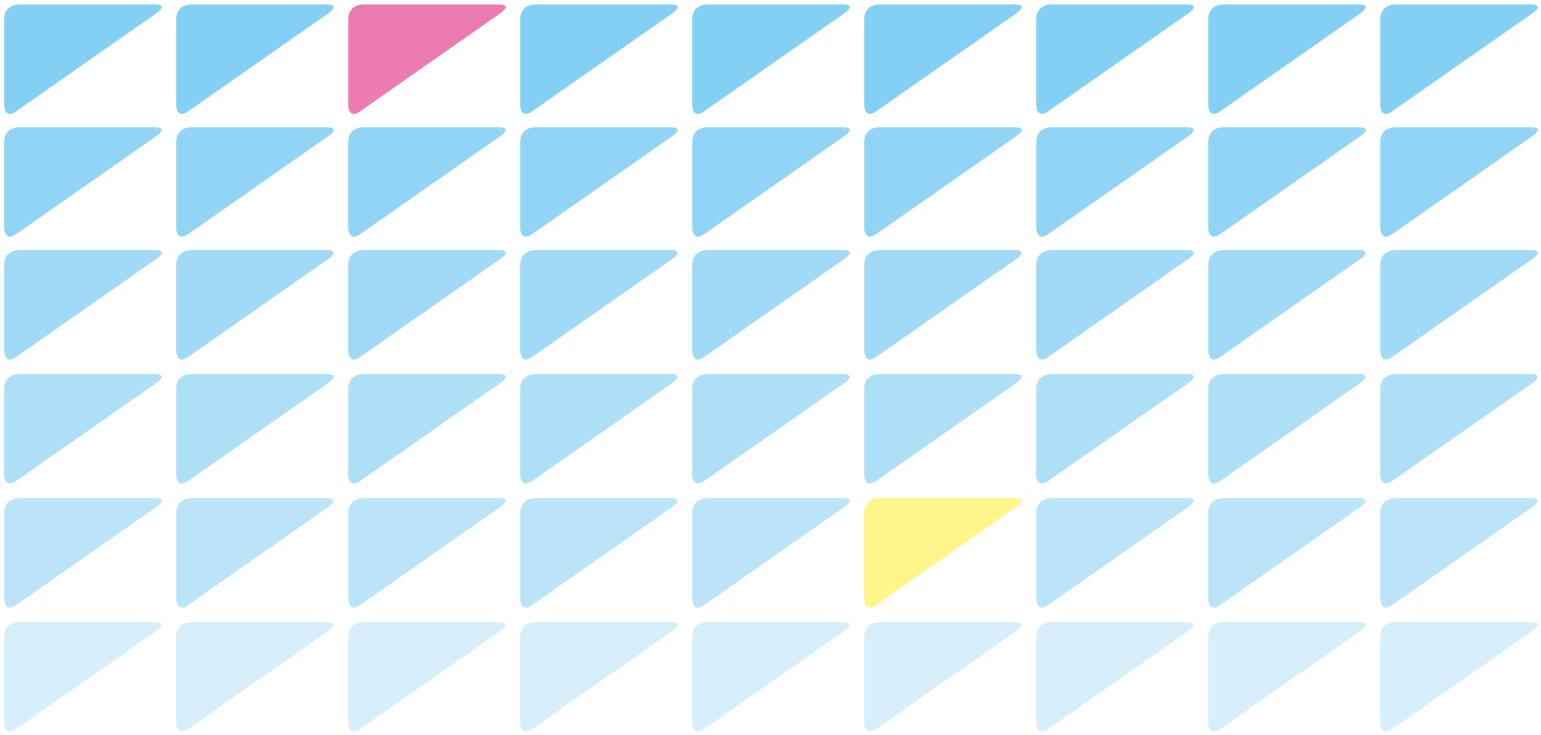
Scaling Social Impact in the UK:

Insights from Scale Accelerator



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere thanks go to the founding Funders of Scale Accelerator, whose support has made this pilot cohort possible:

- Big Lottery Fund
- City Bridge Trust
- Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
- Garfield Weston
- Lloyds Bank Foundation
- Paul Hamlyn
- Rayne Foundation
- Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts
- Tudor Trust

A special thank you to all 11 participating organisations, for the time, effort and commitment applied throughout the programme.

And finally thanks to The Social Innovation Partnership and The School for Social Entrepreneurs and ICSF teams for their roles in delivering the project.

If you have any questions about Scale Accelerator, please contact Joe Kallarackal, joe@the-icsf.org.uk.

ICSF
INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR SOCIAL FRANCHISING

The International Centre For Social Franchising (ICSF) enables organisations with successful solutions to social issues scale their impact to reach more people. ICSF works collaboratively with our partners to equip and build capacity in their teams with the systems, skills and strategies to scale their programs and maximise their impact.

TSIP | The Social Innovation Partnership

The Social Innovation Partnership (TSIP) is a trusted advisor to public, private and social sector organisations seeking to maximise their social impact. We work with organisations to help them clarify their purpose and what it is they want to achieve. TSIP then supports them to embed evidence and innovation in their work. With this combination of strategic and practical support, organisations can measure, communicate and grow their social impact.

school for social entrepreneurs

The School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) empowers people from all backgrounds to create positive social change. Their courses help individuals start, sustain, and scale social enterprises, charities and community projects. So far SSE have helped over 1,500 social entrepreneurs make the world a better place.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2015, the International Centre for Social Franchising partnered with nine of the UK's largest Trusts and Foundations to deliver the pilot Scale Accelerator. The aim of Scale Accelerator is to support promising social enterprises and charities to replicate and scale the proven impact of their programmes.

The initial Scale Accelerator cohort included 11 diverse social enterprises and charities from across the UK, selected in collaboration with funding partners. Over ten months, each organisation received a package of individual support and group training that enabled them to:

- Create an ambitious yet realistic two year acceleration plan – defining their strategy, developing a business model and building a detailed implementation plan
- Build leadership and other critical capabilities
- Improve their monitoring and evaluation processes

This report aims to share insights from Scale Accelerator in the hope it will be of benefit to social purpose organisations aiming to scale their impact and those who wish to support them to do so.

KEY INSIGHTS FOR ORGANISATIONS LOOKING TO SCALE THEIR IMPACT:

1) **Invest Time Upfront:**
Take the time to assess readiness and be clear on intended impact. This may take time upfront, but will be extremely useful in guiding decisions on what the best way to replicate will be.

2) **Understand Your Core:**
Be clear on what specific elements of the intervention need to be replicated to achieve impact. This can potentially streamline your intervention and reduce overall costs whilst providing clarity on what level of flexibility partners have in replicating the intervention.

3) **Find the Right Partners:**
Build a clear profile of the essential and desirable characteristics of partners before thinking about specific organisations. Taking a bottom up approach may help identify new types of partner.

4) **Prepare for Change:**
Many types of replication strategy require a shift from being a delivery focused organisation to one with a focus on supporting others to deliver, which can lead to significant internal cultural change. Think through how these cultural changes can be supported, especially regarding the types and skills of new team members you may require.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDERS AND OTHER SUPPORTERS:

1) **Encourage Innovative Thinking:**
Scaling through replication is innovative. Challenge organisations to explore different replication models, and provide them the time and space required to design a robust plan to scale their impact.

2) **Look Beyond Impact:**
Evidence of social impact is an important pre-requisite to scaling up, but without the right underlying business model, great interventions will rarely be able to achieve scale.

3) **Support the Initial Stages of Replication:**
In the early stages of replication organisations typically need three types of financial support: resource and expertise to systemise i.e. put in place all the processes and systems required to support scale, increasing central capacity and skills and finally providing initial investment to networks to pilot and grow before they reach a critical mass and are sustainable.

4) **Enable Connections and Knowledge Sharing:**
Supporting the sharing of knowledge between social sector organisations looking to scale with those who have achieved scale is valuable.

Whilst it will take time to understand the full extent to which participants will be able to scale their programme, and the degree to which Scale Accelerator contributed to this, an initial evaluation of the programme has shown promising results.

We believe the initial Scale Accelerator pilot has successfully supported each organisation to understand their readiness to replicate, provided them a clear strategy and roadmap to scale their impact, and understand how they will need to improve their evidence to support scale. We believe it fills a gap in the current eco-system, by providing a place where organisations can come to access the support, expertise and coaching required to understand how they should scale their impact through replication.

INTRODUCTION

"Nearly every problem has been solved by someone, somewhere. The challenge of the 21st century is to find out what works and scale it up." Bill Clinton.

This premise – that we often have found interventions that can address some of our society's greatest problems, but that we need to unlock their potential to reach more people – was the founding principle behind Scale Accelerator.

The International Centre for Social Franchising (ICSF) led Scale Accelerator: a collaboration including, The Social Innovation Partnership (TSIP), The School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) and nine of the UK's largest Foundations to support some of their most promising grantees to develop ambitious but realistic strategies to scale their impact. In 2015, the first Scale Accelerator cohort was launched, with delivery partners (ICSF, TSIP, SSE) supporting 11 social enterprises and charities making a difference in a diverse range of sectors. Their innovative projects ranged from ending leadership inequality within our generation by developing working class youth leaders to improving wellbeing and tackling isolation amongst men over the age of 50.

The term *"Accelerator"* may immediately lead you to think of the start up support programmes commonly seen in the technology industry (Y-combinator in the US and JLAB closer to home in the UK) and now increasingly in the social enterprise sector. These accelerators typically bring together start up ventures, supporting them to grow their **organisation** through a mixture of mentoring, training, office space and access to potential funders/investors. Scale Accelerator, whilst learning from these models is crucially different in that it focuses on already successful social enterprises and charities, with a track record of sustainability and proven impact, to develop innovative plans to scale their **impact**, exploring strategies beyond organic growth. Whilst there are a range of resources focused on supporting innovation and developing new ideas, social enterprises and charities have told us they often lack the support and expertise to help them take ideas that work and to spread them into new locations. [1]Our vision for Scale Accelerator is that it becomes a key part of the UK social sector support ecosystem - bridging the gap between survival of the start up and readiness for scale up.

Over a ten month period, the Scale Accelerator cohort were supported through a bespoke package of consultancy and training support to:

- Define a clear approach to achieve scale
- Develop an implementation plan
- Support to improve their evaluation practices at scale
- Build their leadership capability

The aim of this report is to share some of the initial learnings and insight from the programme gained by both delivery partners and participants. We hope that these lessons will provide a useful resource, for social purpose organisations focused on scaling their impact as well as funders who wish to enable them to do so.

[1]Realising the Potential of Social Replication. 2013

OUR APPROACH

Scale Accelerator was structured around the five stages of social replication (see Figure 1) based on ICSF's research and practical work. Scale Accelerator aimed to support participants through the two initial phases of **Prove** and **Design**

FIGURE 1: ICSF'S SCALING MODEL

PROVE	DESIGN	SYSTEMISE	PILOT	SCALE
Assess replication readiness	Define scale goals	Document relevant systems and processes	Pilot in 2-4 locations	Implement rapid replications
Validate social impact	Develop replication model	Develop recruitment and support functions	Create feedback loop to improve systems	Refine on-going support
Validate business model	Identify replication partners	Draft legal documentation	Evaluate and iterate	Continued learning and innovation

Scale Accelerator supported organisations who had a great track record of delivering their intervention, and had evidence of their impact but who were at the beginning of their scale up journey. The three delivery partners contributed to this in the following ways:

1. **ICSF:** Worked with the leadership team and board to diagnose the organisation's readiness to replicate, and supported each to develop a clear strategy and replication model for scale, testing financial sustainability through robust financial modelling. ICSF worked with each participant to develop an implementation plan outlining the key activities they would need the activities and resources needed over the next two years to achieve their scale goals.
2. **TSIP:** Provided purposeful impact measurement support to each organisation seeking to scale, taking into account their existing approaches. For those earlier in their evaluation journey, TSIP provided support through training in evaluation approaches, developing a theory of change, research in key outcome metrics and potential validated impact measurement tools. More advanced participants received more bespoke support addressing their most pressing monitoring and evaluation needs.
3. **SSE:** Delivered a two day training workshop for two individuals from each participating organisation, to introduce them to some of the critical leadership and functional capabilities that would support them to scale. This included hearing from expert witnesses – individuals who had been on a scaling journey and could share their real life experiences. This was followed by facilitated action learning sets[2] aimed at developing peer support groups amongst the participants as they scaled.

[2]Action Learning Sets are a structured method enabling small groups to solve real issues It involves meeting regularly, taking action and reflecting upon the results collectively.

CASE STUDY: RELATE GMS

Relate Greater Manchester South (GMS) provide a range of services, primarily focused on counselling, to support healthy relationships. Bridging to Change is a Domestic Abuse Service promoting the safety of women and children affected by domestic violence and abuse established in 2008.

The programme is a 40-week intervention, as part of which perpetrators attend a mixture of individual and group sessions with trained facilitators aiming to identify, acknowledge and change their negative behaviours. The partners and ex-partners of perpetrators taking part in the programme are also offered individual support, including safety planning. Last year, Relate GMS worked with 120 men and organised 1,200 individual and group sessions.

The Bridging to Change service has been growing rapidly over the last few years, responding to a great demand for this type of support in the area and nationally. However, a recent attempt at replicating the service has not gone as smoothly as planned. Michelle Hill (CEO) said that reflecting on this experience through Scale Accelerator has helped them to be: "much clearer what we want to do for the next replication and we've also learned what we'd never do again". Through workshops, they have explored different potential replication models and developed a robust acceleration plan. This has convinced the board that replication is the right way forward:

"So I think that's been a really big benefit for the organisation – it's helped us inform the board into understanding what replication looks like and why we should be doing it"

Katie McCann (Trustee) agreed and emphasised how the financial model was invaluable in helping the board make an informed decision about the potential risks and rewards of replication:

Scale Accelerator also helped Relate GMS to develop a more robust evaluation framework to better collect hard evidence of the impact of Bridging to Change.

The next step is to use the coming six to nine months to prepare for replication by systemising their services and procedures and collecting impact data to prove their effectiveness. After this, they hope to trial the replication process in one site using a hybrid franchising model.

“I couldn’t speak more highly about [it]. It’s been absolutely fantastic. They (delivery partners) have been very good at doing what they said they’d do…and really high quality interaction… You couldn’t really have wanted for more, really”.

THE SCALE ACCELERATOR 2015-2016 COHORT

Each of the supporting Foundations put forward their most promising grantees who were assessed for the potential and readiness for scaling up. The 11 organisations that took part in the 2015-2016 Scale Accelerator were:

A Band of Brothers

A Band of Brothers tackles offending behaviour in young men by enabling them to collaborate in a meaningful way so they become an asset and not a danger to the community. A Band of Brothers runs a unique programme called Quest for Community that forges powerful bonds between younger and older men using 21st century 'rites of passages' and on-going mentoring to enhance confidence and shared responsibility. Already present in four locations in the South East, we worked with A Band of Brothers to develop a national expansion strategy.

A Band of Brothers chose a social franchise model to achieve their scaling ambition of supporting 1000 men to live purposeful lives free of offending by 2020. A Band of Brothers identified the need to package up their current programme and are currently developing a detailed operations manual to support their franchisees.

Age UK Cheshire

Age UK Cheshire provides a range of care and support services to empower and enable older people to continue to live full and active lives, to participate in community activity, and to remain in good mental and physical health for as long as possible. We worked with Age UK Cheshire on their Men in Shed's programme; a unique offer to target older men to reduce social isolation and enhance their quality of life.

Currently operating four sheds, Age UK Cheshire will expand to around six new sheds in Cheshire by 2021, to achieve their goal of supporting 1,000 men in Cheshire each year. Through a strategic partnership with the national Men's Sheds Association, the two organisations will work together to ensure more sheds across the UK are opened in the likeness of the Cheshire model, retaining the quality provision of the 'Men in Sheds' sheds.

Bikeworks

Bikeworks is a London-based social enterprise founded in 2006 with a mission to actively change lives and offer positive experiences using the bicycle and cycling. We worked with Bikeworks to help them replicate the impact of their All Ability Clubs. The clubs are free and aim to create a cycling community that is truly inclusive, with a range of adapted bikes to suit all needs. All Ability currently runs in three different locations in London and attracted 1,000 participants last year.

Over the next five years, Bikeworks aims to scale up All Ability so it reaches 8,500 participants via an affiliate network.

Through the programme, Bikeworks explored how they could make their model more cost effective by introducing a mobile unit that allowed specialist customised bikes to be used across multiple sites. Bikeworks are looking to test this new model operationally whilst initially growing their sites across London, before exploring how they launch their network and recruit new partners.

Leonard Cheshire Disability

Leonard Cheshire Disability (LCD) supports disabled people to have the freedom to live their lives the way they choose — with the opportunity and support to live independently, contribute economically and participate fully in society. We worked with LCD on their Can Do programme, which empowers disabled people between the ages of 16-35 to volunteer in their communities, learning new skills and building their confidence to participate fully in their communities.
Already present in 12 locations, LCD were looking for a more sustainable model for their existing Can Do sites which would also enable them to double their number of sites by 2019. Through the programme we explored how social franchising could meet this aim, and LCD are currently completing a period of detailed market research to test and refine the franchise design to ensure it is a compelling offer for potential partners. LCD were also supported to develop a tool enabling teams to assess how to collect evaluation data from groups of young people with a range of abilities.

Reclaim

Reclaim is a Manchester-based youth leadership non-profit set up in 2007 that supports 12 to 13 year olds from pressurised working class communities to lead a positive change in their communities.

We worked with Reclaim to develop a strategy to replicate the impact of the LEAD programme across the UK. LEAD aims to build confidence, resilience and social skills in potential young leaders, guided by a manifesto developed by the young people which identifies the priority issues within the area and the policies to address these.

Reclaim wanted to explore how to take their model to other pressurised communities across the UK. Previously they had received multiple requests to deliver LEAD in new locations, but could not see how to achieve this without significantly growing their own organisation. Through Scale Accelerator, Reclaim designed an accreditation model which would allow them to share LEAD with other organisations who could tailor it to their local context whilst providing the mechanisms to ensure all important quality. Reclaim are currently in the systemise phase and are packaging up their delivery approach. Following this they are seeking funding to run a pilot of the accreditation with three partners.

Safer Places
Safer Places aims to ensure the safety, improve the quality of life and reduce repeat victimisation of adults and children fleeing from or living with domestic abuse. Operating in Essex, Southend and parts of Hertfordshire, Safer Places worked with us to develop a strategy and plan to increase the reach of its Daisy Project. The Daisy Project aims to increase the opportunities for victims to disclose and access support in the hospital setting, a crucial point of access for many victims who are unknown to other services.

Over the next four years, Safer Places are aiming to reach 2,500 victims of domestic abuse, by accrediting other organisations such as local domestic abuse organisations to deliver the Daisy project. Prior to launching the accreditation, Safer Places are focused on winning commissions to deliver Daisy themselves in two new locations to prove the programme is able to replicate outcomes in a new location and maintain its cost effectiveness.

Staying Put
Staying Put is a Bradford based domestic violence charity. However, unlike traditional refuge services, Staying Put provides women and their children the support and security they need to feel safe in their homes and communities. Providing a holistic service for their clients on their journey to recovery, Staying Put assists over 1,500 people every year. We worked with their team to understand how to scale their core service offering to reach more survivors of domestic violence.

Staying Put are aiming to more than triple their impact by supporting 4,500 survivors of domestic abuse to stay safe in their homes. Over the next two years they are focused on testing their model outside of Bradford by opening at least two additional sites. This will support them to prove their model works in new contexts, enabling them to understand the type and level of support required by implementing partners, on an initial and on-going basis as well as build their own capacity to support a replicated network.

The Reader
The Reader is an award-winning social enterprise working to connect people with great literature through shared reading. Since 2014, the Reader has inspired more than 1,300 children in over 50 schools in Liverpool to develop a love for reading through one of its programmes, Reading Revolutionaries, a shared reading 'buddying scheme'. The Reader wants to enable school children to have a meaningful relationship with great books and each other outside of Liverpool and across the UK.

Over the next two years the Reader are focused on refining the design of Reading Revolutionaries, building a stronger evidence base and validating the business model by delivering it themselves in new locations. Once these objectives have been achieved, the Reader will focus on how they can enable indirect delivery of the programme through partners.

Vi-Ability
Vi-Ability is a Welsh-based social enterprise founded in 2010 by ex-professional footballer Kelly Davies (Managing Director). Vi-Ability's vision is for every community to have a thriving and financially stable sports hub at its heart that can provide opportunities for young people to broaden their horizons while developing employability and life skills. Vi-Ability's Hub Programme offers disengaged young individuals (aged 16 to 24) who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), experience in the commercial management of sports clubs as part of an eight week work-based learning programme.

Over the next five years, Vi-Ability want to reach 10,000 young people through the Hub Programme, developing over 160 community hubs. To achieve this vision they are looking to franchise the Hub programme, initially in the UK, to other social entrepreneurs. Their first steps on this journey are to systemise the current programme, ensuring partners will be able to replicate the engagement with young people and drive the cultural change required at sports clubs to become commercially viable. Through Scale Accelerator, Vi-Ability identified changes required to programme staffing to achieve all of their desired impacts. They are initially testing this new staffing structure in their current sites in London and Wales before they launch their franchise offer.

CASE STUDY: GROUNDSWELL

Groundswell exists to enable homeless and vulnerable people to take more control of their lives, have a greater influence on services and to play a full role in their community.

Homeless Health Peer Advocacy (HHPA) provides one-to-one support for people experiencing homelessness to make and attend health appointments. The programme is delivered by Peer Advocates – volunteers who all have personal experience of homelessness. Advocates accompany clients to appointments; working to build the skills and confidence to access health services independently. Last year, Groundswell delivered 2,000 one-to-one engagements; and facilitated around 900 sessions at homeless service providers.

Groundswell had already expanded delivery of HHPA across six London Boroughs. Their ambitious goal was to enable 5,000 people experiencing homelessness in England to access services to improve their health through receiving peer support, over the next five years, which represents close to a ten fold increase of their current impact.

Their CEO, Athol Halle, liked the idea of social franchising as a way of handing over responsibility for delivery to someone else, while still being able to influence quality:

"the less control we have to have the better, but if we have too little control we have grave concerns that it wouldn't be done properly".

He felt that Scale Accelerator helped them to explore different replication models that suited their organisation, of which they have chosen social franchising:

He appreciated that staff were involved from across his team as well as members of the board in a whole-system way "to think about this as a whole organisation".

Terry Hitchcock (Chair of Trustees) agreed and thought their involvement had given the board the confidence to proceed with expansion in this way:

“The very measured way of doing this they have proposed – of piloting it first and then making the next step – has given me the confidence (..) that this is a good way to proceed with a minimum amount of risk to achieve what would be a great objective if we were to pull it off”.

The next step for Groundswell is to find funding to achieve their expansion plans, building on help provided as part of Scale Accelerator via links with some potential funders: “it’s credit to them that they are very much engaged in the sector more broadly and with good links”.

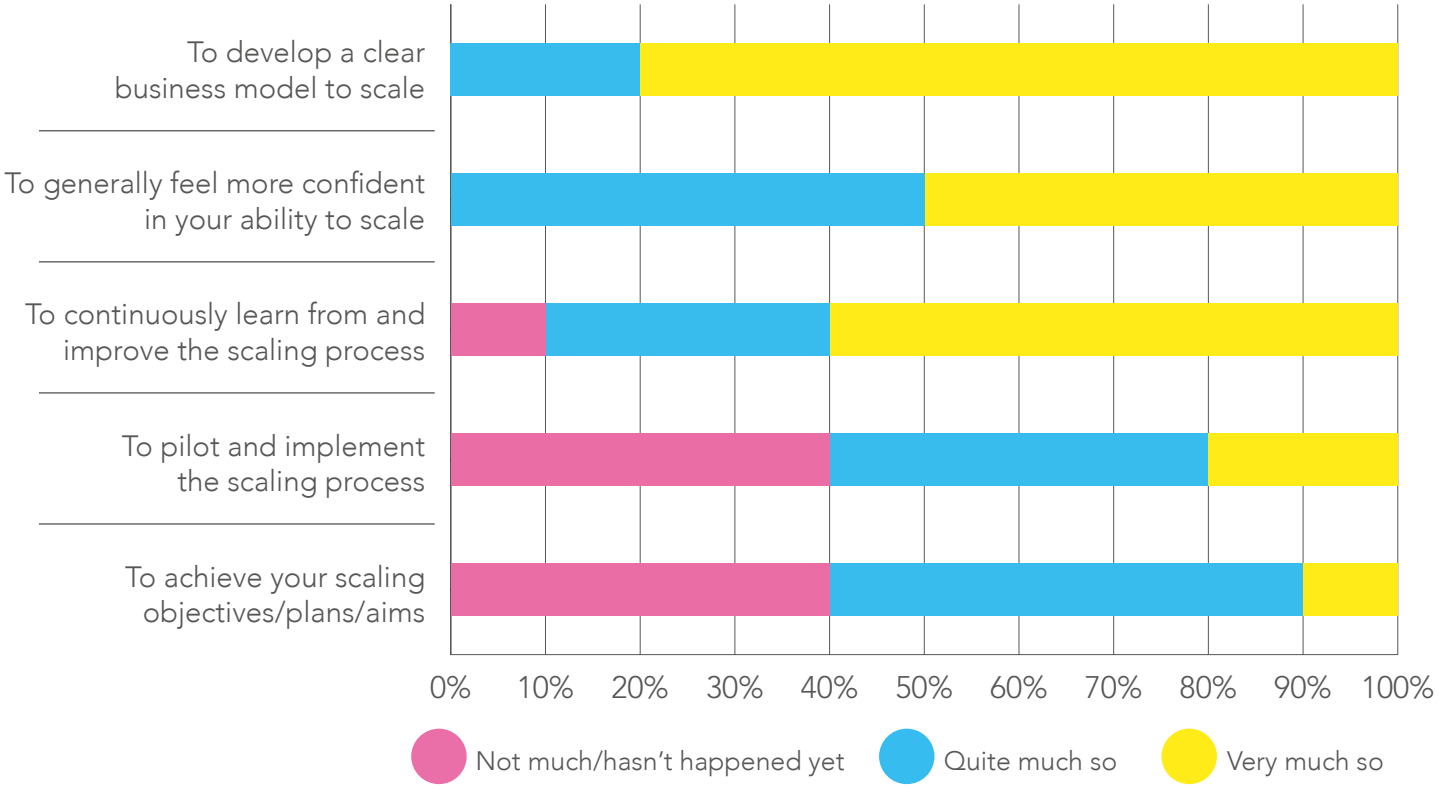
INITIAL RESULTS

From its outset, Scale Accelerator was intended to be a launch pad which would support organisations to navigate through some of their most thorny challenges at the beginning of their scale journey.

Having been equipped with a clear acceleration plan, each participant is focusing on the critical actions that will help them to take steps towards scaling their impact. For some at an earlier stage, this involves refining their model and building their level of evidence, proving that their programme can replicate outcomes in a new context and the underlying business model is sustainable. Many are seeking to do this in a tightly controlled way initially, either by winning new contracts or exploring opening new branches in new locations. For others, they are focused on packaging up their intervention and putting in place the systems they need to support replication. For some, they are engaging with potential partners and funders to understand how they can best pilot their new replication models.

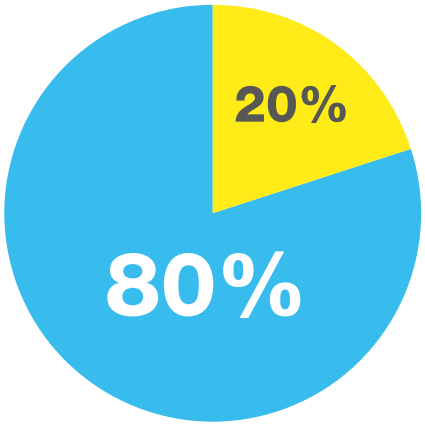
Whilst it will take time to understand the full extent to which participants will be able to scale their programme, and the degree to which Scale Accelerator contributed to this, an initial evaluation of the programme has shown promising results. An independent and qualitative review by the Tavistock Institute for Human Relations, based on participant interviews, found organisations reported the following organisational and personal outcomes from Scale Accelerator.

IN WHAT WAYS AND TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK THAT PARTICIPATING IN SCALE ACCELERATOR HAS HELPED YOUR ORGANISATION:

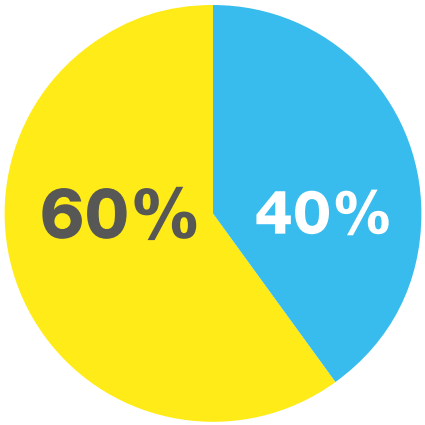


IN WHAT WAYS AND TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK THAT PARTICIPATING IN SCALE ACCELERATOR HAS:

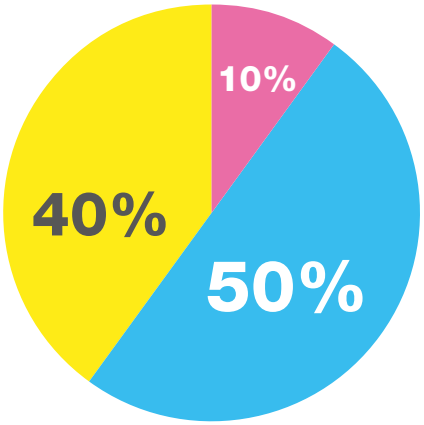
Increased your understanding of the scaling process and how to put it in place



Increased your awareness of the risks of scaling and how to overcome them



Increased your own confidence to lead your organisation's scaling/replication



Not much/hasn't happened yet

Quite much so

Very much so

Below are a selection of quotes from participants articulating the value they felt they gained from the programme.

"This has helped us make the case to the board and funders for more time and funding … because we know how much money we need and what kind of person we need to recruit, so it will help us to make the funding case much more clearly, rather than a broad statement that we need more money to scale"

"The thing that has been very useful… is, I think, if we'd done this on our own we would probably have tried to go much faster and they've been very good at telling us that you should slow down and learn about all these different elements…I don't think we'd be reckless but I think we have a natural tendency in the organisation to move fast with things, and we want this programme to grow and so it has been useful to make us think…and to pilot it initially before moving on."

"I want to say just how grateful we are for the opportunity … because we really wouldn't have got to the position we're now without the support of the Scale Accelerator Programme. So it has been invaluable for the organisation – and what I really appreciate is the flexibility, so it didn't feel like they've put a straight-jacket on us. That kind of quality and flexibility of support has been fantastic!"

"Its definitely increased our understanding of evaluation, both, the need to prove that what we are doing works, and also to increase an understanding of the necessity of evaluating for the purpose of improving what we are doing, rather than just like getting it as a certificate to show to the funder, to go: 'Look, told you that stuff works. Give us some more money!'"

As delivery partners, we've also learnt how we can better modify our programme design through this pilot to better meet participants needs. For example in future iterations of the programme we will be increasing the levels of participant interaction and provide further opportunities to network with organisations that have scaled.

INSIGHTS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO SCALE UP

Our experience of delivering Scale Accelerator has confirmed that the journey for each organisation looking to scale its impact is unique, but that common themes and recommendations are applicable when thinking about replication.

The insights below build on the ICSF's social replication toolkit, a free to use step-by-step guide for organisations looking to scale their impact: http://toolkit.the-icsf.org. We have highlighted these specific insights as they seemed to resonate most with our cohort, based on our programme evaluation, a series of interviews completed with participants and reflections from delivery partners.

1. INVEST TIME UPFRONT

Understanding if and how an organisation can scale its impact requires deep thought and sometimes painful introspection to arrive at the right answers. It is important for organisations to invest time upfront to be really clear on two things: 1) understanding their readiness to scale and 2) what is their overall intended impact. Investing the time upfront to answer these questions, and gaining alignment on them across the organisation will ensure their replication is more successful.

Readiness to scale

Organisations need to collectively and harshly review their readiness to replicate to ensure they do not embark on a plan of scaling before some of the basic building blocks are in place. ICSF have defined a set of ten key questions to help organisations looking to scale assess their readiness. Where possible we recommend you run your assessment and your plans overall past anyone within your network with experience of scaling, so they can act as a critical friend and ensure you have visibility of all of your development and risk areas.

Clarifying Intended Impact

Organisations need to be clear on their vision, mission and how scaling of specific programmes may contribute to them. This level of clarity often requires multiple conversations and iterations, involving individuals from across the organisation and from the Board of Trustees.

Although refining strategic focus can be hard work it often reinvigorates organisations and brings teams together around a shared goal. This upfront investment in time can save effort in the long-term as teams will be committed and can better navigate away from activities not aligned to their overall intended impact.

Better understanding of your strategy can help you identify what you need to replicate. For one organisation taking part in Scale Accelerator, taking the time to review their mission and their intended impact helped them to realise that their most recent scaling efforts were not aligned with their overall strategy, by focusing on employment outcomes solely rather than also building the sustainability of community sports clubs. This realisation enabled them to then be very clear about what activities and team members would need to be included in future replications in order to really achieve their intended impact.

"We've learned an awful lot – we've learned it's a lot more complicated than we thought it was going to be … there's a lot more work that would need to be done at each stage. I think without the support and guidance there would have been a lot of areas we might have overlooked or skimped on a bit…that need a huge amount of attention"

2. UNDERSTAND YOUR CORE

When scaling or replicating through partners it is critical to understand the core elements of the current programme which most directly contribute to the target social impact. As soon as a programme is shared with external partners, there will be a natural tension between a partner wanting to tailor the programme to a new context and the desire of the originating organisation to exert control and ensure the programme is being delivered faithfully as per the original.

Understanding which key elements directly lead to the desired outcomes being achieved gives clarity on what are the non-negotiable elements of the programme, and which can be applied with greater levels of flexibility by partners. Focusing on the core can allow interventions to be streamlined as non core elements are removed, reducing delivery costs and providing greater clarity on what needs to be monitored to ensure quality of the service. Defining your core also will support identifying what your right replication model should be. A useful start to identifying and understanding your core is to develop a Theory of Change and gathering evidence to support the assumptions and causal links outlined.

For example, one participant on the programme initially had assumed they wanted to replicate their whole programme with a set of prescribed activities. By looking at the real core of their intervention, they were surprised at the number of elements in which they were willing to offer flexibility. They realised they needed to replicate their strengths based approach to developing young leaders - by ensuring participants developed a manifesto during an initial conference week, which meant the programme was focused towards helping them address the issues they felt most strongly about. The specifics of what activities were delivered to build participants leadership skills could be decided upon locally.

This realisation allowed them to focus on thinking how this element of their intervention could best be shared with a particular focus on face to face support during conference week to ensure partners were able to develop manifestos appropriately. Initially there were many desired quality controls around operational procedures but these evolved into a less prescriptive set of delivery standards, focusing on ***how*** the programme was being delivered rather than the specifics of ***what*** was being delivered.

> **"We have a greater focus on how to understand the 'magic' of the programme, and feel more confident in achieving the balance of a locally tailored programme which also stands up to our standards/methods."**

3. FIND THE RIGHT PARTNERS

Finding the right partner to help you scale the impact of your work is one of the most critical elements of a successful scaling strategy. When the right partners are found, it can set organisations free to improve their intervention and to influence/ build buy-in for the programme at a much greater level.

For those participants who had previously attempted replicating unsuccessfully, a lack of clarity on what their partner needed to bring to the table and therefore how to assess potential partners was a key barrier to their success.

Clearly defining the expectations of what partners will need to do, regarding key activities such as raising funds, reporting, hiring staff, sharing values and ethos is essential. Building a profile of the essential and desirable characteristics of partners first, and then assessing which groups might fit this profile, often led to surprising results for participants. By taking a "bottom up" approach,

they were able to challenge their existing pre-conceptions and either rule out groups or more commonly identify a broader pool of potential partners who could take on their intervention. For example, by boiling down the essential and desirable requirements, Bikeworks identified that sports and leisure centres could be a potential implementer for their All Ability cycling programme, whilst previously a stronger emphasis had been placed on Special Education Needs schools and cycle training providers.

"In the past, we would have recruited people with a sports development background … looking at it we realised that in terms of the skills you're looking for taking this forward the sports development side isn't the important bit, it's more about being entrepreneurial".

"It's really clear now what the characteristics of the franchisees need to be: they need to be entrepreneurial and they need to have empathy. So it's changed how we interview people for the organisation…"

4. PREPARE FOR CHANGE

When scaling through partners, organisations will need to shift their focus from on the ground delivery to supporting and enabling others to deliver their programme. Organisations will need the skills to build resources required to train, coach and motivate their partner teams, building a truly collaborative network and having the management skills to manage performance of partners and being able to adapt to their needs.

This type of change shouldn't be underestimated and replicating organisations should think through how this may impact their culture and the types of team members and skills needed to effectively manage a network of partners at scale. For many of the participants who were launching an affiliation model, such as accreditation or social franchising, they identified a need for a new network manager role who would bring key skills such as partnership working, business development and quality management.

INSIGHTS FOR FUNDERS SUPPORTING SCALE UP

Our experience of delivering the programme has also helped us to understand how funders, a key part of the scaling equation, can better support organisations to scale.

Although counter-intuitive, replicating a tried and tested programme in the social sector is innovative, as the models of partnership needed to scale impact beyond an organisation's boundaries are not the norm. Our first insight relates to how funders can support this kind of "innovative" thinking:

1) ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE THINKING

We found that during the selection process and through our initial support to define strategy, whilst many organisations were relatively clear on the social impact they were looking to achieve, many were unclear how they would achieve it nor what the different options available were to them.

Funders can play a key role by enabling grantees to have the space and support they need to define their strategies and to understand their options for scale. For some, replicating their impact through partners may be the best route, for others more indirect routes such as influencing policy and wider systems may be the right choice. Often organisations need exposure to these different ideas to enable them to challenge their current thinking on how growth can be achieved.

Shifting mind-sets to consider new or innovative strategies will often face resistance internally. Funders can further support organisations to articulate a robust plan for how they will achieve those strategies, what the current risks are and how they will be addressed. This level of detail will be required in order to give Trustees the level of confidence they need to commit to these strategies.

"Really good at helping us understand the different options and questioning our default answers - we might have gone quite a different way and they asked some really useful questions"

"We've never before been set goals of what we want to achieve over the next 5 years …. So that's been useful – as from that we've been able to work backwards to what we need to do to get there"

DEFINING STRATEGY:

A Band of Brothers
Alex Bailey (Chair of Trustees) agreed that Scale Accelerator helped A Band of Brothers to think more strategically about how to replicate the elements of the Quest most important in bringing about successful outcomes:

"It helped us considerably to strategise about our future. It made us think about: What are the things that we do that matter most, what's the value of them, how can you replicate the value, and how can you make that happen?"

Alex Bailey explained that it had also helped overcome some resistance among other Trustees to scaling up their provision:
"For some of our trustees who are risk averse it gave them an opportunity to hold and understand the risks, and work out how we would address a number of them or recognise that the risk is perhaps not as big as they had originally thought it was."

2) LOOKING BEYOND IMPACT

A pre-requisite for any organisation looking to scale should be they have evidence that their intervention leads to a positive social impact. However not all projects with a positive social impact can, nor should be scaled.

Alongside having clear evidence of social impact, funders must assess and challenge the underlying business model of programmes looking to scale. Without sufficient confidence that there is a clear market for the programme, i.e. demand from potential "purchasers" of it, that there is a good understanding of income sources at scale, it is unlikely the programme will significantly grow beyond its current size.

Organisations in such a position should focus their efforts on deepening their impact or diversifying their services to better achieve their mission. This statement does not imply that only programmes which can be contracted or commercialised in some way can achieve scale. Many of the successful scaled social programmes such as the Trussell Trust food banks rely on community fundraising to enable programme delivery. However there should be confidence and ideally experience of securing this necessary funding in new locations.

3) SUPPORTING THE INITIAL STAGES OF REPLICATION

The nature of funding organisations looking to replicate inherently needs to be flexible and multi-year to enable organisations to address and respond to an ever changing environment. The need for flexible and multi-year funding is a well trodden observation that likely does not need further explanation here. However through developing acceleration plans for Scale Accelerator participants there are three clear themes on what organisations looking to scale will typically need to seek additional funding for.

1) Systemisation: Organisations should build a backbone for scale i.e. robust internal processes and systems, building the right teams, skills and expertise required. Typical areas of focus include strengthening their monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure others can share common outcome metrics; that feedback loops are in place to analyse and learn from the data. Financial systems, structures and processes may need to change as organisations are required to manage new and different flows of income and expenditure with their partners.

2) Building Capacity: Managing, growing and coordinating a replication network typically requires additional capacity and new partnership and quality management skills. Organisations need support in order to recruit and employ these staff prior to the network being launched.

3) Pump priming: For organisations looking to scale through partnership or affiliation models, their networks can become financially self-sustaining through fees charged to partners, once the size of the network reaches a critical mass. In the interim period, they will typically seek an initial buffer or pump-priming to provide them the space and time they need to grow and build their network. This may include supporting potential partners with delivery costs during the pilot phase, whilst the replication model is being tested.

Funders should assess whether organisations have the above infrastructure in place prior to scaling. If not any funding made available should be prioritised towards meeting the above gaps before serious scaling is attempted. However participants have shared that often this type of funding, particularly for systemisation, can be difficult to access.

"Finding time and resources for systematisation … that is still the challenge … trying to find the space is really hard; you get so busy with the doing of it…so we have just put in a funding application to see if we can get some resource for this – but if we don't get this, it will remain a challenge".

"There will be a lot of hard work and determination needed from the existing staff to get it into a box, so to say, to be able to scale it up".

MEASURING OUTCOMES AT SCALE:

Vi-Ability
Whilst Vi-Ability already had a well-established evaluation framework in place (accredited at Level 2 according to the NESTA standards of evidence), Scale Accelerator helped to tighten it up and offer new ways of collecting evidence from participants. As Kelly Davies explained:

"We already had all the systems in place to monitor and evaluate… In the past, most of this was done face-to-face so it meant we'd end up losing a lot of people because we couldn't get hold of them once they left the programme, so we've set it up that it can all be done via text to find out what they're doing a few months later".

4) ENABLING CONNECTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Building on the theme that replication is innovative, Funders can collaboratively play a key role in supporting organisations looking to scale their impact to connect and have access to those with real experience of having scaled their impact. Participants cited the most valued element of the group based training was hearing from organisations who had already been through the scaling journey, and hearing about the challenges they had been overcome.

"It was brilliant to have the talks from people that have already been through it".

"I really appreciated the time away to think about scale in more depth. Good to gain realistic perspective from others who have done similar things"

Funders could further support this sharing of knowledge by collaborating to build a network of organisations who are scaling their impact, or interested in doing so, and giving them the space and resources required.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Our hypothesis, supported by research, was that a key barrier limiting social entrepreneurs and charity leaders was a lack of access to expertise in thinking about how to scale their intervention. Scale Accelerator set out to address this by providing promising organisations with a bespoke package of training and consultancy to support them to scale their impact.

We believe that through Scale Accelerator we have been able to increase the knowledge and confidence of each participating organisation to be able to scale their impact, supported by our programme evaluation. Through our direct work we have been able to act as a critical friend, supporting and challenging their plans for scale and their approach to measuring their impact. Our evaluation has shown that by taking part in the programme participants are more confident in their understanding of replication, they are clear on the replication model they will use and more confident in their ability to carry out their replication strategy.

Many of the participants are at an early stage in their scale journey, and we are committed to continue to track their progress over the coming years. We have identified a number of insights in this report from our experiences of the programme. Our hope is that these are heeded and acted on by funders and voluntary sector organisations alike to improve the conditions for organisations looking to scale.

Given the success of this initial pilot, we will be looking to recruit another Scale Accelerator cohort in 2016/17. Our hope is that it continues to play a role in the eco-system of support required by organisations looking to scale, and that we can continue to share insights and recommendations through each new cohort.

For further information on Scale Accelerator please visit www.the-icsf.org or contact info@the-icsf.org

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