SOCIAL ENTERPRISE TOOLKIT FOR RESEARCHERS

March 2010

If you are a student or researcher interested in social enterprise then this is the resource for you! This toolkit aims to signpost useful material available in the University of Sheffield libraries, Sheffield City libraries and online. In bringing together various sources of information it provides the best possible starting point for social enterprise research.

Why is researching social enterprise important? Social enterprise is a hot topic across a number of disciplines, particularly those areas relating to business and the social sciences. Researchers have the opportunity to be at the forefront of a growing social and business phenomenon. The partnership between the University of Sheffield Enterprise (USE) and the Social Enterprise Research and Knowledge Exchange (SERX) means that the university has strong connections with local social enterprises, creating a great opportunity to combine desk research with practical study of working organisations.

The creation of this toolkit has been strongly supported by the University of Sheffield Enterprise (USE), an organisation committed to helping University of Sheffield students and graduate alumni improve their skills and start their own businesses. To find out more about the information in this resource, contact USE either by visiting their website at www.sheffield.ac.uk/enterprise or drop in to the Enterprise Zone building on Portobello.
Jude England, British Library

Social enterprise is a rapidly evolving business phenomenon. It draws on a number of research disciplines, relating not only to business, but also to the social sciences and humanities. Despite its growing popularity and multi-disciplinary reach, social enterprise has yet to significantly make an impact on the scholarly community. As such, it provides a great opportunity for students and researchers interested in contributing to the social enterprise knowledge-base. The British Library’s interest in developing this knowledge-base relates to its function as an institution dedicated to supporting UK research, and to its role as a partner with the Social Enterprise Research and Knowledge Exchange (SERX). This toolkit developed from the SERX partnership and aims to guide researchers to core print and electronic resources. In doing so, it will support the creation of new social enterprise research, helping to advance the knowledge base so it better reflects the growing social, political and economic significance of social enterprise.

Professor Peter Marsh, Social Enterprise Research and Knowledge Exchange (SERX)

Created by the University of Sheffield, SERX is a collaborative partnership that combines the unique knowledge of researchers and practitioners to develop dynamic, responsive and pioneering projects aimed at furthering understanding of the social enterprise phenomenon. A primary SERX ambition is to lead social enterprise knowledge development. In doing so, SERX hopes to assist the research community with capturing the impact, evolution and implications of this growing business phenomenon. The content of this toolkit will enable University of Sheffield students and researchers to explore and then build upon existing sources of knowledge. From this, new resources will manifest, helping to create better, empirical, knowledge of social enterprise, in all its aspects.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Please send to the University of Sheffield Enterprise Information Officer, Barry Maydom, at: B.C.Maydom@sheffield.ac.uk.
The research resources in this toolkit have been organised according to format, rather than subject.

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Finding books about social enterprise

University of Sheffield Libraries
http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/

A good general introduction to the concept of social entrepreneurship; Bornstein presents a series of profiles on leading social entrepreneurs ranging from Florence Nightingale to Phil Drayton, the founder of Ashoka.

Academic research on the emergence of social enterprise. The first part of the work focuses on social enterprise in the EU whilst the second part investigates social enterprise from a theoretical perspective.

Dees argues that charitable giving is less likely to create sustainable social change than engaging the poor in economic participation. He explores the concept of philanthropy in relation to social and private enterprise and relates business enterprise to the alleviation of poverty.

Nicholls analyses the definitions, processes, outcomes, strategic focus and main drivers of social entrepreneurship. Social enterprise is also briefly explored as a subset of social entrepreneurship.

This text investigates the phenomenon of micro-social enterprise – small scale social enterprises whose informal structure and great diversity sometimes mean they are overlooked in government policy and mapping exercises. The data is supported with a series of case studies.

A highly accessible resource investigating social enterprise from a number of perspectives including its origins, values and various legal frameworks.
Sheffield City Libraries
http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/libraries


**Online e-books**

Finding databases and journals with social enterprise content

University of Sheffield Libraries
The University of Sheffield provides student access to a number of electronic resources. However, these e-resources are subject to licensing agreements. Each resource has specific terms of use and these should be consulted prior to accessing material. The e-resources can be used to support your research, private and course related study – commercial use is not permitted.

For more information on the universities licensing terms and agreement see: http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/licences/licence.html

Bibliographic Databases
ASSIA: Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts
Bibliographic reference and abstract resource with a number of results for social enterprise including work written in relation to health and social care.

Caredata/Social Care Online
Contains a number of resources referring to social enterprise in the context of health and social care.

CINAHL via EBSCO
Index of nursing and other health literature in which social enterprise is an increasingly ‘hot’ topic.

Econlit via OvidSP
Reference resource to global economic research – signposts articles that provide an international perspective on social enterprise.

Web of Knowledge (WoK)
A good starting point for identifying core articles. The WoK searches citation records across a number of different databases and produces a rich result set for social enterprise searches.

Scopus
An abstracting and indexing database with a rich result set for social enterprise searches.

Sociological abstracts via CSA
Citation information from a collection of databases with some reference to social enterprise.
**Electronic Journals**

**Emerald Management Reviews**
Database containing full text articles relevant to the subject and at least two journals that have produced special issues on social enterprise:


**Other electronic journals**


**Online e-journals**

**Social enterprise journal.**
Although this UK academic journal is a subscribed resource, Social Enterprise London (SEL) has made the first three issues available free of charge:

3 Finding institutional repositories with social enterprise content

Online repositories


**SHERPA UK Repository search.** (2006). *SHERPA: opening access to research [Online].* University of Nottingham. http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/repositories/sherpasearchalluk.html [Accessed 5 February 2010]. SHERPA provides a cross-search of UK institutional repositories. A social enterprise search produces a mixture of academic abstract and full text material. Whilst the result set is not extensive it does include a few interesting full text resources.

4 Finding information about social enterprise policy

Online resources


**ePolitix.** (2010). *ePolitix.com [Online].* London: Dod’s Parliamentary Communications Ltd. http://www.epolitix.com/ [Accessed 5 February 2010]. An open access politics site that includes UK political and parliamentary news, analysis and commentary. The site has a search facility that provides the option to refine the search context by categories like legislation, news and interviews. A good tool for developing awareness of the political context of social enterprise.
5 Finding statistics about social enterprise

Online statistics


**IFF Research Ltd.** (2005). *A survey of social enterprises across the UK* [Online]. London: Department of Trade and Industry’s Small Business Service. http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/third_sector/assets/survey_social_enterprise_across_uk.pdf [Accessed 11 January 2010]. Although the survey population of this study is limited to enterprises registered as Companies Limited by Guarantee and Industrial and Provident Societies, it still presents an interesting overview of UK social enterprise – exploring issues like organisation services, scope and goals.


Finding working papers, reports and think-pieces about social enterprise

An investigation into the social economy in the European Union with reference to social enterprise.

In late 2006 the Cabinet Office commissioned five leading thinkers to write about the future of social enterprise.

Investigates common features manifest in social entrepreneurs, in addition to researching the organisational life cycle of social enterprise.

Developed from a research programme studying the emergence of social enterprise in Europe and sponsored by the European Union, this online network is dedicated to Third Sector research and contains some excellent social enterprise resources including working papers and conference papers primarily exploring the international impact of social enterprises.

Leadbeater investigates social entrepreneurship as an alternative to the welfare state, illustrating his analysis with five case study examples.

This research monograph includes an evaluation of the state of UK social enterprise research – in addition to providing an extensive list of references. It contains a good preliminary overview of the current social enterprise knowledge base.


This website contains a combination of abstract, full text and university course information relating to social enterprise and social entrepreneurship.


Provides a number of working and briefing papers relating to social enterprise in addition to other Third Sector themes.


This site provides access to working papers, academic papers and bibliographies for individuals interested in researching social entrepreneurship – an area related to (although not synonymous with) social enterprise.
Finding market research relating to social enterprise

University of Sheffield Libraries
Licensing terms and agreements apply (see p.3).

Mintel
An excellent market intelligence resource. Whilst specific market information on social enterprise is difficult to find, Mintel provides information on related areas – such as green and ethical business. Potentially relevant UK reports include: Ethical and green retailing (September, 2008), Green and ethical consumers (January, 2007) and Ethical clothing (February, 2009).

Sheffield City Libraries

MarketLine.
A business information resource searchable by industry, company and country. Contains a number of generic industry profiles in addition to the following subjects that could relate to social enterprise:

- Organic food in the United Kingdom: industry profile (December 2009).
- Renewable energy in the United Kingdom: industry profile (April 2009).

[Ask at library enquiry desk for details].

Mintel Global Market Navigator Database
[Ask at library enquiry desk for details].
The global market navigator subscription covers UK statistical information from a number of different industry areas. Industries are investigated according to factors like market size, annual growth rates, and socio-economic data.

Mintel Oxygen
Mintel Oxygen provides news and a ‘what’s hot’ exploration of marketplace trends – including trends relating to green and ethical business that may be of interest to researchers interested in social enterprise. [Ask at library enquiry desk for details].

Online Resources

[Accessed 8 January 2010].
The Co-operative bank produces an annual Ethical Consumerism Report. These reports provide insight into the green and ethical market and green and ethical consumer spending.
8 Finding social enterprise case studies

University of Sheffield Libraries

Research into social and ecological entrepreneurship using the UK social enterprise Green-Works as a case study.

A case study of social enterprise in more economically developed regions and communities.

This article profiles eleven social enterprises from around the world. It analyses core issues associated with social enterprise, such as its definition and the measurement of social impact.

Online Resources

A series of US case studies recording the challenges and successes of fourteen social entrepreneurs.

This report is structured around four key public service priorities. Each of the priorities is illustrated with examples of social enterprises that demonstrate their practical achievement. Although the case studies are not highly detailed it is interesting to read each example in the context of the government’s ambition for public services.


9 Useful Links


The web site for Social Enterprise magazine. The site contains social enterprise news and a selection of helpful social enterprise resources.

A knowledge partnership between the University of Sheffield Enterprise, the British Library and Sheffield-based social enterprise practitioners. SERX is dedicated to improving empirical knowledge of social enterprise.

The SETAS site intends to provide a number of facilities for uploading and accessing social enterprise resources and case studies, in addition to providing a forum for promoting social enterprise organisations and contacting other entrepreneurs.

Aiming to represent and promote social enterprise in the Yorkshire and Humber region, SEYH is a good site for finding information on local conferences and events. Its member’s directory and online case studies are a good resource for gaining an impression of regional social enterprise organisations.

Source for accessing current news regarding social enterprise and the Third Sector. Provides a specific social enterprise RSS feed and free email bulletins covering issues like Third Sector Daily and Third Sector Finance.

A University of Sheffield service providing workspaces, advice and practical support for Sheffield students and graduate alumni interested in enterprise.

UnLtd is a charity that provides financial and practical support to social entrepreneurs in addition to undertaking social enterprise themed research.

Images by Crystian Cruz, Jetalone, Dave McLean under a Creative Commons license.

Note: Although at the time of creation catalogue and online information was accurate, library catalogues should be checked for recent acquisition. It is possible that links may change following the publication of this guide.
This toolkit ...

Was funded by the British Library and the Social Enterprise Research and Knowledge Exchange at the University of Sheffield. It is one of a number of resources produced by a social enterprise intern, Jodie Walker. Jodie is a MA in Librarianship graduate from the University of Sheffield. The internship provided her with an opportunity to put her newly acquired skills to work, collaborating with the British Library, Sheffield City libraries and University of Sheffield libraries to better signpost social enterprise material for researchers and practitioners.

The Social Enterprise Research and Knowledge Exchange (SERX) ...

Is committed to supporting the development of innovative and successful social enterprise. Created by the University of Sheffield, SERX provides a forum for the sharing of local and regional knowledge, for benchmarking examples of best practice and for fostering creative partnerships. By combining the unique perspectives of social business practitioners, researchers and other professionals, SERX cultivates an environment of knowledge sharing, strengthening both the practice and understanding of social enterprise. For more details about SERX, visit their website at www.serx.org.uk.

The University of Sheffield Enterprise (USE) ...

Assists University of Sheffield students and graduate alumni with the development of their skills set and the creation of successful, sustainable enterprises. More than this, USE aims to help all students and alumni with their enterprising ideas – whether this relates to developing a business, organising an event or starting a new university society. The USE Enterprise Zone provides free workspaces and wireless, in addition to supporting idea development. For more details about USE, visit their website at http://enterprise.shef.ac.uk/ or contact the Enterprise Zone:

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