



Social Enterprise Development Initiative

LINKWEST Community of Practice Session #1 Summary – 08/04/2025

Linkwest has been funded by Social Enterprise Australia, through the Social Enterprise Development Initiative to convene a deep learning experience community of practice.

Funding will enable Linkwest to capture case studies from member Centres and to develop tools and resources that support understanding and adoption of social enterprise models in WA.

There are three key components of the Linkwest led project:

- 1. Online community of practice sessions** will run from April 2025 to March 2026, offering a structured space for learning, sharing experiences, and discussing social enterprise approaches.
- 2. Support from sector experts**, including Impact Seed and the WA Social Enterprise Council, will help participants explore and implement social enterprise models.
- 3. Small grants from Linkwest** will support organisations to document their journeys through case studies, learning journals, and video blogs—capturing lessons learned and valuable resources.

“A social enterprise is a business that puts people and planet first.

It trades like any other business but exists specifically to make the world a better place.”

Social Enterprise World Forum (SEWF)

In this session we talked about:

- We met everyone in the session, including Centres delivering Staying in Place, Centres managing profitable early years programs, Centres with an interest in what this social enterprise thing is all about!
- We introduced our experts Olivia Chapman (WASEC) and Kylie Hansen (Impact Seed) and heard more about them and what their organisations do that can support Linkwest and our members
- We learnt that Social enterprises are businesses that put people and planet first. They trade like any other business but exist specifically to make the world a better place.
- We talked about how off-putting the word ‘business’ can be for established not-for-profit organisations and were reassured that organisations that make profit for purpose can still be considered a social enterprise and at the very least recognised as socially enterprising!
- We answered a few questions about what social enterprises are and what they are not. Many of these questions are on the FAQ page of the WASEC website: <https://www.wasec.org.au/faqs/>
- Linkwest outlined the project they have funded through to March 2026 and Jane shared her passion for the innovation and entrepreneurship that this project can spark and grow for the Linkwest members who are ready to explore that path

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We looked at the Social Enterprise tools and resources available from WASEC:

<https://www.wasec.org.au/resource/five-stages-of-social-enterprise-development/>
<https://www.wasec.org.au/resource/discover-was-social-enterprises-north-freo-social-farm/>
<https://www.wasec.org.au/faqs/>

And we discussed the 5 characteristics of a social enterprise, agreeing they related well to Centres

1	2	3	4	5
Social enterprises are 'mission-driven'	Social enterprises generate income through business activities	Social enterprises reinvest their profits	Social enterprises have a clear social or environmental purpose	Social enterprises are accountable
Social enterprises are fundamentally driven by a social or environmental mission, rather than making as much profit as possible. Their primary goal is to address a social problem or create positive impact in their communities.	Unlike traditional non-profits, social enterprises generate the majority of their income through the sale of goods or services. They operate as businesses, but with a social purpose at their core.	A significant portion of a social enterprise's profits (50% or above) are reinvested back into the organisation to further its mission and achieve its social goals.	Social enterprises have a clearly defined social or environmental purpose, which is often outlined in their governing documents. This purpose guides their activities and decision-making.	Social enterprises are committed to the highest ethical standards, they ensure fair wages, respect supply chains, and prioritise positive change. They are also accountable to multiple stakeholders for their positive impact

Who came to the session?

22 people registered

9 people attended

Representatives attended from 6 regional Centres and 3 metro Centres

2 were from Centres running fee for service childcare with 7 from Centres running, or setting up, Staying in Place

What feedback did we get following the session?

100% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that:

- The presenter was knowledgeable
- The presentation was effective in developing knowledge
- The information was useful

Keen to see if we can cluster in like-minded people with similar issues and have some more focussed discussions in break-out spaces

In Community of Practice Session #2 we are going to:

1. Introduce the small grants that are on offer to Linkwest member Centres engaged in this Social Enterprise Community of Practice
2. Use zoom breakout groups to have a go at completing a Social Enterprise Impact Canvas, guided by the expertise of Olivia Chapman (WA Social Enterprise Council (WASEC)) and Danae Christensen (Impact Seed).

Thank you everyone for sharing your experiences and really making this a *Community of Practice*.

Any questions, just get in touch:
office@linkwest.asn.au

Session #2:
Tuesday 6 May 1–2:30pm