

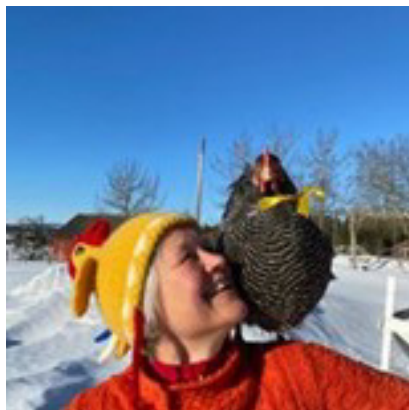
Best Practice Examples of successful Social Enterprises

Maurtuva Growth Farm (Maurtuva Vekstgård)

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Social Mission/key social objectives

Maurtuva Vekstgård is a social entrepreneur that primarily works in the field of dementia, but also offers an alternative learning arena for school students. Our partners are the public sector, we work with the municipalities' health and care units and schools. Our vision is to contribute to dignified and recognized lives for our participants at the farm.

Main Activity

- Community (Membership organisations that exist for a particular purpose and trade commercially with the goal of operating to reinvest profits into the community - community enterprises, community centres, housing cooperatives, community interest organizations, certain smaller shops, and sports clubs)
- NGO/Charity (NGOs and charities operate on both a large and small scales and are usually established to support a specific social, environmental, or political goal.)

Business Structure

- We are organized as a non-profit AS (limited liability company)

Background

Maurtuva Vekstgård was established in 2012. The two of us who established Maurtuva are trained as a nurse and a teacher. We had both grown up on a farm and agreed that the farm was perfect as an arena for working with people in vulnerable situations. We renovated the old house on my colleague's farm, and in 2012 we started our first program.

Year established: 2012

Numbers employed: 3

- Kjerstin: 100 % position, manager
- Kine: 70 % position, professionally responsible for the services for people with dementia at the farm
- Olav: 60-100 % position, driver and handyman

Range of activities

- Maurtuva TrivselsTreff (Maurtuva well-being gathering): A day activity program for younger people with dementia and their family members.
- Maurtuva PensjonistPensjonat (Maurtuva pensioner guest house): An overnight stay for the same target group. This was the first of its kind in Norway. Where we used the farm to arranged daytime activities, we also started to offer overnight accommodation. This started as an innovation project together with the municipality and went into operation in 2015.
- Health competence course for younger people with dementia and their relatives
- Maurtuva GårdsPensjonat (Maurtuva Farm Guesthouse): An overnight stay/relief service for younger people with dementia at the farm.
- Alternative learning arena for secondary school students

Statement from unit manager Per Arne Olsen, Inderøy municipality:

“For my part, I can say with great certainty that dementia care in Inderøy would not have had the status it has today without collaboration with the Maurtuva Vekstgård (growth farm)- social entrepreneur. I think that collaboration will challenge the parties and lead to:

- The industry (health and care) becomes more productive
- Health and care can gain benefits in the form of cost savings
- Services adapted to the user's needs
- Increased innovation
- Private operators are particularly good at customization
- “Reputation”

Lessons learnt/Tips for success

- Stay true to what you are passionate about.
- Always build networks
- Invite good people into your vision
- Have a strong team of board members with skills that complement yours
- Have a partner who makes good money
- The right arena combined with professional competence and personal aptitude
- Perseverance

- Courage to do what you don't really dare undertake and confidence that what you are passionate about is something that is needed.

Do not embark on this journey alone - the ups will be more fun; the downs won't be quite so painful. We have a motto that has increased our peace of mind several times: Everything earthly will work itself out. Trust that when you follow your gut feeling/dream, there's a reason for it. You may have to change course and rethink many times, but the core is there for a reason! Take care of yourself and don't compromise on self-care. If you're going to be good at taking care of others, you must be good at taking care of yourself. Eat right. Exercise. Sleep well. Learn to set boundaries.

Funding

- State/Regional Funding Assistance
- We earn our salary through our offers in collaboration with the municipality health care, combined with project funding that we obtain from the public sector, from non-profit organizations or from other businesses.

Main challenges and obstacles in progressing/developing

1. **That we fall into the sack term “private business” and that many people in public positions equate it with us being welfare profiteers.** The understanding of what social entrepreneurship is has great potential for improvement.
2. **That it is demanding to live on project funding.** The predictability is low. Financial insecurity is a major challenge in life as a social entrepreneur.
3. **Working together with several parties where employees receive their salary if we get a yes or no on an application for project funding,** while for us it means the difference between being able to earn a full salary or not.

What supports have been most useful to the development?

- Support from our own municipality because we've been working with them for 12 years now.

- Support from the people around us, people in the municipality - people want us to succeed and they support us in whatever way they can. For example, in 2013 we received NOK 100,000 from Saniteten on Inderøya to buy equipment when we were starting up the PensjonistPensjonatet.
- Support from public schemes such as Innovation Norway, the Business Fund, Proneo etc. We have found that being women and entrepreneurs has been a door opener to many great initiatives for us to succeed.
- Understanding how important it is to have a competent and well-functioning board. Here we get people who complement our expertise and who want to help us succeed with our social entrepreneurship.