

Social Enterprise and the Roaring Fork Valley

What is social enterprise?
An earned income strategy constructed to advance a social mission while generating revenue that:

- Creates unrestricted discretionary income
- Supports diversified sources of support
- Integrates mission and 'fundraising'
- Creates benefits beyond revenue

A strategic social enterprise venture will:

- Further and complement your mission
- Fill a genuine market need
- Leverage the strengths of your organization
- Enhance your organizational capacity
- Energize your board, staff and stakeholders
- Execute a solid business plan

Challenges

- Board understanding and support
- Lack of capacity and skills
- Capital
- Competition
- Culture clash

Quick Links
[JVA Consulting](#)
[The Manus Fund](#)

JVA Consulting, LLC is a Colorado-based firm seeking to make a difference in the world by helping social innovators across sectors—nonprofits, government, donors and socially responsible businesses—become more successful and sustainable. Our work includes strategic and business planning, community needs assessments, board development, capacity building initiatives, training and management consulting, fundraising consulting, grantwriting, research and program evaluation. Visit www.jvaconsulting.com or call 970.319.1674 to learn how JVA can support your organization in planning and launching a social enterprise.

The Manus Fund supports social entrepreneurship and partners with nonprofit organizations who are willing to generate earned income from their programs and services. The Manus Fund strives to support nonprofit organizations in their pursuit of a double bottom line. We achieve our goals through loans, planning grants and by providing business planning services to organizations in our region.

→ Social enterprise and your board

Commitment and leadership from a board of directors are critical for a successful, strategic social enterprise. Start talking about social enterprise with your board today! Here are some tips to get your board "on board."

- **Educate your board.** It is important that board members understand social enterprise. At your next board meeting, present the concept of social enterprise and its opportunities as well as challenges. Frame your discussion within the context of your organization's long-term sustainability.
- **Challenge the "nonprofit mentality".** It can be a challenge for a board to consider the opportunity to generate a profit as a nonprofit organization. Support a fresh perspective! Be open and support discussions that allow the board to fully consider the notion of a nonprofit's profitability.
- **Identify champions.** Many boards have successful, entrepreneurial board members. They can support other board members in understanding social enterprise. Work to develop these board members as champions. If your organization moves forward with a social enterprise, these individuals will provide critical expertise in planning, developing and launching the enterprise.
- **Engage the full board.** If your organization believes it has social enterprise opportunities, engage the full board. Involve and invest them in a brainstorming exercise to identify potential opportunities. Don't forget about services, programs and expertise your organization already has! Invest your board from the very beginning.
- **Invest wisely.** Planning a social enterprise takes time and resources. Your board should develop and approve a planning budget to support a wise investment in the planning process.

→ Social enterprise at work: real examples of successful enterprises

- **KAJX, Aspen Public Radio:** Aspen Public Radio presents a balanced mix of programming produced to the highest standards to a diverse community of listeners. The partnership with The Manus Fund has enabled Aspen Public Radio to add a full-time, down Valley bilingual reporter to the news department in order to enhance in depth on-air coverage of issues of importance to the residents of the Roaring Fork, Colorado and Eagle River valleys. Through this expanded coverage, Aspen Public Radio has been able to generate additional revenue from underwriting and membership from those newly covered communities.
- **EarthLinks:** A Denver-based nonprofit organization, "EarthLinks connects low-income people with the natural world for the mutual benefit for both the person and the planet." The Greenfingers Program is a micro-economic development project to benefit homeless and low-income persons. Participants grow plants in a local community garden and then use the garden's abundance to create products such as candles, bookmarks, cards and birdhouses available for sale. The project artists earn a modest wage and acquire job skills, plus an enhanced ability for socialization. JVA assessed the organization's capacity and provided technical assistance and consulting to support the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of the organization.
- **LIFT-UP:** LIFT-UP is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing essential humanitarian assistance in the communities it serves. The Manus Fund partnered with LIFT-UP to assist it in purchasing property in Rifle to expand its food bank, thrift shop and administrative facilities. Through the sales at the thrift shop, LIFT-UP generates revenue to support the programs that it offers to the communities in which it works.
- **Family Star:** Family Star, an award-winning Montessori child and parent education center for kids two months through six years, provides the vital steppingstone for Denver's at-risk children. Through a variety of financial programs and tuition options, Family Star generates revenue while allowing families from diverse economic backgrounds to participate in its programs. JVA has partnered with the organization to strategize and market its tuition programs as well as to support a diversified fundraising approach to support all aspects of the organization's work.
- **Casa Esperanza:** Casa Esperanza provides appropriate housing and emotional support for patients and their families who reside temporarily in Albuquerque, New Mexico, while patients receive cancer treatment at local hospitals. Through strategic business planning, Casa Esperanza transformed an existing car donation program to a profitable earned income program. Casa launched its enterprise through participation in the National Center for Social Entrepreneurs program, of which JVA is a regional facilitator in Colorado.

Contact [JVA](#) or the [Manus Fund](#) today to learn how we can support your organization as it explores social enterprise.