



Case Study: Bloom Music Community CIC

Laura, founder of Bloom Music Community CIC, based in the Pennines, Rochdale, sought support from Action Together in April 2024 to turn her vision into a fully operational social enterprise.

Bloom Music Community CIC champions inclusive access to music, offering opportunities to play instruments, sing in a choir and enjoy live music. The aim is to improve health and wellbeing through the joy and connection of music.

Although Laura had significant experience running music programmes, she faced challenges around structuring her new venture as a CIC and accessing relevant funding streams. She needed guidance around legal setup, social purpose and financial planning to move her idea into delivery.

Despite her music expertise, Laura lacked clarity around the most suitable legal structure for her idea and how to build a financially viable and fundable model. An early application as a CIC was rejected, and she needed tailored support to review, refine, and move her plans forward with confidence.

Laura was connected with the Community Development Worker at Action Together for personalised guidance. With this support, she reviewed legal options, clarified her CIC's social mission and explored different funding opportunities. Action Together's Accelerator Programme later identified additional support needs and opportunities.



E26 Thematic Areas:

Laura joined an eight-week Accelerator Programme delivered by Mantle and funded via UKSPF. This provided structured learning in business development alongside access to 1:1 support. Through this journey, her idea was formalised into a CIC, and she accessed two early-stage funding pots (£500 Seed Fund and £1,000 Micro Grant).

Financial and Legal – Supported in choosing the right legal structure and identifying suitable grant opportunities.

Demonstrating Social Impact – Through the Accelerator, she began articulating the social value of her work more clearly, which improved her funding readiness.



Outcomes:

In less than six months, Laura progressed from an idea to a formally constituted CIC with grant funding and a regular programme of activity already in motion. The Accelerator Programme enabled her to identify further areas for development, including confidence building and business strategy, which will be supported through upcoming 1:1 coaching. Her CIC is now delivering community-based music activities and expanding its reach.



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Insights and Lessons:

Having a mentor or advisor early in the journey can make a significant difference, especially during key decision points like choosing a legal structure or applying for funding.

Personalised support following cohort learning creates space for reflection and practical application of knowledge.

Tailored advice helps social entrepreneurs bounce back from early rejections and find alternative routes to success.

Questions for other Social Enterprise organisations:

Are your values and vision clearly reflected in your funding applications?

Could 1:1 advice help you navigate early-stage decisions with more confidence?

What additional support could you benefit from as your enterprise grows, such as confidence-building or communications skills support?



Reflections:

"Julie's advice has been invaluable, especially in the early stages of setting up our CIC. It was great to be able to chat things through with Julie and have her support when our application was originally rejected. Her help with grant applications has also been greatly appreciated."

Link: <https://www.bloommusiccommunity.co.uk/>

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