November 2026

The IIF Solutions Lab: Preparing Communities for a New Market for Flourishing

Why a Solutions Lab

Capital alone cannot produce flourishing. Investments that help people thrive often produce savings in budgets other than the ones that paid for them, so no single budget holder has reason to make them. Outcomes-based finance can align those incentives, and communities across the country want to use it, but wanting to and being ready to are different things. Most have never needed the governance, measurement, financial, and narrative infrastructure that outcomes-based finance requires. The Solutions Lab closes that gap, creating a stronger pipeline of communities ready to attract investment, assemble capital stacks (the mix of public, private, and philanthropic funding behind a shared investment), and achieve lasting outcomes. Without prepared communities, there is no investable pipeline; without a pipeline, there is no **new market** that pays for flourishing.

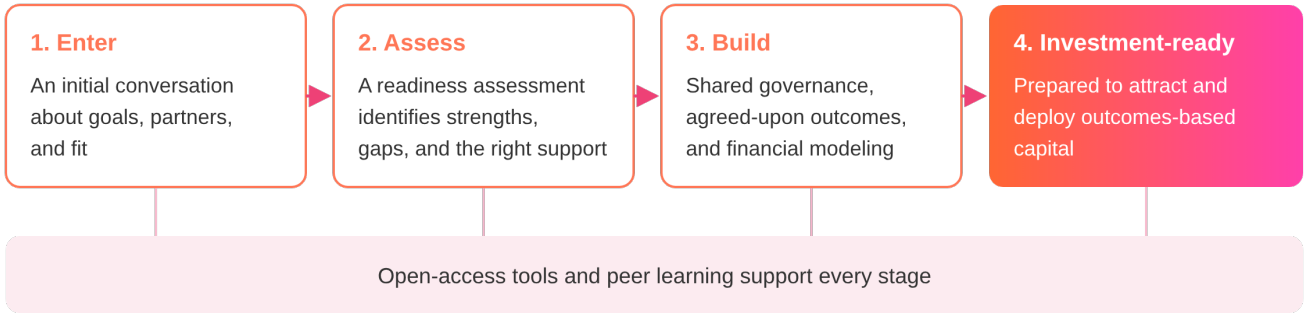
What it is

The Solutions Lab is the readiness engine of Investing in Flourishing: the practical support (data, finance tools, templates, best-practice guidance, and coaching) that communities and states need to organize, implement, and sustain investment in flourishing. It is not a grant program. It builds lasting capacity *with* local partnerships, not for them, through four integrated pillars:

- **Readiness assessment** — understanding where a community or state stands and what it needs next
- **Co-design** — shared governance, agreed-upon outcomes, and fair terms for sharing savings
- **Data and financial modeling** — projecting improved outcomes and the savings they could produce across sectors
- **Peer learning** — a national learning community that speeds progress and builds the evidence base

How it works

Every community or state follows the same pathway; what varies is the starting point and the level of guided support at each stage.



Initial conversations are open to any community or state. Guided support, including coaching, facilitation, and technical assistance, expands as the Lab grows.

Investing in Flourishing Design Team is led by FRBNY Visiting Scholar Tyler Norris, MDiv, and Leslie Walker, MD, and includes 200+ leaders from finance, communities, and relevant professions. The views expressed are those of independent members of the Design Team, not the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

investing in flourishing

Who it serves

Who	Description	Support
Demonstration communities	Places building the first partnerships for investing in flourishing	Full guided support
Emerging communities	Places ready to explore the model and assess their fit	A readiness assessment, then support tailored to their starting point
States	State leaders partnering with local communities, or looking for communities to partner with	Coordinated state and local readiness support
National networks	Place-based networks whose communities share these goals	Open-access tools, peer learning, and connection to guided support

Initial supports

The Lab's first tools are being built alongside early adopting communities and designed for use nationwide.

Support	What it offers a community or state
Flourishing Engine	Projects how improved outcomes could produce savings across sectors, giving partners and investors a shared basis for building a capital stack
Readiness assessment	Gauges trust, convening capacity, governance, outcome measurement, and financial readiness, so support meets each place where it is
Agreement framework	Provides a model agreement that helps partners consider and commit to shared outcomes and shared savings
Learning resources	Offers guides, templates, and intervention pathways in areas such as housing, community ownership, and wealth building

Why invest now

Each prepared community becomes a potential site for outcomes-based capital. Early philanthropic investment in the Solutions Lab builds the pipeline the new market depends on so that more communities and states can move from interest to investment readiness, sooner.

Get involved: Communities, states, national networks, and funders interested in the Solutions Lab are invited to connect with the Investing in Flourishing team.

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