

## Introduction

### **Purpose**

This framework codifies lessons learned regarding characteristics of low and high performing programs. The framework is intended to support evaluations by stimulating investigation into high impact leverage areas. It is not designed to be exhaustive, but to provide support regarding good practice in the area of supporting small and medium sized enterprises. The six key areas are as follows:

- Selection
- Needs-based program design
- Financial sustainability
- Feedback and Monitoring
- Team and Leadership
- Strategy

The evaluators should be aware of the broader organizational assessment Argidius use in due diligence and for comparison to the self-assessment of strategic partners.

Area	Category	Element	Characteristics for grading				Score	Key strengths/weaknesses	Questions to be asked
			1. Clear need for increased capacity	2. Basic level of capacity	3. Moderate level of capacity	4. High level of capacity			
Strategy	Organizational Track Record	Track record and accomplishments	The organization's leadership cannot (or will not) openly articulate both successes and challenges.	The organization has a limited track record (< 3 years) but is open about successes and challenges. Or recent program progress is described anecdotally.	The organization has a proven ability to succeed. The organization has a track record of results that demonstrates an interest in its constituency or target population. Recent program progress is quantified and aligned with mission. Challenges are clearly articulated, and where possible controls to mitigate risks are in place.	The organization has an impressive track record. The organization has a track record of results that is quantified and aligned with mission, and demonstrates a significant impact on its constituency or target population, or widespread across geographies. Challenges are clearly articulated, and where possible controls to mitigate risks are in place.			What have been the most significant accomplishments of the past? What have been the most significant challenges?
	Mission and vision	No / limited expression of the organization's reason for existence. Little shared understanding of organization's aspirations.	Some expression of the organization's reason for existence. Little shared understanding of organization's aspirations. Clarity is lacking, or vision is not inspiring.	Clear and specific expression of the organization's reason for existence. Shared understanding of organization's aspirations, often used to set priorities. Inspiring vision, OR demanding yet achievable.	Clear and specific expression of the organization's reason for existence. Shared understanding of organization's aspirations, often used to set priorities. Inspiring vision, AND demanding yet achievable.			Who are your customers/target market? What experience do you have in reaching these customers? How do you set the overall direction for the organization? Do you have a current strategic plan? If not, how do you develop the strategy? Who is involved in strategic planning and thinking? How do you incorporate current strategies into your work?	
	Commitment to SMEs	The organization has demonstrated little commitment/ experience to serving SME customers	Relatively new organisation (<3 years) with strong stated commitment to SME markets and active program/ Significant experience in other related areas with recent (< 3 years) active interest in SME markets.	Strong stated commitment to SME markets, with <5 years demonstrable experience	Strong stated commitment to SME markets and significant (>5 years) demonstrable experience to date.				
	Strategy Implementation	Leadership cannot describe any internal process by which opportunities are evaluated and/or goals are set.	Strategy exists but is not easily actionable/ strategy is under development with limited articulation	Current strategy is coherent and evidence it is implemented and reflected in activities/ Organization can speak articulately about how the strategy is under development and evidence the process.	The organization has a current strategy for achieving the organization's mission with realistic goals, evidence it is being implemented at all levels of the organization, and evidence of strategy review and adjustment				
Performance Assessment	Feedback and monitoring relationships	Little consideration of impact or performance to measure, use and report on. Limited interest from senior management/ or limited resources allocated. Lack of evidence of relationships with enterprises beyond direct service provision. Where data is not available general reasons are provided.	Organization invests in building trust and relationships with enterprises. Expectations of monitoring requirements are expressed at the outset of the interaction. Basic structure for quantitative and qualitative feedback and monitoring/ or client management and performance measurement system are being put in place. Where data is not available general reasons are provided. 70% response rates are achieved in data collection	Senior management have an interest in performance and impact. Required information for performance management system is being successfully collected, including use of standard indicators, with regular, transparent reports. Qualitative feedback including descriptions of what has changed in the business, how the program has contributed, which aspects of the program are not working, is collected. Evidence of the organization learning and adapting based on performance and enterprise feedback. Expectations of monitoring requirements are expressed at the outset of the interaction, and multiple touch points throughout the program are used to collect KPIs. Enterprise performance assessment is embedded in the service provision. Where data is not provided, the concerns or limitations of the enterprise are clearly understood and a plan for addressing it is in place. 80% response rates achieved in data collection	Senior management interested in and using data for decision making. All interactions with client are used to build continued understanding of how practices and performance are changing, and emerging needs. Organization tracks whether clients use the advice, and changes in enterprise performance. Qualitative feedback is regularly collected and used to understand drivers of performance, which aspects of the program are working and which are not working. Qualitative and quantitative feedback are triangulated. Evidence of trust and relationships between organization and enterprises. Expectations of monitoring requirements are expressed at the outset of the interaction, and multiple touch points throughout the program are used to collect KPIs. Enterprise performance assessment is embedded in the service provision. Value for money is assessed, tracked and discussed with enterprises. Organization is willing to be transparent with results. 90%+ response rates are achieved in data collection			How does the organization keep abreast of the latest thinking in your field? What are the top three challenges facing the organization over the next five years? Describe the basis for your approach to this project. What research do you rely upon for your proposed approach? Describe the resources needed to accomplish your goals, and how you plan to obtain them. What are the goals and outcomes identified for this project? What was the process for developing the outcomes? How do you use lessons learned from previous projects? Describe your organization's greatest strengths in terms of your capacity to achieve your intended outcomes. Are you clear on what you expect your support to achieve? Are your expectations realistic? And do your monitoring processes track delivery against expectations? How many stage gates for client feedback do you have? Are they as light-touch as possible for the client? Can you track whether clients use the advice, not just how they value it on completion why? Do you ask clients which would have been more value: the advisory input they received or the cost of it in cash? Can/should you track changes in enterprise operations or changes in enterprise performance (growth) as indicators of effectiveness of support? What proxy indicator would show whether value for money is going up or down? How can you use feedback to guide service providers and to feed into design of support, selection of topics, mechanisms and providers? How do you incorporate feedback from service providers in addition to enterprise feedback? (How) should you track what happens to clients after your input is finished? How transparent are you willing to be with your results, so as to benefit the ecosystem? How can you improve any of your processes to reduce burdens on clients or improve quality, cost-effectiveness or scalability? What significant challenges inhibit your ability to achieve your intended outcomes? How do you evaluate your programs? What tools do you have in place? How do you incorporate what you learn into your ongoing and future work? What is the plan for evaluation for this project? What timescales are used in evaluating performance? What resources are allocated for evaluation in the project budget?	
	Performance Measurement	Very limited measurement and tracking of performance; all or most evaluation based on anecdotal evidence; organization collects some data on program activities and outputs (e.g., number of children served) but has no social impact measurement (measurement of social outcomes, e.g., drop-out rate lowered).	Performance partially measured and progress partially tracked; organization regularly collects solid data on program activities and outputs (e.g., number of children served) but lacks data driven, externally validated social impact measurement.	Performance measurement is aligned with an explicit theory of change. Well-developed system used for measuring organization's performance and progress on a regular basis, including KPIs on both the organization's internal performance, and the impact on customers. Hierarchy of measure, calculate, estimate is used.	Best practice. Comprehensive system used for measuring organization's performance and progress on continual basis, including social and organizational impact of program and activities; small number of clear, measurable, and meaningful key performance indicators; alignment with theory of change; social impact measured based on longitudinal studies with control groups, and performed or supervised by third-party experts.				
	Evaluation, performance analysis and program adjustments	Organization has no understanding of the value of tracking its outcomes. Few external performance comparisons made; internal performance data rarely used to improve program and organization.	Some efforts made to benchmark activities and outcomes against outside world; internal performance data used occasionally to improve organization. Basic theory of change is in place	Theory of change has been developed, and organizational and social KPIs aligned with, and reviewed at least regularly against internal and external benchmarks. Qualitative feedback is collected to test assumptions and inform drivers/ barriers to outcomes. Evidence of data driven decisions based on findings. Organization regularly reviews the actual and field literature and incorporates relevant lessons. External party is used for objective evaluation	Organization knows what it accomplishes and why (based on quantitative and qualitative data), and can articulate how it will apply what it learned. Evidence of data driven decisions. Leaders explain where outcomes are not achieved and there is evidence of continual evaluation process to inform strategies to improve ability to meet outcomes in such cases. Comprehensive internal and external benchmarking part of the culture and used by staff in target-setting and daily operations; high awareness of how all activities rate against internal and external benchmarks; systematic practice of making adjustments and improvements on basis of benchmarking. Organization is cognisant of and fluent in the wider literature (academic and field) of what is known and not known and the relevance to the program. Regular external evaluation is deployed to support learning				
	Validation	No/ limited validation checks take place on performance data.	Regular sense checking takes place. Qualitative feedback interactions are used to confirm quantitative performance measures	A formal validation process is in place and is used, including at least 3 of the following: Separate data enterer and reviewer. Data is signed off by member of senior management. Primary evidence is provided. Measures are compared against previous periods. All deviations are followed up for explanation. Quantitative measures are confirmed in qualitative interactions. Queries and resolutions are logged. Basis of measurement is clearly described. External party is used.	Thorough validation process is strictly followed. Including most of following: Separate data enterer and reviewer. Data is signed off by member of senior management. Primary evidence is provided. Measures are compared against previous periods. All deviations are followed up for explanation. Quantitative data is confirmed through and triangulated with qualitative feedback. Queries and resolutions are logged. Basis of measurement is clearly described. External party is used.				
Financial Sustainability	Funding Mix and Planning	Three of the following: The ED and board member(s) cannot articulate their funding mix. The organization is overly dependent on one source of funding. The organization cannot articulate a plan for fundraising. The board is not involved in fundraising. Lack of fundraising skills and experience in management and the board	Two of the following: The ED and board member(s) cannot articulate their funding mix. The organization is overly dependent on one source of funding. The organization cannot articulate a plan for fundraising. The board is not involved in fundraising. Lack of fundraising skills and experience in management and the board	The organization has several funding sources OR 20-50% revenue generated from external sources. Fundraising/ income generation skills and expertise are evident on the board and in senior management. The fundraising goals (for the organization or the project) and overall budget are realistic based on the economy and past experience. There is alignment between program funding and strategy.	The organization has strategically aligned diversified contributed income, both in terms of # of unders and sources including local/ national/ regional, public and private. OR The organization has significant revenue generation (>50%). The organization is highly skilled and experienced in fundraising/ fee-for-services aligned with strategy. The fundraising goals (for the organization or the project) and overall budget are realistic based on the economy and past experience.			How much of the project funding is committed? What will happen if you don't receive the anticipated funding from other sources (known and unknown)? How did you arrive at your budget estimates? (Ask them to further explain any line items that are questionable or unclear). What financial statements do you generate? How frequently? Who prepares them? Who reviews them? Describe the financial expertise on your board. What role does the board play in financial oversight? What is the process for providing the board with regular financial information? Describe your organization's current financial state. Has the organization borrowed money? If so, what are the terms of the loan? Was borrowing for capital expenditures such as a building or to cover an operating loss? (If debts exceed available cash) what is your plan for debt reduction? (If there was an operating loss) what are you going to do to avoid another loss this year? What is your vision for (continued) financial health? Where do you see the organization, financially, in five years? How is the risk of fraud mitigated? Describe your fund development plan (i.e., fundraising goals and plan for reaching them). How is the board involved in fundraising? What role do board members play in developing strategies to maintain or grow the organization's contributed income? How do you monitor progress against your fundraising goals? What role does the board play in this process?	
	Organizational Fundraising Capabilities	The organization has a clear need for increased capacity: - Has no fundraising target or strategy in place. - Does not monitor on a regular, systematic basis its income or its proposals. - Organization lacks the internal capability to design theories of change, logic frameworks, project cycles, and narrative and financial proposals which are necessary for fundraising. - Reliance on a single budget for the entire organization and its activities for all fundraising. - Organization meets at least 50% of its annual fundraising target. - Organization lacks a systematic approach to key fundraising processes i.e. authorisations of proposals and contracts; pursuing new fundraising opportunities; tracking income; tracking contracts and reports; and engaging donors for new business	Basic capabilities are in place: - Fundraising target articulated. - Organization possesses at least 1 of the following: capability statement; donor mapping; and partner/competitor landscape analysis - Organization tracks either income or proposals; but not reviewed by management. - One or two members of the organization have the capability to design theories of change, logic frameworks, project cycles, and narrative and financial proposals. - Ability to design basic project budgets. - Frequently delivers donor funded projects that require cost extensions, late reports, and disallowances due to non-compliance. - Organization meets at least 75% of its fundraising target. - Organization has agreed procedures for at least 2 of the following: authorisations of proposals and contracts; pursuing new fundraising opportunities; tracking income; tracking contracts and reports; and engaging donors for new business	- 6-8 of the following are in place: - Multi-year fundraising strategy in writing with clear financial targets - Strong new business development tool kit including: capability statement; donor mapping; and partner/competitor landscape analysis - Clear funding pipeline, tracking income and proposals to inform management decision making - Established internal business processes for designing theories of change, logic frameworks, project cycles, and narrative and financial proposals - Ability to design project budgets by activities and objectives; in conjunction with partners; and in compliance with donor requirements. - Donor contract management: routinely delivers donor funded projects on time, accurately, and in compliance with donor requirements. - Financial Partners: organization exceeds its annual fundraising targets and generates future income. - Has a systematic, systematized approach to authorisations of proposals and contracts; pursuing new fundraising opportunities; tracking income; tracking contracts and reports; and engaging donors for new business. - Possesses a range of organisational policies (anti-fraud, expenses, safeguarding, audit, etc) to pass donor due diligence; and approved by board. - The organisation allocates roles and responsibilities for fundraising across the team.	- 8-10 of the following are in place: - Multi-year fundraising strategy in writing with clear financial targets - Strong new business development tool kit including: capability statement; donor mapping; and partner/competitor landscape analysis - Clear funding pipeline, tracking income and proposals to inform management decision making - Established internal business processes for designing theories of change, logic frameworks, project cycles, and narrative and financial proposals - Ability to design project budgets by activities and objectives; in conjunction with partners; and in compliance with donor requirements. - Donor contract management: routinely delivers donor funded projects on time, accurately, and in compliance with donor requirements. - Financial Partners: organisation exceeds its annual fundraising targets and generates future income. - Has a systematic, systematized approach to authorisations of proposals and contracts; pursuing new fundraising opportunities; tracking income; tracking contracts and reports; and engaging donors for new business. - Possesses a range of organisational policies (anti-fraud, expenses, safeguarding, audit, etc) to pass donor due diligence; and approved by board. - The organisation allocates roles and responsibilities for fundraising across the team.				
	Enterprise contributions	Enterprises do not contribute financially.	Enterprise contributions are being tested, and leadership can articulate a vision for how they will play an increasing role in organization's financial plan. Framing of service is in terms of value add, not charity.	Enterprise contributions are contributing >20% of total program costs (including overhead), and a clear plan is in place demonstrating an increasing contribution over time	Enterprise contributions are contributing >50% of total costs, and revenue generation is central to strategic plans.			How would you describe the health and balance of your funding mix — i.e. is it diversified enough? What areas, if any, do you seek to change or improve? How?	
	HR Management	Staff turnover seems unusually high. There is no evidence of a human resources function within the organization — no job descriptions, no organizational chart, etc. No/ very limited training, coaching or feedback. No systems/ processes to identify new management talent. Relatively high number of vacancies	Moderate staff turnover. Limited human resources function e.g. out of date procedures/ job descriptions. No active development plans for staff. Feedback and coaching occur sporadically. Performance is evaluated occasionally. Limited willingness to ensure high-quality job occupancy. Basic talent identification process. Relatively high number of vacancies	Organizational structure is clear and there are logical lines of reporting for staff. Recruitment, development and retention of managers is priority. Development plans in place for key staff. Frequent formal and informal training/coaching. Performance of staff regularly evaluated and discussed. Initiatives suitable for identifying and attracting high quality talent. Skill is prioritised over experience when hiring. Hiring is proactive rather than reactive. Contractors and/or consultants are used and managed appropriately.	Six + of the following: Low staff turnover. Organizational structure is clear and there are logical lines of reporting for staff. Recruitment, development and retention of managers is priority. Development plans in place for key staff. Frequent formal and informal training/coaching. Performance of staff regularly evaluated and discussed. Initiatives suitable for identifying and attracting high quality talent. Skill is prioritised over experience when hiring. Hiring is proactive rather than reactive. Contractors and/or consultants are used and managed appropriately.			Describe your organizational structure and staff roles/reporting relationships. How are staff recruited and hired? How are staff oriented and trained? What is your staff turnover rate for the last 2 years?	
HR	Project staff	The key project staff do not have the necessary experience/ skills and/or training to do the job and appear to be unsuitable	The staff appear to have questionable skills / experience relevant to the program, and no replacement plan if a staff member leaves	The staff appear to have adequate skills and experience, but no replacement plan if a staff member leaves	There is sufficient staff with the skills and experience, and solid risk management plans for staff resignation.			Who are the staff members responsible for the proposed project? What are their backgrounds and qualifications for their jobs? How do you handle staff performance reviews? How do you invest in professional development for staff? What happens if one of the key project staff resigns?	
	CEO and management	Little attention to organization vision. CEO has difficulty building trust with others, micromanages others. CEO is openly judgemental/ critical of others. CEO and management are uncomfortable with complexity and ambiguity. Have difficulty in considering financial implications.	Visible commitment to organization. CEO expresses confidence in others ability to be successful. Shares own experience and expertise. Earns respect of others. Some ability to cope with complexity and ambiguity. Financial implications are considered for major decisions.	CEO and management exudes passion and commitment for the organization. Anticipates upcoming problems and have a sense of urgency for problem solving. CEO gives others freedom to work their own way and try ideas. CEO/ senior management respected and used for counsel and advice. Complex information can be quickly distilled into core issues. Evidence of robust strategies. Sound financial judgment, and constantly consider financial implications of decisions.	CEO and management exudes curiosity and contagious passion and commitment for the organization. Anticipates upcoming problems and have a sense of urgency for problem solving. Win-win relationships are consistently set up within and outside organization. CEO lets others make decisions and take charge. Exceptional charisma, and a track record of learning and personal development. Ability to quickly synthesize complexity, make informed decisions in ambiguous situations. Strategic alternatives are formed and associated rewards, risks and mitigating actions are identified. Financial implications are considered naturally in decision making.				
Delivery Team	Incentives	No incentive system to speak of, or incentive system that is ineffective and/ or generates bad will (e.g. large pay disparity within teams)	Some basic elements of incentive system in place; may include one of the following: competitive salary (possibly partly performance based); attractive career development options; opportunities for leadership and entrepreneurship; some evidence of motivational effect on staff performance.	Many elements of incentive system in place; includes two or three of the following: competitive salary (possibly partly performance based); attractive career development options; opportunities for leadership and entrepreneurship; obvious effect in motivating staff to over deliver.	Well designed, clear and well accepted incentive system, including the following: competitive salary (possibly partly performance based); attractive career development options; opportunities for leadership and entrepreneurship; system effective in motivating staff to over deliver.			Please describe any staff incentives, and the compensation packages offered.	
	Board	No board is in place. Or three or more of the following: Limited diversity of experience in membership. From limited sectors. Low commitment to organization's success. Poor attendance at meetings. Provide little direction, support and accountability to leadership. Not fully informed about significant matters. Management team have a strong dependence on the CEO.	One or two of the following: Limited diversity of experience in membership. From limited sectors. Low commitment to organization's success. Poor attendance at meetings. Provide little direction, support and accountability to leadership. Not fully informed about significant matters. Management team have a high dependence on the CEO, and organization would appear very different from without her/him.	Membership with broad variety of fields of practice and experience, drawn from non-profit, corporate, academia, media, government. Includes program related expertise. Proven track record of addressing organization's issues. Good attendance at regular meetings. Provide strong support, direction and accountability. Mutual respect between board and leadership. Reliance rather than dependence on CEO. Several of management team could fill position.	All of the following: Membership with broad variety of fields of practice and experience, drawn from non-profit, corporate, academia, media, government. Includes program related expertise. Includes expertise in building successful companies. Proven track record of addressing organization's issues. Good attendance at regular meetings. Provide strong support, direction and accountability. Mutual respect between board and leadership. Reliance rather than dependence on CEO. Several of management team could fill position.			Please describe the board, their experience and backgrounds, involvement and commitments. Could the senior management team manage in the absence of the CEO?	
Selection	Selection	Lack of competitive selection process/ selection determined by factors external to the business (e.g. donors), little consideration of the profile and capacity of prospective participants; framing of service as charity rather than value add; overoptimistic market estimates.	Basic selection criteria are in place; a general profile of suitable participants is outlined; portfolio is described in general terms with little segmentation; little articulation of factors affecting capacity	- Clear articulation of the profile of enterprise sought, and common characteristics. - Clear articulation of the profile of entrepreneur/ team sought - Absorption capacity of the enterprise and participants is included as selection determinant - Target businesses are segmented - Service is framed as value additive - Enterprises make contributions to cost of services - Refined multi-stage selection guides resource allocation over course of program	- Clear articulation of the profile of enterprise sought, and common characteristics. - Absorption capacity of the enterprise and participants is included as selection determinant - Target businesses are segmented - Service is framed as value additive - Enterprises make contributions to cost of services - Quality of applicant pool is reportedly high and justification for increasing scale of offering - Refined multi-stage selection guides resource allocation over course of program			What stage of business to target? Do enterprises have business fundamentals in place yet? If not, can you support this or do we risk distracting from actual objectives? Are the businesses formalizing dynamic or venture? Absorption capacity: Which kind of support are enterprises able to make use of, given their capacity and other priorities? Do you have mechanisms to screen out those with too limited capacity to use the support or with business models that are too weak to thrive relative to the support on offer? Is support allocated evenly across all participants, or is their targeting where it is most likely to change success rates?	

	Outreach	Desk based outreach; little/no footprint on the ground; limited in-country networks; overdependence on one potential backbone partner	Reasonable recruitment period and effort is described; the organization is a new entrant or has limited market traction; the offer may leave room for misinterpretation	The organization has a local presence and is embedded in the local ecosystem. Outreach is broad and thorough. Quality applicants are attracted, with a high proportion being suitable for the program.	The organization demonstrates ability to attract a high quality applicant pool. The organization has a local presence and is embedded in the local ecosystem. Outreach is broad and thorough. Offer is clear to prospective enterprises, and does not set unrealistic expectations			Is your offer sufficiently clear that applicants understand what they will and won't get, and can judge whether or not to apply? Is outreach getting you the 'easy' applicants or the applicants that most need our support? Do you have any information to screen out those for whom addisnality is low, because they would either thrive or fail irrespective of support? Are your selection criteria transparent?
Needs-based program design	Needs based program design	Program design based on expectations; lack of ability to articulate strategic priorities and needs of particular enterprises; curriculum heavy offerings; little thought of how to engage entrepreneurs in delivery; lack of understanding of enterprise profile/capacity; cost/enterprise outside anticipated benchmarks; timing of program delivery not considered. No assessment of gaps in ability of current program to meet recipient needs. Limited ability to create new programs, new programs created largely in response to funding available. Little thought of recipient entrepreneur/team.	A reasonable approach to aligning the program with enterprise needs is outlined; there is limited flexibility within the program to adapt to emerging needs; enterprise dropout during the program is not uncommon; Limited assessment of gaps in ability of existing program to meet recipient needs, with limited action taken. Some ability to modify existing programs and create new programs. Basic assessment of recipient entrepreneur/team is carried out	The organization exhibits the majority of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enterprise driven needs assessment</li> <li>- Entrepreneurial team assessment</li> <li>- The profile of participants is considered</li> <li>- The program is aligned with the capacity of participants</li> <li>- Evidence of program timing and intensity being informed by demand and results</li> <li>- Cost/ enterprise is within acceptable benchmarks, and or justified case is made</li> <li>- Focus on issues related to enterprise core is evident including planning, market validation and sales.</li> <li>- Needs assessment is on-going, with flexibility to emergent needs.</li> <li>- Mentoring is structured if a part of the program.</li> <li>- Demonstrated ability to modify and fine-tune existing programmes and create new programs.</li> </ul>	The organization can demonstrate how the following factors continue to shape the program design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enterprise driven needs assessment: helps entrepreneur improve their understanding of their own needs</li> <li>- Entrepreneurial team assessment</li> <li>- The profile of participants is considered</li> <li>- The program is aligned with the capacity of participants</li> <li>- Evidence of program timing and intensity being informed by demand and results</li> <li>- Cost/ enterprise is within acceptable benchmarks, and or justified case is made</li> <li>- Focus on issues related to enterprise core is evident including planning, market validation and sales.</li> <li>- Needs assessment is on-going, with flexibility to emergent needs.</li> <li>- Mentoring is optimally structured if a part of the program.</li> <li>- Evidence the organization is capable of building trust and relationships with participants.</li> </ul>			Commonalities: What do enterprises have in common that might make cohort events relevant to them all? By stage or sector? How important is peer exchange to your cohort or portfolio? How much can you spend? Can you afford one-to-one tailor-made support? How risky are the enterprises and how much are you willing to invest in them at this stage? How much can and should you invest in needs assessments and scoping, given this is critical and is a value in itself, though is only a precursor to provision of support? How can you make needs assessments more valuable than burdensome to the client? Can you use/adapt standard needs assessments tools? Do they work? What is needed to supplement them? Are you making use of all team interactions with clients to continue building an understanding of their needs? What needs do client enterprises self-identify? Do they have sufficient business experience to identify their longer-term needs? How quickly do you deploy advisory support once needs are understood? How much value is lost if you delay? Do you understand timeliness from the client perspective? How quickly do you adapt the advisory support offering when needs change? How often do you assess enterprise needs? Do you involve the client and provider in scoping the terms of reference for delivery? Is there a way to 'start small' and use small focused support as a way to build longer term support, without creating time gaps between chunks of provision? If support is provided in-house, do you have the right skillset amongst your program staff? If mentors are identified, have you matched needs well enough and what will incentivize mentors to remain engaged? How can a combination of face-to-face time followed by remote follow-up be planned, so as to maximize cost effectiveness?
	Needs based program design: Peer-to-peer	Absence of intentionally programmed peer interaction in a context where it would otherwise add value.	Their is limited recognition and leverage of peer-to-peer as an effective mechanism to drive performance (with a couple of the following in evidence): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Peer interaction is intentionally stimulated</li> <li>- Peer interactions are leveraged for learning</li> <li>- Evidence of peer problem solving</li> <li>- Group problem solving/ reverse curriculum methodology is used where there are classroom settings via a vis expert only delivery</li> <li>- Trust between peers is intentionally built by the program</li> <li>- Group relationships are considered in cohort selection (similar enterprise stages are grouped)</li> <li>- Participants and alumni referrals are common</li> </ul> Or efforts to leverage peer interaction are of limited effect	The program recognizes and intentionally leverages peer-to-peer as an effective mechanism to drive performance in a number of the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Peer interaction is intentionally stimulated</li> <li>- Peer interactions are leveraged for learning</li> <li>- Evidence of peer problem solving</li> <li>- Group problem solving/ reverse curriculum methodology is used where there are classroom settings via a vis expert only delivery</li> <li>- Trust between peers is intentionally built by the program</li> <li>- Group relationships are considered in cohort selection (similar enterprise stages are grouped)</li> <li>- Participants and alumni referrals are common</li> </ul>	The program recognizes and intentionally leverages peer-to-peer as an effective mechanism to drive performance in multiple ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Peer interaction is intentionally stimulated</li> <li>- Peer interactions are leveraged for learning</li> <li>- Evidence of peer problem solving</li> <li>- Group problem solving/ reverse curriculum methodology is used where there are classroom settings via a vis expert only delivery</li> <li>- Trust between peers is intentionally built by the program</li> <li>- Group relationships are considered in cohort selection (similar enterprise stages are grouped)</li> <li>- Participants and alumni referrals are common</li> </ul>			

Area	Element	Score	Key strengths/ weaknesses
		Year 1	
Strategy	Track record and accomplishments	0	0
	Mission and vision	0	0
	Commitment to SMEs	0	0
	Strategy Implementation	0	0
Performance Assesment	Feedback and monitoring relationships	0	0
	Performance Measurement	0	0
	Evaluation, performance analysis and program adjustments	0	0
	Validation	0	0
Financial Sustainability	Funding Mix and Planning	0	0
	Organizational Fundraising Capabilities	0	0
	Enterprise contributions	0	0
Delivery Team	HR Management	0	0
	Project staff	0	0
	CEO and management	0	0
	Incentives	0	0
Selection	Composition, commitment and involvement.	0	0
	Selection	0	0
	Outreach	0	0
Needs based program design	Needs based program design	0	0
	Needs based program design: Peer-to-peer	0	0

Operational Best Practice	Score
Selection	0
Needs-based program design	0
Financial sustainability	0
Performance Assessment	0
Delivery Team	0
Strategy	0

