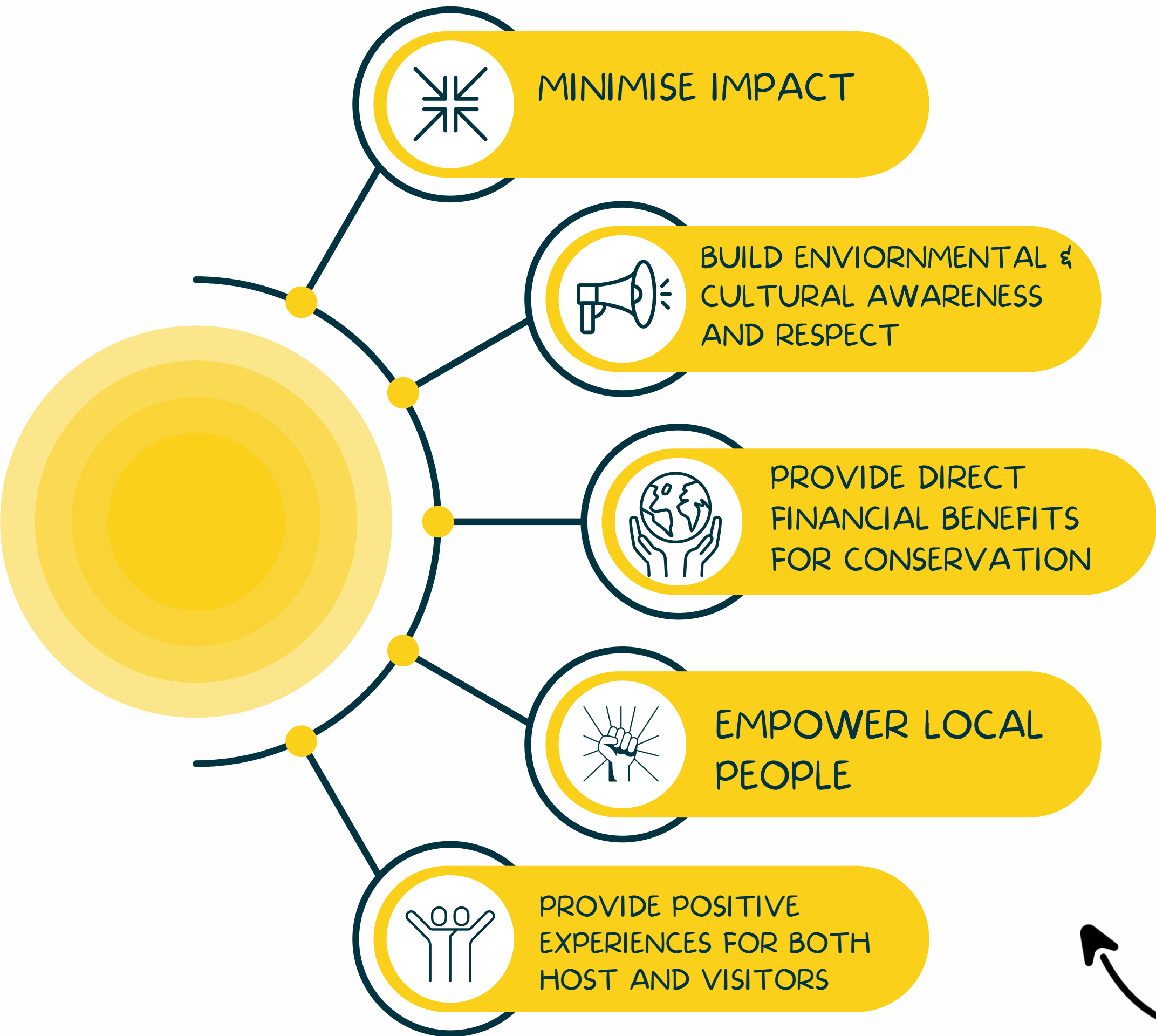European
Yeti

ECO-TOURISM TOOLKIT

FOLLOW US AS WE LOOK AT WHAT IT TAKES TO START A SUCCESSFUL ECO-TOURISM INITIATIVE WITH THIS INTERACTIVE TOOLKIT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE EUROPEAN YOUTH ECO-TOURISM INITIATIVES PROJECT

DEVELOP YOUNG PEOPLE'S SKILLS WHO WANT TO WORK IN THE FIELD OF ECO-TOURISM AND SUPPORT THEM IN THEIR COMMITMENT TO SHARE AND VALUE EUROPE IN A MORE SUSTAINABLE WAY.

MINIMISE IMPACT

BUILD ENVIORNMENTAL & CULTURAL AWARENESS AND RESPECT

PROVIDE DIRECT FINANCIAL BENEFITS FOR CONSERVATION

EMPOWER LOCAL PEOPLE

PROVIDE POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR BOTH HOST AND VISITORS

ECOTOURISM IS ABOUT UNITING CONSERVATION, COMMUNITIES, AND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

THIS MEANS THAT THOSE WHO IMPLEMENT AND PARTICIPATE IN ECOTOURISM ACTIVITIES SHOULD ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING ECOTOURISM PRINCIPLES
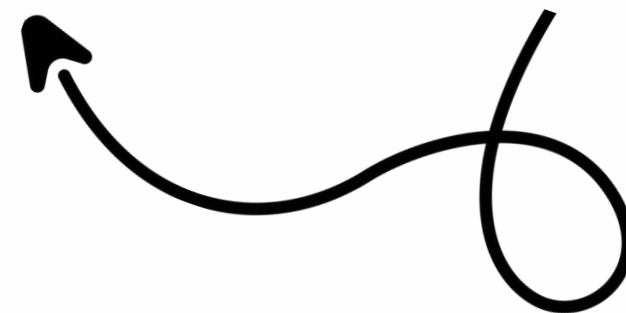
HELPING YOU UNDERSTAND HOW TO SET UP A SUCCESSFUL ECOTOURISM BUSINESS

BELOW ARE THE PRINCIPLES TO CONSIDER IN ASSESSING AND IMPROVING YOUR BUSINESS PRACTICES TOWARDS ECOTOURISM. REFER TO EACH SECTION FOR DETAILED HELP AND HINTS ON HOW TO PUT THEM INTO PRACTICE.

1. WHAT IS THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF YOUR BUSINESS?

2. HOW MUCH DO YOU, AND COULD YOU, FEED INTO THE LOCAL ECONOMY?

3. SHOULD YOU HAVE AN ECOTOURISM POLICY IN PLACE FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

4. HOW CAN YOU DEVELOP A BUSINESS PLAN TO SPECIFICALLY SUIT YOUR ECOTOURISM PRODUCT?

5. WHAT IS ECO-LABELLING AND HOW CAN YOU GET IT?

6. WHAT FUNDING AND TRAINING IS AVAILABLE IN ECOTOURISM?

7. HOW DO YOU MARKET OR SELL AN ECOTOURISM BUSINESS?

Brainstorming space:

Follow Fionnuala!

Fionnuala is a student in Ireland who lives on a farm with her family. They grow apples in a large orchard, and as part of a school project Fionnuala begins to think of ways to incorporate eco – tourism into their business.

Fionnuala hosts tours of tourists visiting their scenic orchard (apple trees). The tourists pick a basket and collect their own apples to bring home. Other activities include cooking classes for apple tarts and traditional foods. Fionnuala's family grow apples to be sold to producers, and some small scale partners have their facilities on the farm site.

We will follow the journey Fionnuala took in the 12 months before opening and look at tools she needed to use along the way to start.

YOUR EUROPEAN YETI ROADMAP

ULTIMATE GOAL
LAUNCH

REVIEW & EVALUATION

MILESTONE #4
COMMUNICATION & IMMPLEMENTATION

MILESTONE #3
OPERATIONAL

MILESTONE #2
BUSINESS PLAN

MILESTONE #1
THE IDEA

1 FOLLOW FIONNUALA AS SHE WALKS YOU THROUGH HER JOURNEY OF STARTING UP AN ECO-TOURISM COMPANY

2 EACH STAGE WILL IDENTIFY THE DIFFERENT STEPS

3 EACH STEP HOLDS USEFUL LINKS TO HELP YOU CONNECT WITH AGENCIES AND NETWORKS

4 USE THIS ROADMAP AS A CHECKLIST OF "BEST PRACTICES"

THE IDEA PHASE

Step 1: Put it on paper

(A) Give the project a name. If you can't think of one in 30 sec call it 'my project' for now. This act alone makes it more real, and the name can always be changed later. From now on your developing your project idea

(B) Jot down a few bullet points outlining the idea. Flesh out the idea

(C) Create a two-line summary. Something that could be easily and quickly explained to someone unfamiliar with the area. This will make it much easier to talk about your project

Step 2: Define the project

(A) Create a start, middle and end. What is the current situation, what would you like to do, and what would a success look like.

(B) Funders love projects that are 'ring-fenced', i.e. projects that are clearly identifiable, with clear start, clear end, clear cost and clear aims.

(C) Estimate how long this project might take from start to finish, are there milestones along the way that could help measure progress?

(D) How is this project different to what has gone before and/or is ongoing?

Step 3: Is it realistic?

(A) Before putting in a lot of effort, is this project realistic? If it needs millions of Euros, a lot of land or lot of volunteer time... maybe consider starting on a smaller scale or an alternative. As a general rule the bigger the project, the more preparation required.

(B) Identify key pass/fails (e.g. eligibility criteria). If your project relies on a fixed piece of land or person, what if they are not available?

(C) Consider key risks, and how they might be addressed? Can the project be scaled up incrementally?

Step 4: Step by step

(A) What is the first step required to make the project happen? What are the next 2-3 steps?

(B) Write it down on paper, use a chart or map to set out what would happen, use arrows etc

(C) Does it require funding (if so, when)? Say you had funding, what would you do?

(D) If you are unsure, highlight the gaps in information and what you need to find out

(E) How/where could you get that information?

(F) What is the environmental impact of your business?

Step 8: Test & review

(A) Have someone external look over the project and provide an independent opinion?

(B) On review, how could the project be better? Smaller/bigger if needed?

(C) Is the project still a realistic idea at this stage?

(D) What are the gaps? Information still needed?

(E) What if the project is a success or failure? What is the legacy?

Step 7: Cost

(A) How much will the project cost to deliver?

(B) What about time and value in kind, has that been factored in?

(C) What about taxes (e.g. VAT), exchange rates, professional fees, bank fees etc?

Step 6: options

(A) Is this project happening already in the wider area?

(B) Would it displace an existing project? How is it different?

(C) What options are there to deliver it (e.g. different scale, location, focus, etc)?

(D) Why is the proposed option the best, all things considered?

Step 5: who

(A) Who would lead the project? Who will sign the application and letter of offer?

(B) Who would need be involved to make this happen? Do you need partners?
Who, what, when, why and how - Ask Questions

(C) How/where would the project be marketed? How would you get participants/customers?

(D) How would the project be delivered? On budget, on time and in full?

(E) Brief review of findings to date, are any changes needed?

(12 MONTHS)

THE BUSINESS PLAN

Having an ecotourism policy in place for your business can be a great way to demonstrate your commitment to sustainability and responsible tourism practices. It can help you attract guests who are interested in environmentally-friendly options, and also reduce your impact on the environment. Implementing an ecotourism policy can involve making changes to your operations, such as reducing waste and energy use, supporting local conservation efforts, and educating guests on sustainable practices.

Overall, having an ecotourism policy can benefit both your business and the environment.

📌 be absolutely sure that every piece of information that goes here goes toward supporting your business plan.

HELPFUL LINKS:

- www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/Start-a-Business-in-Ireland/
- https://www.localenterprise.ie/DublinCity/Publications-Resources/Sample-Business-Plans/

HOW TO WRITE A BUSINESS PLAN

STEP 1: WRITE AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- SELL YOUR BUSINESS AND EXPLAIN WHY IT MATTERS
- INCLUDE A HIGH LEVEL SUMMARY OF YOUR PLAN AND OPERATING MODEL

STEP 2: WRITE A BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

- DETAIL YOUR BUSINESS
- WHAT'S THE OPPORTUNITY THAT YOUR BUSINESS IS CAPITALIZING ON?
- WHAT'S THE TARGET MARKET?
- HIGHLIGHT HOW YOUR BUSINESS IS DIFFERENTIATED

STEP 3: MARKET AND COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

- DESCRIBE THE INDUSTRY YOUR BUSINESS WILL OPERATE IN AND HIGHLIGHT THE OPPORTUNITIES YOU WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
- DID YOU DO MARKET RESEARCH?
- IDENTIFY YOUR COMPETITORS

STEP 4: OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

- HOW WILL YOUR BUSINESS OPERATE ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS?
- WHAT'S YOUR BUSINESS'S LEGAL STRUCTURE?
- HIGHLIGHT WHO'S INVOLVED AND WHAT VALUE THEY WILL ADD

STEP 5: PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

- DISCUSS IN DETAIL WHAT YOU'LL BE SELLING OR OFFERING
- THIS SECTION WILL LIKELY BE A BIT LONGER THAN THE OTHERS BECAUSE OF ITS IMPORTANCE

STEP 6: RAISE CAPITAL

- IF YOU INTEND FOR A PROSPECTIVE INVESTOR OR LENDER TO READ THIS, YOU'LL WANT TO INCLUDE A SECTION HERE ON YOUR FUNDING REQUEST

STEP 7: FINANCIAL ANALYSIS AND PROJECTIONS

- IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU INCLUDE A REQUEST FOR FUNDING IN YOUR PLAN, YOU WILL WANT TO INCLUDE A FINANCIAL ANALYSIS HERE

STEP 8: APPENDIX

- ANY REMAINING PIECES OF INFORMATION SUCH AS LICENSES, CHARTS OR ANYTHING ELSE THAT WASN'T ABLE TO FIT IN ORGANICALLY IN THE PLAN ELSEWHERE, FEEL FREE TO INCLUDE THOSE HERE.

OPERATIONAL RESOURCES (6 MONTHS)

TAKE THE TIME TO IDENTIFY THE RESOURCES YOU WILL NEED FOR YOUR EVERYDAY OPERATION. WHO ARE YOU WORKING WITH? WHERE WILL YOUR BUSINESS TAKE PLACE? WHAT EQUIPEMNT DO YOU NEED?

HUMAN

THE SUCCESS OF AN ORGANIZATION IS HEAVILY RELIANT ON THE TALENT AND STRENGTH OF ITS EMPLOYEES

PHYSICAL

WHETHER A SMALL HOME BUSINESS OR A RETAIL OPERATION WITH MULTIPLE LOCATIONS, EVERY ORGANIZATION MUST HAVE THE APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL RESOURCES TO SURVIVE. THIS INCLUDES A PROPER WORK SPACE, WORKING TELEPHONE LINE, ADEQUATE INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND EFFECTIVE MARKETING MATERIALS

FINANCIAL

WHAT FUNDING AND TRAINING IS AVAILABLE IN ECOTOURISM? AND WHAT RESOURCES CAN HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR INS & OUTS?

https://beyond.ie

https://quickbooks.intuit.com/eu/

EDUCATIONAL

BY UNDERSTANDING YOUR COMPETITION AND GAINING IN-DEPTH KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR INDUSTRY WILL MAKE FOR SMARTER DECISIONS IN BUSINESS. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND THROUGH PROFESSIONAL TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AS WELL AS SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATIONS TO NAME A FEW.

EMOTIONAL

STARTING A BUSINESS CAN BE AN EXTREMELY STRESSFUL FOR AN ENTREPRENEUR TO UNDERTAKE. TO MAINTAIN SANITY AS WELL AS STAY MOTIVATED, IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE A SUPPORT TEAM THAT CAN GIVE GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT AS NEEDED. THIS TEAM MAY BE COMPOSED OF FRIENDS, FAMILY, MENTOR OR PROFESSIONAL GROUP.

EQUIPMENT

DOING RESEARCH IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT STEPS WHEN IT COMES TO FINDING THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT FOR YOUR BUSINESS. KNOWING WHAT YOU NEED AND THE VARIOUS OPTIONS AVAILABLE CAN HELP YOU MAKE THE BEST DECISION FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION (3 MONTHS)

Whether you are looking to gain credibility through social media channels, connect with a community or network, or open potential funding streams, the right communication plan can help you gain the awareness and recognition you need to build your company's success.

Consider incorporating your sustainability plan and ethos into your communication and implementation plan. This will not only increase your company's visibility and reputation, but also promote sustainable tourism and contribute to the preservation of natural resources.

PROMOTION & MARKETING
- FOCUS ON THE AUDIENCE
- MAKE IT MEMORABLE
- IGNITE CONVERSATIONS

SET-UP ONLINE PRESENCE
- BUILD AN EMAIL LIST
- MAKE A WEBSITE/SOCIAL ACCOUNT
- DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS

BRAND IDENTITY
- CREATE VALUE
- SHOW UP WHERE YOUR AUDIENCE IS
- GET CREATIVE

FUNDING
- BE FULLY TRANSPARENT TO BUILD CREDIBILITY
- COMMUNICATE OFTEN AND EARLY WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS
- DO THE RESEARCH & SHOW UP

CONNECTING WITH NETWORKS & COMMUNITY
- https://burren.ie/join-the-burren-ecotourisn-network/
- https://www.sustainabletravelireland.ie/
- https://www.localenterprise.ie/

THE LAUNCH

MILESTONE EVENT

ONCE YOU OPEN YOUR BUSINESS TO THE PUBLIC IT IS GOOD TO PLAN AN EVENT TO BRING IN INTERESTED STAKEHOLDERS WHO YOU CAN GET TO KNOW ON A MORE PERSONAL LEVEL. IT'S A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO CELEBRATE PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS THAT HAVE HELPED YOU GET STARTED AS WELL.

ACCOUNTANCY TOOLS +SOLUTIONS

- CONSIDER YOUR EXPERIENCE. HAVE YOU WORKED WITH A ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE BEFORE? IF SO WHAT DID YOU LIKE/DISLIKE?
- DO YOU HAVE INTERNET CONNECTION? CLOUD-BASED SOFTWARE IF USER FRIENDLY, BUT USUALLY REQUIRES INTERNET ACCESS TO FUNCTION.
- DO YOU HAVE THE FUNDS TO PAY FOR THIS APPLICATION MONTHLY OR WOULD YOU BUY IT UP-FRONT?
- THINK ABOUT INTEGRATION. WOULD IT BE USEFUL FOR THIS SOFTWARE TO INTEGRATE WITH OUR PROGRAMS YOU ARE USING?
- TRY BEFORE YOU BUY. MOST SUPPLIERS WILL OFFER A 30 DAY TRIAL. SEE HOW THIS WILL WORK FOR YOU.
- IF YOU CAN, TALK TO AN ACCOUNTANT FOR SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE.

EVALUATION PLAN

·DEVELOP A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE PROJECT AND IDENTIFY KEY EVALUATION POINTS.
·CREATE EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND DEFINE MEASURABLE OUTCOMES THAT CAN BE DIVIDED INTO SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM.
·DEVELOP AN APPROPRIATE EVALUATION DESIGN. A SUCCESSFUL EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS THE MOST USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT'S OBJECTIVES AND ADDRESSES ITS SHORTCOMINGS.
·COLLECT DATA.
·CREATE AN ANALYSIS OF THE DATA TO SEE HOW YOU HAVE GROWN AS A COMPANY AND AREAS YOU CAN FOCUS ON MOVING FORWARD.

CREATING TOOLS FOR MEASURING PERFORMANCE

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO KEEP ON TOP OF EVERYDAY TASKS AND OPERATIONS?
CREATE TOOLS AND PROCESSES TO KEEP ON TOP OF YOUR BUSINESS

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE

- LET YOUR AUDIENCE KNOW HOW YOU ARE GETTING ON
- GAIN INTEREST AND BUILD YOUR CUSTOMER BASE
- CREATE COLLABORATIONS AND EVENTS TO ENGAGE AUDIENCE

REVIEW AND EVALUATION ☑

REVIEW YOUR BUSINESS PLAN

- TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR INITIAL PLAN AND SEE WHERE YOU HAVE COME
- HOW IS YOUR BUSINESS PERFORMING?

REFERENCE THE EVALUATION PLAN YOU CREATED

- TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR EVAVLIATION PLAN AND CHECK IN WITH YOUR BUSINESS
- WHAT GOALS CAN YOU CREATE FOR THE NEXT EVALUATION PERIOD?

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