

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN SOCIAL ENTERPRISE & SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Description of Field

According to J. Gregory Dees, in his article *The Meaning of "Social Entrepreneurship,"* [Social Entrepreneurship] implies a blurring of sector boundaries. In addition to innovative not-for-profit ventures, social entrepreneurship can include social purpose business ventures, such as for-profit community development banks, and hybrid organizations mixing not-for-profit and for-profit elements, such as homeless shelters that start businesses to train and employ their residents. The new language helps to broaden the playing field. Social entrepreneurs look for the most effective methods of serving their social missions.

Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector, by:

- Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value),
- Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities that serve that mission,
- Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning,
- Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and
- Exhibiting heightened accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.

Social enterprises require the application of management skills within the nonprofit, for-profit, and public sectors and contribute to the creation of social value. Some examples are:

- An organization dedicated to social impact.
- An organization or venture that advances its social mission through entrepreneurial earned income strategies.
- A business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximize profit for shareholders and owners.

Careers in Social Enterprise

Many believe that social entrepreneurs should be distinguished from social enterprise professionals, just as entrepreneurs are separate from business managers. Both professions offer exciting opportunities, but frequently cater to different personal qualities. You will often hear these two professional opportunities lumped together under the banner of social enterprise, but we think distinguishing the two will help you in your pursuit of a career path.

Social entrepreneurship is not so much a career as it is a calling, a driving vision that compels one to dedicate a life to a particular social outcome. The creation and taking to scale of breakthrough enterprises in the social sector, whether nonprofit or for-profit, is at the core of social entrepreneurship. Most social entrepreneurs get started by finding a solution to an unresolved social problem, and taking action to mobilize resources toward this solution by creating a transformative enterprise."

Social enterprise professionals look to take on leadership roles within an existing organization, applying management techniques to achieve social impact within the context of the nonprofit, government, or business sectors. Many alumni/ae have chosen to work as professionals within an organization that supports social entrepreneurs, potentially a lower-risk and better-resourced environment that still offers the chance to work toward large-scale social change.

Sample Career Opportunities

Social Enterprises

- [ACCESS](#)
- [MATCH Public Charter High School](#)
- [Mobilize.org](#)
- [MY TURN, Inc.](#)
- [Network for Good](#)
- [New Creations Community Outreach](#)
- [New Leaders for New Schools](#)
- [New Schools for New Orleans](#)
- [NewSchools Venture Fund](#)
- [New Sector Alliance](#)
- [NFTE](#)
- [Nurses for Newborns](#)
- [One Economy](#)
- [Operation Warm](#)
- [Parents Alliance](#)
- [Peace First \(formerly Peace Games\)](#)
- [Peer Health Exchange](#)
- [Playworks \(formerly Sports4Kids\)](#)
- [Points of Light Institute](#)
- [Project HEALTH](#)
- [Public Allies](#)
- [REDF](#)
- [Roca](#)
- [Root Cause/Public Innovators](#)
- [Rubicon Programs Inc.](#)
- [SeaChange Capital](#)
- [See Forever Foundation](#)
- [Share Our Strength](#)
- [Smiles Change Lives](#)
- [Social Enterprise Alliance](#)
- [SpringBoard Forward](#)
- [Streetwise Partners](#)
- [Summer Advantage USA](#)
- [Summer Search](#)
- [Taproot Foundation](#)
- [Teach For America](#)
- [The Mind Trust](#)
- [Think New Mexico](#)
- [Twin Cities RISE!](#)
- [U.S. Public Service Academy](#)
- [Upwardly Global](#)
- [Work NOLA](#)
- [Year Up](#)
- [Youth Villages](#)
- [YouthBuild](#)
- [Zero Divide](#)

Organizations Supporting Social Entrepreneurship

Starred organizations provide fellowships and seed funding for new social entrepreneurs.

- ***Acumen Fund**—www.acumenfund.org Invests in for-profit and nonprofit social enterprises in five African and South Asian countries.
- ***Ashoka**—www.ashoka.org Helped pioneer social entrepreneurship for three decades through its network of 2,500 global fellows.
- ***Echoing Green**—www.echoinggreen.org Selects one to two dozen, American and global early-stage social entrepreneurs to support for two years.
- **E.M. Kauffman Foundation**—www.kauffman.org Encourages U.S. entrepreneurship, especially for youth.
- **Endeavor**—www.endeavor.org Supports a network of entrepreneurs in nine countries.
- **Lemelson Foundation**—www.lemelson.org Funds, encourages, and recognizes inventors, innovators, and entrepreneurs, especially in the field of sustainable development.
- **Institute for Social Entrepreneurs**—www.socialent.org Provides seminars, workshops and coaching services for social enterprises in the U.S. and around the world.
- **NESsT**—www.nesst.org Supports the development of social enterprises in emerging democracies worldwide through venture funding and education.

- **New Profit**—www.newprofit.org A venture philanthropy fund providing the necessary resources for social entrepreneurs to achieve their visions.
- ***New Sector Alliance**—www.newsector.org A social enterprise venture capital firm that strengthens organizations today while developing leaders for tomorrow.
- **Omidyar Network**—www.omidyar.net Supports dozens of non- and for-profit social entrepreneurs in the microfinance, participatory media, philanthropic markets, and government transparency sectors.
- **Root Cause**—www.rootcause.org A Cambridge organization that advances solutions to social and economic problems by supporting social innovators and educating social impact investors.
- ***Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship**—www.schwabfound.org Selects international social entrepreneurs each year to participate in the World Economic Forum.
- **Skoll Foundation**—www.skollfund.org Identifies and gives major funding to established social enterprises each year.
- **Social Enterprise Coalition**—www.socialenterprise.org.uk The U.K. national body for social enterprise, focusing on social businesses and community development trusts.
- **StartingBloc**—<http://startingbloc.org/home> Brings the latest innovations in corporate social responsibility and social entrepreneurship to emerging leaders through their Institute for Social Innovation.
- **TIE Boston**—www.tie-boston.org An entrepreneur network with mentors and local events.
- **Unreasonable Institute**—www.unreasonableinstitute.org Supports the international collaboration of young social entrepreneurs.
- **World Bank Development Marketplace**—www.developmentmarketplace.org Competitive grant program that funds innovative, early-stage projects worldwide.
- **Young People For (YP4)**—www.youngpeoplefor.org A strategic long-term leadership development program that identifies, engages and empowers the newest generation of progressive leaders to create lasting change in their communities.

Resources for More Information

Websites

- **The Accelerator**—<http://theaccelerator.com/>
- **Business In Development Network**—www.bidnetwork.org
- **Frontline World Social Entrepreneurs Series**—www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/socialentrepreneurs
- **Guidestar** (online nonprofit database)—www.guidestar.org

- **Harvard Business School Social Enterprise Initiative Resources by Topic**—www.hbs.edu/socialenterprise/resources/
- **OxSec Advice for Entrepreneurs**—www.science-enterprise.ox.ac.uk/
- **Social Enterprise Alliance**—www.se-alliance.org
- **Social Enterprise Net**—www.socialenterprise.net
- **Social Enterprise Knowledge Network**—www.sekn.org
- **Social Enterprise Reporter**—www.sereporter.com
- **Social Innovation Conversations**—<http://sic.conversationsnetwork.org/>
- **Social Venture Network**—www.svn.org
- **Stanford Social Innovation Review**—www.ssireview.org
- **Startingbloc** (student SE network)—www.startingbloc.org
- **TED: Ideas Worth Spreading**—www.ted.com

Recent Social Enterprise Related Books and Articles

- David Bornstein, *How to Change the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007)
- Gordon Bloom, "The Social Entrepreneurship Collaboratory (SE Lab): A University Incubator for a Rising Generation of Social Entrepreneurs." In *Social Entrepreneurship: New Models of Sustainable Social Change*. Ed. Alex Nicholls, pp.
- Debbie D. Brock and Ashoka's Global Academy for Social Entrepreneurship, "Social Entrepreneurship Teaching Resources Handbook" (August 8, 2008).
www.universitynetwork.org/handbook
- Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).
- Leslie Crutchfield, *Forces for Good: The Six Practices of High-Impact Nonprofits* (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2008)
- J. Gregory Dees, *Strategic Tools for Social Entrepreneurs: Enhancing the Performance of your Enterprising Nonprofit* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2002).
- John Elkington & Pamela Hartigan, *The Power of Unreasonable People: How Social Entrepreneurs Create Markets That Change the World* (Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2007).
- Chris Gergen and Gregg Vanourek, *Life Entrepreneurs: Ordinary People Creating Extraordinary Lives* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2008).
- Alex Nicholls, *Social Entrepreneurship: New Models of Sustainable Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

- Paul Polak, *Out of Poverty: What Works When Traditional Approaches Fail* (San Francisco: Berrett-Kochler Publishers, 2008).
- C. K. Prahalad, *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid: Eradicating Poverty Through Profits* (Saddle River: Pierson Publishing, 2006).
- Jane Wei Skillern, James Austin, Herman Leonard, and Howard Stevenson, *Entrepreneurship in the Social Sector* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2007).
- Muhammad Yunus, *Creating a World Without Poverty: Social Business and the Future of Capitalism* (New York: Perseus Books Group, 2007).

Annual Social Enterprise Conferences**

- [Columbia Business School Social Enterprise Conference](#) – Hosted in October by the Columbia University Business School. Jointly organized by the Social Enterprise Club, International Development Club and the Social Enterprise Program.
- [GH/Innovate 2010](#) –Hosted in April by Yale University in New Haven, CT. Presented annually by Unite For Sight.
- [Harvard Social Enterprise Conference](#) – Generally held in February at the Harvard Business School and the Harvard Kennedy School.
- [Net Impact Conference](#) – Hosted in October by the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business. Brings together both graduate students and professionals to explore the latest ideas, tools, and careers that use business to achieve social and environmental good.
- [Nonprofit Technology Conference](#) – Hosted in April by The Nonprofit Technology Network (NTEN) and the Georgia Center for Nonprofits.
- [Satter Conference on Social Entrepreneurs](#) –Hosted in November by NYU Stern's Berkley Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.
- [SOCAP10](#) - Hosted in October by Social Capital Markets: At the Intersection of Money and Learning.
- [Social Enterprise Summit/World Forum](#) - Hosted in April by the Social Enterprise Alliance. Don't miss this international forum advocating for increased social impact through social enterprise.
- [Social Venture Capital/Social Enterprise Conference](#) – Hosted in March. Opportunity to learn, network, and connect with hundreds of top social enterprise/financial leaders and organizations from Latin America, the Caribbean, and the state of Florida.

** Dates and locations of these conferences are subject to change from year to year. Please check organization websites for up to date information.

Adapted from *The Unofficial Student Guide to Social Entrepreneurship at Harvard and Beyond* for the use of Maxwell graduate students and alumni by the staff of the Office of Career Development and Alumni Services.