board also reviews any IT security, data protection, and regulatory developments, issues, or requirements. The Board has three sub-committees: Audit and Risk; Remuneration; and Nominations. The Principal Risk Framework and cross organisational issues register are reviewed at Board level by the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC). The ARC conducts deep dives into specific risks on a regular basis. Risks are escalated to the full Board as needed.</p>	
Aims and Activities	
<p data-bbox="204 1805 1382 1989">Social Finance’s core mission is to deliver lasting and widespread change that improves the lives of people and communities in the UK and globally. We do this by helping our partners in impact design, fund and scale solutions to complex and enduring social issues. The partners we work with include: local and national governments, commissioners, service providers such as charities, socially-motivated investors, funders and philanthropic</p>	

organisations. Importantly, we also partner with the people and communities who know what's not working and what needs to change.

Our activities vary on a spectrum from consultancy type projects where we bring our expertise to a particular issue area, to long-term sector partnerships designed to bring about systemic change. These range across our internal teams, which are as follows:

- **Data & Digital Labs**, who harness the power of data and digital for people and communities.
- **Government & Enterprise**, who resolve complex social problems through innovative partnerships.
- **Health & Social Care**, who unite operational, clinical and financial expertise to deliver new models of care.
- **Health & Work**, who create equal opportunities to fulfilling employment.
- **International**, who focus on social impact bonds to deliver international development programmes.
- **Impact Incubator**, who create new opportunities with philanthropy for lasting social change. **It is within the Impact Incubator team where this programme of work sits, with support from our Data & Digital Labs team.**

This programme of work is a core part of our newly established [Early Inclusive Collective](#), led by our Impact Incubator team, which is building a movement that partners with system stakeholders, families, and children and young people themselves to demonstrate how shifting from risk-based approaches to inclusive safety-based environments improves the lives of all children. Our work with Young Carers will sit within our Early Inclusion Collective – contributing to and benefitting from our broader work with children and young people (**more detail on the EIC can be found in the full proposal**).

Given that our work primarily sits at the systemic level rather than through service delivery, we are unable to keep records on our number of beneficiaries.

Finances

Social Finance's financial calendar year operates from September to September. For 22/23, our income and expenditure are as follows. Further information can be seen within our signed accounts.

- **Income:** £11,271,277
- **Expenditure:** £11,246,540

Social Finance receives funding from a broad set of sources, including through multi-year grants and earned income. Notable funders include:

- Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- Fidelity UK Foundation
- Garfield Weston Foundation

- Porticus Foundation
- NHS England
- Macmillan Cancer Support

As of January 2024, our current financial year's forecasted income is £12,434,743 and forecasted expenditure is £12,431,947. For FY 25, we expect similar increases in income and expenditure.

Current situation and need

Through our broader work on issues affecting young people, we have identified a clear need to shift systems to be more supportive of young people with caring responsibilities – and to broaden the system's (schools, providers, local authorities, central government and broader society's) understanding of how to support young people with caring responsibilities in order to ensure responses are tailored and contextualised. For example, in both our work with young people at risk of exclusion and young people at risk of criminal exploitation we identified a trend of practitioners not providing support to young people in relation to their caring responsibilities. This reinforced the invisibility of the prevalence of caring responsibilities for young people and encouraged us to look at the space with a view to understanding the role we could play in facilitating systemic change for Young Carers.

Over the past six months, we have developed our understanding of both the outcome-level issues that young people with caring responsibilities face and, digging deeper, the systemic issues that facilitate these poor outcomes. Some of the key systemic issues we've identified so far include:

- **Political invisibility** - Issues affecting Young Carers often fail to penetrate the public consciousnesses. When the topic makes the news, it is usually as an aside to broader social care. This is despite Young Carers providing £12,000 worth of unpaid care on average each year¹. There is a significant attention gap with respect to the issue in comparison to other discrete groups of young people facing poor outcomes. This requires substantial co-ordination within the Young Carer sector to tackle.
- **Poor identification and data capture** - Most Young Carers are unidentified and invisible within existing datasets. In the recent school census, 79% of schools identified no YCs² which reflects both inadequate identification, and importantly, significant issues in relation to how data is captured and shared across stakeholders working with Young Carers. Additionally, Young Carers are often unaware of their rights or do not identify as carers – many times intentionally as they fear involvement of children's services. This is particularly the case for those from minoritised

¹ Action for Children, 2020.

² School Census 2022/2023.

backgrounds³. There is a need for a new, more co-ordinated and child-led approach to ethical data capture and sharing for Young Carers.

- **Unsupported transitions and weak legislative protections** - The Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014 brought Young Carers numerous rights including a transition assessment. However, the Children's Society reported that only 13% of Young Adult Carers had received a transition assessment⁴. Young Carers face significant challenges in relation to balancing education, employment and caring responsibilities during this transition period and the existing rights are limited in their specificity and power in relation to supporting Young Carers.

Underlying these systemic issues is the disjointed nature of the system's response. Having engaged with organisations working directly or indirectly on issues that Young Carers and Young Adult Carers face, there is a need and strong desire for a more focussed, long-term and collaborative approach to systems change. Our programme of work responds directly to this need.

Purpose of the funding

Our work with Young Carers sits within our Early Inclusion Collective – contributing to and benefitting from our broader work with children and young people. Young Carers are largely invisible – in practice, in data, and in policy. Our focus on this programme of work is to deliver system change for Young Carers by improving data quality and identification, exploring the overlap of caring responsibilities with other forms of vulnerability, such as exploitation and exclusion, and through supporting the strategic development of the sector as a whole.

Throughout this work, Social Finance will be the systems lead. We will take on numerous roles but act primarily as the intermediary – convening partners, producing high-quality outputs, and influencing system leaders so that practice and learnings inform change at a national level. We will bring our expertise in data, systems change, innovative finance etc. and use these with flexibility to drive progress.

Workstream 1: Data, Ethics and Identification

Identification of Young Carers is one of the most acute issues facing the sector. Most Young Carers are unidentified and invisible within existing datasets. In the recent school census, 79% of schools identified no YCs⁵ which reflects both inadequate identification and significant issues in relation to how data is captured and shared across stakeholders working with Young Carers.

³ James, E. et al. 2019.

⁴ Children's Society, 2019

⁵ School Census 2022/2023.

It is vital that the sector works towards improving identification – but equally vital that this is done in a way that a) is ethical and upholds the value of consent and b) reflects the infrastructure challenges that organisations face in collecting and sharing data. We are in the process of producing a discussion paper that looks at the ethics and processes around improved identification. Interviews are taking place with:

- Academics focussed on children’s wellbeing and data
- Professionals working within local authorities across children’s service and early help
- Professionals working within health systems engaging with parents with caring needs
- Professionals within Young Carer focussed organisations

This work will result in the publication of a discussion paper in late summer / early autumn, which will include recommendations on how to better collect and share data on Young Carers and their families in an ethical and trust-based manner. Following this, **we will convene a roundtable of statutory stakeholders** (health, local authorities and central government) and **identify opportunities to test improvement of practice within local areas, with learnings and successes being shared at a national level.**

Workstream 2: Caring Responsibilities, Exploitation and Exclusions

One of the common overlaps in vulnerability that has rarely been explored within the children and young people’s sector is the proportion of young people at-risk of exclusion and/or exploitation that have significant, unidentified and unsupported caring responsibilities. Anecdotal evidence has strengthened this hypothesis – e.g. PRUs highlighting that a vast majority of their young people have caring responsibilities (despite this, the school census identified only a tiny number of young carers in PRUs) and, through interviews conducted via workstream one, evidence suggesting that a significant proportion of young people with caring responsibilities were, or had been, defined as a “Child in Need”.

Via the EIC, we are developing a workstream with MYTIME Young Carers, Catch-22, and Football Beyond Borders to explore these overlaps. MYTIME bring sector-leading knowledge on Young Carers, particularly their experiences within schools; Catch-22 bring a particularly deep understanding of exploitation and how vulnerabilities increase the risk of it; and Football Beyond Borders bring their unique model that works within schools to prevent school exclusions and boost attendance.

Key initial outputs of this workstream will be delivering workshops with these partners and developing and publishing briefings on good practice. Social Finance is acting as an intermediary to convene and develop outputs to inform practice across the nation. **A long-term ambition of this programme is to co-design new, collaborative pilots that can be tested in order to better explore how these vulnerabilities interact and can be tackled holistically.** This workstream will also input heavily into the EIC’s “system level outcomes”.

Workstream 3A: Systems Alignment and Sector Strengthening –Alignment and Prioritisation

Our experience with delivering systems change programme highlights that there are multiple drivers needed – two of these are: a) a clear set of sector priorities, b) genuine AND agile collaboration with key stakeholders in the sector.

Since beginning our work in the sector, we have developed relationships with the key large charities (Carers Trust, Children’s Society) and practice experts such as MYTIME Young Carers. In May 2024 we delivered a workshop with these three organisations to identify the key systemic barriers for Young Carers, and how we can translate these into system priorities. This was a highly productive meeting – and we are now working together to finesse these priorities and engage and consult the broader sector on these.

This stream of work will be agile and highly collaborative. Given that this workstream is focussed on sector alignment and strengthening, there are multiple paths this work can take and multiple “outputs” that can be produced. **The initial expected output is the publication of a collaborative “system priorities” paper, which will feed into the development of the National Young Carers Strategy.**

Social Finance’s role within this will be diverse. We will deliver and put together the necessary workshops and outputs to deliver progress – however, we will also take on the “systems convening role”. This means providing a systems lens on how to make change happen, and acting as the intermediary or bridge between large and small organisations to balance and manage power dynamics.

Workstream 3B: Systems Alignment and Sector Strengthening – Back-bone development (non-funded)

An additional driver of delivering systems change, particularly important within the “Collective Impact” model, is the idea of a “backbone” organisation. As part of our partnership with MYTIME Young Carers, the largest charity in the country focussed only on Young Carers and the sector leader with regards to practice, we are committed to exploring the possibility of them becoming a “backbone” organisation within the sector and identifying opportunities to scale their impact and practice. **However, programme costs in relation to this work would not be paid for by Triangle Trust** as we are exploring alternative and separate funding streams for this. We have significant experience in supporting the development of “backbone” organisations that are pivotal in facilitating collective impact on an issue area – such as [Black Thrive](#).

Expertise and non-financial Triangle Trust contributions (inc. to the EIC)

Triangle Trust have historically been the most significant funders in the Young Carers and therefore hold a huge amount of historical knowledge of both funding within the sector and an overview of cross-sector efforts for change. We are therefore keen for the foundation to be actively involved with the programme, including through regular “check-and-challenges” to test the direction of the work and supporting our engagement with

key sector stakeholders. In the long term, we expect that the Triangle Trust's investment will validate the credibility and ambition of the programme and therefore catalyse additional investment from new sources. We are keen to utilise our own networks to bring new funders to the sector and are separately engaging with other funders in relation to long-term funding for a sector wide partnership around system change.

As a funder of this programme, the foundation would also be contributing to the vision, progress, learning and outputs of the Early Inclusion Collective – which is focussed on making systems more inclusive for “invisible children”, a category that Young Carers often fall into. We'd be keen both now and throughout a partnership to explore the long-term interest of the foundation in relation to the Collective as a whole.

Outcome of the funding

This work, long-term, will contribute to broader systemic change for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers. We see our broader work and impact being delivered over a 2-5 year timeline. However, some of the outcomes which the Triangle Trust will have contributed to over the next six months include:

- **Improved practice for identification of, and ethical use of data in relation to, Young Carers** – Through Workstream 1, we will have developed a pathway for statutory and non-statutory organisations to improve how they collect and share data in such a way that supports ethical identification of Young Carers. Long-term this will substantially improve identification of Young Carers and understanding of their experiences.
- **Improved practice regarding the overlap of caring responsibilities with vulnerabilities** - Workstream 2 will deliver accessible and actionable insights with respect to supporting young carers who are at risk of exclusion and/or exploitation. Long-term, particularly via the EIC, this will bring substantial changes to how caring responsibilities are understood and supported in the context of school exclusion and exploitation.
- **Improved systemic thinking and working within the Young Carer sector:** Through Workstream 3A in particular we will deliver more focussed and co-ordinated efforts in tackling systemic barriers for Young Carers. This is a key outcome – and one that we expect to deliver quickly, dovetailing into plans regarding a National Young Carer strategy. Long-term, this will contribute substantially to the success of the Young Carer sector as a whole and the outcomes of Young Carers nationally.
- **Catalysis of long-term funding into the Young Carer sector** - The Triangle Trust's investment in the programme will validate our credibility and ambition, allowing us to catalyse additional investment into the sector as a whole from new sources. We are particularly interested in funders who have not previously significantly invested in the Young Carer space, and so Triangle Trust's investment will particularly catalyse new funding into the sector.

Request and budget

We are looking for a £50,000 contribution from the Triangle Trust to support Social Finance staff costs, development costs and publication costs across each of the three workstreams over a six-month period. This will be split as follows:

- **Workstream 1: Data, Ethics and Identification** - £20,000.
- **Workstream 2: Caring Responsibilities, Exploitation and Exclusions** - £20,000
- **Workstream 3A: Systems Alignment and Sector Strengthening – Alignment and Prioritisation** - £10,000.

Social Finance will also contribute to staff costs, utilising core funding in order to ensure we have a strong and comprehensive core project team dedicated to the delivery of the aforementioned outputs. **We will also contribute wider Social Finance staff time, expertise and resources** to ensure we are utilising the full strength of the organisation.