**Funding Mechanisms Spiderweb**

**Intro**
This tool was developed by a working group of the Funding Systems Change initiative composed by foundations and social innovators. Its purpose is to help foundations reflect on their funding mechanisms across different dimensions in the funding cycle. These include dimensions whose relevance or implications may not be obvious from the point of view of the foundation, but were surfaced as highly impactful for partner organisations and project holders. By filling out this spiderweb, you can reflect on a specific funding mechanism, and for example understand better why it works so well, surface assumptions, name potential challenges or uncover alternatives.

No two funding contexts are the same. Indeed, each social or environmental challenge, geographic, cultural and historical context, foundation and potential partner organisations, will bring unique attributes, needs and opportunities. Hence, this tool does not suggest that a 5 is always better than a 0. Only the specific context can determine which funding mechanism design is most appropriate and impactful. The main goal of using this tool is to become more aware of the choices behind existing or potential funding mechanisms, to better understand the implications of those choices, and to support the exploration of new ideas by broadening the spectrum of options.

**How to use**

**Time and materials**
- A printed copy of the spider web, a digital or a hand drawn version & a pen or laptop
- 15+ minutes for reflection

**Process**
- Choose a particular funding mechanism, such as a call for projects you have put out, a recurrent funding scheme your foundation runs for a specific topic or geography, or a participatory funding scheme you've set up for a community.
- Invite who you want to do this reflection process with (e.g. a team working on the same funding mechanism, foundation staff working on different funding mechanisms, your board, a partner you have worked with etc.)
- Look at your spider web and start wherever your attention goes first or as indicated by the numbers.
- Go through each dimension, reading the question as well as the context around it, and assess where your funding mechanism falls - from 0 to 5 (0 being closest to the centre of the web, 5 the most point) by highlighting the appropriate intersection in the web or colouring it in.
- Proceed in the same way until you have filled out your spider web.
- Remember that no two funding contexts are the same, so the goal is not to have 5s across the board, the goal is to reflect on how a particular funding mechanism is constructed and assess whether it is suited to the impact you wish to have in this particular context.
- Sometimes, the formal level or rule differs from the de facto practice. If that is the case you may want to visualise both, either by using two different colours or a label, and reflect on why this is the case and whether aligning theory and practice would be valuable.
- Sometimes, a dimension may not be fully applicable to your funding mechanism, in which case you can adapt the spiderweb to your needs or leave it blank. The fact that it’s not applicable may however also reveal something which you may want to reflect on together with your team or partner organisations.
- Sometimes, a dimension may not feel relevant to you, or you may not immediately see why this was included. The model was co-created over multiple months including the insights of different foundations and honest feedback from various social innovators. Certain practices which are considered ‘normal’ in the sector may be counter-productive to the intended impact of the foundation. If you notice that you are triggered by a certain dimension or cannot relate to it, you are invited to dig deeper into this dimension to better understand what it means and what the different practices and their implications are for your collaborators and intended impact.