

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is social value?

- a. "The Social Value Business simply believes that social value is different for everyone and every organisation would benefit from clearly demonstrating what it means to them through a series of social pledges".

2. Is the Social Value Quality Mark the only quality standard for social value?

- a. Yes, as of September 2015, the Social Value Quality Mark is the only quality mark within the UK that measures social value.

3. Can I adopt social accounting principles i.e. Social Return on Investment (SROI), Social Accounting and Audit (SAA), Local Multiplier Effect (LM3) and still be able to apply to achieve the Social Value Quality Mark?

- a. Yes, the Social Value Quality Mark does not define what you measure or how you measure. The mark focuses on the quality, transparency, legitimacy and trustworthiness of the reporting process.

4. How long does it take to gain the Social Value Quality Mark?

- a. This depends on the level you would like to achieve. The social value pledges (Level 1) can be gained within 14 days of applying as it is a commitment to measuring social value. The time required to achieve Lite, Prediction and Full marks (Level 2, 3, 4) depends greatly on the organisation and the information available.

5. Can you support our organisation to measure our social value and would that guarantee us to achieve the Social Value Quality Mark?

- a. We are able to fully support your organisation, through training, mentoring, consultancy support and research to produce a social value report in line with your requirements, which would automatically comply with all of the requirements to achieve the Social Value Quality Mark.

6. Can I apply for the mark even if I have a new organisation or a new product/service?

- a. Yes you may apply for Level 1 – Pledge or Level 2 – Prediction.

7. Can I apply for a Social Value Quality Mark retrospectively?

- a. Yes you can as long as you are able to answer the verification questions and provide the required evidence.

8. How long does the Social Value Quality Mark last?

- a. Level 1 is valid for a period of 1 year from the date of award, Level 2, 3 and 4 are valid for a period of 2 years from the date of award.

9. Is there any restrictions of how and where I can use and market the Social Value Quality Mark for my organisation?

- a. There are guidelines of how you can use the Social Value Quality Mark within the marks branding guidelines. There are currently no restrictions on the marketing of the mark.

10. If I am unsuccessful in my first attempt in gaining a level 2, 3 or 4 Social Value Quality Mark, can I reapply and if so, are there any restrictions in reapplying?

- a. Yes, you are able to reapply immediately and be scheduled for a verification visit.

11. What is the cost?

- a. We have attempted to keep the costs in line with the Social Value Quality Mark sustainability plan and future growth strategy. We have priced the levels depending on the size of the organisation.

12. What is the difference between impact and value?

- a. Impact is the change experienced as a result of products and services being received, value is the financial or non-financial value an individual places on the change.

13. What makes the Social Value Business the most suitable organisation to award the Social Value Quality Mark?

- a. The Social Value Business/Social Value Quality Mark has been developed by Make it Happen Consultancy (MIHC), Income Generation and Social Value specialists based in Stockport.

They have a combined experience of over 30 years working with social value organisations, the Social Value Business and associated products and services have been developed in partnership with MIHC clients throughout the UK and piloted within a diverse section of communities and social businesses.

Lead developers are:

Richard Dickins, Director of the Social Value Business has been involved with the SROI network for the last four years, as a Social Return on Investment (SROI) practitioner. He has carried out a number of SROI reports and now sits on the assurance board which assures the work of all SROI practitioners internationally. Richard's passion for the development of the model has led to him being involved in developing SROI methodology and, as part of MIHC he has delivered training to organisations throughout the UK. Richard has undertaken training of the Local Multiplier Effect model (LM3) and is an ISO 9001 practitioner.

Nicola Dickins, Director of the Social Value Business became interested in social accounting whilst undertaking her masters in Social Enterprise Management at Liverpool John Moores University. During this time, MIHC became involved with the Social Audit Network (SAN), showing an interest in the development of the social accounting and audit framework and have sponsored the development of prove and improve, the most recent version of the framework. Nicola has undertaken training in the wellbeing outcomes framework and is a founder member of the FairShares Association which has developed a multi-stakeholder legal model that enhances the creation of social value.