Building a social and affordable housing investment tool

The purpose of the tool is to provide a rigorous, evidence-based business case to justify investment in social and social affordable housing in Australia. The ongoing critical shortage of social and affordable housing across Australia requires all stakeholders to work together to ensure both short term solutions and long-term correction in this fundamental element of our nation's social infrastructure and peoples' lives. The *Social and Affordable Housing Investment (SAHI) Tool* provides a unique and comprehensive tool to help those in the Australian housing sector better leverage investment to address this supply issue. It is intended for use by government housing and development agencies, State Treasuries, not-for-profits and industry stakeholders delivering housing policy, services and physical assets. Using the tool will help inform conversations within organisations and with partners across the sector, including public and private sector investors about the benefits of investment. This will help build a stronger policy context and identify capacity and capabilities gaps which currently inhibit delivery.

Supply of SAH isn't just about the cost of the built asset but about the holistic benefits of provision. The value of this tool is that it takes this form of expansive approach, with outcomes and indicators included across nine impact domains and three context domains. It addresses the complexity of defining the benefits to individuals, the community and government of providing safe and secure housing for all in order to better demonstrate the benefits of investment. As such the tool will help with identifying the current funding gap between the traditional cost-based approach and this benefits-based approach.

The source tool consolidates over 240 indicators, both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The aim has been to provide measurable and meaningful indicators to provide evidence to support existing and evolving practice. Due to data shortfalls and issues with data sharing, problems exist with quantifying much of the intrinsic benefits of housing, but this limitation remains important in providing an aspirational guidepost to future data gathering and use. The use of qualitative indicators as equals to quantitative ones is intended to better define benefits, enabling more informed policy and investment-making and delivery.

The Excel-based tool being developed will include a worked scenario for funding social housing to demonstrate how the source tool can be used. It will be available at our project website from April 2023. Work is also underway on developing a web-based version of the tool.

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About the SBEnrc

The SBEnrc develops projects informed by industry partner needs, secures national funding, project manages the collaborative research and oversees research into practice initiatives. Current Core Members include ATCO Australia, BGC Australia, Government of Western Australia, Queensland Government, Curtin University, Griffith University, RMIT University and Western Sydney University. The industry-driven research underpinning the achievements outlined in this publication would not have been possible without the valuable support of our core industry, government and research partners over the last two decades.