

Case Study

For Sumerian Foundation, the key decisions that influence which social enterprises receive social investment are - evidence of positive impact to date; clear potential for growth; and quality of the management team. TellJO fully met these criteria, having a highly committed and capable founder coupled with a tested new digital approach that had already demonstrated how it could both engage and benefit highly vulnerable people who otherwise are unable to access such support. We were pleased to provide patient and flexible finance to enable the growth of TellJO through a £150k revenue share agreement.

It was important to Sumerian Foundation that TellJO had in place a system to measure and manage the impact of their support. For most social enterprises, this is an area in which further improvements can be made to not just understand the needs of target beneficiaries, but also the depth and breadth of impact achieved. This social impact - together with financial growth and sustainability - will be the key-ways by which Sumerian will measure success.

We were particularly impressed with the way the TellJO recorded vulnerability indicators and then sought and recorded positive outcomes.

TellJO was able to share important societal vulnerability statistics for the UK from their work with people experiencing a vulnerability.

- 96.3%** experiencing problem debt
- 35%** at risk of homelessness
- 22%** using a foodbank
- 55%** have a diagnosed mental health condition
- 73%** are experiencing loneliness
- 58%** do not exercise
- 27%** experiencing an addiction
- 10%** have recently experienced domestic abuse

TellJO were also able to evidence the positive outcomes that were generated as a result of the TellJO wellbeing assessment.

45% of customers referred directly into free debt advice

82% of customers able to share free text describing their circumstances via the TellJO assessment

24% Self helped through TellJOs provided digital signposts

75% are referred for an affordable payment arrangement on their arrears

62% are referred to their Water Provider for reduced social tariffs and to be added to the Water Company Priority Services register.

16% are referred to the Energy Network Distributors Priority Services register

23% receive a Wellbeing Counselling call by either TellJO or a prevention team.

But under-pinning such success is the need for the leadership of any social enterprise to be constantly innovative, eternally persistent, and open to new ways of partnering with others, which is crucial for good mission-driven businesses like TellJO.

Dominic Maxwell the founder of TellJO said ***“We were delighted to receive Patient Capital from Sumerian Partners, as Sumerian completely dovetailed with TellJO philosophy of creating social value over profit.***

I can’t think of anything more soulless than working with funders who have the single focus of wealth generation. TellJO’s goal is to help as many people as possible, not generate as much profit as possible. Capital for the single purpose of wealth generation would never be appropriate for TellJO”.