



From Ideas to Impact:

## Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

Questions to ask yourself as you proceed through your planning

Embarking on the journey of establishing a social enterprise can initially seem overwhelming, filled with uncertainty and risks. However, a successful social enterprise is fueled by passion and a robust business plan.

We have created this Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist specifically for non-profit leaders like you. The questions in this checklist encourage social entrepreneurs to consider various aspects of launching a social enterprise and positioning it for long-term success.

These questions lay the groundwork for assessing whether you have enough details to gauge the potential success of your social enterprise. As you delve into your plan, you may discover additional questions to address gaps, clarify opportunities, and enhance organizational strengths. Remember to incorporate these questions into your final review as well.

### Instructions:

Using the checklist as a guide, answer each question below. Then, determine whether additional research is required, when the study will be completed, and note when each task is completed. Add any notes about progress/hiccups in the notes column.

Facilitating conversations that move from  
talk > action > accountability > results

Compiled and written by:





# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## Company Description:

The company description reflects on foundational information about social enterprise. It includes the following:

### Business Plan Components

#### Company Description

What community need are you addressing? Poverty, homelessness, mental health, housing, parenting, family dynamics, addictions, etc.

Will your social enterprise be integrated into your non-profit or will it be stand-alone business? Why?

What makes the social enterprise unique and credible?

Does the social enterprise have Vision, Mission, and Values?

Are you clear on the outcomes and outputs you want to achieve with this social enterprise generally?

Research  
Req'd

Due Date?

Completed?

Notes

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### Assessment & Notes



# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## Market Research & Analysis

Showcase the data, statistics, and facts that demonstrate why this social enterprise is feasible. That also includes answering the following questions:

### Business Plan Components

#### Market Research & Analysis

What exactly is your product / service? What need does it meet?

Who is your customer and why will they buy?

How much are your customers willing to pay? How often will they make purchases?

How will your product / service be produced?

How will your product service be brought to the market and distributed?

### Assessment & Notes

Research Req'd	Due Date?	Completed?	Notes
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# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## Market Research & Analysis

Showcase the data, statistics, and facts that demonstrate why this social enterprise is feasible. That also includes answering the following questions:

### Business Plan Components

#### Market Research & Analysis

Who are your competitors? What makes them unique? What challenges do they face?

What staff skills are instrumental in this business? Do you have access to them in your existing team? Do you need to hire externally?

What is happening in the marketplace that will positively or negatively impact your success?

What will it cost to bring the product / service to market?

What share of the market do you need to break even? To make a profit?

### Assessment & Notes

Research Req'd	Due Date?	Completed?	Notes
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# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## Marketing & Sales Strategy

Describe how the Product/Service will be brought to market and sold. This section addresses the four P's of marketing: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion, and answers:

### Business Plan Components

#### Marketing & Sales Strategy

Where will you find your ideal customer?

What sets your product/service apart from others in the industry (your Unique Sales Proposition or USP)?

How will you position your product/service in the market place (premium product?)?

What is the ideal pricing strategy for growth and sustainability?

How will you effectively promote and sell your product/service to your ideal customers?

Research  
Req'd

Due Date?

Completed?

Notes



### Assessment & Notes



# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## Organization and Management:

The organization and management section of your plan defines how the non-profit and the social enterprise are entwined and how they will operate in relation to each other. Be sure this section discusses:

### Business Plan Components

### Assessment & Notes

#### Organization and Management

What is the governance / legal structure of your social enterprise?

Research  
Req'd

Due Date?

Completed?

Notes



What pitfalls do you need to consider with each social enterprise model/structure?



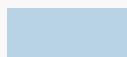
Have you consulted with a lawyer and/or accountant about the impact / realities of your legal structure for your social enterprise?



Who manages the enterprise and what expertise qualifies them to do the job?



How do you manage the risks associated with the social enterprise while keeping the parent non-profit safe?





# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## Operations & Implementation:

The operations and implementation plan addresses topics including product development, inventory control, facility requirements, safety and environmental factors, staffing, policies and procedures, and implementation. Be sure it answers the following questions:

### Business Plan Components

### Assessment & Notes

#### Operations & Implementation

	Research Req'd	Due Date?	Completed?	Notes
What facilities are needed to operate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What technology is needed to operate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What are key staff positions, required skills and expertise, and where will we find these staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What systems, policies, and procedures need to be in place to guide operations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What is your launch plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	



# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## Operations & Implementation:

The operations and implementation plan addresses topics including product development, inventory control, facility requirements, safety and environmental factors, staffing, policies and procedures, and implementation. Be sure it answers the following questions:

### Business Plan Components

### Assessment & Notes

#### Operations & Implementation

	Research Req'd	Due Date?	Completed?	Notes
How will you scale the operation to increase profitability?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What key performance indicators (KPIs or metrics) will you use to track and evaluate success?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Can this social enterprise be started small and scaled with demand? If so, how?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What policies and procedures are foundational for the social enterprise before it launches?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What policies and procedures are foundational for the social enterprise when operational?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	



# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## Impact & Outcomes:

It is essential to communicate the impact and outcomes to staff, customers, partners, and the community. Consider the following for this section of your business plan:

### Business Plan Components

### Assessment & Notes

#### Impact & Outcomes

	Research Req'd	Due Date?	Completed?	Notes
What measurable outcomes are expected? How long will it take to achieve these results?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
How will customer's lives be improved through your enterprise?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What stories or data demonstrate your intended impact?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
How will you gather those impact stories or data to showcase actual impact? How will you share those stories with your interest holders?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Are the desired impact and outcomes woven into all aspects of the business model?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	



## Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

### Financial Plan and Projections

The financial plan and projections drive the “Go-No-Go” decision-making. Include spreadsheet summaries and financial details that address the following questions:

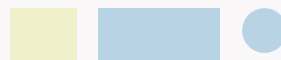
#### Business Plan Components

#### Assessment & Notes

#### Financial Plan & Projections

Research Req'd	Due Date?	Completed?	Notes
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Are your sales and expense projections realistic? How can you back these with data?



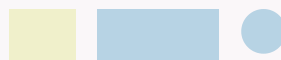
What is your breakeven point in likely scenarios (worst, middle, best)?



How will cashflow be managed throughout the year?



What internal investment is the parent non-profit willing to make in the enterprise? What are the terms of this investment?



Will outside investors be needed to launch and maintain the social enterprise until profitability is achieved?



Has a qualified accountant reviewed the financial projections?







# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## Risk Management

Risk management involves identifying, assessing, monitoring, and reporting on potential risks. Create scenarios for potential business risks and include details that answer:

### Business Plan Components

### Assessment & Notes

#### Risk Management

	Research Req'd	Due Date?	Completed?	Notes
What risks are the Board and Board of Advisors willing to take?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What can we learn about risk management from similar businesses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What risks could threaten the enterprises success?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What contingency plans exist for each risk?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
At what point do you exit the enterprise, if needed? Could you describe the criteria in detail?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What risks exist for the parent non-profit who is hosting the social enterprise? How will these be managed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	



# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## SOAR | Building on a Strong Foundation

Before you dive in too deep, it is always a good idea to analyze your social enterprise idea using the SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results) framework. Start by asking yourself:

### Business Plan Components

### Assessment & Notes

#### SOAR Analysis

What are the **STRENGTHS** of this social enterprise?

Research  
Req'd

Due Date?

Completed?

Notes



What opportunity gaps does this enterprise fill in the market or the community? Consider weaknesses and threats, looking for related **OPPORTUNITIES**.



What **ASPIRATIONS** exist for the social enterprise and who can help you realize this outcome?



Given the **RESULTS** desired, what risks have you not accounted for?





# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## Executive Summary | Bringing it all together

The Executive Summary is the “hook” that encourages readers to explore the full plan. It provides a high-level summary of the full plan, helping bring the business picture into focus. The answers to these questions can be found in previous work completed as part of the business planning process.

### Business Plan Components

### Assessment & Notes

#### Executive Summary

	Research Req'd	Due Date?	Completed?	Notes
What is the purpose of the social enterprise?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
How will it positively impact outcomes in our community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What is the business and how will it generate revenue to support the non-profit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Who is the target customer and how will they be reached?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
How will the product / service be brought to market, promoted, and ultimately sold?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Who will lead this social enterprise?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	



# Social Enterprise Business Plan Checklist

## Executive Summary | Bringing it all together

The Executive Summary is the “hook” that encourages readers to explore the full plan. It provides a high-level summary of the full plan, helping bring the business picture into focus. The answers to these questions can be found in previous work completed as part of the business planning process.

### Business Plan Components

### Assessment & Notes

#### Executive Summary

	Research Req'd	Due Date?	Completed?	Notes
What skills and expertise do you bring to the enterprise that will be of benefit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
When will the enterprise break even and generate a profit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What investment is required for the social enterprise to be successful? What are the terms of these investments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
What is the financial picture for the social enterprise? When will it be profitable enough to fund the parent non-profit's activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Who are your professional advisors (lawyers, accountants, financial planners, business consultants, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
How will risks be mitigated over the short and long-term?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	



Strategic Non-Profit  
Consulting

## Board Recruitment Skills & Experience Toolkit

# CALL to learn how HIP can HELP!

Contact HIP Strategic Consulting



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Let's connect soon,

*Angie McLeod*

Founder / CEO

HIP Strategic Consulting

