



**Place-based
Impact
Summit**
15-16 June 2026

Welcome

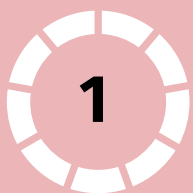
to the 2026 Place-Based Impact Summit!

The Summit presents an important opportunity for all of us working for place-based change across Australia. A coming together of the place-based ecosystem (communities, services, funders and government) to tackle one of our most significant shared challenges, *“how do we define and use data to measure the impact of place-based approaches in ways that make sense across different communities?”*

As interest and investment in place-based approaches grows, so too, does the pressure to understand and demonstrate impact using different kinds of data and evidence. While communities know meaningful change is happening, we don't yet have an effective or cohesive way to define and measure this change. And without a shared approach, we can't build a robust and compelling evidence base that demonstrates the value of place-based approaches and reflects the heart of why these approaches are effective.

In the lead up to the Summit, the PLACE team has been exploring the challenges of understanding and measuring the impact of place-based approaches. By deep diving into the local and international evidence, talking with others and reviewing around 50 different measurement frameworks, we've identified some of the key challenges, what's missing and a possible way forward. We'll be testing this thinking with you at the Summit.

Four key challenges to demonstrating impact of place-based approaches



Frameworks don't capture how the work is done

Place-based change initiatives are tailored to their local context, and using a place-based approach involves working differently with communities.

How the work happens matters. It's the ways of working that lead to sustained change.

Current measurement approaches **don't measure the ways of working** (nor recognise their contribution to change).



Simple metrics for complex matters

The impact of place-based approaches is hard to measure. Easily measured outcomes take a long time to materialise and even then, attributing those outcomes to a single initiative is complex.

Using simple metrics for complex matters delivers **an incomplete picture of what changed and why**.



Success is in the eye of the beholder

What counts as success depends on who's asking.

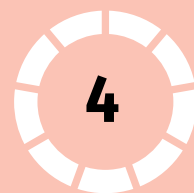
Communities look for visible, felt change in their place.

Funders prioritise measurable outcomes and return on investment.

Government and service system leaders focus on whether services respond better to need.

This tension is real.

Whose definition of success decides whether a place-based initiative is working?



Early signals of change are not recognised or valued

The nature of place-based work means change often emerges as changes in relationships, connections and behaviours.

These shifts are quiet and can be seen and felt in communities, long before change is visible in "official data".

Community insights about early signals of changes are **not recognised or valued as evidence of change**.

The Missing Middle?

We know that change doesn't happen all at once in place-based work, change becomes visible over time, as initiatives grow and evolve. And while every community is different, there is a recognisable pattern to the types of change that become visible. Early shifts are seen in relationships and growing trust, increasing community agency, participation and leadership, through to tangible shifts in the responsiveness of local services and systems, and eventually - with sustained effort and resourcing - shifts in population-level outcomes.

The current approaches to measuring impact concentrate the focus on shifts in population level data. Such a narrow focus misses the important progress that is seen and felt by communities along the way.

And at a practical level – this narrow focus on evidence of long-term, population level change reinforces the likelihood of funding and support being withdrawn too early, simply because the change that is happening is not yet visible in the population level data.

We think that capturing the progress and the changes felt and seen, in a community along the way, is *the missing middle*.

Adding a “place-based” layer to existing measurement frameworks

We’re proposing to build a complimentary layer that can be added to the existing impact measurement frameworks; a ‘place-based’ layer of measures that will help answer the question, “*What is it about taking a place-based approach to shifting XX outcomes for XX community that makes a difference?*”

We suggest that by building ways to better understand and measure how place-based change is created - including place-based ways of working and capturing data about what early signals of change are experienced by individuals, families and community - we’ll be closer to demonstrating *why* place-based approaches work.

An invitation to the field - the Impact Summit and beyond

We know from the many, many conversations and the high levels of interest in the Summit, that there is shared appetite for building a shared solution to this shared challenge.

The Summit program is designed to help us grow our shared understanding about both the diversity and shared features of place-based approaches, as well as the different perspectives about ‘impact’. Through participatory and interactive sessions, we’re inviting all participants to bring their perspectives and experience to the collective challenge.

By building shared understanding, we build solid foundations for shared action. If we are to realise this potentially transformational opportunity – we will only succeed, together.

The full program is attached and we look forward to your participation and contributions in Brisbane on 15/16 June.

Kind regards,



Dr Luke Craven
CEO, PLACE



Eve Millar
Director, Data Policy and Evidence, PLACE

Program - Day One

15 June 8.30am - 7pm



Time	Location	Activity
8:30am - 10:00am		Registration with coffee/tea - morning tea and networking
10:00am - 10:50am	Main Ballroom	<p>Grounding in place and purpose</p> <p>Welcome to Country - Tribal Experiences</p> <p>Luke Craven, CEO, PLACE</p> <p>Natalie Siegel-Brown, Board Member, PLACE</p> <p>Eve Millar Director, Data Evidence and Practice, PLACE</p> <p>Meet our facilitators – Fiona McKenzie & Sarah Rogers – Orange Compass</p>
10:50am - 11:10am	Main Ballroom	Unpacking the collective challenge: how can we better understand and demonstrate the impact of place-based approaches?
11:10am - 11:20am		Transition to breakout rooms
11:20am - 12:00pm	Main Ballroom, Ballroom 1 & Lyon Room	<p>Round 1 - Breakout Panel Sessions - What do we mean by place-based impact?</p> <p>Hear from place-based practitioners and thought leaders about what impact looks like in their communities and what's so different about a place-based approach.</p> <p>Facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Davitt, Director, Collaborative Solutions, PLACE • Eve Millar, Director, Data Evidence and Practice, PLACE • Jane Anderson, Director, Enable, PLACE <p>Panel Member Organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol and Drug Foundation • Australian Centre for Evaluation • Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) • Becoming U – Toormina • Bourke and District Children's Services (BDCS) • BurnieWorks • Cape & Torres Health Commissioning • Clear Horizon • Early Years Hubs Network (MCRI) • Empowered Communities • Fire to Flourish (Clarence Valley) • Great Barrier Reef Foundation • Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project • Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa • Maranguka • Mornington Peninsula Foundation • New School of Arts Neighbourhood Centre • Ready Communities • Resilient Lismore • Social Justice Reinvestment WA • The HIVE • Tiraapendi Wodli • University of Queensland • YouthWorx NT

12:00pm - 1:00pm		Lunch
1:00pm - 1:40pm	Main Ballroom, Ballroom 1 & Lyon Room	Round 2 - Breakout Panel Sessions – What do we mean by place-based impact? As above
1:40pm - 1:50pm		Transition to Main Ballroom
1:50pm - 3:00pm	Main Ballroom	Unpacking the people power ecologies in our places An interactive and immersive experience led by Amanda Tattersall – Associate Professor in urban geography at the University of Sydney, and a leader in place-based research and community-led research methods.
3:00pm - 3:30pm		Afternoon tea
3:30pm - 3:45pm	Main Ballroom	Existing frameworks and measures: what could form the basis of a shared approach to measuring place-based impact? Facilitated by: Nicholas Hill, Strengthening Place-based Impact Lead, PLACE
3:45pm - 4:00pm	Main Ballroom	Your say Vote #1 – What is important in measuring place-based impact?
4:00pm - 4:40pm	Main Ballroom	Insights from the experts in place - in conversation with place-based data dynamos Facilitated by: Jeanelle Gibson, Collaborative Solutions Lead, PLACE Panel members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christine Kamau - AC Care • Fiona Merlin – Hands Up Mallee • Patrick Sharpe – EMU Consultancy • Patrick Cooke – PLACE Australia • Rowena Cann – Queensland Kids Partnership • Sarah Pain – Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project • Toni Cincotta – Our Place
4:40pm - 5:00pm	Main Ballroom	Reflections & framing for Day 2
5:00pm - 7:00pm	Lobby	Networking drinks and conversations

Program - Day Two

16 June 9.00am - 3.15pm



Time	Location	Activity
8:30am - 9:00am		Coffee & tea
9:00am - 9:25am	Main Ballroom	Acknowledgement of Country, Welcome, Recap & overnight reflections Facilitated by: Luke Craven, CEO, PLACE
9:25am - 9:35am	Main Ballroom	What does the data tell us? Sharing results of from Day 1 and Vote #1
9:35am - 10:20am	Main Ballroom	Scalable impact measurement innovations – hear about different initiatives seeking to understand and measure impact at a national scale. Facilitated by: Eve Millar, Director, Data Evidence and Practice, PLACE Presenters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restacking the Odds - MCRI • Community Strengths Survey Tool - Strengthening Communities Alliance • People & Place Data Analysis Pilot - AIHW & PLACE • Learning about impact as an intermediary - Queensland Kids Partnership • BeBold Data Platform - University of Adelaide & InfoXchange
10:20am - 10:25am	Main Ballroom	Introducing the Impact Measurement Marketplace Facilitated by: Wardah Tahir, Policy and Project Officer, PLACE & Matthew Wilkins, Evaluation and Learning Lead, PLACE
10:25am - 11:25am	Main Ballroom and Lobby	Impact Measurement Marketplace & Networking Hour – with morning tea Impact Measurement Marketplace - see what's out there: explore some of the tools, platforms and supports available. In the marketplace you'll find: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Child Youth Wellbeing Atlas – University of WA • Australian Institute of Family Studies • Brotherhood of St Laurence • Clear Horizon • Impact Lab • InfoXchange • Seer Data & Analytics • Strengthening Communities Alliance
11:25am - 12:15pm	Main Ballroom	Moving to collective action What will it take for a shared approach to impact measurement? Identifying what needs to be in place for implementation.

12:15pm - 12:25pm	Main Ballroom	<p>Your say Vote #2</p> <p>Voting on possible shared measures</p>
12:25pm - 1:15pm		Lunch
1:15pm - 2:00pm	Main Ballroom	<p>Special Guest Panel</p> <p><i>What can we learn from philanthropic funders who are doing things differently?</i></p> <p>Hear about some of the different ways that philanthropic funders can (and do) support place-based initiatives to understand and demonstrate their impact, in ways that work for them and their communities.</p> <p>Facilitated by: Luke Craven, CEO, PLACE</p> <p>Panel Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachel Kerry - Cages Foundation • Margot Beach - Dusseldorp Forum • Lisa McLeod- Fletcher Jones Family Foundations • Penny Dakin - Minderoo
2:00pm - 2:15pm	Main Ballroom	The voting results – sharing the results of vote #2
2:15pm - 2:50pm	Main Ballroom	Insights for action
2:50pm - 3:00pm	Main Ballroom	Next steps & agreed actions
3.00pm - 3.05pm	Main Ballroom	Summit close