

Viable Corporate Services

Viable Corporate Services is a social enterprise that provides outsourced corporate services and strategic planning consultancy across the third sector in Northern Ireland. It emerged out of a partnership between two of NI's leading youth charities: Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) and Include Youth.

**include
YOUTH**



The aim of Viable is to provide effective and efficient corporate services that support not only VOYPIC and Include Youth but other organisations across the third sector. Outsourcing corporate service functions to Viable is beneficial as it allows organisations to focus on their core objectives and dedicate more time to delivering programmes in their local communities.



Impacts and Successes

Viable established as a **social enterprise** and legal entity with office space, a full-time staff, a joint venture agreement, a website and a Twitter account, and its **first third sector customer**

Viable has developed a **Corporate Shared Services Portfolio**, developing **systems and processes** in relation to finance, HR and strategic planning within each organisation

Viable has promoted **collaborative learning** and delivered training sessions on **best practice** in corporate services to NGOs and social enterprises across NI. Supplemented by a **published guidance paper**

Working towards purchasing a co-location for the **partnership** in Belfast city having developed a vision with programme staff, management, respective boards as well as young people themselves

Sustainable Practices

Developing Lasting Partnerships

VOYPIC and Include Youth have been working together to develop the concept of shared corporate services since 2007. With the support of NIO, DHSSPS and DSD both organisations were funded to commission a feasibility study in 2008 to explore the viability of sharing corporate services. Reflected through initiatives such as the Positive Steps programme, this process has been motivated by the desire to protect the viability of these two leading children and young people's charities. To ensure lasting partnerships in the future, Viable has identified four stages of best practice to focus on:

- **Partnership formation** – Any partnership starts out as a conversation. This stage is about sharing an idea and exploring its potential and synergies with all of the parties and stakeholders involved.
- **Partnership design and operations** – Defines the working level of the partnership. These are usually expressed in terms of 1) programme, 2) functional, 3) strategic/governance and 4) physical co-location.
- **Partnership institutionalisation** – This stage involves establishing structures/processes and highlighting ways to add value to the partnership.
- **Value frame fusion** – Value frame fusion provides a framework to work through issues or differing viewpoints that may arise with the partnership, transforming differing viewpoints into co-created goals in the partnership.

The overall investment from Atlantic has put the partnership in a very strong position to develop a sustainable model that will drive service innovation and equip the organisations to adapt to the future economic and social environment that they operate within.

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