



Case Study: Tales to Inspire CIC

Tales to Inspire is a Social Enterprise based in Bolton and active across GM. For over five years, they have delivered workshops, storytelling platforms and lived-experience-driven consultancy that empowers individuals and organisations to create meaningful change.

Their work focuses on platforming lived experience through storytelling, ranging from terrorist attack and domestic violence survivors to other underrepresented voices, inspiring culture change in schools, workplaces and communities. They wanted support to transition from unintentional project work to a clearer, scalable consultancy offer.

Tales to Inspire had built a wide-ranging portfolio of activities, including podcasts, blog content and workshops. However, this created a lack of clarity about their core offer, audience and income strategy. The team recognised that they were saying yes to too many opportunities without a clear purpose, which made prioritising and planning difficult.

They asked for support in:

- Clarifying their business value proposition
- Strategic decision making on which services to keep or let go of
- Reposition from B2C (public-facing) to more sustainable B2B (business and institutional) income streams
- Mapping a plan that would strengthen their business model

E26 Thematic Areas:

Tales to Inspire received 6 hours of expert 1:1 coaching over six months. This included structured business planning sessions, take-home tools and hands-on exercises around market targeting and strategic decision-making.

Contract Bidding and Marketing – The team developed a stronger elevator pitch, targeted specific sectors (e.g. schools and HR departments), and re-engaged past clients in new conversations.

Financial and Legal – The team reviewed spending patterns, cutting lower-return activity and redirecting resources into core team development and new business generation.

Outcomes:

The E26 support enabled Tales to Inspire to make significant shifts in how they operate and plan for the future. Through tailored consultancy, they developed a clearer, strategic service offer focused on culture change work in schools and workplaces, moving away from a previously less defined mix of activities. Their value proposition was refined and embedded into their operational planning, enabling them to set out clear priorities and articulate their core mission with confidence.

As part of this process, they made a deliberate decision to reduce time and resources spent on podcast and blog content, for example, creating capacity to invest in more impactful, income-generating consultancy.

They also successfully repositioned their business model from B2C to B2B, allowing them to engage schools, academies and HR departments.

Tales to Inspire began securing commissioned work with schools to deliver culture change interventions with both pupils and teachers. Conversations have since begun with larger corporate clients, and they are exploring additional funding options via UnLtd.

Overall, the support has strengthened their income planning and laid a foundation for strategic growth in 2025, including building a more stable core team to meet demand.





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Insights and Lessons:

Tales to Inspire's journey highlighted the importance of having a clear value proposition, for both external communications and internal decision-making processes – being able to confidently say "no" to lower-impact work and focus on opportunities that align with long-term goals.

Tools like business planning templates and value proposition canvases became strategic assets in refocusing the organisation.



Letting go of legacy services can be a difficult but necessary step toward sustainability. Clarity and planning can lead to growth without compromising purpose.

Questions for other Social Enterprise organisations:

Are all parts of your current business model aligned with your mission and future growth strategy?

Could coaching or consultancy help your organisation unlock new income streams or clarify direction?

Reflections:

"How do we reveal to ourselves what our social enterprise should be doing from now onwards?"

"We know that what got us here won't get us there."

"I had never seen the business model canvas before, it was so useful to have my own copy, I was shown how to use it as a tool and it was critically important. The canvas informed our thinking about recognising actual target markets and designing key activities."

Link: <https://talestoinspire.com/>

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