

Social entrepreneurs strive to address pressing social and environmental issues while creating economic opportunities. **Maureen Howard** asks six how they include doing good in what they do.



RHYS MILLAR

Ahika Consulting managing director

1. Ahika works with our communities, including businesses, runanga, councils and NGOs, to deliver ideas that are embedded in the principles of sustainability. We work in the areas of energy efficiency, bioenergy, carbon, biodiversity and community development. There is increasing recognition that the growth-mindset is unsustainable and that holistic thinking is needed to provide the future that most of us desire for our tamariki. Ahika's team encourages this thinking when we work with our clients, and work closely with them to implement the operational changes that result.

2. We listen to people's aspirations for the future and use our technical expertise to provide ideas and guidance in those conversations. We help businesses and communities to plan and implement change that reflects their aspirations, supporting the processes with a view of sustainability at all times. We strongly believe in community partnerships, including researchers, iwi, councils, businesses and NGOs. By working together, we can shape places where environment and communities thrive.

3. I'm doing the stuff that I love! I've got the opportunity to create positive change that I wholeheartedly believe in. The work we do is fundamental to my being. I'm motivated by what we're trying to achieve as a business, and Ahika's kaupapa of aligning community wellbeing and business social responsibility by enhancing the health of our place. Most importantly, I get to work alongside a whole range of amazing, talented people, and have fun!

BRONWYN BAY

Share Your Space co-founder

1. Share Your Space supports parents to pursue their passions by providing a shared working space with a child-minding service on-site in collaboration with Belle Babysitters Ltd. We have run multiple trials and pop-up sessions and are currently looking for a permanent location.

2. Whether parents are running a business, completing study or just need time and space to update their CV, apply for housing or work out their budget, Share Your Space offers a productive work environment and a safe childcare space for parents to get ahead while remaining close to their little one. We are the first in New Zealand to trial a co-working space for parents.

3. As a parent of a 2-year-old, I am in need of my own service. That's what brought the whole idea about. I wanted to go to a shared working space but I didn't want to disrupt other workers by bringing my child along. I wanted to create something that would meet the need for a flexible quality childcare option. It's an idea that sprung from running the "Share Your Gold" meet-up which is all about supporting parent wellbeing, something I'm passionate about.



KYLIE RUWHIU-KARAWANA

Horizon Tours director

1. Horizon Tours Ltd is a whanau business that delivers values-based tourism experiences in Dunedin. We offer premium small group experiences that take our guests from the heart of Dunedin city to the wild coastline of Otago Peninsula to see and learn about the spectacular marine wildlife, natural landscapes and intriguing Maori history.

2. The charm of the Dunedin community and beauty of our natural environment are at the heart of what we love to share with our guests. In our tours we aim to inspire and educate, with a unique blend of science, conservation and culture. We also give back to the areas we visit through programmes such as predator and weed control in native forest we visit. Our ethos extends to our use of recyclable products and avoidance of single-use plastics in our tours.

3. We are a local family. We are passionate about supporting the conservation of our natural and cultural heritage for future generations. I want our guests to be intrigued, to learn about and experience the things I love about living in Dunedin and our Maori heritage. I love the fact that we get to share our ethos with those who travel with us, and work with my whanau, sharing our slice of heaven with our guests.

We asked six social entrepreneurs what drives them to do what they do:

1. What does your business do?
2. How does your business bring change?
3. What's in it for you?

DEBORAH MANNING

KiwiHarvest founder and chief executive

1. KiwiHarvest is a national food rescue social venture. We collect surplus, unable to be sold and donated food from growers, manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers, and distribute it to social service organisations providing food support to vulnerable people in our community.

2. Forty percent of food produced does not make it to market. By redistributing this food, we reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with its loss and waste. This includes landfill emissions from decaying food, and land, water, labour and other resources used to produce, transport, store and cook food. By providing nutritious food for vulnerable Kiwis we contribute to improving their health and well-being. This ultimately leads to stronger and more resilient communities.

3. I believe we have an environmental imperative not to dispose of food in landfill, thereby damaging our environment, and a moral obligation to use that food to feed people in need. I also believe everyone has the right to access fresh nutritious food as part of their daily diet. The reality is many people do not have that access. The work KiwiHarvest does is my way of trying to uphold those necessities. Food is the ultimate connector. It connects us to the land, our cultures, our families, friends and community. Food is obviously important for our nutrition as well as providing a sense of worth and belonging. Food brings people together and encourages us to share our experiences, ideas and lives. It builds and strengthens our relationships. I want to be part of bringing people together and improving their lives and I want to see our environment healthy and providing for generations to come.



DEAN GRIFFITHS

Trade Aid Dunedin/Otepoti store manager

1. Trade Aid is a social enterprise creating fairness in trade. We work with small food and craft producers and marginalised groups around the world, and we support and educate Kiwi consumers to join with us in creating a world where trade is fair for all.

2. We use fair trade to help improve the lives of thousands of talented artisans and food producers by buying and selling their handcrafted products, paying them a fair and stable price, telling their unique stories and speaking out for greater justice and fairness in world trade. We focus on bringing change through long-term partnerships based on honesty, transparency, equity and through an alternative way of doing business that is underpinned by environmental and social responsibility.

3. I am proud to be part of a global movement and a business that lives its values, puts people before profit, celebrates the art of handcraft, and gives our talented trading partners the best opportunity to realise their full potential. I know from my 20-year plus involvement with Trade Aid, starting as a volunteer, that every fair-trade purchase makes a real difference for its maker or grower.

NEAL MCALOON

Bee the Change founder

1. We are using the medium of apiculture to try to raise awareness in the general public about the importance of pollinators. We work closely with community and environmental groups as well as the Queenstown Lakes District Council to help try to empower people to effect positive change in their own gardens and in everyday life to help do their bit for their environment. Our long-term goal is, with the support of benefactors, to build an apiculture infrastructure strong enough to assist crisis areas around the world. There is already an export business model of bees being shipped to Canada from New Zealand, so why not to other areas in need?

2. Firstly, through education, hopefully followed by community and organisational buy-in to a better way to interact with our environment. Every action can have either a positive or a negative impact on the world around us.

3. Having become a Dad in the last few years and looking at all the challenges facing our kids' futures, I felt I had to try to do something to effect positive change. At least I will be able to look my kids in the eye and say I tried, and of course someday maybe a salary too would be nice.



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