



Case Study: Skills 2 Thrive

Skills 2 Thrive is a social enterprise working to support individuals through transitional life stages by helping people gain skills and pathways into employment or education.

Although operating as a limited company by shares, the leadership team was unsure whether this structure aligned with their social mission. They wanted to explore the possibility of becoming a Community Interest Company (CIC) to unlock funding and social investment opportunities that better aligned with their community-focused goals.

The enterprise's current legal structure restricted access to certain social investment funds. The leadership lacked clarity on whether transitioning to a CIC would offer financial improvements and greater mission alignment.

The team needed expert advice on legal structures and access to practical guidance around investment readiness. They were looking for tailored mentoring to weigh up options and make a decision about their future direction.



E26 Thematic Areas:

The Director participated in intensive business incubation workshops in Q3, followed by one-to-one legal and financial mentoring in Q4, supported through E26.

Financial and Legal – The mentoring focused on assessing the suitability of different legal structures and understanding the implications of transitioning from a limited company by shares to a CIC. It also included guidance on social investment readiness, exploring opportunities like NatWest's social investment support.

Outcomes:

The mentoring provided the Director with clarity on the legal implications of changing structure, as well as confidence to explore social investment routes. As a result, they are now in active discussions with NatWest's social investment team and evaluating next steps with a deeper understanding of governance, liability, and funder expectations. The support was instrumental in informing their strategic planning for growth and sustainability.

Insights and Lessons:

Does your legal structure reflect the kinds of funding and investment you can access.

One-to-one mentoring offers opportunity to explore individual options.

Legal transitions, such as becoming a CIC, can offer better alignment with mission but only if you fully understand the implications for control, governance and income.





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Questions for other Social Enterprise organisations:

Is your current legal structure helping your access to mission-aligned funding and investment?

Do you have access to expert advice that can help you understand structural options for your organisation?

Reflections:

"We are currently a limited company by shares, but given our sector, we've been considering transitioning to a CIC. We explored the pros and cons with (consultant) and we're now in serious talks with NatWest's social investment team."

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