

Case Study: Joseph Rowntree Foundation



The Client

The [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#) (JRF) is an independent social change organisation working to solve UK poverty through research, policy, collaboration and practical solutions.

In 2015 JRF began a process to develop its social investment operations. It aimed to preserve its capital in real terms, while simultaneously delivering positive social outcomes. As of March 2019, JRF had committed £12 million of its £15 million allocation to 25 investments.

In 2018-19, JRF produced a new anti-poverty strategy for the UK outlining a vision of a prosperous UK without poverty.

Our Role

JRF commissioned Small Change (NI) Ltd and The Good Economy to carry out a study to create a robust foundation for a new social investment strategy that would contribute to the four outcome areas in its new anti-poverty strategy. These were:

- More people live in a decent, affordable home
- More people find a route out of poverty through work
- More people find a route out of poverty through a better system of social security
- More people want to solve poverty, understand it and take action.

The project involved:

- Analysing the financial and social performance of JRF's existing social investment portfolio
- Reviewing relevant European and US social investment experience

- Carrying out stakeholder interviews and organising workshops to identify investment opportunities related to each of the outcome areas
- Developing strategic recommendations which were presented to JRF's senior management team and Board of Trustees.

The Findings

While the study was designed to inform JRF's own social investment strategy, the findings were also relevant to policy and practice in the wider UK social investment market.