

Explaining How You Do What You Do: Theory of Change

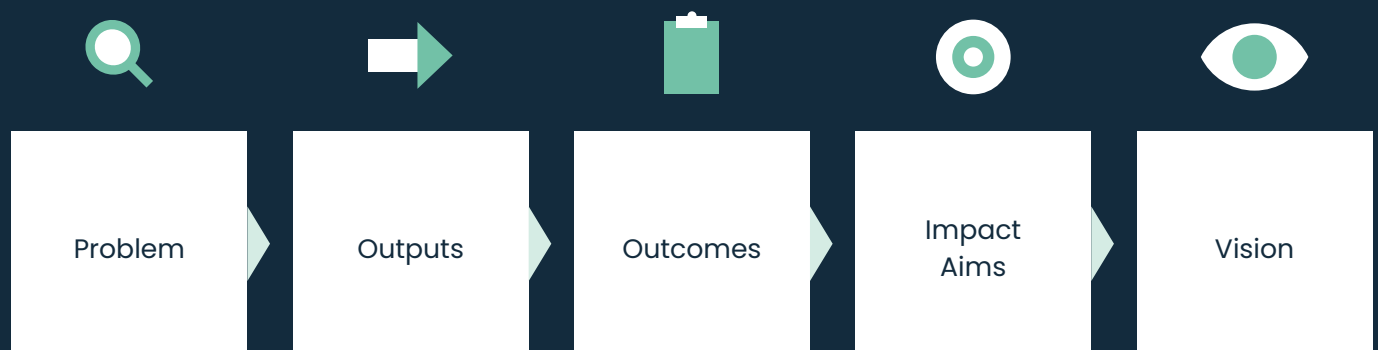
Theory of Change is a tool you can use to think critically about what is required to bring about a desired social change. It is a way to articulate your community's work (Outputs) and connect it to your bigger goals (Vision).

Your Theory of Change should outline causal linkages between the Problem you are trying to solve, your activities (Outputs), your Outcomes, and your broader Aims and Vision. A great Theory of Change should ultimately be a simple, visual document (no more than one page) that is easy to understand and digest. When done correctly, it's a powerful tool for both external buy-in from the community and other stakeholders as well as internal strategic decisions.

On the next page we have a basic Theory of Change template for you to fill in, easily adapt and brand for all relevant purposes (e.g. website, member engagement and partnership development collateral, potential funders, board presentations, etc).


To write your own Theory of Change, we suggest starting from your Vision, (if you haven't articulated it yet, check out our *Explaining What You Do: Purpose & Vision Statements* resource), then go straight to the Problem, and work your way back to the Vision box.

The Theory of Change Process



Problem	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact Aims	Vision
<p>What is the problem you are trying to solve and who is your audience?</p> <p><i>e.g. Philanthropists don't always feel connected to each other, and those outside urban cities are often excluded or isolated</i></p>	<p>What are the activities done by your community? (this needs to be broken down to specific active verbs)</p> <p><i>e.g. We offer opportunities for philanthropists to meet online and build strong relationships</i></p>	<p>What happens as a direct result of your outputs?</p> <p><i>e.g. Members on our platform are able to make meaningful connections and learn from their peers</i></p>	<p>What are the planned areas of change that would enable your overall goal?</p> <p><i>e.g. To significantly increase the quality and amount of philanthropic money given to charity</i></p>	<p>What is the broader goal your community is working towards? (i.e. the 'world you want to see')</p> <p><i>e.g. A world in which philanthropy is able to respond to the sector needs and fill the gaps that prevent non-profits from achieving meaningful changes</i></p>

The Mesa is the first B2B community platform specifically designed to bring together philanthropists, inheritors and changemakers to learn, connect and give better. [Click here](#) to check out our other resources:



Do you have any follow up questions? Any feedback? Are you interested in knowing more about how you can ensure members in your community can be kept actively engaged and are thus likely to give more and better as a result of that? Get in touch with our team by contacting info@themesa.org.