



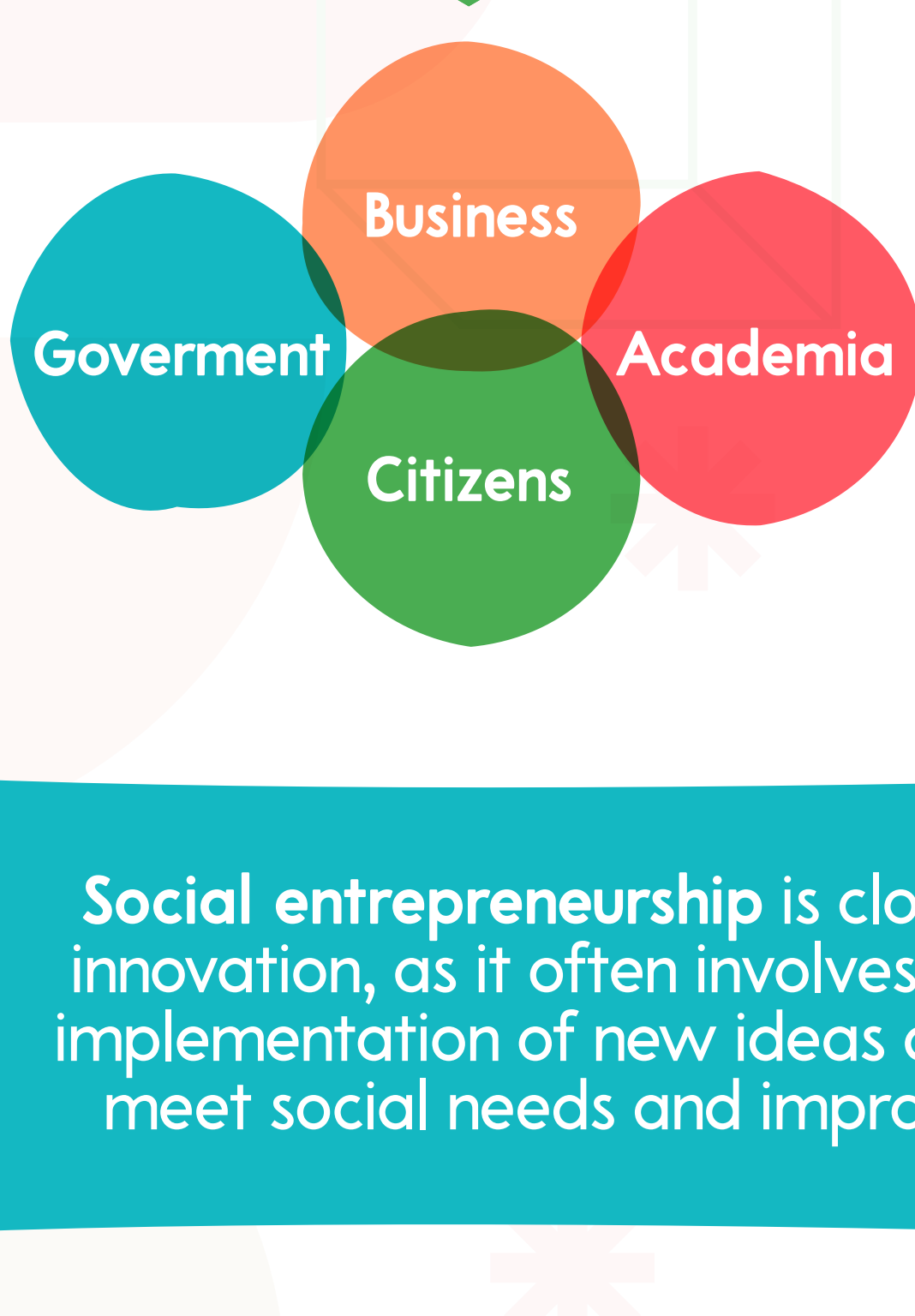
Social innovation is creating and implementing new ideas (like products, services, or models) to address social problems and improve people's lives.

It's about finding better ways to meet social needs, fostering new relationships or collaboration, and enhancing individuals' ability to act.

European Commission, 2013

Good governance implies a creative environment resulting from democratic decision-making processes that, most notably, encompass all of public affected by the strategies.

Social innovation transforms the governance model of an ecosystem.



TOP-DOWN VIEW

Traditionally, the governance model of an ecosystem is based on top-down, based on the triple helix approach



BOTTOM-UP VIEW

Social innovation aims to decentralize governance to a bottom-up process and upgrade it to the Quadrable Helix approach, which includes citizens as the fourth cornerstone of an innovative society.

Social entrepreneurship is closely linked with social innovation, as it often involves the development and implementation of new ideas and business models to meet social needs and improve human wellbeing.

A social enterprise is a type of business that:

prioritizes social impact over profit generation for owners and stakeholders.

primarily reinvests surpluses towards achieving social goals.

is managed in an accountable, transparent and innovative way.

THE SOCIAL BUSINESS INITIATIVE REPORT, 2013

2.8 million

organisations and entities in Europe

>13 million

million paid jobs

6.3%

of the work force

0.6-9.9%

of all jobs across Member States

The role of social innovation in supporting youth

13.1%

High unemployment rates

Youth unemployment level at EU: 2.3m (13.1%) of unemployed young people in EU (aged 15-24)

40%

Skills mismatch

More than 40% of employers in the EU face difficulties in finding workers with the right skills, particularly STEM and digital skills

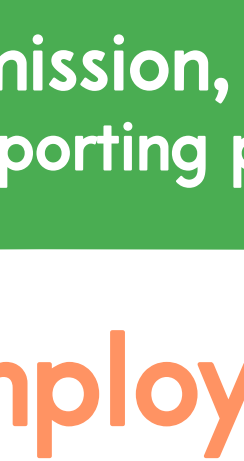
6.5%

Limited entrepreneurial opportunities

6.5% of young people (aged 15-24) in the EU are engaged in entrepreneurial activities



Social innovation can help by creating new opportunities for disadvantaged youth to gain skills, connect with mentors and networks, and start their own ventures.



Social innovation can also help create new models of employment and work that better meet the needs and preferences of young people.



Social enterprises that prioritize social and environmental impact alongside financial returns may be more appealing to young people looking for work that aligns with their values and interests.

Case study

OX?LORE

Ox?lore youth programme in Oxford, UK, is a social innovation initiative that aims to provide opportunities for disadvantaged youth to engage in creative and innovative projects

One inspiring example from the program is Clean State, concerning a group of young people previously involved with the criminal justice system.

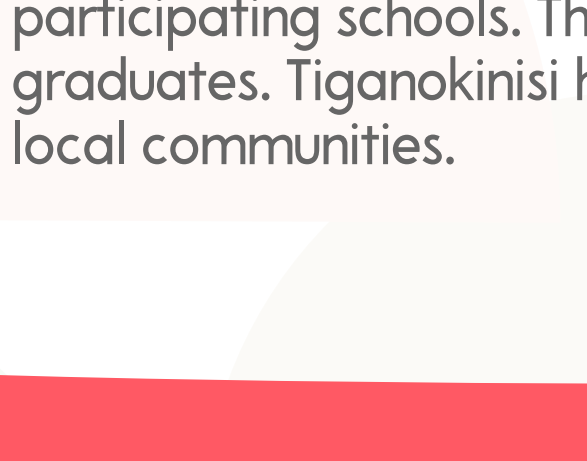
The group worked together to design and create a mobile laundromat that would provide a much-needed service to homeless individuals in the community.

The project not only provided employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for the youth, but it also addressed a social need in the community.

EU CASE STUDIES AND BEST PRACTICES TO INSPIRE ACTION

European Commission, Social Innovation

"inspirational practices supporting people throughout their lives"



Employing Digital, Spain

Problem

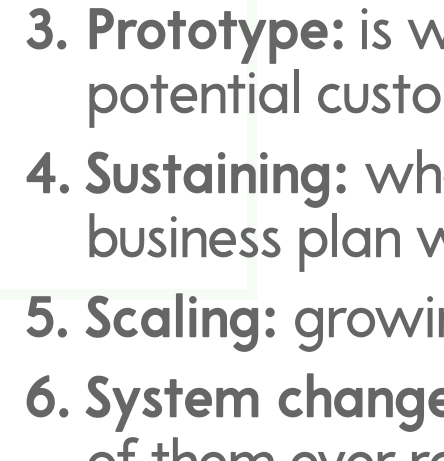
The demand for digital skills in the workplace is growing rapidly. For vulnerable groups, this could mean increasing risk of exclusion from the labour market (higher risk of unemployment) and further economic hardship (higher risk of poverty).

Solution

Employing Digital program focusses on developing digital skills of people at risk of social exclusion through a digital skills training program.

Results

Deployed in 12 out of the 17 regions in Spain, 9826 total participants.



NoRo Centre, Romania

Problem

In Romania, 1.3m people are affected by rare diseases and 90% of them don't receive a correct diagnosis or adequate medical care.

Solution

One-stop-shop for people living with a rare disease in Romania offering a holistic and centralized approach to rare disease care, combining medical, social and educational services for patients and their families.

Results

It offers services to over 10% of patients diagnosed with rare diseases in the country, opened the door to a re-valuation of how rare diseases are treated in Romania.



Regseda, Lithuania

Problem

8% of the population in Lithuania is classified as disabled. For people with disabilities, opportunities for work can be scarce and unsustainable. Lithuania has the 3rd highest rate in the EU of disabled people being at risk of poverty and social exclusion (43%).

Solution

A social enterprise that since 1959 has been employing people with disabilities in the country.

Results

It employs 196 people, 155 of which are people with disabilities. In 2016, the company generated a turnover of 3.2 million. All the profits were re-invested into social integration of people with disabilities.



Tiganokinisi, Cyprus

Problem

Cyprus has one of the highest levels of municipal waste generated per person in the EU (more than 2,000 tones of used cooking oil is wasted every year in the country).

Solution

An environmental education program that transforms used cooking oil into a renewable energy source. The program is based on innovative circular bioeconomy model, with schools acting as collection points for used cooking oil. Profits go back to the schools to be re-invested in environmental education and promotion of green technologies.

Results

Involving over 85% of Cypriot schools. Since 2014, over 250,000 have been generated and re-invested in green infrastructures and technologies in participating schools. The program has also created new jobs for university graduates. Tiganokinisi has also contributed to policy and legislative change in local communities.

SOCIAL INNOVATION SPIRAL

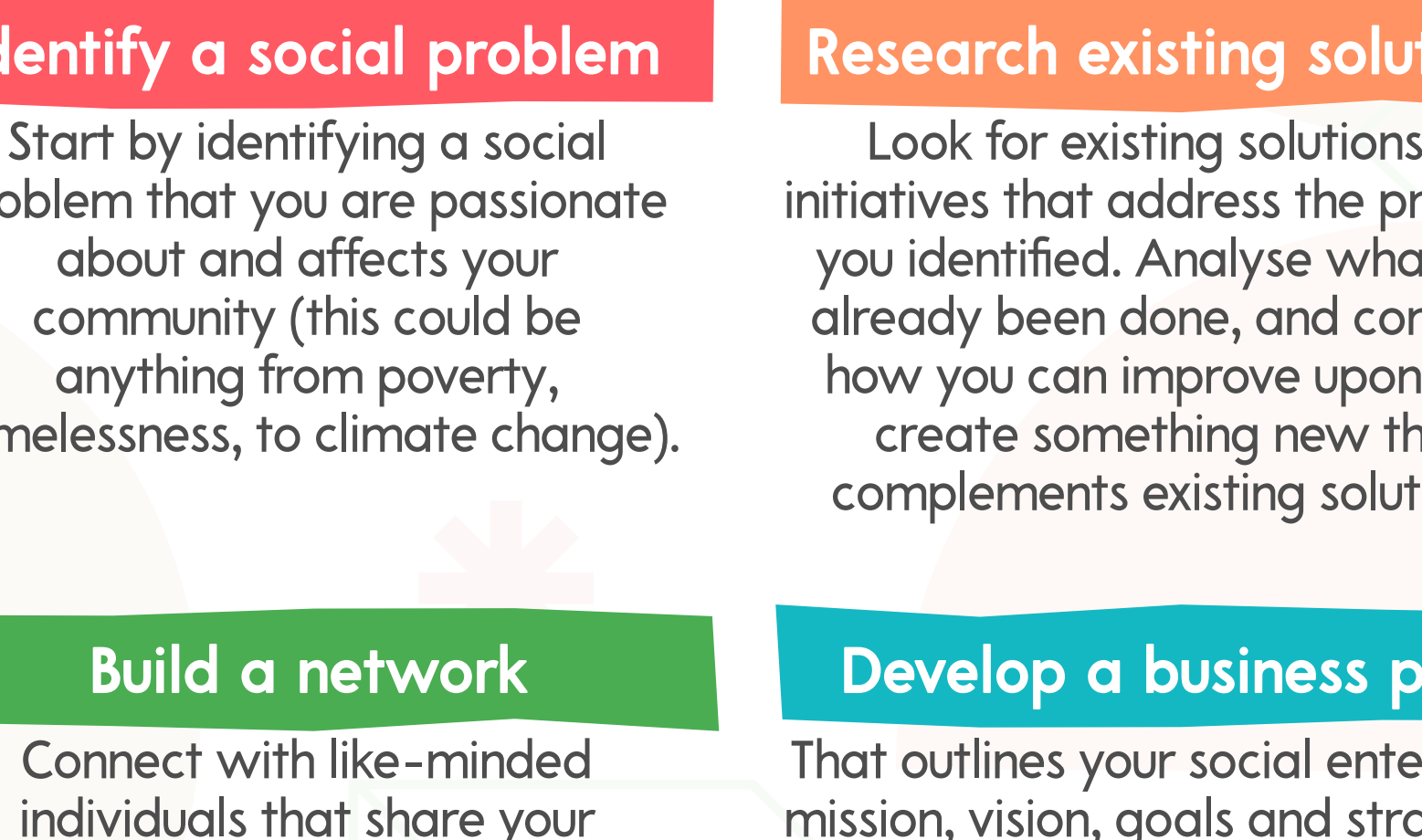
Social Innovation Spiral is a framework used to categorize social innovations according to their maturity level. Depending on the stage you are in, there are different funding opportunities available to finance your socially innovative project



- 1. Prompts: identify a problem worth solving
2. Proposals: develop solutions to the problem you identified.
3. Prototype: is where ideas get tested in practice by involving end users and potential customers.
4. Sustaining: when the idea becomes everyday practice. At this stage the business plan will be defined and implemented.
5. Scaling: growing and spreading social innovations into other markets.
6. System change: it is the ultimate goal of social innovation, even if very few of them ever reach this stage. Here, a social innovation has the power to positively impact the ecosystem in which it operates.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

During social enterprises early stages of development social enterprises are not making any profit thus, in order to sustain themselves and cover their costs and investments, they need access to pre-seed and seed capital options.



Source: European Commission, 'A recipe book for social finance', 2016

Practical tips that disadvantaged youth can use to start or participate in social enterprises:

Identify a social problem

Start by identifying a social problem that you are passionate about and affects your community (this could be anything from poverty, homelessness, to climate change).

Research existing solutions

Look for existing solutions or initiatives that address the problem you identified. Analyse what has already been done, and consider how you can improve upon it or create something new that complements existing solutions.

Build a network

Connect with like-minded individuals that share your passion for social change. Attend local events, join social media groups, and attend workshops or seminars to build your network.

Develop a business plan

That outlines your social enterprise's mission, vision, goals and strategies for achieving them. Consider how you will finance your initiative, whether through grants, crowdfunding or other sources.

Collaborate with others

Partner with other organisations to pool resources and create a more significant impact.

Test and iterate

Test your social enterprise's products or services and gather feedback from your target audience. Continuously evaluate your impact and refine your strategy to achieve better outcomes.

