

## Research Policy

### 1. Context

As a community development agency that engages low-income communities to act on their aspirations and challenges, Beyond Social Services has an inherent obligation to deepen its understanding and broaden its perspectives of the multitude of factors that hinder or support the efforts of these communities. Research findings inform programme development and are presented to these communities to help people appreciate the context of their lives and with the understanding, collaborate with others to build purposeful, satisfying, and hopeful lives where they experience social integration and a deep connection with Singapore society.

### 2. Policy Statement

Beyond believes that social issues are not just problems to be eradicated but are opportunities for the government, civil society, and the community to collaborate toward a common good and in doing so, they facilitate a socially integrated, inclusive, and cohesive society. Hence, to inform and enable these efforts, research at Beyond is guided by the following values and guiding principles:

Values	Guiding Principles
Empowerment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Research design should endeavour to position respondents as co-producers of knowledge rather than just subjects to be studied. As far as possible, potential respondents of the study must be involved at key stages of the decision-making process.</li> <li>2) Research findings must be shared with communities with a view of encouraging its members to act on important issues that affect their well-being and, where appropriate, in collaboration with the government, civil society and wider community.</li> </ol>
Engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3) Research findings will be shared with government grassroots organisations and relevant government bodies to promote understanding and cooperation among all stakeholders.</li> <li>4) Research findings will be shared with volunteers and donors to help them appreciate the impact of their contribution and to deepen their relationship with the organisation.</li> </ol>
Evidence-informed Efforts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5) Efforts at understanding the impact of programmes and initiatives must support practice building rather than just the testing of their efficacy.</li> </ol>

	6) Programme evaluation comprises the assessment of needs, design and theory, processes and implementation, outcome or impact, and cost and efficiency; efforts must fit the developmental stage of the programme.
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When programme-based grants contain a requirement of evaluation, they will be informed by Evidence-informed Efforts Guiding Principle 6. Research projects will not be taken on purely or largely for the purposes of gaining access to funding if the project does not meet one of the above criteria and the research goals do not serve our values.

### 3. Policy Goals

Developing research capabilities has been the organisation's attempt to reimagine its identity in alignment with the Social Service Strategic Thrusts (4STs) articulated in 2017 that advocates for "effective social purpose entities that deliver quality, innovative and sustainable solutions." Refer to Annex 1.

In the similar vein of alignment with the 4STs, Beyond's research goals endeavour to serve its members, its practice, and collaboration within the sector and across society. As a member of the social service eco-system, it highlights needs with a view of encouraging dialogue for a collaborative response.

#### 3.1 Empowered individuals, families, and communities

#### 3.2 A credible social purpose entity that contributes to the social service eco-system

#### 3.3 The ongoing improvement of evidence-informed practice

### 4. Policy Implementation

#### 4.1 Determination of the Research Subject

- a. Research efforts are geared towards:
  - understanding and amplifying the needs and concerns of the communities Beyond engages;
  - enriching and improving Beyond's work and programmes, including capacity-building among staff and volunteers of Beyond.
  - enhancing collaborations with like-minded stakeholders to support community efforts and initiatives.
- b. Research subjects/projects must be relevant and can be suggested in different ways by different stakeholders:
  - Community members;
  - Community workers;
  - Researchers (students, academics);
  - Partner agencies;

- Funders.

#### **4.2 Endorsement of the Research Project**

- Research projects will be presented to the Programme Committee which comprises academics serving on a voluntary basis. After deliberation, the Programme Committee will propose the research to the Board for their endorsement.

#### **4.3 Commissioning of the Research Project**

- The internal research and programme evaluation team at Beyond will manage most research projects, and work in collaboration with students, interns, and volunteers in stages on specific dimensions of the study.
- For larger, more complex projects, or those where funders specify additional requirements, some components of research may be outsourced to organisations or consultants from other institutions (e.g., ‘the Culture of Online Learning’, sponsored by UBS, where the Theory of Change and Monitoring and Evaluation components are managed by Blackbox and IPS).
- Where a research project is a collaboration with tertiary institutions, their contribution will be significant.
- Factors that influence how research is commissioned include funding considerations (cost), subject matter expertise, and alignment of interests (e.g., students doing a particular project on entrepreneurship among single mothers may tie up with Bakers Beyond).
- The Board will endorse the commissioning of research owners and partners.

#### **4.4 Process for Consultation with Government before Publishing**

- Before publication, a draft report will be shared with different subject experts and peers for feedback.
- Following which, the revised draft will be shared with relevant government stakeholders, such as MSF, MOH or MCCY and invite comments. If in this process, inaccuracies are flagged, they will be corrected, and valuable feedback will be incorporated before the report is published.

#### **4.5 Presentation, Publication, and Representation of the Findings**

- The internal research team that worked on the research project will be responsible for making presentations to community members and other relevant stakeholders (social service professionals, funders, government agencies, etc.), because they are most familiar with the material and will be able to answer questions.
- If the project was done in collaboration with other partners outside of Beyond, they will be able to speak to the findings as well.

- c. Where applicable, all intellectual property contributed to the project or owned and controlled by research team and other partners outside of Beyond involved are to remain vested in all relevant stakeholders involved.
- d. Where applicable, all intellectual property rights subsisting in works, discoveries, reports, and all other information prepared as a result of or in association with the project will be jointly owned by the research team and partners outside of Beyond as tenants in common in equal undivided shares.
- e. Where applicable, the research team and other partners outside of Beyond is entitled to use any intellectual property rights resulting from the project for its internal, research, development, academic, publicity, and non-commercial purposes. This includes collaborative projects carried out with any third party.
- f. The research team and other partners outside of Beyond may, with prior consent and notice to the relevant stakeholders, publish the findings in the form of an article in a journal, newspaper, magazine, digital media, or present at any symposia, national, regional, or international meeting or conference.
- g. If the findings are to be shared publicly, and if there is any public engagement around the report, the Communications Team will craft this content in consultation with the research team, and/or external partners, and manage the engagement. All public engagement may be notified of Beyond's research policy guidelines whenever necessary.
- h. Information identified as proprietary or confidential at the time of disclosure, will be kept confidential by the relevant stakeholders and not be disclosed to any public body or third party other than to carry out the research scope as agreed. Furnishment of such information are to be agreed in writing between the relevant stakeholders.
- i. The Board will endorse all public engagements before they may proceed. No public body may use the findings for any purpose whether in relation to any advertisement or other form of publicity without obtaining prior endorsement.
- j. The research scope, conduct, and findings are to comply with the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 of Singapore and all subsidiary legislation related thereto with regard to any and all personal data collected, obtained, and/or held.

#### **4.6 Application of the Findings**

- a. Findings will be used to strengthen community-based interventions and inform programme development.
- b. Findings will be shared with relevant stakeholders, such as other social service agencies, policymakers, community groups, etc.

- c. The report will be published online and social media engagement around it will be created.
- d. For reports published on the Beyond Research website and accessible to public bodies, short excerpts may be reproduced without authorisation on condition that source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation request, interested parties should make an application to Beyond Social Services by email at [mail@beyond.org.sg](mailto:mail@beyond.org.sg).
- e. The Board will have oversight of these initiatives. No public body may use the findings for any purpose whether in relation to any advertisement or other form of publicity without obtaining prior endorsement.

## **5. Current Research Projects in FY 2022**

### **5.1 Youth Employment**

- Analysing in-depth interviews of 30 youth in common sectors of employment.
- Evaluate the impact of our youth community development efforts;
- Either reform or generate new programmes to strengthen youth community development work.

### **5.2 Culture of Online Learning: Learning Circles**

- Monitor & evaluate new programme to cultivate a positive culture of learning through a peer-learning model called 'Learning Circles';
- Sponsored by UBS.

### **5.3 Youth Volunteering**

- Evaluating existing programmes that promote youth volunteerism;
- Sponsored by Changi Airport Group.

### **5.4 Health Competence in Low-income neighbourhoods**

- Assist in researching, facilitating, and doing outreach for a group of rental flat residents attempting to connect their neighbours to existing healthcare facilities, services, and outreach programmes, to provide more affordable healthcare;
- This group came together after a study funded by the Tote Board Community Healthcare Fund and administered by the Health Promotion Board.

### **5.5 Challenges faced by families at HSCDC**

- A volunteer led study conducted in 2021 that is being written up now.
- Findings will be presented to parents to encourage mutual support

### **5.6 Evaluation of Headstrong**

- Studying the impact of the programme on participants' mental health and mutual support networks

## 5.7 Family Circles

- Studying impact of programme on improvement in financial situation and mutual help networks

## 6. Annex

Annex 1                      Social Service Sector Strategic Thrusts 2017 - 2021 Extract

Research Policy Review Log – latest on top					
V/No.	Date of Review	Reviewers (Bold Leader)	Vetted By	Date of Board Approval	Next Review
1	28 February 2022	<b>Kumarr</b> , Ismail	Gerard	8 April 2022	30 June 2022