

# Purpose first! Economy for the Common Good launches tool for better company founding

**New interactive template “Ecogood Business Canvas” combines values and impact from the start.**

**Hamburg | Start-ups are usually characterized by a certain energizing spirit of creativity, innovativeness, and social purpose. But all too often, companies lose this sense of deep connection and contribution to the greater good as they mature. Thanks to the new “Ecogood Business Canvas” (EBC) companies/organisations can now anchor purpose and define their contribution to social-ecological change in their business model from the very start - and thereby keep their original spirit alive. The Ecogood Business Canvas combines the idea and values of the Economy for the Common Good (ECG) with the advantages of the strategic management template Business Model Canvas. A team of five ECG consultants and speakers from Austria and Germany developed this tool as a result of working with founders who wished to build their business on cooperation and align themselves with the values of the Economy for the Common Good, in order to provide a good life for everyone.**

## **Purpose as a starting point for social impact**

Isabella Klien, coordinator of the EBC development team, got the impetus for a tailor-made tool from feedback from young companies. Founders were struggling to work with the existing Common Good Balance Sheet because they could not contribute any experience as a basis for a balance sheet. “We put the purpose of the company to be founded at the beginning. That is the starting point for social impact,” the ECG consultant from Salzburg describes her approach to developing her own offer for founding for the common good. The EBC was created in collaboration with her colleagues Sandra Kavan from Vienna and Daniel Bartel, Werner Furtner and Hartmut Schäfer from Germany.

## **Combining the advantages of the Common Good Balance Sheet and the Business Model Canvas**

“The Ecogood Business Canvas combines the best of both worlds,” say Werner Furtner and Hartmut Schäfer who joined the team as Canvas experts. “We have merged the advantages of the business model canvas - i.e. visual representation on a large poster and a joint, iterative and creative development of the start-up strategy - with the values and the impact measurement of the ECG.” It is of central importance to keep an eye on all stakeholders of an organisation: social environment, customers and other companies, employees, owners and financial partners as well as suppliers. Founding with the EBC means working out how to maximise socio-ecological impact according to the four ECG value pillars - human dignity, solidarity and social justice, environmental sustainability as well as transparency and co-determination.

## **Made for zebra startups and founders looking for purpose in their work**

In the startup world, there is a distinction between unicorn startups, who want to grow quickly and profitably and then sell as quickly and expensively as possible, and on the other hand zebra startups, who rely on cooperation and co-creation upholding organic growth as well as social and ecological goals. "According to this classification, we are clearly addressing zebras. Our canvas is ideal for them," says social entrepreneurship expert Daniel Bartel. But the target group is considered broader. "Basically, we are addressing all founders for whom meaningful business is important. The ECG offers a different economic model and now with the Ecogood Business Canvas also optimal support for sustainable founding," says Viennese start-up expert Sandra Kavan.

## **Co-creation and plenty of applications**

The EBC offers a manual using simple questions to guide founders step by step through the entire creation of the canvas. The process can be carried out as an individual or in a team, self-organised or accompanied by ECG consultants. The founders can decide on whether to use the EBC poster (A0 format) or an online whiteboard. Both variants promote a co-creative and playful creation of the canvas. The use of Post-Its supports visualisation and enables iterative development. The EBC is also suitable for existing organisations that want to "re-found" and reposition themselves. Organisations that start with the EBC are also well prepared to review their positioning after the first few years by doing a Common Good Balance.

## **Documents for download and information evenings**

All documents - the EBC as a poster with or without key questions plus the guidelines for creating the EBC - are available for free download (Creative Commons license):

<https://www.ecogood.org/start-ups/>

For those who would like to get to know the tool for better founding, the members of the EBC development team offer free information evenings:

<https://germany.ecogood.org/termine/>

<https://austria.ecogood.org/termin/>

## **About the Economy for the Common Good**

The Economy for the Common Good advocates a more ethical economic model, in which the wellbeing of people and the environment become the ultimate goal of business. The worldwide movement exists since 2010 and is based on the ideas of the Austrian publisher Christian Felber. Currently the movement consists of over 11,000 supporters, more than 4,000 activists in more than 160 local chapters and 31 associations. Over 500 businesses and organisations have completed the Common Good Balance Sheet. Worldwide nearly 60 municipalities and 200 universities are actively involved in spreading the idea of the Economy for the Common Good. On 29 Sep. 2018 the International Federation was founded and consists of 10 national associations. (05/2019)

Further Information: [www.ecogood.org/en](http://www.ecogood.org/en)

**For general questions about the Economy for the Common Good, please contact:**  
[press@ecogood.org](mailto:press@ecogood.org)