



Update from the Minister: Try, Test and Learn Fund

Today I announced that the \$96 million Try, Test and Learn Fund will open for ideas submission on Friday 9 December 2016. It will close for ideas on 24 February.

This is an innovative Government initiative, and we want your ideas on how we can help people who may be at risk of being on welfare for the long term to find, retain and flourish in long-term employment. Our priority groups for this first round of the Try, Test and Learn Fund are young carers, young parents and young students at risk of long-term unemployment.

From Friday 9 December, ideas for the Fund can be submitted using a simple online form on the Department of Social Services' (DSS) Engage website.

Ideas will be published on DSS Engage for everyone to see, to encourage collaboration and innovation. A discussion forum will run alongside the ideas generation phase, to encourage people to share views about how to help people in our priority groups, through the Try, Test and Learn Fund.

The most promising ideas will be selected for development into possible policy initiatives, which will involve refinement and co-design of the idea in preparation for funding.

Our aim is that by May 2017, the first set of successful ideas will have been selected by Government, and we will be on our way to on-the-ground implementation.

On Friday, you will be able to find more details on this process as well as links to the Fund Handbook, information and data on each of the initial priority groups, FAQs, and a discussion forum on the DSS Engage website. We look forward to reading your ideas and encourage you to submit as early as possible.

Christian Porter, Minister for Social Services

Policy Hack

To assist the ideas generation process, we are organising a Policy Hack in Melbourne, tentatively scheduled for February 2017. This event will see representatives from the non-government sector, not-for-profits, other experts and individuals collaborating on developing and pitching possible ideas that could end up being further developed under the Fund. Further details will be provided in a future newsletter.

We understand that not everyone interested in submitting ideas to the Fund will be able to be part of the Policy Hack, or will even want to attend. If you wish to submit ideas to the Fund, you do **not** need to participate in the Policy Hack. We will provide further details soon for those who do want to be involved in the Hack. Invitation of idea proposers to workshop their idea at the Policy Hack will be entirely at the Department's discretion.

Outcomes of consultation workshop

The Policy Hack will encourage collaboration and ideas sharing between experts with a wide range of experience. This is in line with feedback from participants of the consultation workshop held in Sydney on 21 October 2016; who identified that the Fund's ideas generation stage provides opportunity for stakeholders to break down silos and collaborate and share ideas, perhaps eventually through partnerships.

Key outcomes of the consultation workshop are captured in this [summary document](#). We understand that genuine consultation is very important in developing successful policy or program responses through the Fund. Feedback from the consultative design workshop is influencing the design of the Fund.

Until the next update, please feel free to distribute this newsletter to your networks, and encourage them to sign up for updates [here](#). You can also contact us at InvestmentApproach@dss.gov.au.