



RESEARCH SNAPSHOT

Good Practice and an Engaged Workforce:

Building an Effective, Modern Organisation for the NDIS

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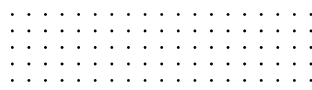


ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation, who are the Traditional Owners of the land on which Centre for Social Impact Swinburne is located, in Melbourne's east and outer-east, and pay our respect to their Elders past and present. We are honoured to recognise our connection to Wurundjeri Country, history, culture, and spirituality through these locations, and strive to ensure that we operate in a manner that respects and honours the Elders and Ancestors of these lands. We also respectfully acknowledge Swinburne's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, alumni, partners and visitors.

We also acknowledge and respect the Traditional Owners of lands across Australia, their Elders, Ancestors, cultures, and heritage, and recognise the continuing sovereignties of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations.





ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

About This Resource

This document is intended as a useful resource for leaders of organisations that operate within the context of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

It is the companion resource to the full report titled, 'Good practice and an Engaged Workforce: Building an Effective, Modern Organisation for the NDIS', prepared by the Centre for Social Impact (CSI) Swinburne about One Good* Day - an organisation providing Recovery Coaching services to people with psychosocial disability (disability related to a mental health condition).

The overall aims of the research were to understand how One Good* Day's organisation model:

- Enables a **happy, healthy workforce** through providing positive work experiences for employees
- Models **good practice** and **supports positive outcomes** for clients; and
- Demonstrates an **effective organisation design** and approach to **service delivery**, and articulates unique organisation design elements that could potentially be used to support service innovation and positive outcomes in other contexts.

About This Resource

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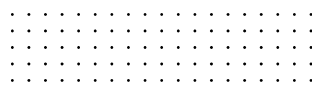
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THE NDIS OPERATING CONTEXT

Operating within the NDIS Context

Organisations operating within NDIS markets need to contend with the usual requirements of business operation alongside NDIS-specific regulatory requirements, codes of conduct, practice standards, and price guidelines (NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, 2021).

Building an effective organisation for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) context also comes with **specific market conditions** that organisation leaders need to plan and design for to deliver their **social value** proposition.

This requires deliberate and thoughtful decision-making from organisation leaders about how to best deliver **quality services**, **recruit and support employees**, and **operate sustainably** (Foster et al., 2022), without being able to draw on usual commercial strategies such as increasing service prices in line with costs.

Success within the unique constraints of this context therefore requires **creative thinking** around **lean organisational design**, as well as ensuring that systems and processes are closely tailored to enable **effective and sustainable operations**.

Operating within the NDIS Context

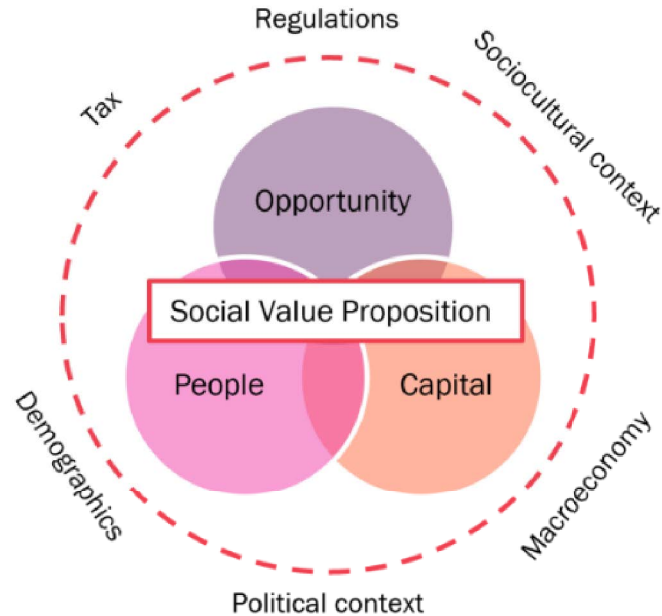
Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern's **Social Entrepreneurship Framework** (see following page) illustrates how internal organisational capabilities and opportunities are always situated within the particular operating context of an organisation, and influenced by factors like the **regulatory and tax environment**, the **political and sociocultural atmosphere**, the **macroeconomic situation**, and the **population demographics** within a particular location (2006, p. 17).

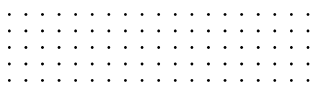
All of these factors inevitably influence the **value proposition** organisations can create, and the **people, opportunities** and **capital** available to organisations to deliver on this (Austin et al., 2006).

While organisations operating in the NDIS context are diverse and may sit across a spectrum in terms of their degree of social and commercial focus, all must be **socially entrepreneurial**, and are required to navigate a market that is shaped by **forces beyond supply and demand** (Austin et al., 2006; Green, Carey, & Malbon, 2022).

Operating within the particular context of the NDIS market - and the requirements upon emerging NDIS organisations and leaders that come with this - requires specific knowledge, learning and care that can differ from what is required of businesses in a purely commercial market.

Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern's Social Entrepreneurship Framework (2006)





BUILDING EFFECTIVE ORGANISATIONS WITHIN THE NDIS CONTEXT

Foundational Capabilities for NDIS Providers

The NDIS Provider Toolkit (National Disability Services, 2015, page 3) provides a useful framework for business excellence that describes foundational capability areas for NDIS organisations

Capability	Description
Strategy	How does our strategy allow us to be agile, flexible and responsive to the changes in our sector?
Corporate Governance	Do our decision making processes allow us to effectively manage the key risks, challenges and opportunities facing our business?
Clients and Market Focus	How will we differentiate ourselves to retain and attract clients in an increasingly competitive market?
Financial Sustainability	What impact will individualised funding have on our business and the way our services are costed, priced and funded? What changes do we need to make?
People and Capability	How will we attract, recruit and retain staff with the right values, skills and capabilities to support the changing needs of our clients and our business?
Information and Knowledge Management	Do we have the right information systems in place to respond to reforms? How will our systems support the necessary changes to our business, client operations and finances over the next decade?
Safeguarding, Quality Management and Improvement	How do our systems, process and people help us to maintain and improve our safety, quality and performance? How will we know when we are doing well, or at risk?

Foundational Capabilities for NDIS Providers

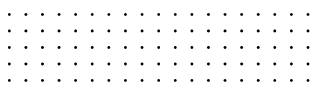
NDIS organisation leaders need to:

1. Seek a wide range of information on the organisational capabilities required to build an effective NDIS organisation, and
2. Consider how they will achieve these within their particular context and organisation goals.

Getting from the point of knowing what is required, to understanding how to implement good practice can be challenging.

This resource aims to support new and emerging leaders who are at the stage of thinking through their own implementation questions as a NDIS service provider organisation.

We do this by sharing some specific examples of good practice based on research with NDIS Psychosocial Recovery Coaching organisation, One Good* Day.



ONE GOOD* DAY

Overview of One Good* Day

One Good* Day is an organisation that delivers **Recovery Coaching** services to participants of the Australian National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) with a psychosocial disability.

Recovery Coaching was introduced in July 2020 by the National Disability Insurance Agency, as a 'Recovery Oriented' support intended to assist people with psychosocial disability to work toward their own goals (National Disability Insurance Agency 2022a). Goals of Recovery Coaching participants vary by individual, but might include things like building a **coordinated support network**, taking part in **community activities, working, or managing challenges** in life.

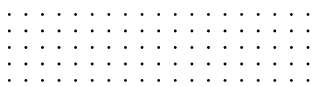
One Good*Day currently has a sole focus of providing Recovery Coaching services and **specialises in mental health**. Many One God *Day Recovery Coaches (approximately 75 percent) have **lived experience** related to mental health, in addition to experience gained through **formal education and professional work backgrounds**.

Overview of One Good* Day

One Good* Day's **organisational design** is different to many more traditional organisational structures under the NDIS. One Good* Day was built with a focus on **team wellbeing** and a cell-like structure or '**pod model**' (One Good* Day 2022). Pods are small teams intended to:

- Support each other in challenging work and provide team coverage to support clients;
- Build strong links with local communities;
- Be agile and self-organising; and
- Be efficient by having a number of small teams where Senior Recovery Coaches (senior workers) mentor and coach workers, but also maintain a caseload of clients, reducing fixed or semi-variable management costs (One Good* Day 2023).

One Good* Day experienced **early growth** and **potential to scale**. In its first full financial year of operation (FY22), OG*D generated a small (2 percent) net profit and a 3 percent operating profit, of which the majority of income was from Recovery Coaching revenue, via the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

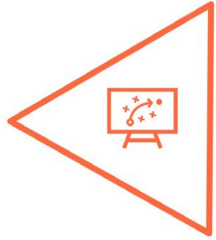


KEY STRENGTHS OF ONE GOOD* DAY'S APPROACH

One Good* Day's Organisational Model



Strategic Approach to Market



Understanding the market

Focused strategy and service

Engaged leadership

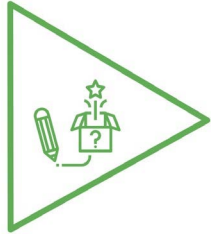
Careful planning

Monitoring and evaluation

*“The other companies, they might have been fine, but I just felt like, I’ve got a mental health issue and so I want someone that knows how to do mental health, and that’s all they do.” – OG*D Client 2022*

One Good* Day’s co-founders were attuned to developments in the NDIS market and were well placed to respond to the introduction of Psychosocial Recovery Coaching. The co-founders chose to build an organisation with a focused strategy that drew on their existing expertise in mental health. The relatively flat organisation structure and pod model allows senior team members and managers to be closely connected to direct practice and able to understand and support colleagues through challenges at work. Following the NDIS announcement of Recovery Coaching services, the co-founders did six months of planning before implementing their plans. Embedding clear KPIs and monitoring systems helps One Good* Day to track and continually improve performance.

Designing for Wellbeing



Permanent jobs

Pod model

Layered supports

Values-based culture

Team connection

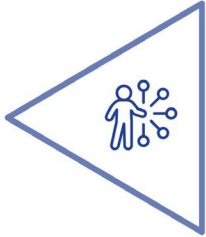
Flexibility

“...we've got the most beautiful group of humans together in a team, and we care about each other. And we support each other. And I certainly feel that from above as well.”

– OG*D Senior team member

Providing permanent (non-casual) employment opportunities is a specific strategy One Good* Day uses to encourage sustained employment, cultivate connection and support among colleagues, and enable effective workload planning and consistency of service delivery for clients. At One Good* Day, Recovery Coaches and their direct supervisors (Senior Recovery Coaches) are closely connected, working together in pods. A management team with strong experience and expertise in mental health offers additional layers of support to team members. One Good* Day has worked to actively build a culture that values lived experience and encourages inclusion and open communication among the whole team. One Good* Day offers flexible work conditions such as condensed and part time (4-day) work weeks, remote work, and encouragement to take leave as needed.

People and Capabilities



Connecting to relevant training

Skilled workforce

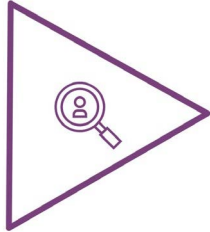
Strong on lived experience and specialist knowledge

"[In other workplaces, having a mental health condition is] always like kind of perceived as a risk... This is the total opposite. It's been really supportive... There are a lot of tools in place. There is an ongoing and open conversation about how we're feeling and how that can be supported."

– OG*D Recovery Coach

One Good* Day's co-founders were aware of the need for deliberate strategies to grow and connect with the emerging Recovery Coaching workforce. Early on in establishing One Good* Day, the co-founders developed a work placement partnership with a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work program (in this case, at Swinburne University of Technology). Students nearing course completion could undertake a paid work placement with One Good* Day and successful work placements provided an additional pipeline of qualified employees, alongside those moving into Recovery Coaching from other mental health sector roles. Connecting with qualified and skilled workers through training programs and other avenues means new team members joined the organisation with relevant experience, knowledge and skillsets.

Client Focus



Responding to unmet need

Leading with quality

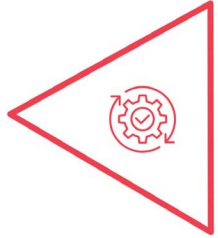
**Recovery oriented,
relationship-based,
person-centred service**

*“My Recovery Coach has been amazing. Helpful and fast with responses and organising supports and researching anything I want to look into such as activities and other supports... I am so grateful to have my Recovery Coach’s support. She has her own lived experience and really understands my needs and gets me.” – OG*D Client 2023*

One Good* Day’s focus on providing quality specialist Recovery Coaching services aligned well with the market for NDIS-funded Recovery Coaching. The value proposition of specialising in mental health Recovery Coaching fit into an existing market gap for Recovery Coaches with strong expertise in mental health, including lived experience. One Good* Day developed clear branding, identifying the organisation as uniquely able to understand and meet people where they are in terms of their mental health and recovery goals. Evidence from clients suggests this is influential within the market for Recovery Coaching services. One Good* Day’s person-centred, holistic and authentic branding reflects their strength in lived experience, recovery-oriented practice, and understanding of broader system issues, which helps them to deliver quality client-focused services.



Effective Systems and Processes



Technology that enables connection and efficiency

Standardised induction

Practice guidance and training

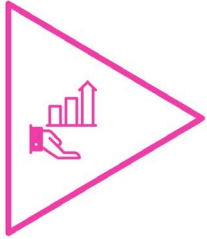
Clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Templated processes

“We’ve got quite a structured templated approach to the work that we do... So there’s a documented foundation of how we practice... and we’ve spent a lot of time developing written resources.”
– OG*D co-founder

One Good* Day uses technology to support team communications from anywhere, and build efficiency through automated processes where possible. A structured induction and orientation process builds clarity about role and work expectations and connects team members to resources and supports to help them work effectively and build confidence in their role. Existing online training tools such as the Mental Health Professional Online Development (MHPOD) portal provide highly relevant content and enough flexibility to tailor training, while scaffolded learning is provided on the job through observing other team members, conducting supported practice, then progressing to autonomous practice. Clear KPIs are set from the start of employment and reviewed on a regular basis, and multiple templated processes support team members in working with clients.

Sustainable Growth



Clarity of values

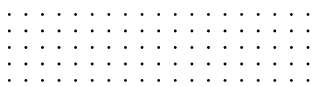
Self-paced and self-funded growth

Lean management structure

“I think we connected on two things. One is we had some experiences of previous workplaces that had been great to work in and we just loved... So that was one thing we just seem to be really aligned on - a great place for people to be their best. And I think the other one was wanting to see people with psychosocial disability and the NDIS overall succeed.”

– One Good* Day Co-founder

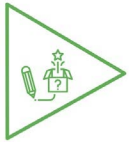
One Good* Day’s model was intentionally designed to create good careers and support positive outcomes for team members; provide excellent services to NDIS participants; achieve financially sustainable operations; and grow the impact and success of the NDIS. One Good* Day was started with a Directors’ loan, and the pod-model enabled a kind of prototyping stage allowing the organisation to begin small (with one pod team) and focus on getting things right before growing the organisation further. One Good* Day’s co-founders made the decision not to seek external investment, but to fund growth through a “working capital snowball” – building pod growth and client base to the point where surplus is generated that can then fund the next expansion of pod/s. One Good* Day’s lean, decentralised management structure helps to reduce fixed and semi-variable costs.



IN CONCLUSION

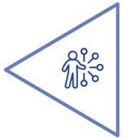
In Conclusion

This resource provides examples of how an organisation can effectively build and support their people and capability, through approaches such as:



Designing for team wellbeing

- Offering permanent jobs, with meaningful, safe and fair work
- Providing a supportive work environment with layered formal and informal supports through pods, senior staff, managers, and recruitment cohorts;
- A values-based culture with flexible working practices and leave policies.



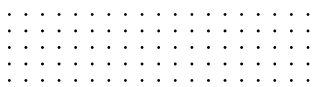
Connecting with skilled potential employees to recruit and train the right team members

- Partnering with a relevant training pathway provider alongside open recruitment;
- Valuing lived and learned experience; and
- Supporting continued training and development of team members.



Implementing systems and processes that support people and capability

- Clear practice guidance and templates that support success;
- Wellbeing plans for all team members and regular reflective practice, and
- Facilitating connection and shared learning via technology and time together.



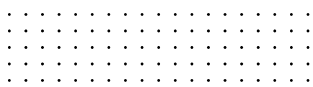
FURTHER RESOURCES

Further Resources

[Download a copy of the full report here.](#)

[Explore One Good* Day's website here.](#)

[Contact CSI Swinburne here.](#)



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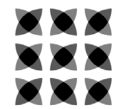
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