

Invest In Me in Practice

The logo for Home Stretch WA is a circular emblem with a blue-to-purple gradient. The words "Home Stretch" are written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with "WA" in a smaller font below them. A series of white dots forms a curved path along the bottom edge of the circle.

**Home
Stretch**
WA

Date: 30-1-23

Name of Facilitators:

Shelley Farmer
Young Consultant – Community of Practice

Andy Kazim
Manager Community of Practice

Acknowledgement of Country

**Home
Stretch**
WA

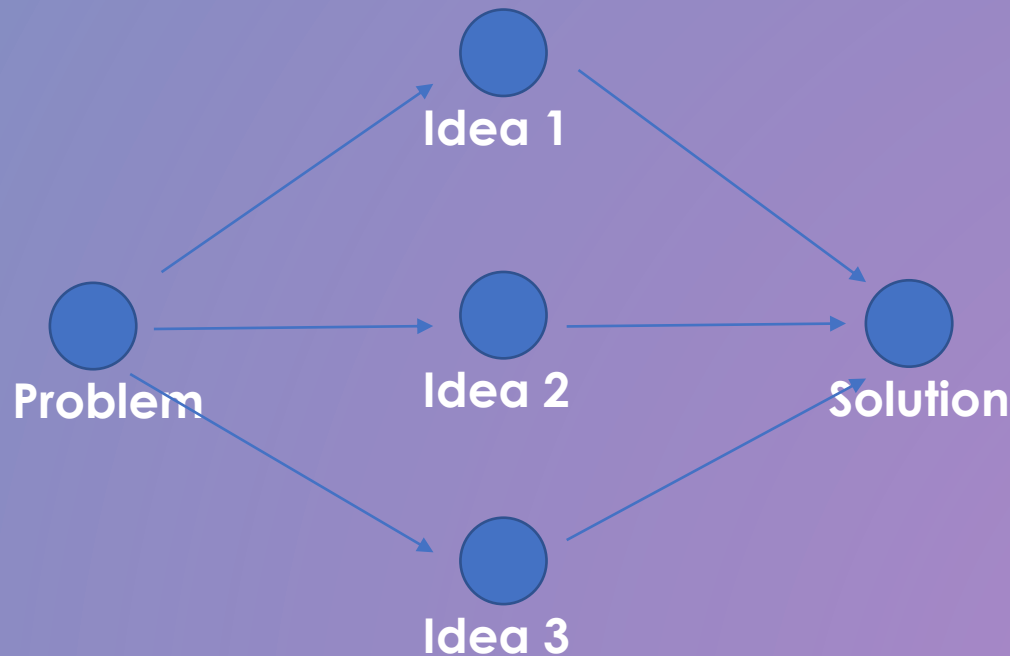


Ngaala kaaditj Noongar moort
Keyen kaadak nidja boodja

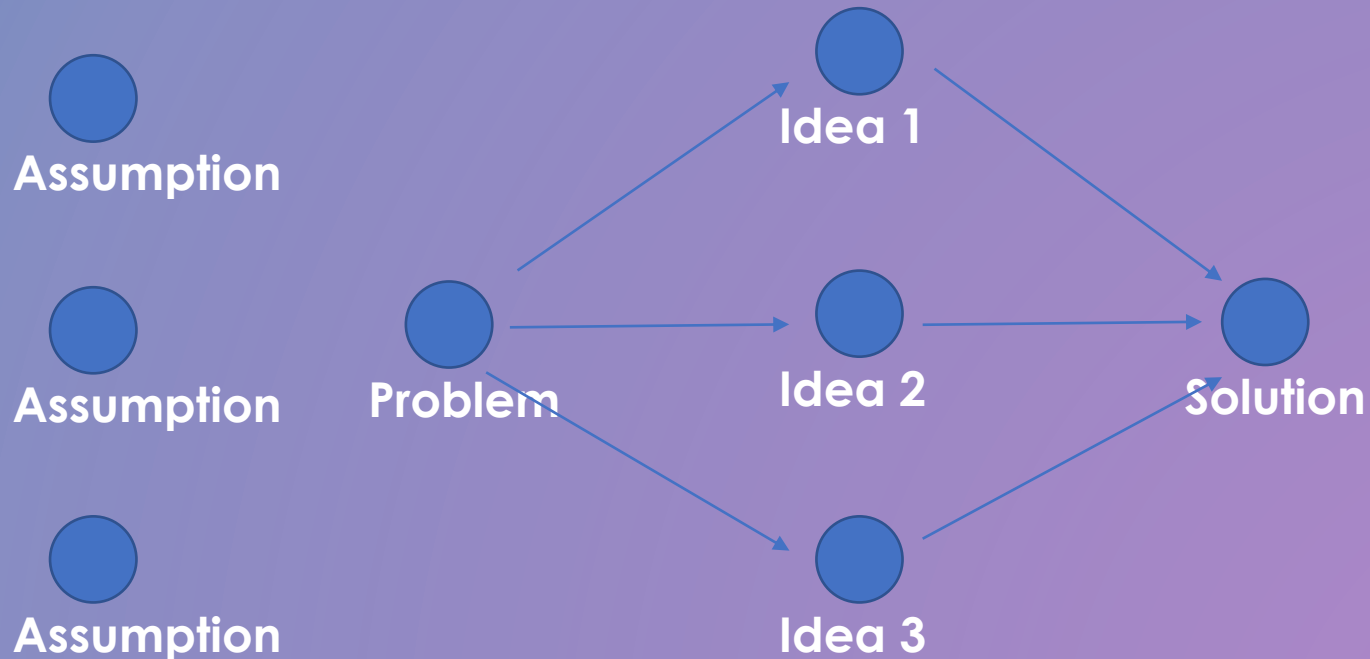
We respectfully acknowledge the
Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation
as the Traditional Custodians of this land.
We pay our respects to their strength,
cultural resilience and the Elders past
and present.

Solving Problems

We develop ideas and test them, so that we can deliver a solution



Our understanding of 'the problem' is often built from our own assumptions and perspective

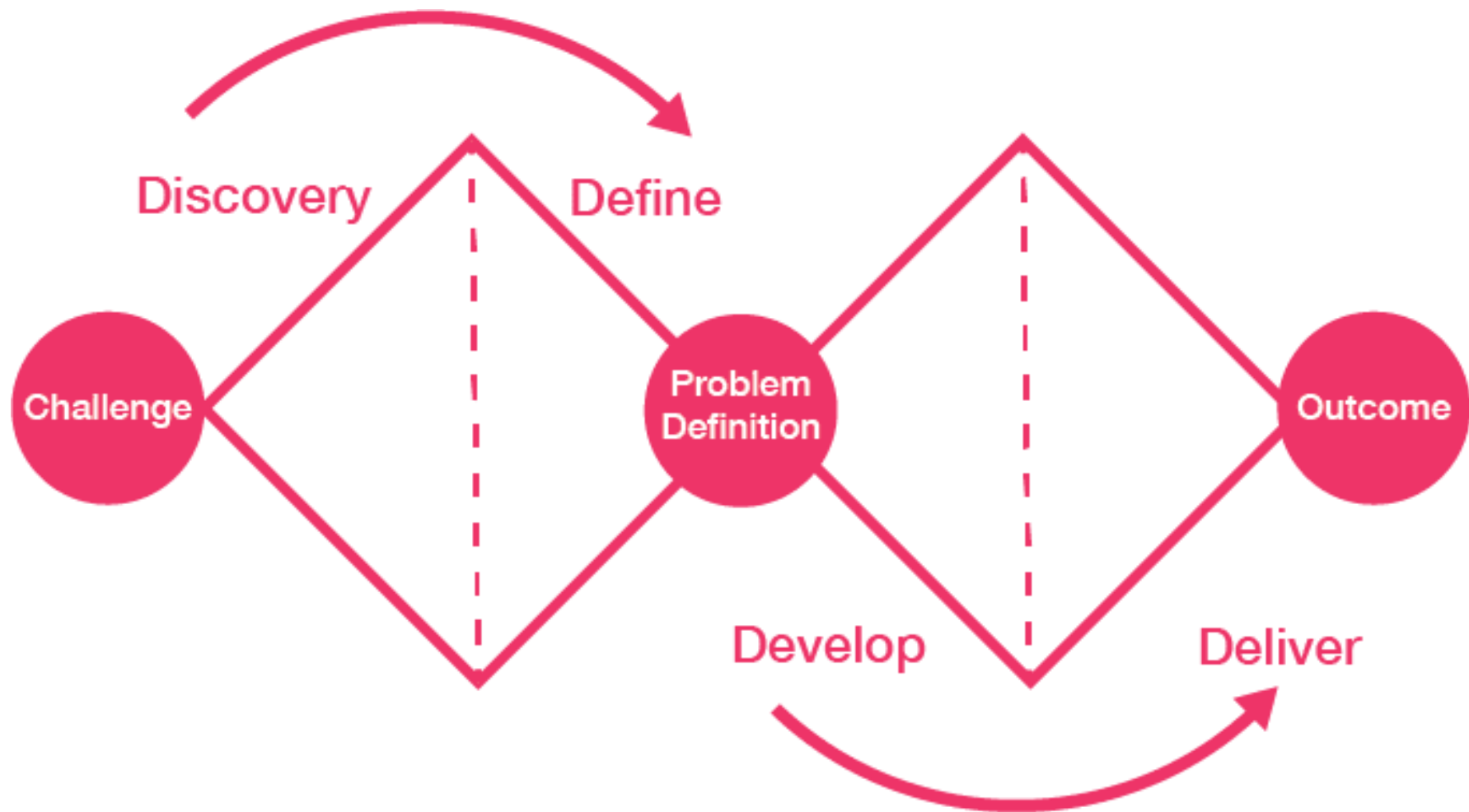


Co-Design takes a step back

**We empathise and understand with
service users, and others in the
system.**

**We then work together to
Define the Problem**

**Then we can Develop effective
solutions to the problems people face**



Assumptions Activity

Find a person you don't know very well [if you can]

Take turns explaining to each other

My name is ____ and I work for ____.

My role in Home Stretch is a ____.

One thing you cannot tell just by looking at me is ____.

This is important for me to tell you because ____."

Who is in the room?



MISSION
AUSTRALIA



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**



Housekeeping & Rules of Engagement

**Home
Stretch**

WA




Goals of the Invest In Me Session

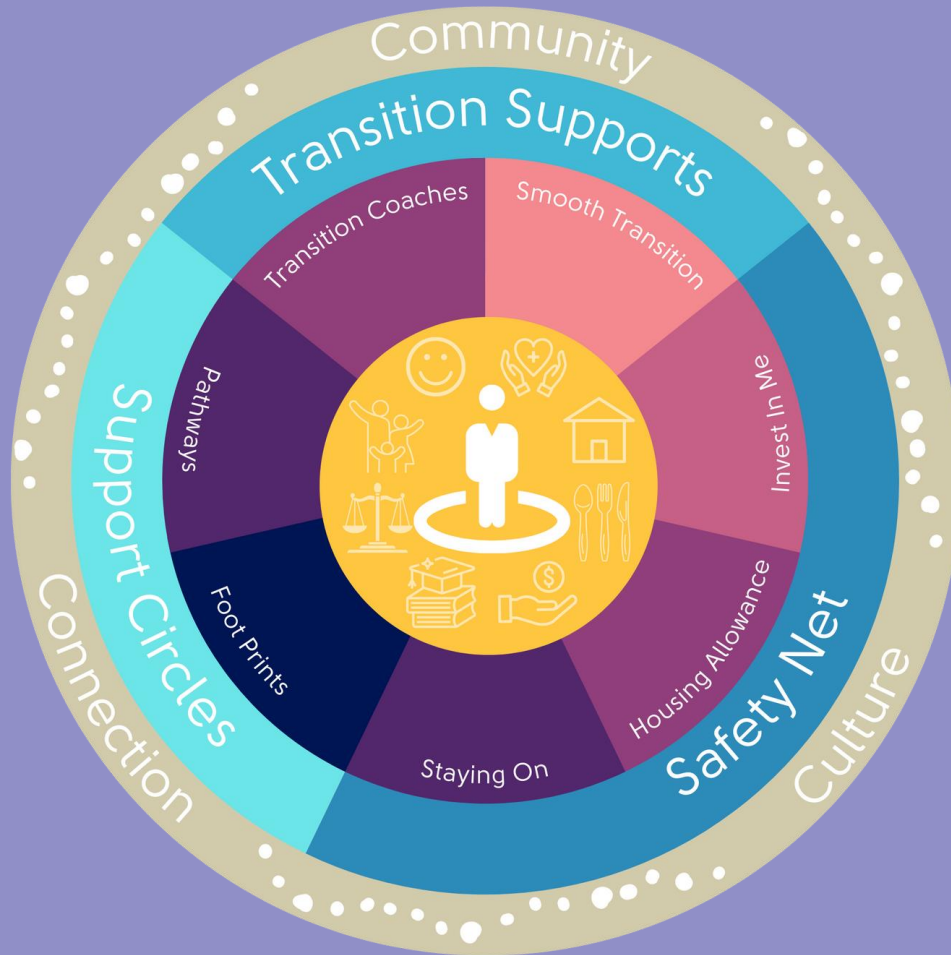
Understand the Purpose and Background

- Systems, People, Values and Attitudes
- Building Capacity and Interdependence

Invest In Me in Practice

- What is it and how does it work?
 - Using the Decision Matrix
 - Responding to Funding Requests
 - Aspirational
 - Emergency
 - Appeals & Leaving Care Fund
 - Monitoring and Data
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- A decorative dotted line in a light purple color is located at the bottom of the slide, curving across the width of the page.

Home Stretch WA Model



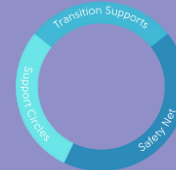
Young people are at center of support.
Everyone is treated as an individual



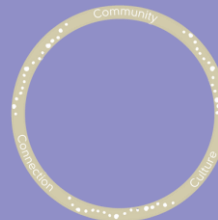
Support or connection is offered
in all areas of life



Support is delivered in specific
ways [Practice Approaches]
that work for young people



Home Stretch WA focuses on 3
key elements of support



Home Stretch WA greater purpose is
to connect young people with their
community and culture.

Home Stretch WA – Practice Frameworks



Support is delivered in specific ways [Practice Approaches] that were co-designed with young people

Each of these practice approaches has guidelines, and a range of tools and resources to help workers deliver the Home Stretch service.

Training will be provided in each of these.

Transition Coaches

A consistent, persistent and skilled youth worker who works with young people to provide flexible, one to one support focused on coaching towards independence.

The Transition Coach works from a set of practice principles ensuring support provided is consistent and focused on building a young person's self reliance, skills, capacity and connection to community, culture and country.



Invest In Me

\$2,500 average funding per young person per year

The 'right' to a visible and secure financial safety net.

Support towards their aspirations and goals, or deal with crisis.

Invest in Me funding is provided through the coaching relationship and administered by Home Stretch WA service providers.

It provides young people with fast access to financial assistance without having to return to a District Office.



Invest In Me is about

Building Self-Reliance, Financial Literacy and Skills in Problem Solving

Growing Confidence and Interdependence on community, and mainstream services

Empowering young people with knowledge of their rights and an ability to independently access resources from 21.

Invest In Me is NOT about

Making a plan to spend \$2500 each year with each young person [the right to '\$2500']

A 'Selling Point' in the program as a financial resource

Reproducing the problems that exist in the current discretionary system!

How does Invest In Me work?

Young people request financial support from their Transition coach

For purchases under \$100, the Transition Coach can approve directly.

For purchases over \$100, the Transition Coach will help the young person prepare an application. The program Coordinator will review the application and approve it.

Payment is made by the provider in a timely manner, data is recorded on every cost.



It's easier to get support and coaching from Home Stretch, when you call DCP (Department of Communities) you never know who will answer.'

Invest In Me works better because I have a relationship with my Coach, I know him and he knows me so when I call I know he'll answer.

How does Invest In Me work?

Every funding request is an opportunity to support a young person to build their skills, knowledge, connections and capacity.

Aspirational requests or plans for future costs embed that opportunity as part of the application.

Crisis and Emergency requests require a response first, with reflection and capacity building afterwards.



Invest In Me Guidelines



The Home Stretch WA Community of Practice Backbone Team, and the Department of Communities have updated the guidelines for Home Stretch WA Providers.

These guidelines represent the development of policy to align with good practice.

They will be released to the Guiding Panel in mid February for review and final approval.

They align policy with good practice!



Invest In Me

Providers are funded an average \$2500 per person per annum, per funded place

This funding is provided as a brokerage pool.



Home Stretch WA providers should;

- Not aim to exhaust the \$2500 per person per year
- work with each young person according to their individual needs and capacity
- ensure that any use of brokerage above the budgeted \$2500 per individual per year will not affect the availability of funding required to support other young people

Invest In Me



There will be no additional funds provided over each 12-month period if the Invest in Me Fund is expended earlier.

Invest In Me



Evidence and Data from the trial suggested that when practice guidelines are followed

Average (mean and median) is around \$2500

Higher Costs were associated with

Emergency Housing
Education/Training
Living Skills (Driving Lessons)
Health/Dental



Invest In Me



Evidence and Data from the Trial also suggested that setting limits and saying 'no' to funding request may get you temporarily fired!

Delegated Authority - Risks and Benefits

What are some of the benefits in allowing Coaches to approve funding requests under \$100?

What are some of the risks and challenges?

What strategies and approaches will be critical to ensuring that Invest In Me funding is used effectively?

Tracking Use of Invest In Me

Home Stretch WA Providers must record and monitor the use of Invest In me as part of their contracts, and for the Independent Evaluation.

- How much funding was spent.
- What life domain [National Framework] the funding was spent on.
- Whether the financial support was towards aspirational goals, or dealing with a problem or crisis.
- Whether it achieved the intended goal or outcome.
- Any qualitative information such as case studies or examples of outcomes generated through use of Invest In me funding.

The CoP has developed a tracking tool that can assist Home Stretch WA providers to meet these requirements

ual

Reflecting on spending as part of group and individual supervision is the best way to improve practice.

[illegible]

What Can Invest In Me Pay For?



What Can't Invest In Me Pay For?

- Program funding, asset and/or maintenance costs or staffing costs for the Home Stretch WA service provider.
- Staying On or Housing Allowance costs
- An income supplement for a young person
- An alternative to free or low-cost goods or services available in the community.
- Health care costs that can be met through the public health system. This includes attending medical clinics that bulk bill or services where costs are partially reimbursed through Medicare, using public dental health clinics and the Closing the Gap – PBS Co-Payment program.
- Pets or livestock.
- The purchase of alcohol, cigarettes, or illegal substances.

Group Activity – Financial Resources

In Small Groups – 10 minutes

On a piece paper, draw a long horizontal line.

On the left end - write 'Dependent'

On the right end - write 'Interdependent'

Thinking about the different life domains, write down as many different sources of financial support available to young adults.

Align them based on whether they represent 'interdependence' in the community or 'dependence' on child protection systems.



Engagement Costs

Using Invest In Me funding to support engagement and building a relationship.

Under 18

District offices are authorised to fund up to \$200 in costs (per young person) incurred by a Home Stretch WA provider from Communities Leaving Care Fund. (Guidelines have been circulated to Metro ADD)

Over 18

Transition Coaches must consider the benefits for engagement of using ILM to pay for small meals and activities, with the expectations and dependence this might create.



Leaving Care Fund

The Invest in Me Fund is primary source of financial support and brokerage for young people in Home Stretch WA.

Young people can still be supported to access the Leaving Care Fund through a district office for significant expenses that cannot be reasonably afforded through the available Invest in Me Fund.

Some of these high-cost items/services (such as dental work) may have been identified prior to the young person leaving care and should be detailed and approved in their Leaving Care Plan.

Working Together

Smooth Transition Practice is about working together with a District Office.

Costs identified in the leaving care plan, can and should be covered by the Invest In Me Funding if consistent with young people's goals and their capacity to contribute.

Reviewing the leaving care plan together with the young person and their case manager can help ensure any significant costs are planned for and covered.

Leaving Care Funding requests are no longer constrained by what is contained within the Leaving Care Plan.

Stand By Your Values and Attitudes Activity

1. Young People who have been through the care system deserve to have things paid for because of what they have endured.
2. Everyone has to become financially independent, but the care system teaches young people to be financially dependent!
3. Some things like health costs and education should always be paid for in full by child protection.
4. It's our job to teach young people how to get whatever they can out of the system.



Invest In Me – Transition Coach

The Coach connects young people to resources and supports available through the Home Stretch service model and beyond.

Helping young people navigate their journey to interdependence beyond the child protection system.

"My Coach has stuck by me, even when I didn't answer messages. Every young person coming out of care should have someone like that."

Youth Advisory Group
Member and Trial
Participant



Invest In Me – Co-ordinator

The Coordinator reviews and approves applications for costs over \$100, and monitors spending over time for reflection supervision.

Applications for expenses that can be covered by mainstream services, or that lack any meaningful contribution by the young person might be challenged or rejected.

The coordinator should not take over the role of the Transition Coach.

The role provides transparency and objectivity in decision making.

Invest In Me – Team

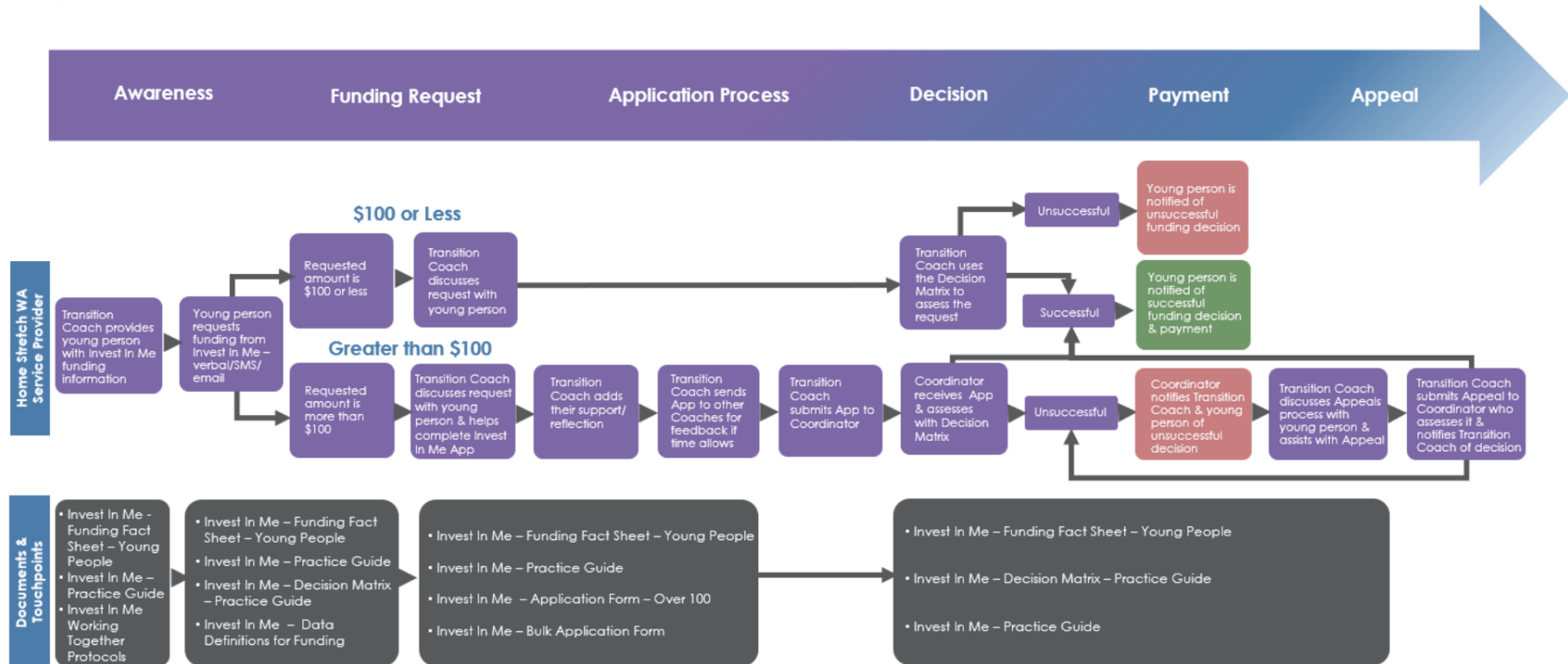
Share individual Invest In Funding requests and applications across the team.

Share ideas and perspectives to inform how best to use Invest In Me funding, or to encourage young people to 'Chip In'

Develop networks of resources, services and alternative sources of funding for the team to offer to young people.

Develop a culture of reflective practice around brokerage

Invest In Me Flow Chart



Invest In Me – Decision Matrix

Every decision regarding 'Invest In Me' funding is made based on a young person's individual circumstances.

Home Stretch Transition Coaches are guided by the principles of Home Stretch and use the 'Invest In Me- Decision Matrix- Practice Guide' to ensure consistent and equitable support for all young people accessing Home Stretch.

Invest In Me – Decision Matrix

What does the young person want / need?

The coach works to understand and identify the supports and resources a young person might need.

Young people make direct requests for financial support from their coach.

Want / need identified

Why would we fund the item/request?

The coach identifies what impact the funding would have on the young person's life.

The coach helps the young person explore and access alternative resources to cover costs.

The coach supports the young person to understand their own financial capacity to contribute to costs.

Meets funding criteria

How to support the IIM request

The coach works with the young person to make a plan to ensure that the funding results in a successful outcome.

The plan considers

- The financial component as one part of the support.
- Development of the young person's skills and capacity.
- Opportunities to enhance and grow young people's networks.

Plan approved

Invest In Me – Decision Matrix

Why would we fund the item/request?

The coach identifies what impact the funding would have on the young persons life.

The coach helps the young person explore and access alternative resources to cover costs.

The coach supports the young person to understand their own financial capacity to contribute to costs.

Impact	Funding Source
Has a +ve impact on one of their life domains.	There is no alternative funding source.
Leads to a successful outcome of one of their goals.	It is an emergency. [there is immediate risk to the young person's safety or health.]
Reduces risk.	The young person does not have capacity to pay some or all cost.
Decreases disadvantage.	There is no other alternative option. eg. Car vs public transport
Increases health and wellbeing.	There is no other alternative service or support. [Legal Aid, Medicare, Workforce Australia etc.]
Increases the YP capacity. (skills and Knowledge)	An unplanned event in the person's life requires a timely response.
Encourages and increases interdependence	Is it a large cost that has been committed to previously in Leaving Care Plan

Invest In Me – Decision Matrix

How to support the ILM request

The coach works with the young person to make a plan to ensure that the funding results in a successful outcome.

Decision making	Self advocacy	Chipping in	Future Planning	Problem solving	Self-reflection	Comms Skills
The young person is fully independent	The young person can advocate for their needs.	The young person can and will chip in financially.	The young person has the capacity to maintain the thing or activity.	The young person has demonstrated problem solving to find a solution.	The young person understands their role, responsibility, rights in the situation and demonstrates self-reflection and learning.	The young person has appropriate communication skills (verbal, written, numeracy).
The young person requires some assistance	The young person requires some support to advocate for their needs.	The young person can and is willing to contribute in ways other than financial.	The young person will need support to plan how to maintain the thing or activity.	The young person needs some support to research, compare and decide upon a solution.	The young person requires some support to understand their role, responsibility and rights in the situation. The young person is guided through being self-reflective.	The young person has limited capacity and requires support in one or more communication area/skills.
The young person's decision-making capacity in this 'area' is limited.	The young person cannot advocate for their needs.	The young person cannot or does not want to chip in.	The young person has limited ability at this time to maintain the thing or activity.	The young person needs support to research, compare and decide upon a solution.	The young person demonstrates low understanding of their role, responsibility, rights in the situation, is externalising responsibility and is not self-reflective.	The young person requires support in all communication areas/skills.

"Chipping In" is about young people taking charge. This means that young people are asked to invest in themselves - building their skills, knowledge and capacity.



Young People
are at the Centre

Invest In Me – Chipping In

Young people supported by Home Stretch WA should have receive an income payment.

Chipping In can be difficult to introduce as an idea, particularly when young people might have experienced a system that reacts to their need, rather than invests in their development.

What kinds of ways can a young person chip in?

Invest In Me – Chipping In

Case Study 1

A young person needs help to start paying off a range of debts that are impacting their ability to move forward in their life.

The debts are due to accidental property damage that was done by family members who were living in the young person's community housing provider property.

Invest In Me – Chipping In

Case Study 2

A young person experiencing homelessness keeps losing their mobile phone, or having it stolen.

Their Centrelink also keeps getting cut off and you have no way of contacting them outside of messenger.

Invest In Me in Practice

For funding requests over \$100

The Invest In Me Application Form provides a useful way to structure responding to the request and developing a plan.

'Invest in Me' Funding Application



Note:

The form is for amounts over \$100 which requires Coordinator approval

Name		DOB	
Phone			
Email			
Transition Coach			

What are you requesting the funding for?

- ☐ Housing/accommodation
- ☐ Health - physical, emotional (including self-esteem), mental, sexual and dental
- ☐ Education and training, employment or other suitable activity
- ☐ Financial security
- ☐ Social relationships and support networks
- ☐ Life (and after care) skills
- ☐ Identity and culture
- ☐ Legal matters

Details:	Amount: \$
Date payment is required:	
Is it urgent? If yes, why?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

Have you tried to source this money elsewhere? What else have you tried?

Alternate funding options/resources investigated	Outcomes/barriers

Invest In Me in Practice

The form can be completed by a young person independently, together with their coach, over the phone or even online.

The coach can also complete the form on behalf of the young person, providing they have undertaken the process of working through the Invest In Me process.

<p>How does this funding help you with your future goals or plans? Please tell us about your future goals, any planning you have done and how this money would help.</p>				
<p>What happens if you don't get the money from Home Stretch?</p>				
<p>Future planning - What strategies do you have to avoid similar future payments?</p> <table border="1"><tr><td>1.</td></tr><tr><td>2.</td></tr><tr><td>3.</td></tr><tr><td>4.</td></tr></table>	1.	2.	3.	4.
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
<p>How much money can you contribute towards this request?</p>				
<p>Signed by:</p> <table border="1"><tr><td>Young Person</td><td>Date</td></tr></table>	Young Person	Date		
Young Person	Date			

Invest In Me in Practice

The Transition Coach should be transparent with the young person about whether they support the application.

The young person should also have the option to have their application and perspective considered by the coordinator.

Coaches should be careful not to setup any unhelpful dynamics.

Transition Coach Notes and Recommendations:		
Checklist		
Does the young person have sufficient funds remaining?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative funding options sourced	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Future planning (in line with goals/demonstrated investment)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Future planning (demonstrated problem solving/plan to overcome)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Chipping in (demonstrated contribution to costs or investment)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Right to secure and visible safety net, accessible by right not discretion	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Help to grow identity/connection to culture	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Investing in young people & their aspirations	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Fund:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing/accommodation		
<input type="checkbox"/> Health – physical, emotional (including self-esteem), mental, sexual and dental		
<input type="checkbox"/> Education and training, employment or other suitable activity		
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial security		
<input type="checkbox"/> Social relationships and support networks		
<input type="checkbox"/> Life (and after care) skills		
<input type="checkbox"/> Identity and culture		
<input type="checkbox"/> Legal matters		
Fund type:	Aspirational <input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency <input type="checkbox"/>
Payment Type:	Credit Card <input type="checkbox"/>	Invoice <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting Documents attached (evidence of planning/budget etc.)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Invest in Me Education & Training Application Form		
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other planning/coaching tools		
Signed by:		
Transition Coach	Date	

Invest In Me in Practice

Approving applications shouldn't be a lengthy or drawn-out process.

The objective is to create transparency, and develop the skills and capacity of the young person.

Not create a burden of forms and application processes.

What – Request Details			
Fund:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing/accommodation			
<input type="checkbox"/> Health – physical, emotional (including self-esteem), mental, sexual and dental			
<input type="checkbox"/> Education and training, employment or other suitable activity			
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial security			
<input type="checkbox"/> Social relationships and support networks			
<input type="checkbox"/> Life (and after care) skills			
<input type="checkbox"/> Identity and culture			
<input type="checkbox"/> Legal matters			
Aspirational <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency <input type="checkbox"/>			
Why – Funding Criteria			
Impact:		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Funding Source:		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
How – Process for Developing Independence			
Skills & Capacity explored:		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome – Application Meets Criteria			
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Coordinator Notes:			
Amount: \$		Payment Type: Credit Card <input type="checkbox"/> Invoice <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
Coordinator Signature:			Approval Date:

Invest In Me in Practice

A young person calls you up and ask for you to pay for a laptop for a TAFE course they intend to start in a few days. They demand you sort it out and pay for it immediately all because it's their right to access funding. This is the 2nd time in two years that they have broken their laptop and requested financial support to pay for it.

You remind the Young Person that chipping in is about them taking responsibility for their own lives, and while last time they did some research and found a more affordable option, this time they would need to contribute towards some of the costs.

The Young Person hangs up immediately and texts you that you don't care and you won't help them even though it's 'their money.'

They threaten to Opt-Out of the program and go back to the District Office to get the laptop funded, unless you pay for the laptop in full.

Invest In Me in Practice

A Young Person wishes to have their Invest in Me withdrawn for a cash buy, they wish for you to give them the entire amount saying that they want to buy a car in cash. They say that they will cover the other half therefore fulfilling the chipping in portions of their Homestretch WA involvement. How would you respond?

Invest In Me in Practice

A Young Person asks for a \$3000 computer because they need to be able to fulfill their dream of becoming a famous youtuber. Do you think this is a worthwhile use of their Invest in me? What will you do?

Invest In Me in Practice

A Young Person wishes to use their Invest in Me to outfit their private rental, they wish to use it buy furniture and other household appliances. The total cost is going to be over \$2500, whilst they have the money to afford to cover the total costs, they wish to have money in their savings and to be able to use that a safety net. As the transition coach is there a way for you to cover the additional costs of the housing furnishings? What are your next steps to support this Young Person? Is this a good use of their Invest in Me funding?

Model Integrity Framework



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**

Produced by:
Anglicare WA
Home Stretch WA Team