



Impact Startup Guide

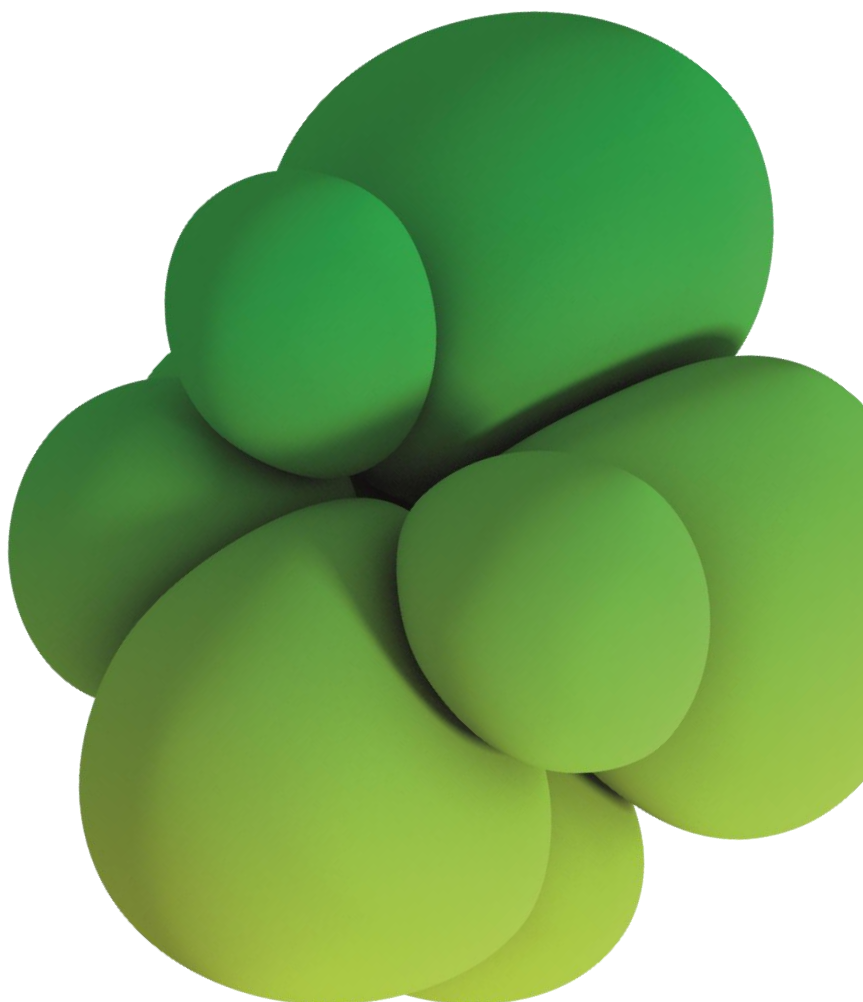
for entrepreneurs WITHOUT impact
background knowledge

These impact documents are continuously updated working documents. They are for informational purposes only and are intended to help founders consider aspects of sustainability and impact in the start-up process. Despite careful preparation, no guarantee is given for the accuracy, completeness, or timeliness of the content.



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Impact Startup Guide

Impact = sum of all ecological, social and economic effects

Sustainability = responsible use of resources in economic activity within ecological limits

- Goal: Minimising negative impacts, maximising positive impacts --> Generating a positive impact
- Social factors such as inclusion, diversity and equality are important in implementation
- The [doughnut model](#) serves as a further explanation to show how basic social needs can be reconciled with the limits of the environmental system



Impact in Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurial relevance

- Competitive advantage
- Easier access to financing, [funding](#), public tenders
- Tax breaks
- Marketing and customer loyalty
- Increased innovation and performance through diverse teams (see [studies](#))
- Cost savings through energy and resource efficiency
- Innovation drivers and development of additional services

Social and ecological relevance

- [Equality](#)
- [Inclusion](#) and [diversity](#)
- Improving health and well-being in the workplace (reducing absenteeism)
- Training and further education (employee retention)
- Community engagement and development
- [Environmental and climate protection](#)



Business Model

Integration of social and environmental goals into the business model

Focus on [SDGs](#) and the following questions

Upstream value chain

- Where do the materials used come from? Who do you work with?
- How and where is the product/service designed/manufactured?

Own activities

- How many resources and how much energy (from renewable energy sources?) are consumed?
- What are the working conditions like?
- Who is your target group?

Downstream value chain

- Which usage and business models reduce the footprint?
- Is the product repairable and what happens at the end of its useful life?
- What happens to by-products and [waste products](#)?



Product and/or service development

- Integration of sustainability principles into development from the [very beginning](#)
 - Up to [80% of a product's carbon footprint](#) is determined during the design phase
- Increasing product longevity through repair and update options
 - See [circular economy strategies](#)
- Incorporating different perspectives to enable access for [diverse groups of people](#)
- Long-term cooperation for research and development, incorporating customer feedback



Supply chain and partner management

Collaborate with suppliers and manufacturers who are environmentally conscious and offer fair working conditions. The following questions can help with this:

- Do you know your suppliers and business partners well?
 - What is their stance on sustainability? (Do they have sustainability certificates or environmental seals, do they produce sustainability reports?)
- To what extent can you imagine working together to expand the positive impact or creating a [code of conduct](#) for suppliers?
- Regular review of your supply chain
 - Are [human rights](#) being respected?
 - Is anyone violating your values and sustainability goals?
- When selecting suppliers, pay attention to short transport routes if possible.



Own activities

environmental and social measures

- Reducing [energy and resource consumption](#) in the production process
 - e.g. renewable energy, optimised transport routes, minimisation of waste
- Ensuring resource efficiency in the [office](#)
- Green office hacks: waste separation, LED lighting, room temperature, telecommuting, paperless office, used IT hardware, etc.
- Observing [corporate digital responsibility](#) for [digital](#) products and services
- Creating incentives to use [public transport](#) and carpooling
- Measuring the [carbon footprint](#), using innovative business models
- Ensuring fair and transparent wages, occupational safety and development opportunities (well-being and equal opportunities)
- Promoting [inclusion](#) and diversity
 - e.g. employing people with disabilities (positive impact and tax advantages and bonuses)
- Committing to values and goals with a [diversity charter](#)



Regulatory requirements and competitive advantage

- Compliance with environmental and labour laws and industry-specific standards
- Sustainability as a financing advantage
 - Tax breaks for investments in energy efficiency, loans with better terms, subsidies
 - [VBA](#), [FFG](#), [AWS](#), [Climate and Energy Fund](#), [Ökobusiness Wien funding database](#)
- Competitive advantage in the B2B sector if sustainability information is well prepared, long-term customer relationships
- Benefits of sustainability-oriented markets and public tenders
- Increased resilience to change and long-term competitiveness
 - through early adaptation to upcoming regulatory requirements and market trends



Communication

- Talk about your sustainability efforts and raise awareness
- Reflection and support of employer branding through 'lessons learned'
- Only truthful communication – transparent and credible
 - Avoidance of [greenwashing](#) or social washing
- Testing who responds to what, cooperation with impact partners
- Consider whether [labels, certificates and seals](#) of approval are worthwhile
- Use selected communication channels for different stakeholders
- Analyse how and to whom impact goals can be successfully communicated
 - e.g. annual report, Christmas card, sustainability report
- Pay attention to the ecological impact of marketing materials
 - e.g. digital instead of flyers



Impact measurement and improvement

Focus on a few indicators and measure them regularly

- Define specific indicators for impact targets (e.g. [SDGs](#) or [sustainability KPIs](#)) and [impact logic](#)
- Regularly evaluate the impact.
- Use [sustainability reports](#) as a basis for marketing, communication, funding applications and green loans.
- CO2 compensation.
- Observe the [Gold Standard!](#)
- Support [non-profit organisations](#).



Support

You will find numerous offers at the Vienna Business Agency!

- 1:1 [consultations](#)
 - e.g. for [sustainable technologies](#)
- Numerous [impact workshops](#)
 - for companies less than 5 years old
- 4-hour [impact coaching sessions](#)
 - for companies less than 5 years old

More impact programmes and support:

- for start-ups/scale-ups: [ASHOKA](#), [SIA](#), [Climate Launchpad](#), [Grow](#) and [Marc](#), [Greenstart](#), etc.
- for SMEs: [ÖkoBusiness Wien](#), [Climate and Energy Fund](#), [respACT](#), [Climate Lab](#), etc.