

# A quick guide to understanding social enterprises

## Cheat Sheet

### What are 'social enterprises'?

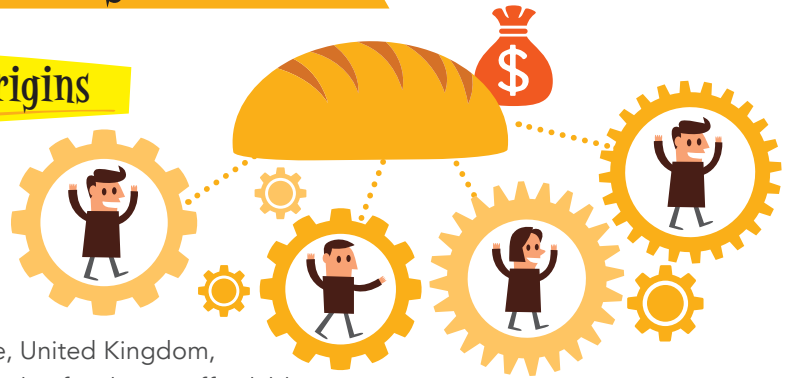
Social enterprises are businesses with a social mission.

## Background

There is a growing trend in the numbers of social enterprises emerging around the world. This follows the increase in awareness and interest in combining businesses with social causes.

### Origins

The beginnings of social enterprises can be traced back to as early as the 1840s. In Rochdale, United Kingdom, a workers' cooperative was set up to produce quality food at an affordable cost. This was made in response to exploitative factory conditions.



## Types

The causes supported by social enterprises cover a wide range, including environmental, social and even health causes.



Who are the people behind social enterprises<sup>3</sup>?

The people that make up or operate social enterprises come from various backgrounds. They include:

community groups



students



corporations

What are some examples in local companies?

Internal impact:

**A-changin**

Employs disadvantaged women to provide alteration services.

External impact:

**Food for Thought**

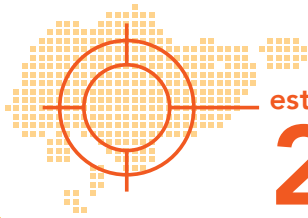
Seeks to improve lives through charity donations from profits.

**Bagosphere<sup>2</sup>**

Provides vocational training programmes for youths in rural areas at an affordable cost.



# Social Enterprises in Singapore



estimated  
**200** active social  
enterprises  
currently

In Singapore, the Social Enterprise Association<sup>4</sup> serves as the umbrella organisation that promotes social entrepreneurship.

Find out more about other types of social enterprises!  
(Refer to "Searching for Social Enterprises")

## Sources:

- 1 Cheng, W. (2013, 16 Feb) 'What makes a social enterprise?' *The Straits Times*, p. D6
- 2 Bagosphere (2013) 'About Bagosphere', Retrieved from: <http://www.bagosphere.com/about-bagosphere>
- 3 Social Enterprise UK, (2011) 'Social Enterprise Explained', Retrieved from: [http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/uploads/editor/files/Publications/Social\\_Enterprise\\_Explained.pdf](http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/uploads/editor/files/Publications/Social_Enterprise_Explained.pdf)
- 4 SE Association (2013) 'Social Enterprise Association', Retrieved from: <http://www.seassociation.sg>



## Searching for Social Enterprises

How and where do you start your search from?

How do you navigate through the array of information available?

### A. Searching for Information

#### Search Tip:

Narrow your results using Boolean commands such as

**'AND'** or **'NOT'**

E.g. 'Social Enterprises AND definition' ... Versus ... 'Social Enterprises'

More specific results

\*Note that search results may vary with different search engines

### B. Databases

Look for reliable websites belonging to organisations with authority. Here are some recommended websites and sources:

**NLB SearchPlus** <http://searchplus.nlb.gov.sg/>

**NLB e-resources** <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/>

**NewspaperSG** <http://newspapers.nl.sg/>

**Social Enterprises UK**

<http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/about>

**Social Enterprise Association (Singapore)**

<http://www.seassociation.sg>

### C. How can you be SURE?

#### SOURCE:

Look at the origin.

Is it trustworthy?

Make sure that the source of information is credible and reliable.

#### UNDERSTAND:

Know what you are

reading. Search for clarity.

Look for facts, not opinions.

#### RESEARCH:

Dig deeper. Go beyond the initial source.

Investigate thoroughly before making a conclusion. Check against multiple sources.

#### EVALUATE

Find the balance.

Exercise fair judgement.

Look from different angles. There are at least two sides to a story.

