

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

SOCIAL FIRMS

Social Firms are businesses developed specifically to create employment opportunities for people who are severely disadvantaged in the labour market.

Social Firms aim to generate at least 50% of their income from sales of goods and services. They are non-profit distributing, with any surplus being shared by employees or re-invested in the business or community in order to meet the social purpose.

At least 25% of a Social Firm's workforce is people who are severely disadvantaged in the labour market. Social Firms have a 'family business' atmosphere, providing an environment where team working and participation in the business are paramount.

SOCIAL FIRMS SCOTLAND

Social Firms Scotland is the national intermediary promoting and supporting the development of Social Firms.

Our mission is to grow the Social Firm sector to increase employment opportunities for severely disadvantaged people. **We strongly value** the right of everyone to access work and see Social Firms as a means of achieving this.

Our vision is for Social Firms:

- To be widely recognised as an innovative business model that combines enterprise, employment and empowerment.
- To support large numbers of severely disadvantaged people excluded from the open labour market into work in sustainable businesses.

We believe that Social Firms offer a real and sustainable solution to creating employment for people furthest from the labour market. As an employment and business model, we know that Social Firms work, however we also know we need to continue to strengthen our membership, our message and increase the number of Social Firms in Scotland.

If we are to achieve the growth of Scotland's Social Firm sector and move more severely disadvantaged people into work we need to:

- Raise the understanding and awareness of Social Firms in Scotland and the Social Firm model
- Provide advice and support on establishing and developing Social Firms including tailored business development and capacity building support

- Deliver projects that target strategic growth of the sector (e.g., Business Acquisition, Social Clauses in Procurement etc)
- Lobby effectively for recognition and support of Social Firms
- Consult with our members on policy and practice issues of importance to them
- Network the sector, building on its strengths through a stronger, more connected membership
- Develop clearer and more accessible information
- Undertake solutions-based research to support campaigning for change in policy to grow the sector
- Conduct and encourage the measurement of the social and economic impact and values of the Social Firm sector
- Secure funding programmes for individual Social Firms
- Map the Social Firm sector to chart progress and growth
- Deliver relevant training and events including strategic management training
- Work in partnership with other intermediaries and supporters to improve the support and development opportunities available to our members

We aim to be a voice for the sector, campaigning and raising awareness of the business model to position Social Firms as an effective solution for the employment for severely disadvantaged people.

SOCIAL FIRMS SCOTLAND'S MEMBERSHIP

Social Firms Scotland works closely with Social Firms UK and Social Firms Wales to form a strong coalition to promote, support and lobby on behalf of the Social Firm Sector.

Membership runs from January to December each year and as a member of Social Firms Scotland you can expect a range of benefits including:

- ◆ Help and advice on establishing and developing a Social Firm through support from our experienced staff team
- ◆ Regular Ebuletins providing up to date information on issues relevant to Social Firms
- ◆ Quality Health Check and Mapping to assess your Social Firm status
- ◆ Access to a UK wide network of Social Firm practitioners
- ◆ Free access to all Social Firms Scotland resources
- ◆ National Campaigning on behalf of Social Firms

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- ◆ Products and services promoted by us at national, regional and local levels including via the online trade directory to help you grow your customer base and strengthen your business
- ◆ Free support and advice on attaining the Star Social Firm quality standard
- ◆ Automatic membership of Social Firms UK including free or reduced rates at their events and on their specialist tools
- ◆ Access to Social Firms UK's online Members' Forum including discussion board and free downloads of useful HR templates and sample documents
- ◆ FREE DIY Feasibility Toolkit (retailed at £90 to non members)
- ◆ FREE Third Sector Performance Dashboard (retailed at £90 to non members)
- ◆ FREE downloads of useful HR templates and sample documents
- ◆ Qualify for discounts at the annual S2S Social Enterprise Trade Fair and receive the Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition's monthly bulletin (on request)
- ◆ Opportunity to influence policy through our lobbying activities and input into consultations responses to Government
- ◆ Social Firms Scotland represents the voice of its members to Government regularly and consistently. We are requested from time to time to provide contact details of practitioners who can be invited to policy events within the Scottish Parliament. These opportunities are only open to members of Social Firms Scotland.
- ◆ A free media advice pack
- ◆ Social Firms Scotland member logo for use on your materials (feedback from funders has told us that this logo would assist them to assess the credibility of applications and approaches made by Social Firms)

Basically everything we do at Social Firms Scotland is with the aim of strengthening and growing the Social Firm sector - we are here to support you.

In return we would like you to:

- ◆ Share your experiences and knowledge with Social Firms Scotland and other members
- ◆ Welcome enquiries and visits from interested parties
- ◆ Provide information to Social Firms Scotland and Social Firms UK about your organisation and your work
- ◆ Help us to promote the sector
- ◆ Help us to improve what we do

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MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Social Firms Scotland has 2 categories of membership - Full and Associate.

Full Membership

This membership is open to full and emerging Social Firms. A Social Firm will meet both the 50% income from trading and 25% employment criteria outlined previously. An emerging Social Firm will be trading and working towards achieving these targets.

If you join under this category, we require you to undertake a mapping exercise with a representative from Social Firms Scotland to clarify your Social Firm status. Once your Full or Emerging status has been confirmed you will be allocated to this membership category.

Full membership is £90 for the full year, if you join from 1st July, this is reduced to £60.

Associate Membership

Associate membership is open to any organisation or individual who is interested in and supportive of Social Firms. Our Associate members include Local Authorities, Housing Associations, the Voluntary Sector, Enterprise Agencies, Consultancy Practices and more.

If your organisation is not a Social Firm you would join under this category. If you are considering developing a Social Firm and are at the very early stages, e.g. not yet trading, you would also join under this membership category.

An organisation who develops a number of Social Firms, i.e. the parent organisation, would join as an Associate member. We would then provide free Full membership for each of their trading arms (Social Firms/emerging Social Firms) on an individual basis.

Associate membership is £130 for the full year, if you join from 1st July, this is reduced to £90.

In addition Associate membership will also be available to individuals who have moved into employment through Social Firms or would be interested in doing so. These individuals will be able to join SFS for free.

TO JOIN

Simple - visit our website, download the appropriate membership form, complete and return to us. Alternatively contact Jayne on 0131 225 4178 or at jayne.chappell@socialfirms.org.uk

We all want more sustainable Social Firms. By joining us, your membership will help us to achieve this leading to an increase in employment opportunities for severely disadvantaged people.

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