

# STATE OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

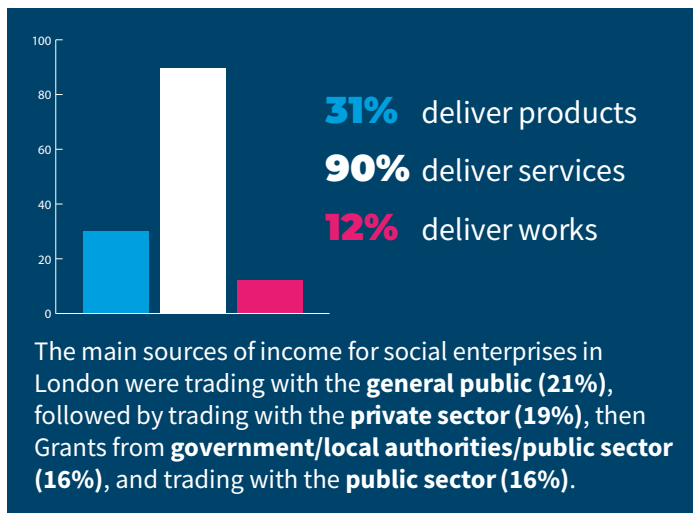


## IN LONDON

This paper sets out headline findings on the state of social enterprise in London, using government estimates and data from the State of Social Enterprise 2025 and SEUK's Social Enterprise Knowledge Centre.

<p><b>Around 10,900 of the 100,000 social enterprises</b> in the UK operate in London*. <b>43%</b> of these operate as Community Interest Companies.</p>	<p><b>Median social enterprise turnover</b> in London was around <b>£67,500</b> in the previous financial year.</p>	<p>The <b>median number of employees</b> for social enterprises in London was <b>6</b>.</p>
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Of the social enterprises surveyed:



The median amount of time social enterprises in the London have been trading is 8 years.

	London	UK
<b>Up to 6 months</b>	3%	3%
<b>7 months to a year</b>	4%	2%
<b>1-3 years</b>	21%	19%
<b>4-5 years</b>	19%	17%
<b>6-10 years</b>	26%	26%
<b>11-15 years</b>	14%	14%
<b>16-20 years</b>	6%	7%
<b>More than 20 years</b>	6%	11%

## ECONOMY

**34%** of social enterprises in London made a profit in **2025**. This is down on **2023**, when **49%** made a profit.

**50%** of social enterprises in London developed a new product or service in **2025**. This matches the national figure.

	PROFIT		LOSS		BROKE EVEN	
	LON	UK	LON	UK	LON	UK
<b>2025</b>	34%	40%	32%	26%	26%	28%
<b>2023</b>	49%	48%	28%	26%	19%	22%
<b>2021</b>	42%	49%	35%	25%	23%	25%

	London	UK
<b>2025</b>	50%	50%
<b>2023</b>	59%	53%
<b>2021</b>	62%	61%

**47%** grew their turnover in the previous financial year.  
**19%** decreased their turnover compared to the previous financial year.

**62%** expect to grow their turnover in the next financial year, and **13%** expect it to decrease.

Of those who expect their turnover to grow, most plan to achieve this through partnerships with the public and private sector (**77%**), developing new products and services (**66%**) and diversifying/ expanding into new markets (**58%**).

**Financial barriers** were perceived as the biggest barrier to growth (**75%**). Of these financial barriers, **obtaining grant funding** was viewed as the biggest barrier to growth (**67%**).



## SOCIETY

**60%** of social enterprise leaders in London are women. This is higher than the UK figure of **57%**.

**35%** come from a minority ethnic background. This is more than double the UK figure of **17%**.

**26%** are disabled or neurodivergent. This is lower than the UK figure of **30%**.

**73%** have lived experience of the social issue(s) addressed by their social enterprise

**87%** are real living wage employers



GLL is one of the UK's biggest social enterprises, supporting UK communities with leisure services, libraries & more for over 30 years.

The **top three impact** areas for social enterprises in London are:

- Supporting vulnerable people (**44%**)
- Addressing social exclusion (**36%**)
- Creating employment opportunities (**31%**)

## SUPPORT

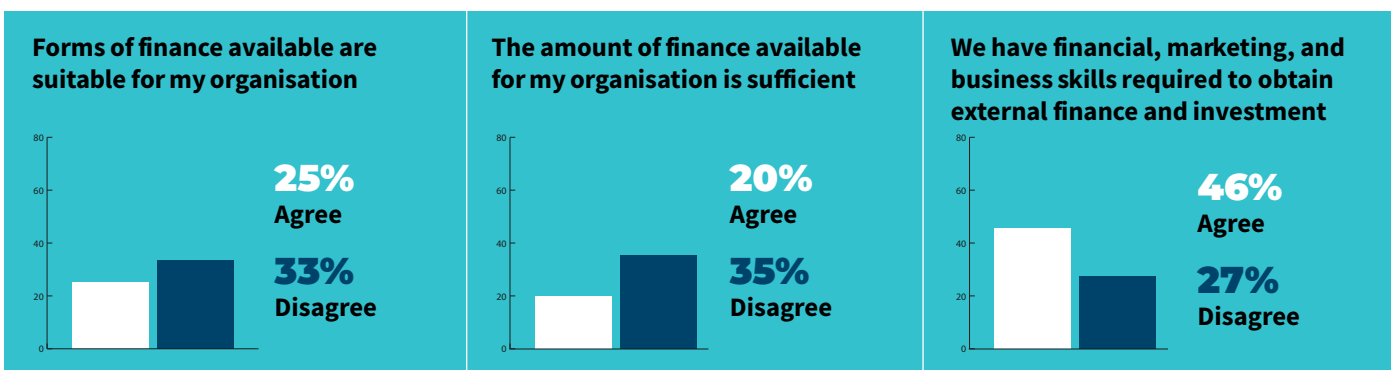
Summary of interest in external finance (not including grants) in the last 12 months.

The five most common reasons for deciding not to apply to new sources of finance in 2025 were:

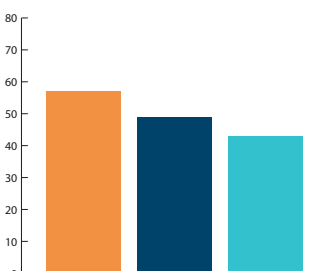
	2025	2023	2021
Applied for external finance	18%	12%	38%
Considered applying but didn't	35%	31%	24%
Not considered applying	43%	54%	37%
Don't know/prefer not to say	4%	3%	N/A

	2025
Time pressures/lack of resources	24%
Thought application would be rejected	22%
Not the right time (economic conditions)	20%
Lack of finance offering suitable terms/lack of suitable products	20%
Don't know where to find appropriate finance	20%

Opinions on external finance were as follows:



The three most common areas where external information/advice were sought were:



- 57%** Business growth/business plans
- 49%** Financial advice e.g. accounting, cash flow, general running of the business
- 43%** Management/leadership development

