

Trading Up

Trading up is an initiative that addresses the needs of organisations developing trading functions, launching trading subsidiaries or operating a “mixed economy” of commercial and charitable activity.

Development of trading activity can provide opportunities for innovation in provision, independent income, expansion, lower unit costs and a stronger bottom line. But it also creates a need to enhance management systems, financial awareness and market knowledge and to demonstrate “contract readiness” and “investment readiness”. These are areas where **Trading Up** can help. The initiative is designed to work with and for Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Organisations, to complement their services and not to rival them. It builds on our experience of working with and for Co-operative Development Bodies, Social Enterprise Support Organisations and Business Support Organisations over two decades.

Trading Up is a joint initiative by Co-operative Assistance Network Limited (CAN) and Ealing Business Services Limited (EBS). Both are asset-locked companies limited by guarantee with social objectives that have been trading for nearly twenty years. We have joined forces to create a service to help VSOs maximise opportunities and address barriers to progress.

CAN has provided training and consultancy services to Social Enterprises directly and through contracts with Business Link Service Providers and Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Organisations since 1989. Increasingly over recent years this has encompassed working with Voluntary Sector Organisations developing social enterprise activities. See more at www.can.coop.

EBS has provided financial management services and financial management systems development to voluntary sector organisations, also since 1989. In recent years this has increasingly focused on enabling them to run multiple projects under different funding and trading regimes within robust and auditable management systems. See www.ebs.coop for more.

Through the **Trading Up** Initiative we provide:

- Diagnostic assessment and reports through which organisations can assess their enterprise readiness, strengths and weaknesses
- Training workshops developed to meet the learning objectives of individual or groups of voluntary and community sector key workers
- Feasibility assessments, business risk assessments, capitalisation requirement assessments for projects, new enterprises, or expansion programmes (an external and independent view can be empathetic too.)
- Fast response consultancy - a skilled and experienced social enterprise consultant with experience appropriate to your needs on site fast.
- Training and mentoring for workers with social enterprise / trading activity development responsibilities
- A flexible and cost effective service appropriate to identified needs. No wasted money, no wasted time, no “one size fits all”.
- Emphasis on empowerment – a dedication to leaving you better placed to do what you do by helping you identify and acquire the required skill, information or tool.
- A simple one e-mail or telephone call ordering system.
- Affordable, simple, one-price-for-anything charging structure: £500 plus VAT per day for training or consultancy with no hidden charges for travel, preparation time or anything else. No we are not cheap but then we are not nasty – we are an initiative provided by social enterprises that have demonstrated professionalism and sustainability over trade cycles, funding cycles, fashion cycles.....

To find out more visit www.can.coop/tradingup. To contact us:

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Telephone the **Trading Up** team on 0845 3733616 (local rate).

We look forward to hearing from you. Yours sincerely,



Chris Funnell, **Trading Up** Team Leader