

## AccessEd: Researcher Development Programme Researcher Engagement and Reflection Log

### Workshop: Launching your own social organisation or project

#### Outline

This worksheet is designed for you to reflect on the key learning steps from the training workshop you attended and think about workshop learning outcomes in line with your learning portfolio.

We encourage you to make a note of your responses in a word document or otherwise, ensuring your record your reflections and consider what legacy this will have after the training has finished.

Consider the following actions that you might take in relation to this workshop engagement and reflection log:

- ✓ Consider sharing your reflections with your peers – Commonwealth Scholars and others
- ✓ How can you best record your notes and reflections to best suit your own individual style of learning?
- ✓ How might you use reflections from this worksheet log in the future to contribute towards learning in other workshops?

#### A. Self-reflection: Skills development

1. During training, we discussed 'step 1' of setting up a social organisation or project being: Clarify the 'what' and the 'why'. *Why* focus on this problem? *What* are you bringing to this social issue that hasn't been done before?

Tick off the following once you've considered all elements of WHAT the key social issue is that you'll be tackling through this project:

<input type="checkbox"/>	You might be drawn to a social issue through your own experience, but the cause you choose needs to be important to many others
<input type="checkbox"/>	Your idea might stem from personal passion; your issue or cause can be social, environmental or economic, that needs to be tackled
<input type="checkbox"/>	It is important to identify beneficiaries of your project or venture
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't assume everyone has the same experience or will have similar buy in to your idea

2. During training we discussed how you should ask yourself the tough questions related to this social issue ('step 2' of setting up a social organisation).

Tick off the following once you have considered them in relation to your idea for a social organisation or project:

What is your target market for your project or idea?
Who are the beneficiaries? How large is the target population?
What assumptions are you making about your target market and beneficiaries?
What are the future expected trends that might change the situation (good and bad)
Is there a real need for your social project?
Is the problem growing?
What is your competition in the field and how will you stand out from it?
What is the value you want to bring to society and your beneficiaries?

3. What was your biggest learning takeaway from the workshop?

4. How will you apply what you have learnt today to your research/studies, and how does it complement your learning portfolio?

5. What is one commitment you will make to Step 2: Exploring and seeing what's out there in relation to your idea (e.g. Market research; conducting feasibility studies; performing industry or sector analysis; conducting viewpoint forums; SWOT).

E.g.

Practical tool: *Feasibility study*

Action: *Take the steps to begin a feasibility study e.g. Historical background of the business or project, a description of the product or service, accounting statements, details of the operations and management, marketing research and policies, financial data, legal requirements and tax obligations.*

Practical tool:

  

Action:

## B. Self-reflection: Learning in relation to starting your own social endeavour

6. During training, you had the chance to map out your mission and vision statement ('Step 3').

Having done further research into other organisations or projects mission and vision statements, refine your own statements below.

\*Remember: Make it real, make sure the timeframe is within the next 5-10 years, imagine what a newspaper headline with it would look like, check for lay-person understanding.

<i>Mission statement:</i>
<i>Vision statement:</i>

7. We discussed Theory of Change ('Step 4') as a critical thinking tool to help underpin the link between activity and change. You started to plot your Theory of Change statements during training: take time to finish these.

<p>We believe that if we do x (action), then it will achieve y (change).</p> <p>If we do x, then we will see y result, because z.</p>
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8. During training, you had the chance to practice writing objectives – 'Step 5' (using a table). Finish filling these out. Make sure your objectives are SMART!

Who/what	Change/desired effect	In what	By when
e.g. Youths participating in our 'Youth Cafe'	Increase numbers	Their use of community resources and services	Within one year of joining

9. 'Step 6' of setting up your own social organisation or project is to develop a business plan – and start to articulate this plan! Even if you haven't written this up in full, you can start mapping out your ideas using this framework:

What is your idea?	
Who are your beneficiaries?	
How will you promote your organisation or project	
Who else is doing something similar	
Steps to achieve your goal	
What resources do you need?	
How much money will you have going in and out?	

10. 'Step 8' is all about seeking support from a business or project mentor. What one commitment will you make to finding yourself this mentor? Where will you look?

## C. Tools to takeaway: Starting your own social enterprise or project

Below is a list of further tools that can be used.

### (i) Developing a vision and mission statement

Here is a group activity to do (online, in person) for collectively developing these statements:

#### Instructions:

1. Identify one person to take notes while the group brainstorms ideas and one person to document the decision reached through consensus.
2. Carry forward ideas generated in developing your vision statement. Gather the ideas generated that described the "essential why" or the dream/ideal you seek and the "essential what" or what would have to happen for the dream to come true.
3. As a group select the statements that have particular relevance for the vision statement identified and brainstorm potential mission statements (e.g. Our mission is to \_\_\_\_\_ (essential why) through (or by) \_\_\_\_\_ (essential what). (30 minutes)
4. Come to consensus by considering the following: (10 minutes)
  - a. Does it describe the *what* your group will do and *why* it will do it?
  - b. Is it concise (one sentence)?
  - c. Is it outcome oriented?
  - d. Is it inclusive of the goals and people who may become involved in the work?

#### Notes:

Then Mission of our initiative is (*the essential why*):

## D. Further reading tip....

Resources:

- Social Enterprise UK: [starting your own social enterprise guide](#)
- Just Act has a great Knowledge Bank that helps point you in the right direction for the type of help you need!
- A [business planning guide](#) to developing a social enterprise
- [Strategyzer tool](#): business model canvas
- Bright Ideas Trust offer free advice by phone or e-mail to start-up organisations and offer Start-up loans and training for young entrepreneurs in London.
- Nesta Innovation Toolkit
- [Expert Impact](#) - free 'human lending' library