



SOCIAL ECONOMY AGENCY

IMPACT

journeying towards sustainability

Tools & Services for Infrastructure Organisations

IMPACT is an initiative of the Social Economy Agency in collaboration with the National Council for Voluntary Organisations. SEA's mission is to work for an equal and just society, promoting social economy solutions to renew and sustain communities. **IMPACT** contributes to that mission by helping voluntary and community organisations become more sustainable.



The **IMPACT** Initiative is a response to the rapidly changing grant funding, administrative and policy environments impacting on the Community & Voluntary sector in Northern Ireland. The initiative is a new capacity building, training, mentoring and learning support programme led by the Social Economy Agency. SEA will pilot new learning methodologies and provide high quality learning resources to help participating organisations to address the key issues and acquire the necessary skills and knowledge related to long-term financial and organisational sustainability.

Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCOs) continue to work hard to deliver their social missions in demanding environments. To ensure such work continues and beneficiary needs are met VCOs need to consider how they will fund their activities, and keep on funding them into the future. The **IMPACT** Sustainable Funding programme is divided into six themed modules:

- * Introduction to Sustainable Funding
- * Introduction to Planning
- * Introduction to Full Cost Recovery
- * Introduction to Trading
- * Introduction to Public Service Delivery
- * Introduction to Loan Finance

While the sector is diverse, vibrant and committed many old and some new challenges are now converging to threaten many of the sector's organisations and the services they provide. With the Review of Public Administration, the downturn in EU structural funding and the cutbacks in the Programme for Government, the financial sustainability of many organisations will become critical over the medium term.

Building on the work and experience of the Sustainable Funding Project run for several years in England by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, **IMPACT** will seek to improve the capacities of voluntary and community organisations to explore and develop a broad range of funding strategies appropriate to their situation. Led by the Social Economy Agency, **IMPACT** will provide a range of workshops, mentoring, material and electronic resources directly to frontline organisations and will also work in partnership with other infrastructure/support agencies to provide support to their members or clients for the development of and taking action for sustainable funding.

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Working with Infrastructure Organisations

A key strand of IMMPACT's approach is to increase the capacity and capability of Infrastructure Organisations or Networks by providing them with the tools, skills and resources to support frontline organisations to develop their financial and organisational sustainability.

The IMMPACT project will work with a range of *Infrastructure Partners (IPs)* who are interested and committed to hosting a number of different workshops over a 12 –18 month period to share the learning and resources received through IMMPACT with a small number of their member or client organisations. The tailored package of training and support offered to each IP comprises a series of training courses and workshops, support and learning resources:

- * Foundational Workshops (see below)
- * Training Programmes (see below)
- * Website & e-Resource Library, e-Bulletins
- * Introduction to Sustainable Funding Booklet
- * Case study resources – printed & electronic
- * Other training resources and guides
- * Mentoring Support

IMMPACT Foundational Workshops (see outline on next page)

- * Train-the-Trainer Workshop & Sustainable Funding Pack
- * Introduction to Sustainable Funding Workshop

IMMPACT Training Programmes (see outline on next page):

- * Strategic Planning
- * Understanding Social Enterprise
- * Outcomes Management

IMMPACT Resources:

- * National Council for Voluntary Organisations 'Sustainable Funding Project' Guides
- * New Economics Foundation 'Proving & Improving' Toolkit
- * CASS Business School 'Tools for Tomorrow' Strategic Planning Manual

IMMPACT will seek to work with a range of assigned staff or volunteers from Infrastructure Partners:

- * Board/Committee members or trustees
- * Directors or senior management
- * Training & development, funding advisors or other staff

"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."

John F Kennedy (1917 - 1963)

"To give real service you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity".

Douglas Adams (1952 - 2001)

The IMPACT learning programme

IMPACT will support Infrastructure Partners to deliver a package of workshops and training courses to their member and client organisations.

"Plans are useless; planning is indispensable."

Dwight D Eisenhower (1890 - 1969)

"Oh I really don't know which road to choose, protested Alice. Do you know where you're going?, asked White Rabbit...Hmmm...No.... Then it doesn't really matter which road you take"

Lewis Carroll (1832 - 1898)

'Through The Looking-Glass' extract

"Knowing is not understanding. There is a great difference between knowing and understanding: you can know a lot about something and not really understand it."

Charles Kettering (1876 - 1958)

Train-the-Trainer & Sustainable Funding Pack

Introduction to Sustainable Funding

Strategic Planning

Understanding Social Enterprise

Outcomes Management

Train-the-Trainer (foundational)

Designed specifically for Infrastructure Organisations only. This intensive 1-day workshop aims to equip funding advisors, training and development workers with skills and knowledge to enable them in turn to deliver sustainable funding events and workshops themselves - tailored to the needs of their membership base, clients or local community and voluntary groups.

Introduction to Sustainable Funding (foundational)

A 1-day workshop designed as an overview of sustainable funding, with a particular emphasis on generating income from trading goods and services. The day is aimed at frontline organisations and focuses on the early stages of the learning curve – it seeks to give people the awareness, understanding, enthusiasm and information to think beyond grant dependency or a single income source. An outline of the strategic planning process will be included as part of a strategic review towards achieving financial sustainability.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning should be approached as a journey. This 2-day course introduces the six planning stages used in *Tools for Tomorrow - A Practical Guide to Strategic Planning for Voluntary Organisations*. It has been designed to help small and medium sized community & voluntary organisations undertake strategic planning. It is a practical guide packed with 23 tools, case studies and worksheets.

Understanding Social Enterprise

For voluntary and community organisations thinking about developing a trading idea, this course provides information and tools enabling them to get started. A 2-day course introducing the values, operating forms and issues related to starting or adopting a social enterprise approach. The course will promote the SFEDI (Small Firms Enterprise Development Institute) standards for Business Support to Social Enterprises.

Outcomes Management

The 2-day course builds an understanding between project/programme aims, objectives and anticipated outcomes. Participants will reflect and clarify their project/programme outcomes before formulating success indicators, whilst considering methods of data collection. The course will use best practice approaches to thinking about and managing outcomes. It will guide participants through the process of developing an organisation outcomes framework to measure its mission performance, stakeholder value and the general quality and impact of their work.



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Department for
**Social
Development**

At the heart of the **IMPACT** initiative lies the idea of 'sustainable funding' for voluntary and community organisations. **IMPACT** believes that sustainable funding is both a 'destination' and a 'journey' - is both a future lasting and secure financial organisational state and the route map to get you there. Sustainable funding is about strategic thinking, planning and evaluating outcomes, and exploring ways to broaden your sources of income. Above all, it is an integrated methodology promoting action for significant and lasting organisational change to sustain and improve the delivery of your social mission.

All journeys begin with a single step and begin from where you are now. That means being clear about what your organisation is about - your values and mission, knowing your strengths and weaknesses and being sure about all your costs. Breaking free of the endless cycle of applying for grants or lessening the dependence on a single grant source or a small number of grant sources will be for many organisations in the voluntary and community sector giant steps on the journey. Therefore borrowing ideas from others, for example from the business world, trading to open markets, bidding for contracts from government or even taking on a loan may be right for some at this stage of their development. For others, the idea of social enterprise may be the destination they wish to travel towards in time.

For the most challenging journeys it is always wise to make sure you are ready and well equipped. Having a map of the territory, food for the journey and appropriate tools to negotiate obstacles along the way are all important. This is where **IMPACT** will help you by providing you with a broad range of knowledge, skills, ideas and tools to help you take those first steps towards sustainable funding. **IMPACT** and its sustainable funding methodology will help you explore and integrate ideas from the areas of strategic planning, full cost recovery, trading/earned income strategies, social enterprise development, public procurement and loan finance. Taking all of these disciplines together, sustainable funding provides therefore a **comprehensive** and **integrated** methodology for organisational financial planning and management.

Let's invest some time and energy together on the journey towards sustainability.

IMPACT (Improving & Modernising Mission Performance And Community Transformation).

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