NSW Department of Education

Welcome to the

Flexible Initiatives Trial Grant writing workshop

NSW GOVERNMENT

Acknowledgement of Country

Welcome

Presenters:

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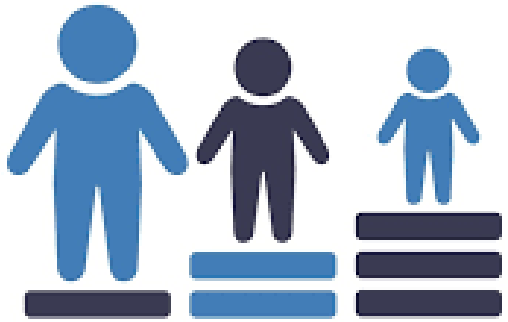
Irene Vella, Raj Kulkarni, Denisse Schweinsberg - Flexible Initiatives Trial team

Today’s session

Topic	Activity Type	Location
Ground rules	Information sharing	Main room
Motivation and outcomes	Group activity	Menti
Grant writing process	Information sharing	Main room
Phase 1: Learning	Information sharing	Main room
Phase 2: Thinking	Group activity	Menti
Phase 3: Planning	Group activity	Breakout room
Phase 4: Applying	Information sharing	Main room
Questions	Group activity	Main room

Ground rules

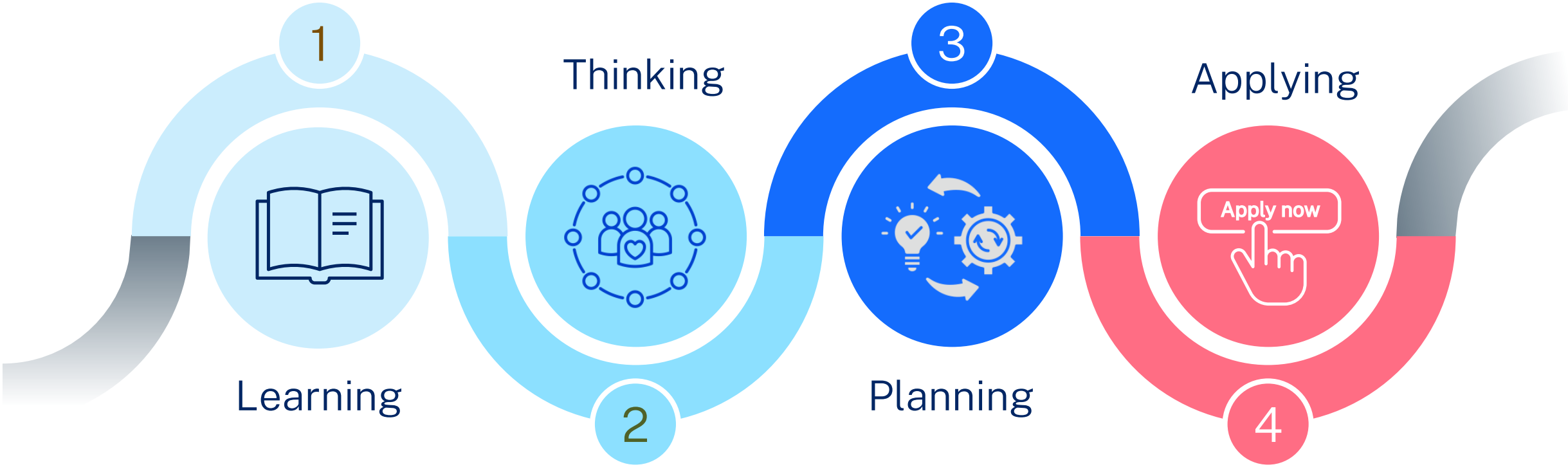
Probity



Equity

Support

Grant writing process



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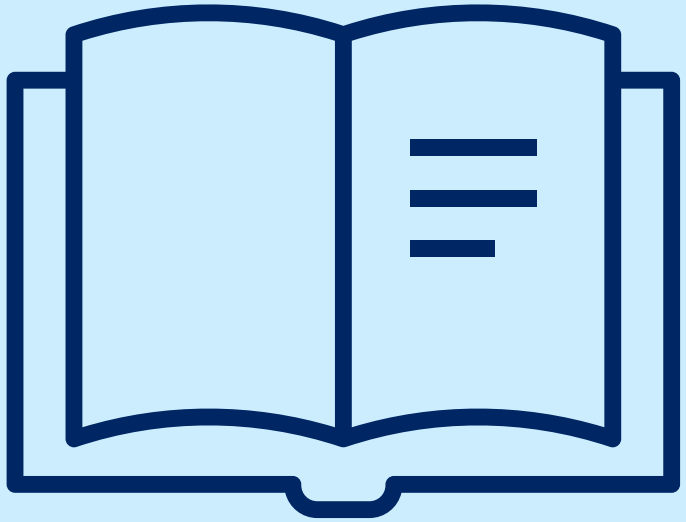
Learning



Phase 1

Key elements

$20 million over 2 years

12-month funding

Test and trial

All ECEC service types eligible

Competitive and versatile grants program

Program objectives

Increasing access

Increasing women's workforce participation

Increasing knowledge and capacity to meet local flexibility needs

Support educators delivering flexible models

Developing an evidence base for successful flexible models

Program streams

Stream 1A: Flexible Service Delivery

Smaller-scale operating model changes within one provider and service type.

Stream 1B: Establish new FDC

Establishment of new Family Day Care services in outer regional, remote and very remote areas (ARIA+, 2021)

Stream 2: Blended Service Delivery

Larger-scale innovative operating models involving partnerships between 2 service types.

Eligibility and funding rules

Key eligibility criteria

- Operate an approved ECEC in NSW
- NQS rating: at least ‘meeting’ the NQS
- Education and care to 0-6 year old children

Clear funding rules

- Eligible and ineligible activities and examples
- Caps and rules around minor capital works elements
- Rules for funding council and/or regulatory approvals

Learning phase outcomes check

Program objectives

- Understand the objectives
- Start to align my ideas to the objectives

Eligibility

- Understand all elements of eligibility
- Checked that my service / provider is eligible

Streams

- Understand the 3 different streams
- Consider which stream my idea falls into

Funding rules

- Understand the funding rules
- Know which types of items can and cannot be funded

2

Thinking

Phase 2

From idea to proposal

Local need and innovation

Criteria:

Provision of quantitative and/or qualitative evidence of a local need for more flexible ECEC, and a clear explanation of how the proposed activities will meet this need.

Demonstration that the initiative is innovative in testing and trialling a flexible model of delivering an ECEC service.

Consider how you would respond to these questions

How can you show what your current families need?

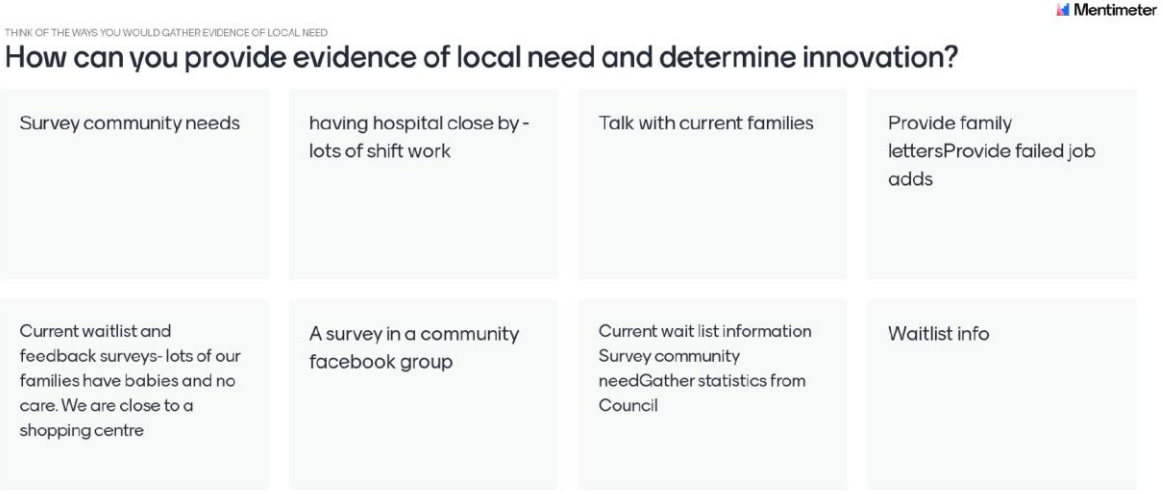
What are your local industry impacts? (shift work, job or study opportunities)

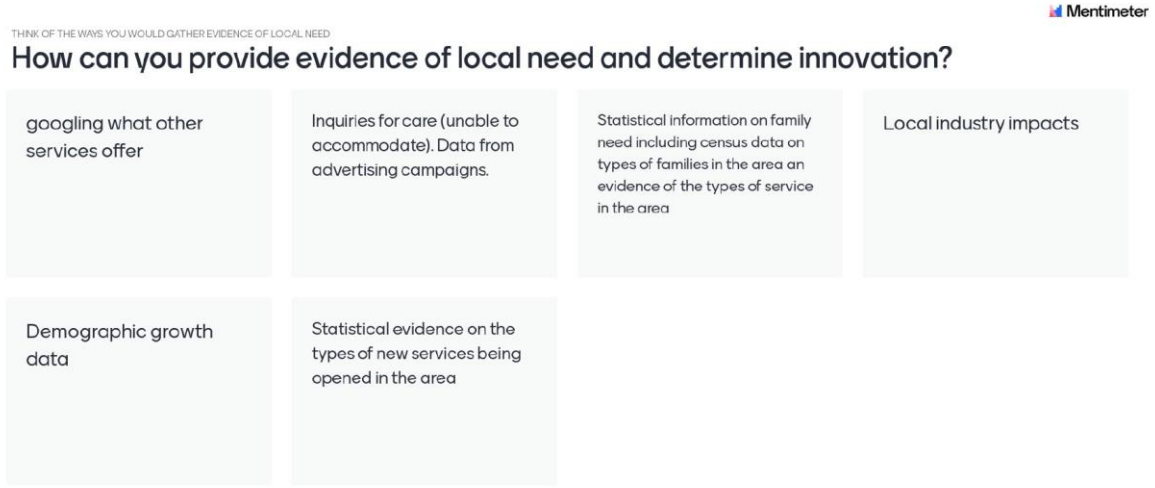
Diversity of community - what does your local community look like?

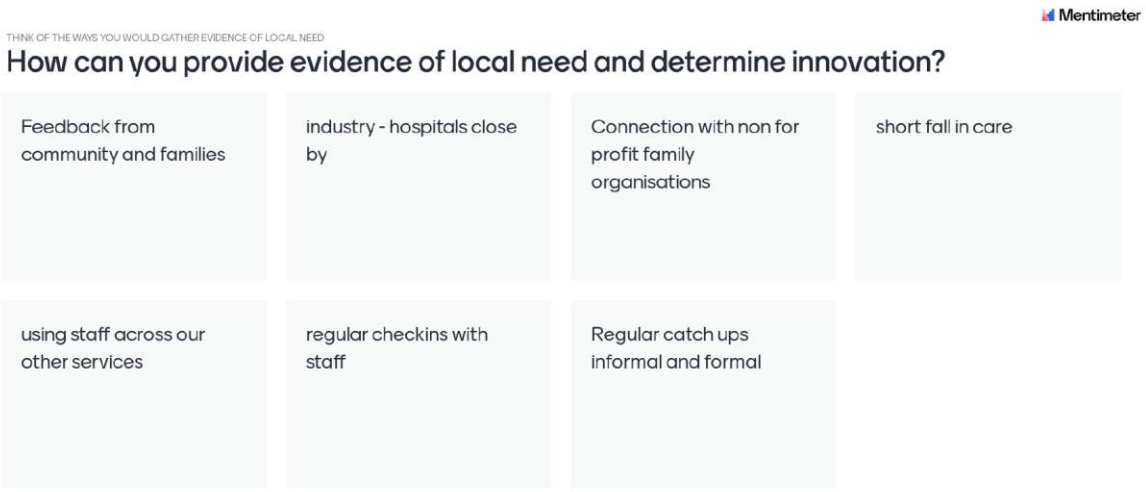
What are the barriers to accessing ECEC in your community?

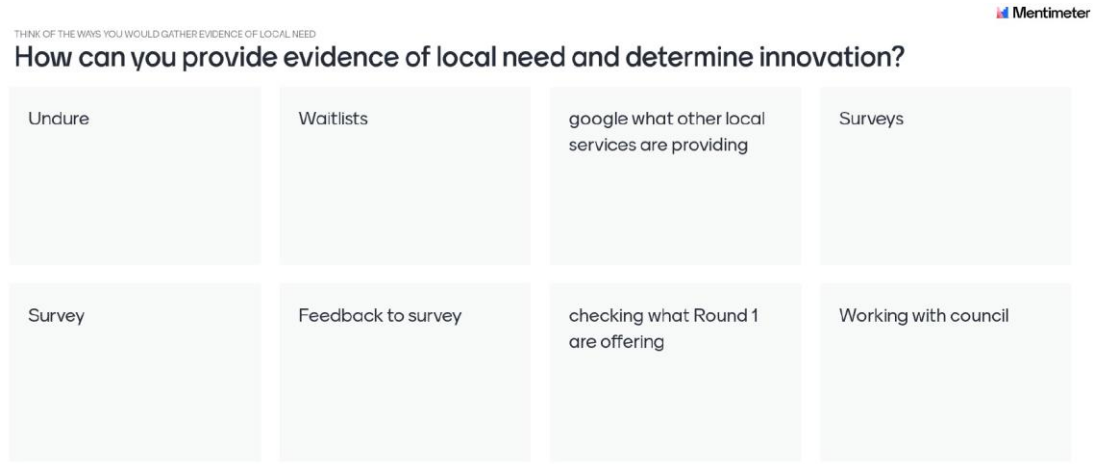
How is your initiative innovative in your community?

Menti responses: Local need and innovation









Staff wellbeing

Criteria:

Demonstration that the needs of the child, maintenance of quality care and staff wellbeing have been considered in delivery of proposed activities.

Consider how you would respond to these questions

Are your current staff on board with your proposal?

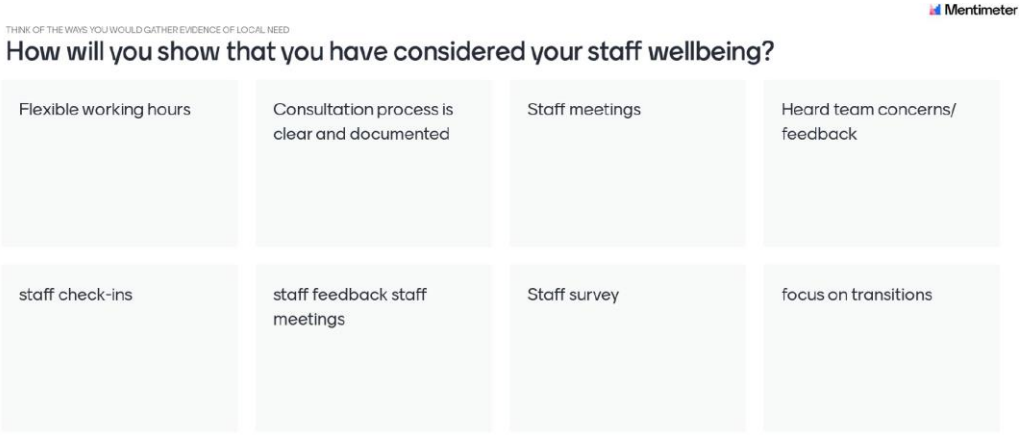
Do you have the current staff required to meet ratios?

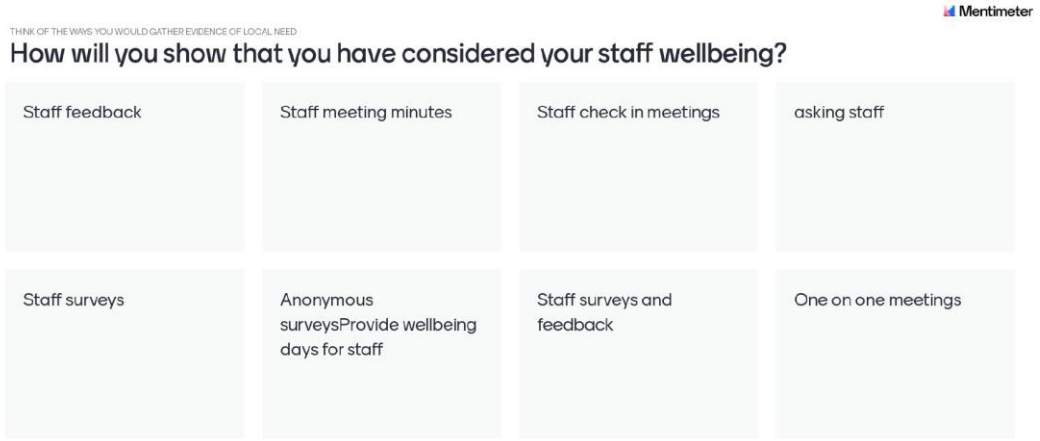
How will you be able to recruit more staff if needed?

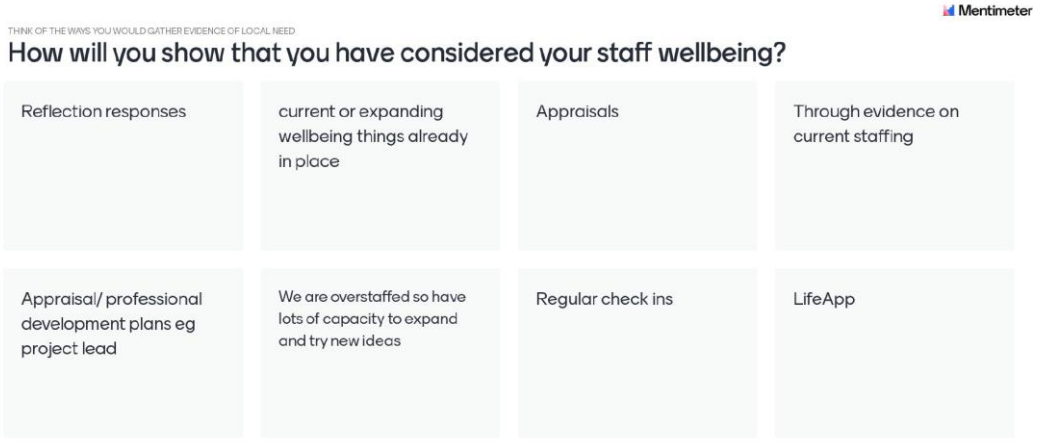
Have your staff expressed interest in increasing or working different work hours?

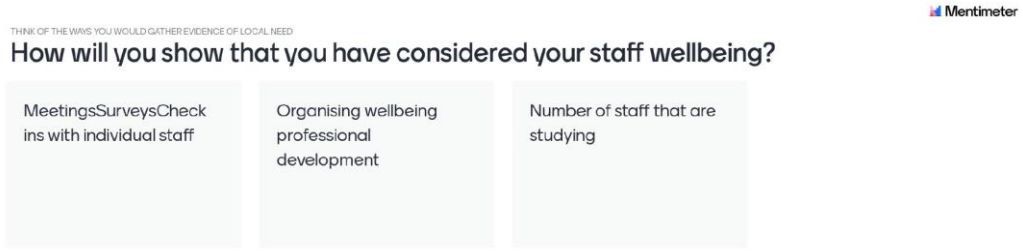
How will you track your staff wellbeing?

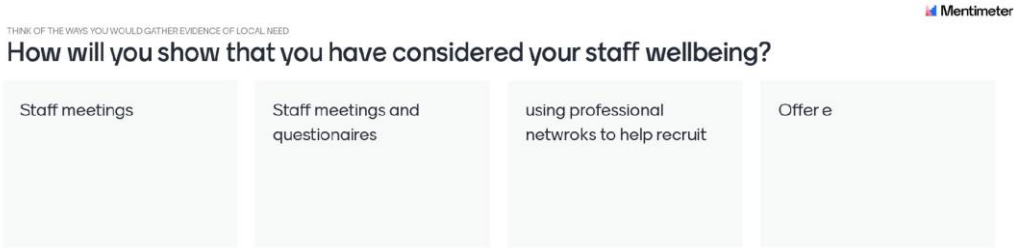
Menti responses: Staff wellbeing











Child needs, quality of care and accessibility

Criteria:

Demonstration that the needs of the child, maintenance of quality care and staff wellbeing have been considered in delivery of proposed activities.

The extent to which the application demonstrates that the proposed activities will be accessible to all children and families of the service's local community.

Consider how you would respond to these questions

How will you ensure current children are not impacted negatively?

How will you provide continuity of care?

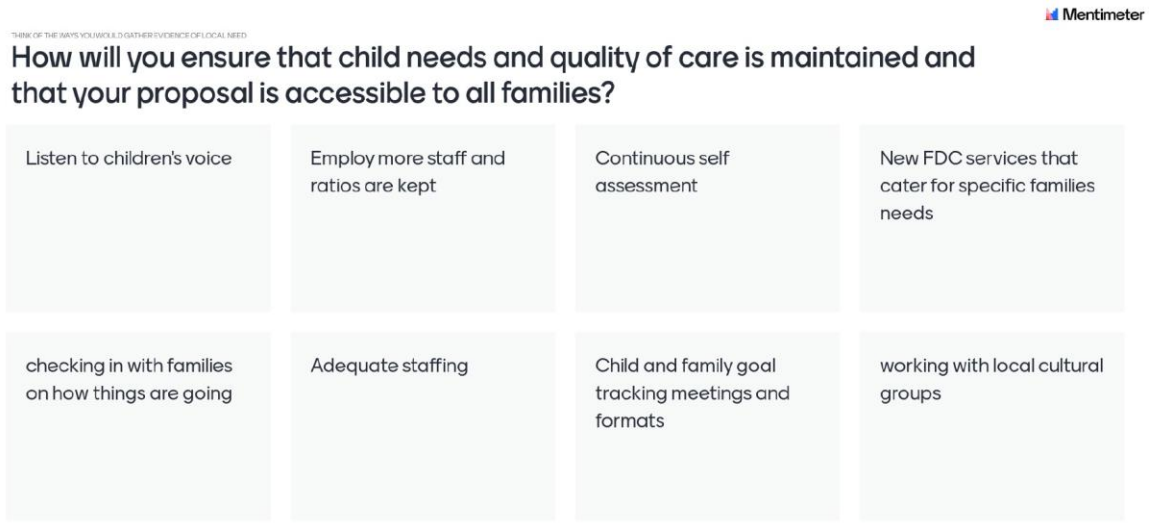
How will the children participating in the initiative transition/adapt to the initiative?

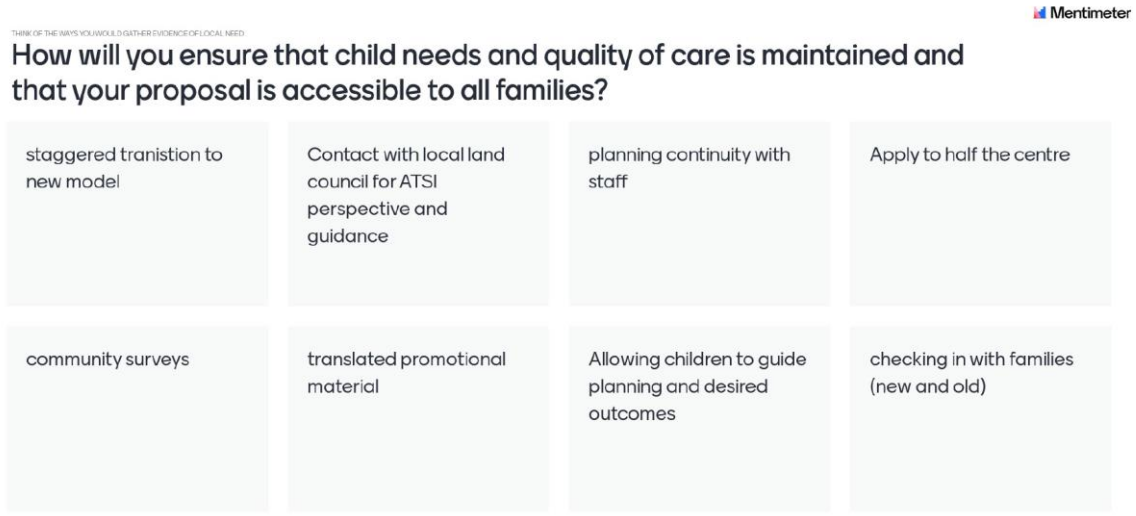
How will all children and families of your local community be able to access your initiative?

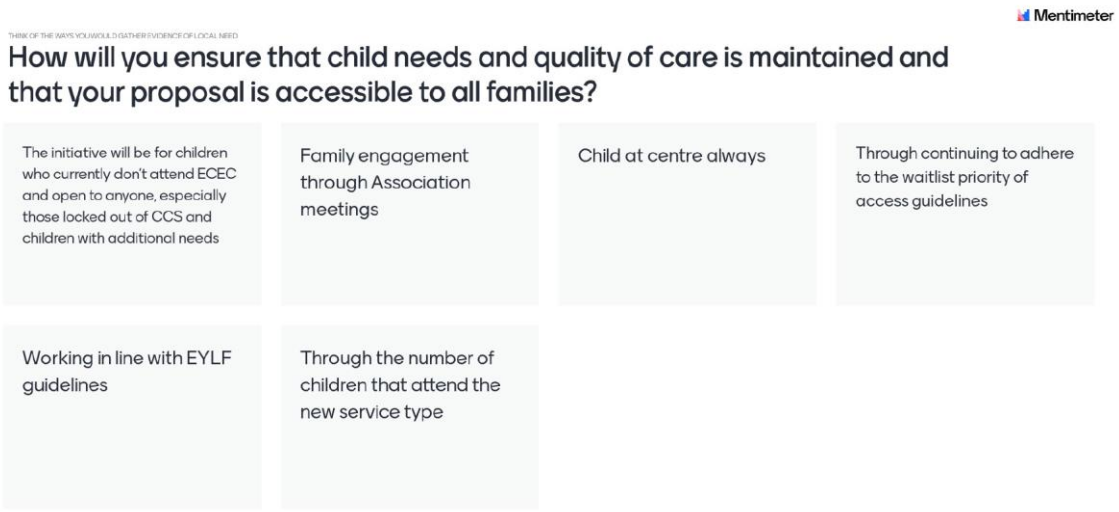
Have you considered accessibility and inclusion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities?

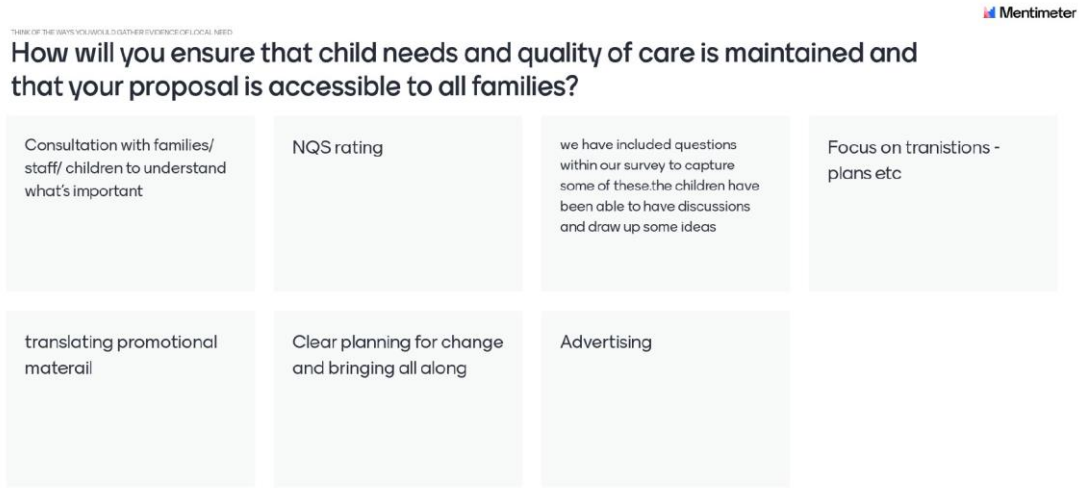
Have you considered all other accessible needs of your community?

Menti responses: Child needs, quality of care and accessibility









Sustainability and evaluation

Criteria:

Clear explanation as to how services intend to sustain or cease their program activities beyond the funded period, with consideration to participating children and families.

Clear explanation of how services will evaluate or determine the success of their trial program.

Consider how you would respond to these questions

How will your initiative be sustainable post funding period?

How will your initiative still be sustainable to families post funding period?

How will you evaluate your initiative?

How will you assist children and families if your initiative is unsustainable?

Menti responses: Sustainability and evaluation

How will you evaluate your initiative and determine sustainability? Have you considered an exit strategy to minimise impact to children and families?

- Family uptake
- Discuss with families
- keeping track of how many children are accessing
- Increase in utilisation
- Getting the families that need to return to work participating in the program
- asking new families if they are interested
- Feedback from staff
- Shift in demographics of access

How will you evaluate your initiative and determine sustainability? Have you considered an exit strategy to minimise impact to children and families?

- Completing checklists on milestones met by children
- Quarterly surveys
- No of new services, utilisation
- We already offer the initiative one day a week for a short period. The funding will be to expand to 5 days. If not sustainable, we go back to one days
- Need for care viability
- telling families early if the program cannot be sustained
- Promote as trial, so families know it may not continue if not utilised/needed ongoing

How will you evaluate your initiative and determine sustainability? Have you considered an exit strategy to minimise impact to children and families?

- keeping track of how many are accessing the change
- survey quarterly
- ask enrolling families is they would like this for next year
- Keeping initiate SMART so progress can be measured
- asking staff if they want it to continue
- telling families early if it will continue
- Identify any issues or barriers early and have a plan to redefine approaches

How will you evaluate your initiative and determine sustainability? Have you considered an exit strategy to minimise impact to children and families?

- communicating with families
- Gather feedback from stakeholders
- usage rates to see if we should continue
- Plan to measure success
- Determining need before implementing an initiative.
- seekingn other funding
- usage rates and wait listplanning to aim for achieve sustainability

Linking your proposal with assessment criteria

- Program objectives
- Local need
- Innovation
- Child wellbeing and staff needs
- Accessibility and inclusion
- Sustainability
- Value for money
- Evaluation

Thinking phase outcomes check

Align proposal to program objectives

- I understand the 5 key program objectives
- I know how to consider which objectives my proposal aligns with

Respond to assessment criteria

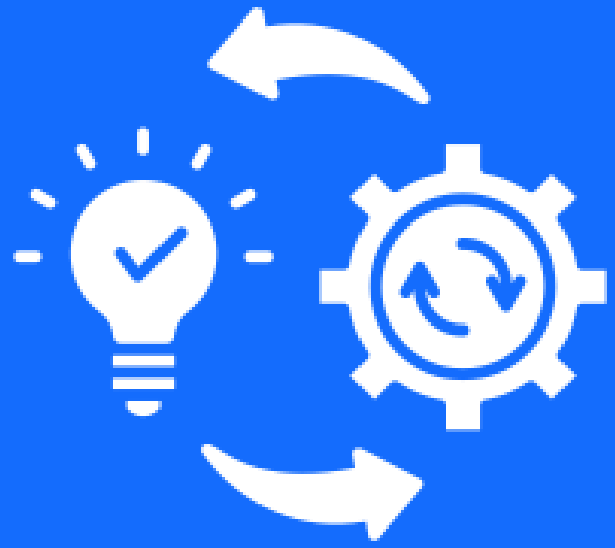
- I understand the 8 assessment criteria
- I know how to think about ways my proposal will respond to each criteria

Turn an idea into a proposal

- I understand how to develop an idea into a planned proposal

3

Planning



Phase 3

Breakout room
Budget Brainstorming activity

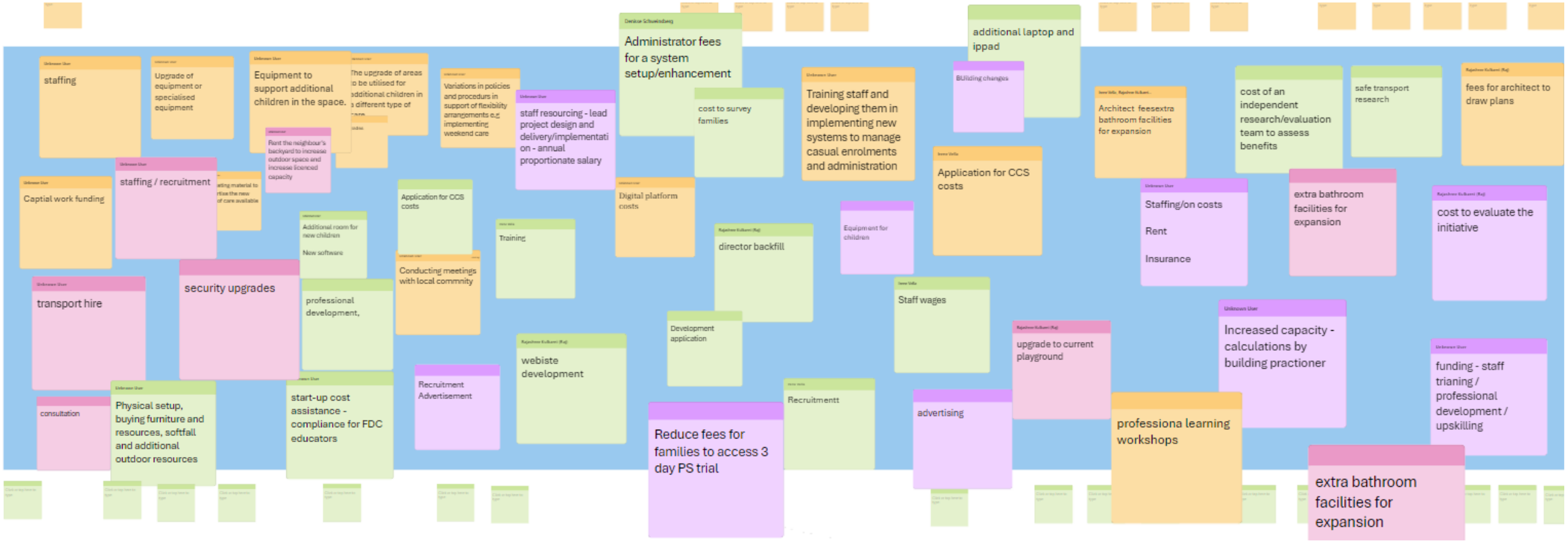
Step 1

- Brainstorm potential costs of FIT proposals
- Think big, don’t worry about funding rules

Step 2

- Review identified items against what can and cannot be funded

Activity responses: Brainstorming all costs



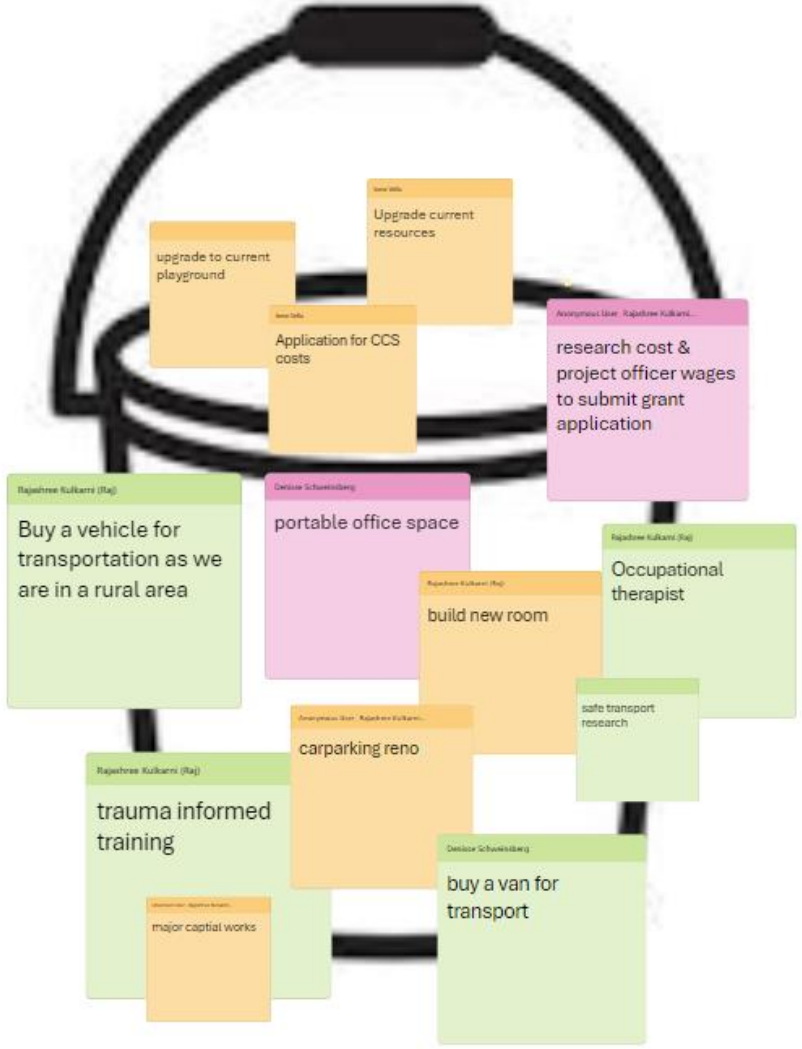
Activity responses: Reviewing costs

What can be funded – All Streams	What cannot be funded – All Streams
Staffing and recruitment costs: • Staffing and recruitment costs for activities directly related to the proposed initiative (educator and/or administrative and program-related; new or existing staff). • Staff learning and development costs directly related to the proposed initiative (for example, to train staff in the use of digital software to manage enrolments or rostering). **Operating expenses:** • Operating expenses directly related to the proposed initiative (for example, additional rent for opening longer hours or increased utility costs if required). • Software costs required to support the proposed initiative (for example subscription or upgrade costs) **Resources and equipment** • Resources or equipment required for the proposed initiative, where these items are not currently available at the service (for example purchasing additional educational materials, arts/crafts, furniture or fittings required) • purchase of tablets or computers to support the proposed initiative where these items are not currently available at the service. **Regulatory authority or local council fees:** • Fees payable to the regulatory authority or local council directly related to the proposed initiative **Transportation costs:** • Transportation costs (driver, additional educator for supervision, as well as vehicle hire and fuel costs) related to the proposed initiative.	**Staffing and recruitment costs:** • Recruitment and staffing costs not directly related to the proposed initiative (that is, costs relating to core service delivery). • Staff learning and developments costs not related to the proposed initiative (for example, trauma awareness, stress management counselling) • Costs related to allied health professionals **Operating expenses:** • Routine day-to-day operating expenses, such as maintenance, insurances, utility bills and consumable supplies not directly related to the proposed initiative. • Other one-off costs (for example, research proposals) **Resources and equipment** • Resources, equipment not directly related to the proposed initiative. • Resources, equipment that are currently available at the service will not be funded for an upgrade. **Regulatory authority or local council fees:** • Any regulatory and/or local council fees that have already been paid or are in process prior to the funding agreement being executed **Transportation costs:** • Any costs associated with purchase of a vehicle for transportation.

What can be funded – Minor capital works (1a & 2)	What cannot be funded – Minor capital works (1a & 2)

Minor Capital Works:
• Minor capital works, that are directly linked to the proposed initiative, limited to essential infrastructure, and facility improvements aimed at:
  ○ ensuring compliance with any changes required for regulatory and/or council approvals.
  ○ ensuring a safe and conducive learning environment for children accessing the proposed initiative.
• Minor capital works, that are directly linked to the proposed initiative, may be considered up to a maximum of $100,000 for all eligible service types, excluding an existing family day care service.
• Minor capital works, that are directly linked to the proposed initiative, may be considered up to a maximum of $20,000 for an existing family day care service.
	Capital Works:
	• Major capital works cannot be funded.
	• Minor capital works that are not directly linked to the proposed initiative.
	• Minor capital work costs over $100,000 for all eligible service types, excluding existing family day care services.
	• Minor capital work costs over $20,000 for existing family day care services
	• Minor capital works associated with the major construction or extensive renovations that substantially change the structure cannot be funded.
	• Minor capital works that cannot be reasonably expected to be completed within the funding period
	• Minor capital works also associated with the following cannot be funded:
	  ○ landscaping projects un-related to safety
	  ○ non-essential decorative enhancements and aesthetic improvements
	  ○ expenses related to the purchase of land or property
	  ○ items with high risk, such as trampolines.

Cannot be funded under FIT



Value for money

Achieving value for money is important to ensure the benefits of grants are maximised for the people of NSW.

- competitive grant process
- costs to families
  - intended fees for the proposed initiative represents value for money for families
- allowances for greater costs in rural and remote areas
- No minimum or maximum amounts (exception for minor capital works)
- ask for what you need, provide rationale
- aim for reasonable costs (don't under or over inflate)

Funding stages

Design and approvals

- Architecture fee
- DA approvals
- Safe transport research

Initial costs

- Hardware (laptop)
- Security upgrades
- Play equipment for new cohort

Implementation

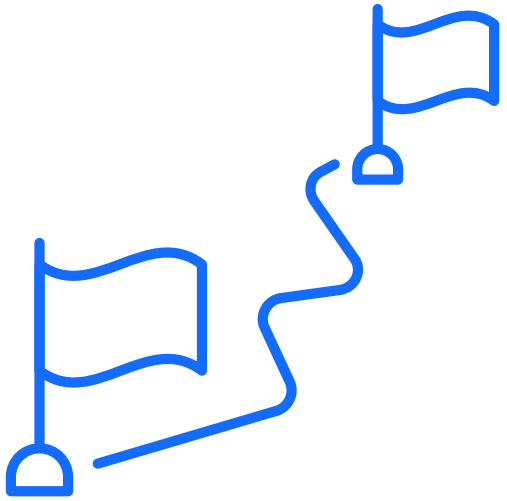
- Staff wages
- Resources
- Additional utilities

Post trial costs

- Survey software subscription
- Director backfill, evaluation, acquittal
- Sustainability (access CCS)

Milestones and timelines

Milestone: "A milestone is a key event in your proposed initiative that must be met before you can move to the following stage in your timeline."



Proposal dependent

Stream dependent

Recognising milestones

Regulatory approval

Recruiting staff

Training staff

Notifying ECEC RA

New software subscription

Feedback from families

Partner service meetings

Starting minor renovations

Enrolling children

Buying resources

Staff wellbeing check-in

New rostering system

Re-arranging indoor space

Bus hired and route planned

Curriculum updates for new cohorts

Operating hours updated

Planning for sustainability

Inclusion planning

New session times created

Refurbishment completed

Translated promotional material

Backfill for Director

Continuity mapped

Evaluation commences

Timelines

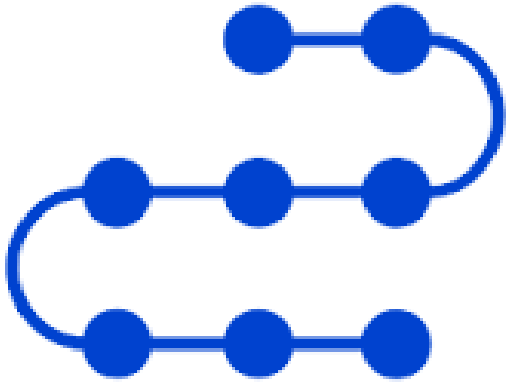
Plotting your timeline

How do you plan to deliver your proposal?

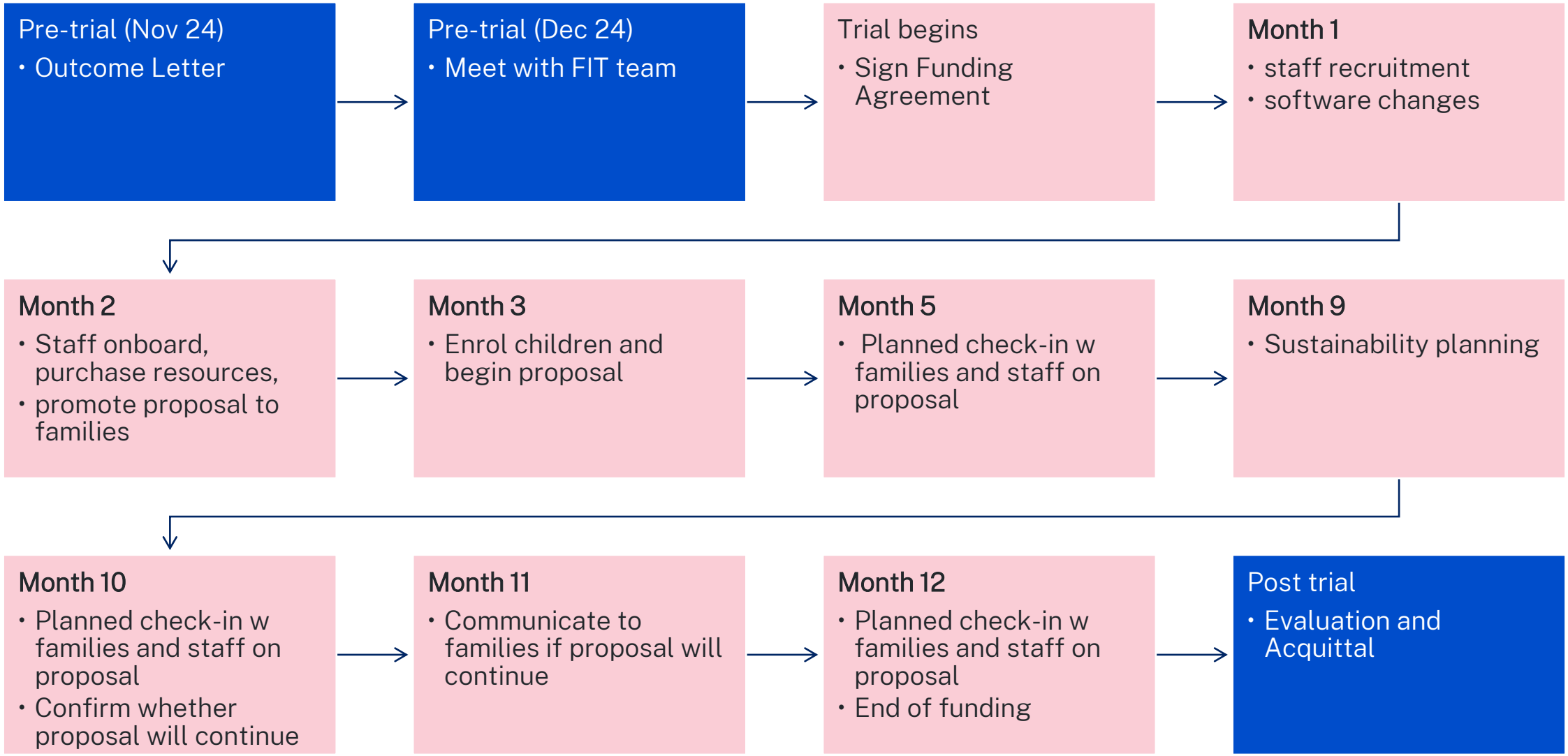
What milestones will you need to meet along the way?

When do you plan to meet those milestones?

Can your proposal be implemented within the 12-month timeframe?



Stream 1A: Operating model change



Stream 1A: Minor capital works

Pre-trial (Nov 24)
- Successful Outcome Letter

Pre-trial (Dec 24)
- Meet with FIT team

Trial begins
- Sign Funding Agreement

Month 1
- Seek DA lodged

Month 3
- DA approved
- Construction begins

Month 4
- Promotion of proposal to families
- Children enrolled

Month 5
- Construction completed
- Furniture and resources purchased

Month 6
- Seek Regulatory approval
- Enrolments commence

Month 9
- Planned check-in w families and staff on proposal

Month 10
- Confirm proposal will continue
- Promote proposals continuing in new year

Month 12
- Planned check-in w families and staff on proposal
- End of funding

Post trial
- Evaluation and Acquittal

Stream 1B: Establish new FDC

Pre-trial (Nov 24)
- Successful Outcome Letter

Pre-trial (Dec 24)
- Meet with FIT team

Trial begins
- Sign Funding Agreement

Month 1
- DA approval lodged
- Educator begins FDC scheme training

Month 2
- DA approved
- Safety upgrade to house undertaken
- Regulatory approval lodged

Month 5
- Regulatory approval granted
- Promotion of new FDC to community
- Resources purchased
- Children enrolled

Month 6
- Children begin attending
- FDC scheme intensive support

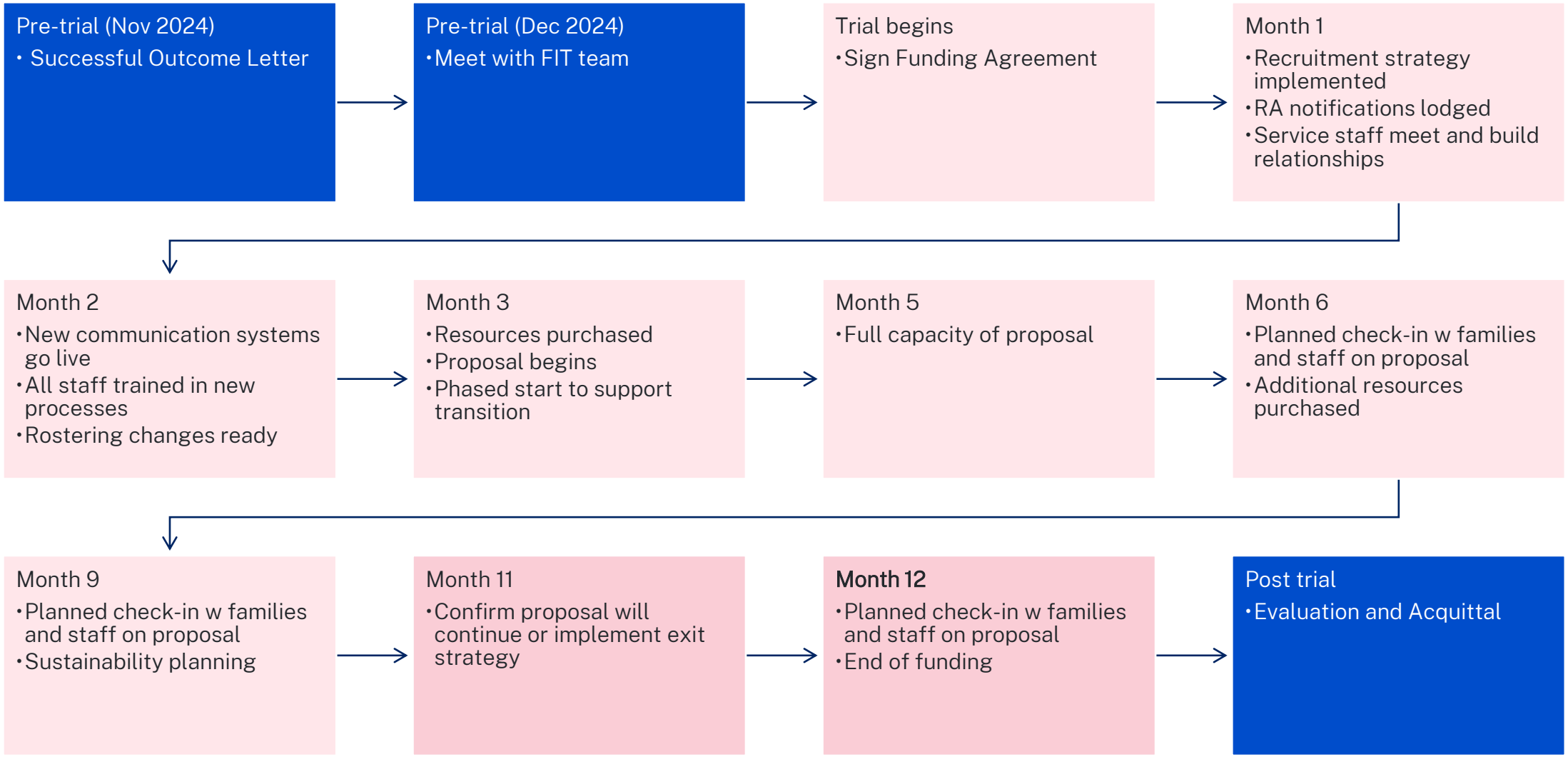
Month 8
- Planned check-in w families and staff on proposal

Month 10
- Confirm service viability and continuation into next year
- Promote to community

Month 12
- Planned check-in w families and staff on proposal
- End of funding

Post trial
- Evaluation and Acquittal

Stream 2: Partnership model



Planning phase outcomes check

Budget

- I can identify all possible costs
- I know how to check what can and cannot be funded

Value for money

- I have considered reasonable costs
- I will be able to provide rationale for all my funding requests

Timeframes

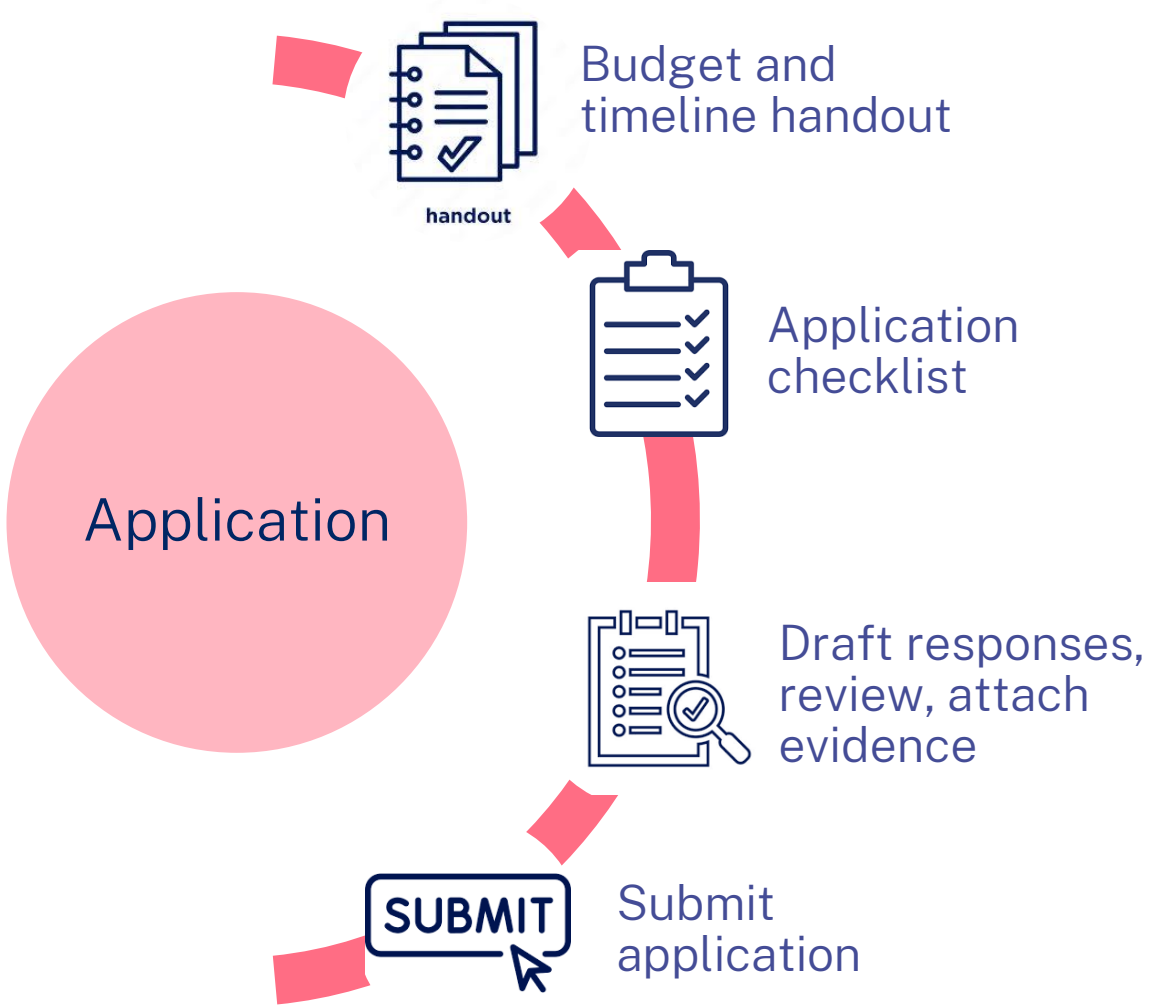
- I can outline the key milestones of my proposal
- I understand how to plan a timeline to deliver my proposal

4

Applying

Phase 4

Preparing your application



Include everything you want assessed

Don’t assume prior knowledge

Be clear and concise

Use the word count as guidance on level of detail expected

If you are unsure, just ask!

Key dates and support

Applications close:
7pm, Tuesday 2 July 2024

Notification of outcomes:
30 November 2024

Grant delivery:
From January 2025 (12 months)

1 SmartyGrants online application system

Smarty Grants Support Desk
03 3920 6888 (Mon - Fri 9am – 5pm)
service@smartygrants.com.au

2 Trial enquiries

NSW Department of Education
ECE Information and Enquiries team
1800 619 113
ecec.funding@det.nsw.edu.au

Applying phase outcomes check

Application process

- I understand the application process
- I know how to access resources to support me to complete my application

Key dates

- I have planned to submit my application well before the due date
- I understand the Round 2 trial dates

Seeking support

- I know who to reach out to for additional support