

THE MELTING POT

Impact Report
October 2026

THE MELTING POT Consultancy

Scotland's Centre for Social Innovation

About us

THE MELTING POT



The Melting Pot is Scotland's Centre for Social Innovation. An Inspiring community of people striving to make the world a better place.

We work across three business strands to support and stimulate social innovation in Scotland:

Consultancy

Our consultancy services utilise co-design principles to deliver solutions for people and place. With over 18 years of proven experience, we deliver practical, results-driven solutions that address key business challenges while fostering meaningful and sustainable change.

Coworking

Our central Edinburgh collaborative hub offers a warm and inviting workspace away from home, whilst our meeting rooms provide a convenient venue for upcoming events. Here you can find our friendly, engaged community of individuals and organisations doing good for people and the planet.

Good Ideas Incubator

A champion of Good Ideas. Our social innovation incubator provides budding entrepreneurs with the knowledge, skills and networks to develop their good ideas into a sustainable and impactful business.

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Delivering our 2023 - 2028 Strategy



Since launching our five-year strategy in November 2023, The Melting Pot has grown from a single Edinburgh coworking hub into a national convener for social innovation. This report is structured around our five strategic objectives: Long-Term Sustainability, Scale Our Impact, Collaborative Ecosystem, Knowledge Exchange, and Community-Driven Innovation. Within each, we draw together our reach and impact across Good Ideas, Enterprise in Place, our events programme, our space at 15 Calton Road, and our growing consultancy offer, showing the breadth of our work across Edinburgh and Scotland, and the ripple effect it creates.

Our Theory of Change

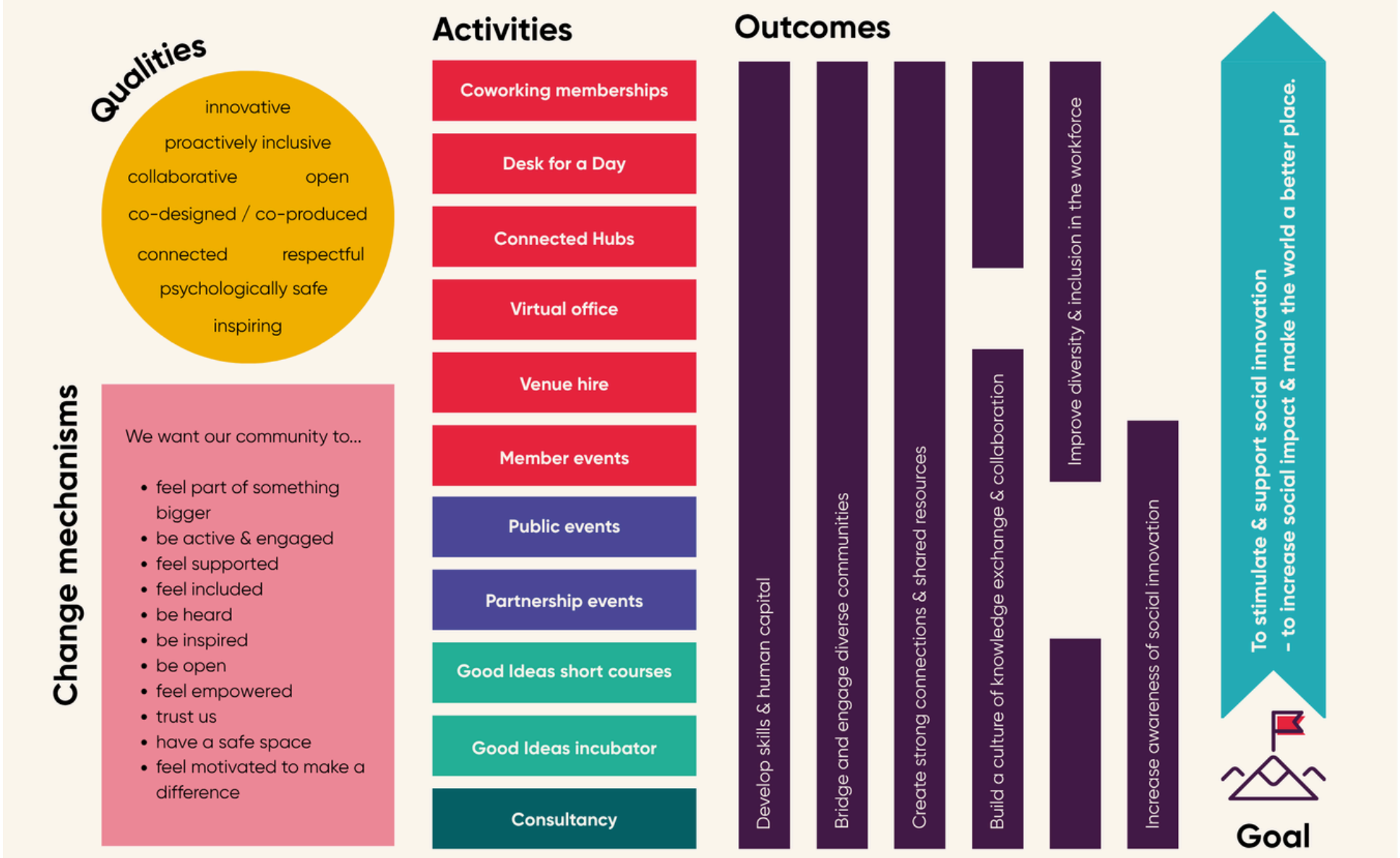
Our theory of change starts with a simple belief: people closest to a problem are best placed to solve it. Through coworking, Good Ideas, Connected Hubs, venue hire, our events and our consultancy service, we create spaces that are collaborative, co-designed, connected and psychologically safe, helping social innovators feel part of something bigger, supported, included and empowered to make a difference. This drives seven intermediate outcomes: bridging communities, sectors and diverse perspectives; building a culture of knowledge exchange and collaboration; engaging diverse communities to co-design social solutions; developing skills and human capital; creating strong connections and shared resources; increasing awareness of social innovation; and improving diversity and inclusion in the workforce. Together, these outcomes work towards our long-term goal: to stimulate and support social innovation, to increase social impact and make the world a better place.

This theory of change was first tested through an independent evaluation in August 2023, surveying 87 members and interviewing 11 in depth. It found that 97% of members felt welcomed and able to ask for help, 71% reported improved mental health, and 70% said membership helped them work more effectively in social innovation. These findings continue to shape how we design and measure our programmes today.

"The Melting Pot is a container for a particular type of person. And if that wasn't there, there would be less of an impact because those people just wouldn't be getting together."

Our Theory of Change

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Long Term Sustainability

Since introducing our new strategy, we have diversified our income and strengthened our foundations so that The Melting Pot can keep delivering for Scotland for years to come. This period saw the launch and growth of our consultancy offer, drawing on nearly two decades of experience in social innovation and community building. We have delivered projects with the Law Society of Scotland, Social Enterprise Scotland, Changeworks, The Robertson Trust and Zero Tolerance Scotland, achieving 140% of our consultancy income target to date and demonstrating that, over time, this income stream can help us become more sustainable and less reliant on any single source of funding. Alongside this, our space at 15 Calton Road generated 2,561 venue hire bookings, 533 Desk for a Day bookings and 65 Virtual Office customers, and we completed a staff restructure and a feasibility study to explore our long-term home.

"Really great programme. I have learned a lot. I feel it's just the beginning. The warmth and openness of The Melting Pot team has been really special and I hope to continue to work there and be part of the community."

Good Ideas Class participant

"It's given me much more of a vision for what the future membership offer could look like, and the steps for how we get there. We wouldn't hesitate to recommend The Melting Pot to other organisations."

Kim Wallace, Social Enterprise Scotland

Scale Our Impact

We closed 2024–25 with 365 coworking members (94% working in social innovation), rising to 388 members as of July 2026, engaged 3,985 people in person through events, programmes and services in 2024–25, and reached 95,773 people digitally each year through our website, blog, newsletters and social media. Good Ideas remains central to this growth: in 2024–25 we supported 28 entrepreneurs across our Class, Catalyst and Camp strands, followed by a further 36 participants in 2025–26 to date, hosting a Showcase event that welcomed 70+ attendees to celebrate their progress. Over the past three years we delivered 258 events, reaching 4,928 attendees, and welcomed 1,628 unique venue hire visitors.

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Collaborative Ecosystem

Our impact is not confined to Calton Road. Connected Hubs Scotland began in 2024 when four founding hubs, The Melting Pot, Impact Hub Inverness, Glasgow Collective and Dunkeld & Birnam Community Coworking, came together around a shared belief that community-rooted workspaces could help build a fairer, more inclusive economy. The network has since grown to over 35 independent hubs spanning urban, rural, coastal and island Scotland, from Edinburgh to Inverness and Dumfries to Shetland. We are inspired by Connected Hubs Ireland, which has grown from its 2021 launch to over 350 hubs, creating more than 5,300 desk spaces and contributing an estimated €1 billion annually to the Irish economy, and see similar potential for Scotland. Enterprise in Place, our place-based model for inclusive enterprise support, was delivered with Connected Hubs Scotland, Firstport and Elevator alongside local community hubs Glasgow Collective, EK Collective and POP Shop Dunoon. Funded by the Scottish Government's Pathways fund, the pilot delivered 24 sessions of tailored support, reaching 86 women and underrepresented entrepreneurs, including women returning to work, unpaid carers and young people exploring enterprise for the first time, in Dunoon, Glasgow and East Kilbride. Our Bridging Communities event series brought 850+ people together throughout Scotland and we have worked with 45+ cross-sector partners annually.

"I have new ideas, new direction, new motivation and inspiration."

Enterprise in Place participant

"In many communities, these hubs have become trusted anchor institutions, the kind of places where someone comes for a desk and stays because they've found belonging."

Building a Connected Scotland: Why Local Hubs Matter, The Melting Pot

Knowledge Exchange

We shared learning within our community and across the sector. Over the past three years we have published 34 blog posts on our website and spoken at 20+ different public events and podcasts sharing our social innovation approach, reaching 95,773 people annually through our website, blog, newsletters and social media. In 2025–26 we delivered a Connected Hubs Learning Exchange in the Highlands, bringing 9 hubs together to share learning.

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Knowledge Exchange

With the Law Society of Scotland, we delivered the first cohort of our Future Leaders development programme in 2025, building such a strong reputation that the second cohort grew easily to 14 participants and expanded to include guest speakers from beyond the legal sector. With Changeworks, we ran a commercial confidence programme covering bid writing, networking and consultative sales, supporting their ambition to decarbonise 180,000 Scottish homes by 2030.

"One of the shifts we've noticed is in the confidence of some of our colleagues. Some have been very quiet when they joined the programme, and one now wants to deliver more training in-house and share learning."

Scott Dick, Law Society of Scotland

"Allows for an improved work life balance, better collaboration with remote colleagues in person, and has improved my network and connections by introducing me to people I wouldn't otherwise have met."

Alex Reid, Member

Community Driven Innovation

Our founding belief, that people closest to a problem are best placed to solve it, runs through everything we do. Over the past three years we have delivered 90 member events, encouraging peer support and social connection, and established a member-led social committee to shape the design and delivery of events relevant to our community. Enterprise in Place was co-designed with local Community Connectors and participants, ensuring the programme responded to real needs in Dunoon, Glasgow and East Kilbride rather than a one-size-fits-all model. Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion commitments remain embedded throughout, from how we design programmes to how we host events and shape our space.

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The Ripple Effect

Beyond the numbers, our role as a convener and connector creates value that extends well past any single event or programme. An early Social Return on Investment (SROI) pilot, based on a single Good Ideas cohort, found a social return of 1.86:1, meaning every £1 invested generated an estimated £1.86 in social value through increased skills and confidence, stronger networks, and access to a supportive working environment. This is an early, indicative finding rather than an organisation-wide figure, and we are building towards a fuller, multi-year SROI analysis across our programmes, space and consultancy work.

To give a sense of scale across all of our work, not just Good Ideas, we can apply a benchmark SROI ratio drawn from comparable Scottish social value studies. A conservative benchmark of 4:1 (in line with typical third-sector figures) applied to our estimated annual running costs of around £400,000 suggests a total social value of approximately £1.6 million a year, or roughly £226 per person across the 7,094 people we reach through our enterprise support programmes, venue hire, events and coworking membership. This is an illustrative estimate based on external sector benchmarks, not a bespoke, audited calculation of our own impact.

What this tells us is that impact does not stop when engagement with The Melting Pot ends. Good Ideas alumni go on to build ventures that employ others; Enterprise in Place participants carry new confidence back into their communities; and coworking members describe a ripple of collaboration and friendships that reaches well beyond our four walls.

"I certainly don't think that ProjectChange would have been as successful had we not had The Melting Pot, because it would've just been me in the corner of my living room. It wouldn't have become what it's become without that space and time to be outside and speak to people."

Adam, Founder, ProjectChange

"The Melting Pot (The Unknown). has been the most powerful and reflective training I have ever done. I am so happy to be a part of it. It's helped me personally and my charity change, grow, reflect and reshape the road ahead wherever that might be. So, Thank You"

Participant on Funder Plus Programme, Facilitated by TMP on behalf of The Robertson Trust

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The Numbers

258

Events delivered since November 2023



388

Current coworking members. 94% Social innovators



4928

Event attendees from across Scotland



95773

People reached digitally each year



150

Underrepresented entrepreneurs supported through our enterprise support programmes



1628

Unique venue hire clients



35+

Hubs in the Connected Hubs Scotland Network



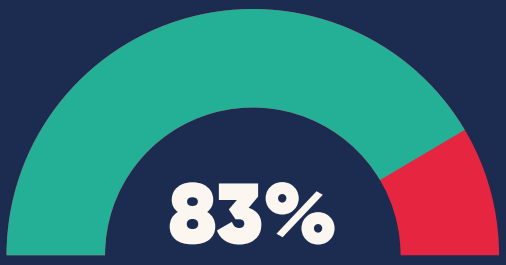
45+

Cross-Sector partners worked with annually



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The Numbers



Said that being a member of The Melting Pot improved their productivity, giving them a focused environment and the motivation to get more done.

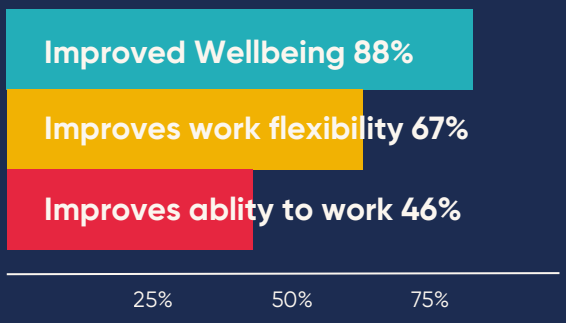
100%

Of our participants said our programmes had given them knowledge or tools that will be useful for developing an idea or enterprise for social good.

91%

Said that being a member of The Melting Pot improved their network, helping them connect with people who share similar values and build more meaningful professional relationships.

Wellbeing Benefits of Membership



£226

Estimated social value per person reached



£1.6m

Estimated annual social value at benchmark rate

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Testimonials

"Changeworks engaged The Melting Pot Consultancy to provide a fresh perspective on our networking approaches. The Melting Pots methods and insights were valuable in reshaping how our team interacts and builds relationships. The alternative approach brought by The Melting Pot Consultancy helped to improve our understanding of networking and building relationships. It challenged our traditional methods and encouraged us to think more positively. It was a valuable lesson that we believe will continue to benefit our team in the long run."

Changeworks

"I am loving the opportunity to zoom out from the day-to-day operations & connect with new people from outside my organisation. I'm already using some of The Melting Pot's tools in my work & feel confident it'll increase the impact of our work, my personal resilience & allow us to think longer term sustainability instead of getting stuck on the hamster wheel of survival & firefighting."

Participant on Funder Plus Programme, Facilitated by TMP on behalf of The Robertson Trust

"We have used the Co Lab at the Melting Pot for the last two years when in Edinburgh. It is a fantastic venue - great location, great working space and great staff - I will definitely book again when next in town and would highly recommend"

Venue Hire Client

"A really positive experience working with The Melting Pot. They delivered an excellent piece of consultancy work, demonstrating a deep understanding of both the brief and the role of an intermediary/membership organisation. Their approach was intuitive and thoughtful, and the final report was insightful, informative, pulling on their own experiences and grounded in reality. The recommendations were practical, achievable, and clearly articulated. They were also a pleasure to work with, going beyond the original brief to deliver a comprehensive and high-quality piece of work."

Social Enterprise Scotland

""Bridging Communities reiterated the importance of coming together to be able to share what we are all working on. Sometimes there's so much duplication when really we should be breaking out of our silos and collaborating more."

Bridging Communities Event Attendee

CONTACT

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