



Institute for **Social Innovation** and **Impact**

Research/Collaboration/Consultancy





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01

The Institute

The Institute for Social Innovation and Impact (ISII) at the University of Northampton evaluates and measures the social impact of social innovations in the UK and internationally, as well as exploring the financing of, and policy support for, social innovation.

In 2025-2026, we delivered a range of research and evaluation projects that support our organisations and partners to maximise impact. Alongside this, we have introduced a new range of workshops and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities designed to help organisations build their skills and capacity.



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Hazenberg



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You can contact the ISII
through either the QR code,
or emailing:



Research-ISII@northampton.ac.uk

"At the ISII we are committed to supporting social innovators from across the world to create, scale and measure their impact. For us, research is a gateway to better understanding how we can create a more sustainable world."

Professor Richard Hazenberg, Director, the ISII

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Our Offer



We work with our partners in a range of ways to **strengthen their teams, measure their impact, and evaluate the effectiveness of their work**. Our research approach is tailored to each client, with flexible ways of working designed to best support your organisation's aims and objectives.



1. Research and Evaluation

Rigorous and independent research, which generates actionable, evidence-based insights.



2. Social Impact Measurement

The design and implementation of measurement frameworks that demonstrate the value of your impact to society.



3. Workshops and CPD

Tailored learning and development for your organisation.



4. Community Engagement

Inclusive and participatory approaches that centre your beneficiaries' voices and embeds them in the research.

Our approach is collaborative, evidence-informed, and grounded in the real-world impact our partners create.

If you would like to talk to us about any of the above, you can contact us at anytime





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PROBabLE Futures



This is an ongoing project that explores the responsible use of AI across law enforcement and criminal justice, examining **technical, legal, ethical, operational** and **societal challenges**. Through collaboration with practitioners and innovative research, it seeks to develop a future focused framework to support the **responsible development, governance and deployment of probabilistic AI throughout the justice system**.

We are part of a consortium of Higher Education Institutions, led by Northumbria University

Our report into participatory frameworks in law enforcement is available here:



Across the project

- We advanced participation and collaborative research through establishing an experimental advisory body.
- We generated evidence that will inform policy and practice and contributed to government consultancy.
- We have provided a platform for community voices through a participatory storytelling methodology
- We provided expert advice to organisations including the Home Office, NPCC, and Police AI.

"AI is already positively biased, which means not only will it get to the conclusion that you want, but it will also get there quick, which is not necessarily what we need when we want a reasoned, balanced response [from the police]."

Mental Health

Participant



05

Prevention of Violence Against Women

This project addressed **gender-based** violence (GBV) in higher education in Viet Nam to support enhanced teaching around gender equality and violence prevention. The project aims to create safer, more inclusive university environments for women and girls, assess the **gender sensitivity of teacher training programmes**, evaluate the prevalence of GBV across **five pedagogical universities**, develop and deliver training materials on gender equality and **violence prevention**, and provide **policy recommendations to the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)**.

Across the project

- We delivered a survey and risk assessment to understand the status of safety and violence against female lecturers and students.
- We developed a communication campaign to raise awareness.
- We developed a training curriculum to embed gender-sensitive teacher training.
- We held a policy roundtable with MOET and submitted a policy paper for their review’.



You can find out more about the project here:



“The materials can be included in teacher training sessions to help them understand gender-related issues and apply this knowledge in their daily teaching [...] participants should also share the training materials with colleagues, friends, etc. to spread the value that the event builds”

University Staff



06

Premier League Kicks



Premier League Kicks is a community outreach programme operated by the Premier League. The ISII was commissioned to examine the activities delivered by the programme and provide a comprehensive analysis to the programme's stakeholders. The evaluation highlights the benefits to young people, including **positive role models, social skill development, improved confidence, and physical health**. It also evidenced the importance of the programme to both the community, and wider society.



You can read our report about Premier League Kicks here:



Across the project

- We worked with several clubs to demonstrate the high impact of Premier League Kicks.
- We delivered a conference presentation at the annual conference to disseminate best practice that emerged across the project.
- We conducted participatory research through our innovative 'Photostories' methodology which platformed youth voice.
- We contributed to evidence submitted to Parliament on the programme's impact across the UK.

"The Institute for Social Innovation and Impact (ISII) at the University of Northampton undertook an evaluation report of the impact of Kicks [...] children and young people felt that Kicks had a positive influence on how people in the community treat them, how they treat people from their neighbourhood, and on how they plan to work on community issues after stopping participating in Kicks"

From evidence provided to Parliament



07



Promoting Women's Entrepreneurship in Indonesia

This project partnered with two rural Indonesian universities to identify gender inclusivity gaps in entrepreneurship education and to develop an evidence-based model to **enhance women's pathways into employment**. It aimed to strengthen entrepreneurial and employability skills, improve access to opportunities, and establish a system for measuring the programme's **long-term social, economic and environmental impact**.



Our final report on this project is available here:



Across the project

- We developed an evidence-based model which support women in engaging in entrepreneurship.
- We evidenced the importance on gender-lens investing and mentorships initiatives.
- We promoted ecosystem collaboration
- We called for a focus on digital skills and network building.

"The university is like a second home for students, so it should serve as a bridge. It should offer more than just a forum—it should connect us with experts who can guide us through mental and motivational struggles, not just focus on the challenges we face but also provide solutions for the future"

Student (Jombang)



08

Family Hubs



This project evaluates the long-term outcomes of Family Hubs for children and families using the University of Northampton Social Impact Matrix©. Employing an evidence-based social impact measurement approach, it assesses both **longitudinal benefits** and **broader social value**, demonstrating how Family Hubs contribute to improved outcomes for **children, families, communities**, and **wider society**.



To find out more about Family Hubs, you can visit their website here:



Across the project

- We identified the key mechanisms that underpin the impact that Family Hubs has.
- We highlighted the barriers and enablers that influence outcomes for children.
- We created a robust framework for evaluating the long-term outcomes and measuring social value.
- We generated evidence to inform the development of the service, policy, and investment.

"Our evaluation is central to understanding the difference Family Hubs make to children, young people and families in West Northamptonshire.. It provides the evidence needed to demonstrate impact, inform future investment and support the continued development of effective and sustainable services for families."

Professor Claire Paterson-Young



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Access and Participation Plan



The ISII leads the full evaluation of Access and Participation Plans at the University of Northampton. This includes taking part in the APP Steering Group and other related APP working groups, **running Theory of Change and evaluation** workshops; and designing and delivering research tools (i.e. quantitative and qualitative research tools) to compile **activity and thematic reports which highlight the barriers and enablers to greater inclusion into Higher Education.**



You can find out more about the UON's Access and Participation Plan here:



Across the project

- We delivered Theory of Change and Evaluation training workshops.
- We carried out qualitative and quantitative interviews with multiple members of staff and students across 8 years of evaluation.
- We produced high-quality papers and outputs which highlight the strengths of UON's approach to Access and Participation, highlighting its role as a leader in the field.

"The ISII has been a vital partner, delivering robust evaluations, impactful Theory of Change workshops, and expert research support throughout for our APP work."

Project Leader



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The Canon Young People Programme

Our partnership with the Canon Young People Programme entered its third year, with a focus on continuing to strengthen their **global social impact measurement infrastructure**, whilst advancing the development of a knowledge-based curriculum centred on **empowering youth voice** and **embedding participatory methods**. We have worked with stakeholders and beneficiaries to develop research and outputs that align with Canon's corporate philosophy and priorities. This work has also resulted in the development of a bespoke **Social Impact Measurement Framework (SIMF)**, providing a structured approach to capturing, measuring and communicating the programme's social impact.

Across the project

- We developed a cross-cultural social impact measurement framework to allow direct comparison across four countries.
- We developed guidance and a toolkit for the embedding of Photovoice into youth outreach and engagement.
- We created a toolkit for establishing an international youth advisory board to enable youth voice to be central to the evolution of the programme.



More information about the Canon Young People Programme can be found here:



"The more we've done this we've realised that it's not just about the camera and photography and photographers, it's about the camera as a tool for learning, for education and for self-development."

Organisational Stakeholder



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Blue Skies

This project evaluates the social, economic, and agronomic impacts of Blue Skies' KfW-funded initiative in Ghana and Benin. Through a comprehensive evidence-based impact evaluation, it explores how the project influences **farmers, local communities, employment, female entrepreneurship, sustainable livelihoods, market access, and long-term community development**, generating robust evidence to demonstrate its wider social and economic impact.



To find out more about Blue Skies, you can visit their website here:



Across the project

- We developed a robust social impact measurement framework and impact calculator for Blue Skies' Benin and Ghana initiatives.
- We conducted qualitative interviews and focus groups with farmers across the project.
- We strengthened accountability to stakeholders with clear evidence outcomes.
- We informed future investment and decision – making of the initiative.
- We captured the project's impact on livelihoods, employment, and community wellbeing.

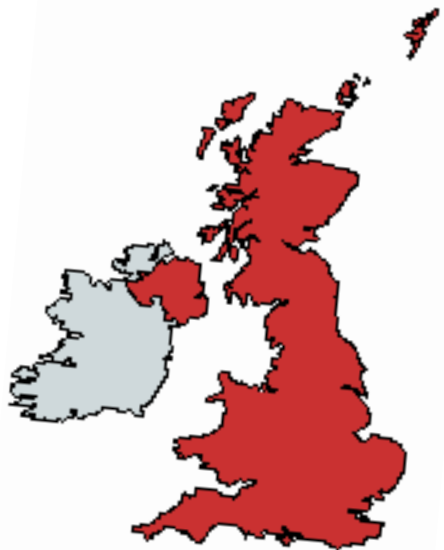
"We have worked with the ISII on several studies across Ghana and Benin and have been particularly impressed by the Social Impact Matrix, which enables us to quantify and track the social value created through our activities over time."

Project Leader



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Social Enterprise Support Fund



This fund aimed to support 500 social enterprises with emphasis on recovering and rebuilding in a post-Covid society, with a core aim of **ensuring equitable and inclusive delivery of support.**

UnLtd: The Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs (UnLtd), The School for Social Enterprise (SSE), Key Fund, Resonance and Big Issue Invest (BII) were responsible for delivering the fund, with the ISII responsible for **supporting partners in understanding the cost-effectiveness and lessons from the fund.**



You can read the final report here:



Across the project we...

- We demonstrated the high impact of the SESF, alongside the strong resilience and sustainability of SEs through Covid-19 (2019-2022).
- We evidenced the need to training for partners to ensure consistency in scoring applications and matched understandings of key terms, such as EDI.
- We gave clarity to the need for post-award support to make sure social enterprises could maximise their impact.

"This research was integral to the decisions we made on SESF design and delivery during the years of fund operation. Further, it has underpinned our work on future similar funding and support programmes"

Project Leaders



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Eco-Creative Pedagogies: Training the Next-Generation

This project strengthens planetary resilience by **building a collaborative network of schools, teachers, eco artists, environmental activists, think tanks, and NGOs** in the UK and Turkey. It promotes shared learning and the exchange of effective practice to develop green skills through innovative, eco-creative approaches. This will equip educators with **creative, culturally responsive methods to teach environmental awareness and sustainability**, empowering learners to become active environmental stewards and contribute to a resilient planet.



You can read
more about the
project here:



Across the project

- We delivered in-person and online workshops with teachers in Turkey to co-design an eco-friendly curriculum for pre and primary school.
- We developed a comic book with practicing teachers and a student to promote the projects findings.

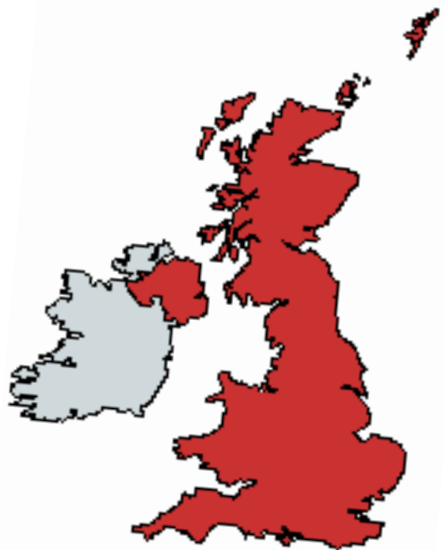
The collaboration between universities, third sector partners, and teachers from different disciplines proved incredibly rewarding. Through the co-design process, we learned from one another's perspectives, resulting in fruitful outcomes and lasting insight

Teacher



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ImpactU



The ImpactU network is a consortium of UK universities led by Oxford University Innovation, LSE, the University of Cambridge, and the University of Northampton. It aims to support the **development, spin-out and scaling of social enterprises** from university incubators or ecosystems, through both funding (convertible loan notes) and training (the ImpactU Hub). The ISII has supported ImpactU through the delivery of training in the Hub, as well as in evaluating the programme of work. Further, the **ISII has represented the University on the ImpactU Board and the investment selection committees.**

Across the project

- We supported the distribution of £1 million in investment to social businesses.
- We contributed to the support provided to over 700 social enterprise stakeholders.
- We evaluated the project and delivered training workshops to advance the wider mission.



You can read
more about
ImpactU here:



"ImpactU illustrates how universities can partner to support the development of social businesses within higher education ecosystems, and the impact that this can have."

Professor Richard Hazenberg



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Own Merit

This research project evaluates the social impact of Own Merit CIC's services using the University of Northampton **Social Impact Matrix©**. It examines resident and stakeholder experiences, outcomes relating to **stability** and **independence**, and **potential savings to public services**.



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Hundred Heroines



The ISII worked with Hundred Heroines to develop a **participatory photography toolkit** for practitioners working with young people, alongside establishing a **practitioner community** and **social impact report** highlighting the impact of their work.



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Jon Egging Trust



JET provides long-term support to young people who may struggle at school. Our evaluation found that JET's activities build **confidence**, **self-esteem** and **empowerment**, strengthen relationships, and **support education and personal development**.



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Action for Happiness



This year we worked with the Action for Happiness Northamptonshire hub to identify the impact it has had in the community through its **practitioner network**, **outreach material**, and **influence in the local mental health ecosystem**





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Policy Influence

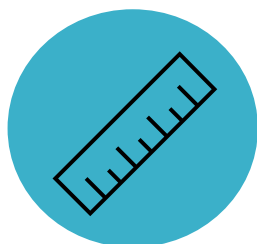


The Institute for Social Innovation and Impact has made a marked influence on governmental policy, providing evidence across the care sector, mental health, and AI Governance.



1. Social Innovation

The ISII has supported the policy in several areas related to social innovation, including around the Government Outcomes Lab (Cabinet Office), social investment tax relief and state-aid (HM Treasury), and university-led impact investing (Better Society Capital).



2. Impact Measurement

Over the past decade, the ISII has supported the MOD to evaluate the social impact of the UK Cadet Forces. The evidence informed Parliament's support for the continued Cadet Expansion Programme in Schools and helped underpin continued cadet funding in the latest Strategic Defence Review.



3. Participatory Research

The ISII has advanced participatory and arts-based approaches that enable marginalised communities to shape research, evaluation and practice. This work has influenced practice across the world, including the UK, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, and Rwanda, demonstrating sustained international impact beyond academia.



4. AI Governance

The ISII's research informed the NPCC Responsible AI Checklist for Policing, including guidance on participatory advisory panels. The team has also worked directly with police forces to strengthen ethical oversight, including supporting the recruitment of community members to the West Midlands Police Data Ethics Panel.

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Selected Publications



Research can only have impact if it is widely shared and accessible. We regularly publish free-to-access reports and academic papers, which are available through our university's research repository and can be accessed using the QR code below. All our research is available at: [Institute for Social Innovation and Impact - University of Northampton's Research Explorer](#)



Hazenbergh, R., and C. Paterson-Young. 2025. *"Hybrid Coping: The Impact of Covid-19 on Social Enterprise Resilience"*, **Nonprofit Management and Leadership**.

Keywords: Social Enterprise, Financial Sustainability; Resilience



Paterson-Young, C., Corrales, T., Warren, I., & McNamara, P. 2024. *"Impact of trauma and placement in residential or congregate care on the criminalisation of children in England/Wales and Australia"*, **Children and Youth Services Review**.

Keywords: Youth Justice; Comparative international research



Karlidağ-Dennis, E., Keser Ozmantar, Z., & Cin, M., 2026. *"Teaching in displacement: refugee teachers' agency and the reworking of social and professional practices"*, **International Journal of Inclusive Education**.

Keywords: Refugees; Teachers; Collective Capability



Maher, M., Karlidag-Dennis, E., Hazenberg, R., & Conway, D., 2026. *"Employability Programmes in higher education: Supporting students through tangible, transitional and transformational approaches"*, **British Educational Research Journal**.

Keywords: Higher Education; Employability; Cultural Capital



Paterson-Young, C., Maher, M., Karlidag-Dennis, E., & Hogg, M., 2025. *"I'd lost trust and having to tell everyone the same story again and again and again...": Bottlenecks and barriers to the application of therapeutic approaches within care services' ecological systems"*, **Children and Youth Services Review**.

Keywords: Social Care; Therapeutic Care; Eco-Systems

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Our Partners

Impact U



shaw trust



Northumbria University
NEWCASTLE



Nacro
WE CHANGE LIVES

Canon



Ministry of Defence



Arts and Humanities
Research Council

