

ARK Group
International

Strengthening business impact through fundraising; we are creating a disaggregated blended finance platform.

Business Plan (2023 updated)

Registration: England, August 2021, 13542595

Sectors: Fundraising and international development

Geography: International with current focus on UK

Business type: Profit making. Limited by shares.

Website: www.arkgroupint.com

Elevator pitch: We are focussed on enabling investment into Small Growing Businesses (SGBs) that are creating impact through the Sustainable Development Goals. We are creating a platform that helps SGBs access grant funding and leverage it for non-concessional investments, with a focus on the diaspora community. Our model is based on 3 complementary subscriptions supporting SGBs to: i) access grants, ii) leverage grants for investment readiness, and iii) diaspora investors to access resources and bankable ventures.

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Section 1. Executive Summary:

For over 9 years, I have worked in international development, with a focus on supporting governments and private sector to position to access funding to progress their development agendas. I have worked in over 20 countries through entities such as the London School of Economics, Overseas Development Institute, University of Oxford, The Commonwealth, African Development Bank, Tetra Tech, and more. So, this sector is not new to me nor ARK's dedicated team of committed staff.

Over the last year of piloting our subscription service we have learnt a lot, and one thing that has stood out is the clear demand for our service. We are now focussed on creating mechanisms to absorb that demand. We are a small growing team of 7, mostly on part time contracts. We are all committed to the vision ARK serves, and have clear responsibilities that are driving the day-to-day function of the business. We are working on enabling small growing businesses (SGBs), that lack access to finance overcome such barriers. These businesses are all already trading with high growth potential and a focus on progressing a sustainable development goals. We serve 40 businesses, with a clear pipeline to grow our subscription to 100 businesses by Q3 this year. Although we serve businesses across a range of countries; this year will narrow our focus on UK Community Interest Companies, which is a clear area of growth. Overtime we would steadily implement our service across Africa, which is an important target market for us, and the basis of our long-term planning. Existing research, as well as hands-on experience highlights two main problems we are working to solve:

- i) **The Missing Middle:** SGBs lack access to finance, they are too big for microfinance and too small for bank financing. Yet capital at this stage is essential for sustainable growth.
- ii) **Investment gap:** The diaspora community has untapped investment potential, yet face barriers such as access to credible information, resources, and bankable ventures.

We treat fundraising as a journey, that starts with understanding the vision of the business, and strategically obtaining funding to support sustainable growth. In the context of SGBs creating impact aligned with the SDGs, grants are a good source of early funding. However, many businesses struggle to obtain these funds. In addition, beyond the term of the grant, there is limited mechanisms for additional financing, in turn limiting the sustainability of growth.

Through our subscription-based service we work with SGBs over a minimum 12-month period to access grants. This includes i) Strategic planning, so grants are productive for growth, ii) Quality assurance, so applications are competitive, iii) Core Development, so systems are functional (i.e., policies, governance, etc). Thereafter we would also work with the successful grantees to position for investment, to enable growth beyond their grant term.

Our revenue model is that we have 3-subscription types. Firstly, SGB's subscribe to get support accessing grants (£1,080 p/a, +8% of funds won; average £80k target per SGB). Secondly, grantees subscribe to our investment readiness programme (still being developed). Thirdly, investors subscribe to access bankable ventures and country specific resources (still being developed). In addition to this, we have ambitions of securing early anchor contracts with grant providers, to support their grantees to build sustainable growth through our investment readiness support.

I am confident now is the right time to continue growing our solution providing SGBs creating impact to access funds for sustainable growth. Thank you for the time reading this business plan and for contributing to the journey.

Section 2. Vision:

2.1. In brief: We support Small Growing Businesses (SGB) to fulfil their own visions of growth and creating impact, primarily through fundraising services. We define impact as a contextually relevant and measurable contribution to a Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). We see fundraising as a strategic journey that must be aligned with the SGB’s vision. Our approach to strategic fundraising is inspired by blended finance - mobilising concessional financing as a strategic magnet for non-concessional financing. Specifically, utilising grant funding to attract diaspora investment to SGBs. We are concerned with solving the access to finance problem faced by SGBs across the UK and Africa, and through doing so enabling investors access to a pipeline of bankable ventures across the continent.

2.2. Vision justification: By SGBs we are drawing on the definition of ASPEN ([here](#)). We serve small businesses that already have some revenue and employ at least 5 people; with potential to grow and generate economic development and job creation, but face constraints to access finance, markets, human capital, and other barriers. SGBs typically seek external financing in the range of \$20,000 to \$2 million to support early-stage growth, expand operations, finance working capital, and acquire new assets, but struggle to access forms of capital that meet their needs. (Collaborative for Frontier Finance, [here](#)). In low- and middle-income countries these SGBs are typically too big for microfinance and too small or risky for traditional bank lending, resulting in an estimated \$5.2 trillion finance gap every year (IFC, 2017, [here](#)).

At present there are limited estimates on the total value of grant investments in Africa and the number of providers. However, as an indication we can look at data from some of the top grant making organisations on the continent. We have also mapped 40 foundations currently providing grants in Africa (can be accessed in the documents pack). Although the UK is not the long-term target location of SGB support we provide, it is a part of our early strategy. The UK grant market has approximately 8,000 grant making trusts, giving a total of £3 billion annually (NFP, [here](#)).

Fund	African Development Fund	Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund	African Women Development Fund	GSMA Innovation Fund for Innovative Tech
Start date	1978	2008	2000	2020
Total value of grants	\$45 billion	\$310 million	\$41.7 million	\$17.7 million

Although the grant market is large, and growing, many SGBs struggle to access affordable and quality fundraising support. Evidence shows in developing countries, ventures with ties to a developed country are significantly more likely to raise grant financing in more substantial amounts, rather than local entrepreneurs doing so alone (Lall, et al, 2019, [here](#)). Our service enables SGBs access to support to submit competitive applications and improve their chances of being awarded grant funding.

We are currently conducting a survey amongst grant providers to understand the sustainability of their grant investments. From what we have observed, there is limited mechanisms to ensure the growth generated from grants are sustainable beyond the grant term, due to lack of additional financing options. A key characteristic of blended finance is ‘leverage’ – using concessional financing to attract commercial finance into ventures (EBRD, 2020, [here](#)). We work with SGBs to utilise grant success to position for commercial financing.

We are developing a case study with ODI, on a current business we serve ([Freetown Waste Transformers](#)) utilising grant funding to leverage a recent investment deal of \$3.9 million from Climate Fund Managers ([here](#)). We are primarily concerned with diaspora investment as the concessional financing. There is a significant investment gap in the diaspora community – having appetite to invest,

higher risk tolerance and desire for positive impact, yet faced with concerns around corruption, poor governance and lack of information (The Commonwealth, 2018, [here](#)). Approx. \$715 billion was sent in remittances in 2019, however funds are not yet used for investment (Asare, 2021, [here](#)). We are addressing these barriers providing diaspora access to bankable ventures and resources.

2.3. Competition: All ventures we have come across are either focussing on supporting access to grants or access to investment. Our approach sits on the nexus of both. With regards to access to grants, there are three types of support typically offered in the market: i) individual consultants, which are milestone based, so does not provide strategic support, ii) in-house fundraisers, which is expensive and most of our target audience cannot afford, iii) consultancy firms, which charge fees not affordable by our audience. We bring a new model to the grant access market, that is affordable, high quality, and offers strategic advice through a longer relationship-based service. For an initial mapping of competitors please see [here](#).

In terms of access to investment, there is no venture that currently exists with focus on the diaspora community. There is growing interest in this space, with a few crowdfunding platforms being developed but they are still very new and concerned with facilitating investment into new projects. Outside of formal ventures there are individual and company brokers, which is a more traditional model and lacks the innovation to support the diaspora community at scale. Although we are not focussed on impact investing, there is a lot to learn from the market, which accounts for \$715 billion in 2019, up 43% year-on-year (WEF, [here](#)). We have also looked at potential competitors in this space and found none that use our blended finance approach or have a focus on the diaspora community. T

2.4. Metrics for Success: We define success to be a measurable contribution that enables SGBs access to funding and diaspora investors access to bankable projects. We will be developing a robust framework for measuring success over time. However, for the first two years of operation our main indicators are based on our subscription and commission targets, outlined in section 3.5.

2.5. Long term goal: Beyond the short-term goals outlined in the following sections, we have two complementary long-term ambitions. Firstly, we would like to contribute to changing the narrative of investment in Africa. Now is a credible time to work on doing so, given Africa has some of the fastest growing countries in the world. Plus a strong commitment to pan-Africa development, reflected through agendas such as The Africa Continental Free Trade Area ([here](#)). Secondly, we aim to strengthen a positive identity of entrepreneurs and investors from backgrounds facing discrimination.

2.6. Values: We have five core values that influence our culture and how people see our company:

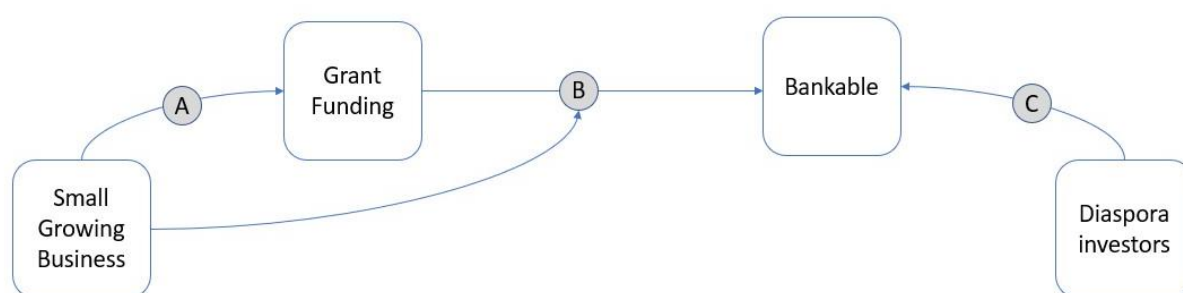
- **High quality** service and output. We do not decrease quality under any circumstance, even when demand is high, quality of service and output must also be high.
- **Relationship focussed:** we invest time in building genuine relationships with members and stakeholders, even when no clear objective of business. This is the foundation of our network.
- **Solution orientated:** we work on output and actions that contribute to solutions.
- **Servantship:** businesses and investor sharing their vision with us is a privilege we do not take for granted. We serve to create opportunities that enable visions to progress.
- **Generosity:** We give time to members and are generous with our resources and network.

Section 3. Business Model

3.1. Current service: In February 2022, we launched a subscription-based service to support access to grants. Businesses sign up for a minimum 12-month period where they receive support to access grants. We work closely with the leadership through supporting i) Strategic planning, so grants are productive for growth and align with pushing the company vision forward, ii) Quality assurance and bid-writing, so applications are competitive, iii) Core Development, so systems are functional (i.e., policies, governance, etc). Business get access to up-to 3 grant applications fee-waived. Any applications submitted beyond three is chargeable. They also have access to fundraising advice, which is usually equivalent to approximately 1 hour per month, as well as introductions to trusted suppliers in our network. Each member has a fundraising target, of at least £80,000 each year. At the start of each membership, we have a ‘*growth meeting*’, which enables us to understand the member’s vision and growth priorities and set a measurable Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for their membership. This allows ARK Group International, and the member to be on the same page in terms of what success looks like for their membership and target concessional fundraising efforts productively.

The standard eligibility for membership is that i) the company must be registered for at least 1 year, ii) makes at least £20,000 trading income in last 12 months, iii) employs at least 3 people, iv) creates impact aligned with an SDG. Prospective members use the online application form ([here](#)) to apply for membership, which the team screens against the criteria and due diligence. If approved the prospective member receives the Terms and Conditions and direct debit mandate to sign. Membership fees are £1,080 per year and we charge 8% on commission on funds won. We capped the number of subscribers to 40 so that we can build the rest of the business model. To see our current portfolio of companies, see [here](#).

3.2. Service development: For the grant access subscription service we have started developing a digital system, to automate the operational process. This would complement the direct interactions and improve the efficiency of service delivery when helping subscribers apply for grants. In addition, we are now developing two new subscription services. All three subscriptions would complement one another and together would complete our core business model.



A: Grant access, subscription. As described above.

B: Investment readiness, subscription. SGBs that successfully win grants would subscribe to the investment readiness subscription. We will work with two types of grantees, i) those we have supported through the grant access subscription, ii) grantees awarded grants through other means. The purpose of this subscription is to work with grantees to utilise the grant success to position SGBs for private investment. The skeleton indicators we are looking at for an SGB to be investment ready includes, i) competitiveness, ii) financial projections, iii) market fit, iv) tested and proven concept, v)

management, vi) legal, and vii) IP. The subscription would be directly with the SGBs; however we will also get contracts with grant providers to support their grantees to improve sustainability of impact from their grant investments.

C: Investor subscription. This subscription enables investors access to a pipeline of SGBs that we deem as investment ready. We would provide them with indicators and profiles of businesses, which they can explore and request further insights. In addition to this, through country programmes we would develop specific resources and recommendations that support investors to access information, resources, and in-country networks. Our primary focus is the diaspora community, with long-term options of expanding the target audience, if aligned with the vision and direction of growth.

3.3 Marketing: The marketing approach we would like to take is one that reflects success. So far, the enquiries we have got is based on word of mouth and visibly seeing an SGB get access to a grant through our model. How we reflect success would be based on the marketing strategy we develop, which would include targeted local marketing, social media engagement and more. We endeavour that our marketing would also support the wider ecosystem, sharing case studies and best practices.

3.4. Intellectual property: We have ambitions to have strong digital components to our operations, as this is developed, we anticipate having ownership over the IP. In addition to this from the 3-tier model we have access to collecting unique data across types of SGBs, diaspora investors and SDGs. This data would also make up part of our intellectual property. In addition to this, we have plans to consider trademarking as the services develop. We would also be developing ‘trade secrets’, through carefully building relationships with funders and stakeholders alike, which will enhance our competitive position. We own the (.com, .co.uk and .org) URLs for [www.arkgroupint](http://www.arkgroupint.com).

3.5. Financial model: Our core model is based on three types of revenue streams. Firstly, subscription fees, which is £1,080 per annum. This is currently modelled as flat across all 3 subscriptions. Some members pay upfront, some pay via direct debit, if their bank is eligible. Secondly, we charge commission on funding won through the grant access subscription and deals made through the investor subscriptions. This is modelled at 8% per grant won, with each SGB having a target of £80,000 per annum through grants. In terms of investment deals, commission will be charged at 5% per deal, with an average value of £150,000 per deal. The third revenue stream is direct contracts with grant providers, to work with their grantees to improve their sustainability of growth, through investment readiness support. We are currently targeting 3 grant providers, to act as anchor clients, based on our current success working with their grantees, [UNLTD](#), [Big Issue](#), [GSMA](#), with plans for more soon after.

Subscription type:	Grant Access	Investment readiness	Diaspora investor
Revenue streams:	Subscription fee: £1,080 p/a Commission fee: 8% of funds	Subscription fee: £1,080 p/a Contract with grant providers	Subscription fee: £1,080 p/a Commission fee: 5% of funds

Since running the grant access subscription from February 2022, we have made revenue of £35,000 in subscription fees and £35,000 in commission. We have incurred approx. £25,000 in costs, 40% capital costs, and 60% expenditure on mainly staffing. Currently the team are on restricted contracts, paid per output and limited time. This means we have used an output-based structure for bid writers, who are paid £150 per application, however this is not sustainable as we grow. It is important subscribers have access to the same advisors/bid writers over their subscription period, to enhance strategy and understanding of priorities, hence we will employ fulltime bid writers and team members.

The next steps are for us to develop and implement the full business model across all three subscriptions. We expect to make revenue of approx. £450,000 by December 2023. Our costs over this period are budgeted to total approx. £322,000. A full breakdown of our financials can be accessed on request.

Dashboard - Summary			
	Phase 1 (Jan '23 - Dec '23)	Phase 2 (Jan '24 - Dec '24)	Total for P1 & P2
Profit	125,850	849,940	975,790
Revenue	448,000	1,343,340	1,791,340
Costs	322,150	493,400	815,550

We plan to make profit from phase 1. This would increase over phase 2 as we increase the reach of our subscription models.

Expected income, Phase 1 & 2: Jan 2023 - December 2024										
								Phase 1	Phase 2	P1 & P2
								448,000	1,343,340	1,791,340
								Total		
Income stream	Client type	Type	Unit	Unit income (GBP)	Phase 1 units target	Phase 2 units target	Total units target	Phase 1 revenue (GBP)	Phase 2 revenue (GBP)	P1 & P2 revenue (GBP)
Subscriptions										
Grant access	SGBs	Subscription Fee	Annual	1,080	100	228	328	448,000	1,343,340	1,791,340
Investment readiness	SGB Grantees	Subscription Fee	Annual	1,080	0	75	75	108,000	246,240	354,240
Diaspora investors	Investors	Subscription Fee	Annual	1,080	0	175	175	0	189,000	189,000
Commission										
Grant commission	SGBs	Commission	Percentage (8%)	6,400	50	114	164	320,000	729,600	1,049,600
Diaspora investor deals	Deals	Commission	Percentage (5%)	7,500	0	9	9	0	67,500	67,500
Contracts										
Investment readiness contracts	Grant providers	Anchor contracts	Annual	10,000	2	3	5	20,000	30,000	50,000
ASSUMPTIONS										
A. To reflect risk, we assume only 50% of SGBs on the grant access subscription, meet their £80k target.										
B. To reflect risk, we assume only 40% of investment ready SGBs make deals with the diaspora investors, worth £150k each										
C. We assume each contract is worth £10,000										

Our revenue model has realistic unit targets for each of the three subscription models. We have taken account of risk on commission, by assuming we only achieve 50% of SGB grant fundraising targets (£80,000 each), and 40% of investment deal targets (£150,000 each). Therefore, this model is a minimum scenario, and we anticipate exceeding these revenue targets.

Indicative Budget, Phase 1 & 2: Jan 2023 - December 2024										
								Phase 1	Phase 2	P1 & P2
								322,150	493,400	815,550
								Total		
Type	Unit	Unit cost (GBP)	Number of Units	Phase 1 cost (GBP)	Phase 2 cost (GBP)	P1 & 2 cost (GBP)				
HR (Staff and Suppliers)										
Managing Director	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	4,000	23	44000	48000	92,000.00			
Research Director	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	4,000	13.25	5000	48000	53,000.00			
Programme Director	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	4,000	20	32000	48000	80,000.00			
Partnerships Manager	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	3,500	23.14	38990	42000	80,990.00			
Programme Manager UK	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	2,500	20.56	21400	30000	51,400.00			
Programme Manager (Africa 1)	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	2,500	16.2	10500	30000	40,500.00			
Programme Manager (Africa 2)	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	2,500	16.2	10500	30000	40,500.00			
Administrator	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	2,500	21	22500	30000	52,500.00			
Research Manager	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	2,000	22.53	21060	24000	45,060.00			
Finance Manager	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	2,000	20.45	16900	24000	40,900.00			
Expert Advisors	Day rate contracts	Monthly	2,500	6	7500	7500	15,000.00			
Bid writers	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	150	734	39000	71100	110,100.00			
Board sitting fees	Salary (FTE)	Monthly	1,500	22	15000	18000	33,000.00			
Operational Expenses										
Office rent (UK)	Fixed	Monthly	300	24	3600	3,600	7,200			
IT & office supplies	Variable	Monthly	100	24	1200	1,200	2,400			
Travel (UK)	Variable	Avg, per trip	200	24	2400	2,400	4,800			
Accommodation (UK)	Variable	Per night	150	24	1800	1,800	3,600			
Travel (international)	Variable	Avg, flight	2,000	7	8000	6,000	14,000			
Accommodation (international)	Variable	Per night	2,000	7	8000	6,000	14,000			
Portal development- grant access portal	Capital cost	Milestone contract	5,000	2	5000	5,000	10,000			
IT and website maintenance costs	Fixed	Monthly	150	8	600	600	1,200			
Legal costs	Variable	Monthly	3,000	5	3000	12,000	15,000			
Training and learning	Variable	Monthly	200	24	2400	2,400	4,800			
Marketing	Variable	Monthly	150	24	1800	1,800	3,600			

Our cost structure is largely made up of staffing costs, which is an urgent cost we need to cover to implement to serve demand and growth of the business.

3.6. Three-year roadmap:

Our three-year roadmap is split into three phases (ironically). Phase 1: Foundation building, Phase 2: Targeted application, Phase 3: Scaling. This section explains what we envision for each phase along with the anticipated activities, in line with the above financial model. It is important to note, this is a guide, and although the core vision will remain the same, as we progress through each phase we will learn and adjust activities as necessary to maximise success.

Phase 1:	Foundation Building & absorbing demand
	This phase is critical for developing and establishing our model. It will inform strategy for the next phases and provide key insights as we plan growth. We are concerned with three key outcomes: i) concept justification, ii) basic services built (MVP), iii) early underlying systems developed.
Timeline:	Now – Dec 2023
Activities:	<p>This phase will be based on activities in relation to research, relationship building and early service delivery. The following key activities will be conducted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grow grant access subscription service (up to 100 businesses). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Support subscribers with up to £80,000 grant funding each. 1.2 Develop subscriber dashboard portal and a CRM for team. 1.3 Capture feedback from members 2. Position for the grant to investment readiness subscription <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Synthesise research and case studies to develop and justify model <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1.1 Obtain feedback from sample of trusted investment experts on our investment readiness framework and indicators. 2.2 Survey grant providers to understand sustainability of grant impact <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.2.1 Build relationships 2.2.2 Obtain anchor clients to fill sustainability gap 2.3 Run first iteration of investment readiness subscription. 3. Develop supply side, diaspora investment subscription <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Synthesise research and case studies regarding diaspora investment 3.2 Conduct a survey amongst investors in the UK diaspora community to understand perceived risks and investment appetite, to shape service. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.2.1. Develop relationships and pipeline of investors 3.3 Develop subscription service and first iteration of portal for subscribers. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.3.1. Onboard the first 30 subscribers 4. Develop framework for sector/SDG and geographic selection for next phase: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Based on research, clusters of success and the foundation of phase 1.
Success indicators:	<p>At the end of this phase, we would like to have an operational MVP, with the following measurable activity indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100 SGB subscribers to the grant access programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to grants of value £80k each. ▪ 2 contracts with grant providers to deliver for their grantees, serving approx. 30 grantees each.







Phase 2:	Targeted traction
	Building on the success of phase 1, we would apply the frameworks to develop country programmes with sector specific focusses. We would secure operations at country levels to deepen credibility, increase social capital, contextual understanding and develop IP.
Timeline:	Jan 2023 – Dec 2024



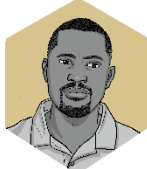
Activities:	<p>We will treat each country level engagement as individual, requiring specific research, strategy, and application. Each country programme would enhance the core operations and position the business for increased potential when scaling.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Select focus countries and relating priority sectors. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Based on selection process, including macro signals, clusters of success, market size, existing relationships, scoping visit, political landscape, etc. 2. Set up country programmes, including <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Create country programme strategy for pipeline of bankable projects 2.2. Includes items such as, legal presence, formalising and managing government and stakeholder relationships, etc. 2.3. Operational infrastructure 3. Integrate country programmes to core business model <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Target pipeline of bankable projects for each country programme 3.2. Integrate into digital SGB and investor portals 3.3. Enable investors access to bankable projects and country resources
Success indicators:	<p>At the end of this phase, we would like to have three country programmes set up and operational. By operational, this includes a clear infrastructure and operational process that is functioning. For this phase we have the following targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 250 new SGB grant access subscribers + grants of value £80k each - Launch investment readiness subscription - Information to sensitise investors and provide contextual resources

Phase 3:	Scaling
<p>Through P.1 and P.2 we use digital approaches to automate operational processes. Scaling would be developing a digital product that enable matching of bankable SGBs to diaspora investors.</p>	
Timeline:	Jan 2025 - beyond
Activities:	<p>The product would utilise data, and input from partner stakeholders. It will be built on the skeleton MVP developed through P.1 and P.2. Although physical in-country presence is important, it would be based on in-country partnerships. 1) Develop, test, and build product, 2) Launch and scaling strategy.</p>
Success indicators:	<p>At the end of this phase, we would have a publicly visible product with user targets. A further plan would be developed specifically for this phase, further in phase 2.</p>

Section 4. Founding Team

We currently have three type of team members, which make up the founding team. 1) Directors, who lead the overall growth, decision making and direction of the business. 2) Staff, lead on delivering tasks and responsibilities. 3) Advisors, who provide specific advice based on expertise. The team so far has been working on limited hour, and output-based contract.

Directors			
Profile	 <p>Joevas Asare (here), Founder and Managing Director</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economics for Development (MSc), University of Oxford - 8-years in International Development, policy, advisory and management - 5 years fundraising - Worked in 20+ countries. - Strength: Vision, strategy and relationship building 	 <p>Guilherme Suedekum (here) Research Director</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International Economics (PhD), Graduate Institute of Development - 10-years in international development, UNCTAD, IFC, IGC, ODI - Passionate about using research to solve problems. 	 <p>Felix Edwards (here) Programme Director</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -MA International Education, University of Sussex - 25 years in international development, bid writing and delivering complex programmes
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead the overall direction of the business. - The face of the organisation. - Business development. - Building relationships - Strategic growth - Progressing overall vision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead the development and implementation of research agenda. - Research for justification and leverage for business growth. - Manage research assistants - Research outputs to influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead the overall operational management of subscription programmes. With focus on developing the intersection of the 3 target audiences of each subscription programme.
Status	Current: Full time (unpaid) Plan: Full time (paid)	Current: Part time (unpaid) Plan: Part time (unpaid)	Current: Part time (paid) Plan: Full time (paid)
Staff: Fundraisers			
Profile	 <p>Emma Payne (here), Programme Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MSc Global Affairs (focus on Africa), Kings College London - 3-year fundraising and 2-year management experience - Passion for development 	 <p>Roshni Patel (here), Bid Writer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MSc Development Management, London School of Economics - 5 years international development and bid writing experience. - Passion for development 	 <p>Joseph Brammer (here), Partnerships Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -MA International Development, SOAS - 3 years in international development, bid writing and delivering fundraising support.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bid writing - Growth strategy with SGBs - Programme management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bid writing - Growth strategy with SGBs - Programme management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bid writing & Q.A - Growth strategy with SGBs

			- Programme and team Management
Status	Current: Output consultant contract (paid) Plan: Full time (paid)	Current: Output based consultant contract (paid) Plan: Part time (paid)	Current: Full time (paid) Plan: Full time (paid)
Staff: Operational			
Profile	 <p>Riquelle Asare Administrator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BSc, Communications and Media, University of London - 10 years corporate administrative experience - Lived in 3 developing countries - Passion for development 	 <p>David Nono Finance Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACCA, BSc Accounting and Finance, University of Kent - 5 years financial management experience - Passion for development 	 <p>Asi Anold Research Assistant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -BSc Economics, Univesrity of Yaounde - 5 years research, data mining experience and report writing - Passion for development
Responsibilities	-Lead administration and office management related activities	-Lead financial controlling and financial management activities	- research based data mining, and collating information
Status	Current: limited hours consultancy contract (paid). Plan: Part time (paid)	Current: limited hours consultancy contract (paid) Plan: Part time (paid)	Current: Part time (paid) Plan: Full time (paid)
Advisors			
Profiles	<p>All advisors listed here are not contracted as official advisors, but have voluntarily dedicated significant time to support the development of ARK Group Int. We plan to create an Advisory Board, early on, that consists of a selection of people from the current pool of advisors, and others. Current advisors are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cheryl Bruce (here), Senior Associate, FCA (Former Regional Director, IMF) - Rania Nasir (here), Head of Firms Initiative, International Growth Centre, LSE - Claudia Morrison(here), Director of Finance, International Growth Centre, LSE. - John Cortines (here), Director of Generosity, The Maclellan Foundation - Reuben Coulter (here), Director of International Strategy, Faith Driven Investor - William Morrison(here), Chairman, MetricsLed (Former Founding Director, Adam Smith International) - Kariuki Waweru (here), Programme Lead, ACEF -Kenya - Oliver Turnbull (here), Programs Lead, Google for Startups - Sedick Toffa (here), CEO, Jojabesi Sourcing Global Procurement – South Africa - Kwame Freddie Asare, Advisor - Dr Irene Brew-Riverson (here), Senior Lecturer in Entrepreneurship, University of Westminster - Fred Binka (here), Partner, TIA Capital - Dr Sarah Malter (here), Managing Director, Made.Simplr 		

Annex 1: 2023 Strategic Goals

Purpose: This document outlines the vision for ARK during 2023 and the goals to achieve it. The vision aligns with the overall vision of the company, with a narrower focus this year, to build steadily from last year and position for further growth. It also considers several areas of success and risks we encountered over the last year to grow more robust. This document is not exhaustive, and simply acts as an anchor for growth plans and accountability and helps all team members be on the same page re focus for this year.

Main priority/vision for 2023: This year, growth will focus on solidifying the systems for the grant access subscription and growing the number of users, primarily in the UK.

The rationale for this, is twofold. Firstly, the grant access subscription is the service we have most experience with, and are now well tuned in how it works, so it is the best service to further develop to drive growth, rather than implementing a new service. Secondly, we have seen clear demand from paying SGBs that this service is needed, giving us confidence that investing in further development of this service should allow us to absorb high demand, as well as leverage complementary contracts.

Success of this primary priority will be defined by strategic **5 goals** to be achieved by end of the year.

1. All SGB users to be using the digital platform as their main service.
 - a. Complete development and update of portal
 - b. Phase in use through a pilot and gradual increase in users.
2. All ARK team members using the digital platform as their main tool for management and onboarding activities.
 - a. For ARK team members, this also includes the onboarding process for new SGBs and programme management.
 - b. Aligning operational and financial activities in real time.
 - c. Grow number of Bid writers on the platform to at least 25 active users by the end of the year.
 - d. All bid writers to be using the platform as main system for assignments.
3. Grow number of active SGBs on the platform to at least 100 by the end of the year.
 - a. Primary focus on UK community interest company members
 - b. Africa members would be targeted and position to be implemented through externally funded programmes.
4. Win at least 50% of all grants applied for on a unit basis.
5. Build at least two non-subscription contracts with institutional partners to triangulate service and new incomes based on partnered delivery of subscription.

How we achieve these goals would be a team effort, and not simply a strategy on paper. However, to give some indication of the direction we can take, the below table outlines goals based on 3-month periods.

<u>Focus</u>	<u>Activities</u>	<u>Team required</u>	
<i>March to June 2023</i>			

Balancing finances with operational growth	Adjust onboarding formula to keep cashflow and operational growth balanced (price discriminating + steady of onboarding UK P1 and P2 members to approx. 50 members). Utilising external finances to smooth costs and position for further growth. Build up pipeline of grant commission incomes.	Managing Director - JA Programme Manager – (new hire) Partnership Manager - JB IT company – Steven’s team Research Manager - AA Finance Manager - DA	
Update and pilot platform	Update platform and start piloting amongst trusted members.		
<i>July to September 2023</i>			
Implementation of platform	Start sensitising members and bid writers to use platform as main access to service. Shift service to be more demand driven, without taking away too much from relational elements.	Managing Director - JA Programme Manager x2 – New hires Partnership Manager - JB IT company – Steven’s team Research Manager - AA Finance Manager - DA	
Grow users	Target X number of new users to be onboarded through the platform.	Programme Director - FE	
Financial growth	Build grant commission pipeline with more accuracy and improved per unit rate of success. Review onboarding formula, and how price adjustments affected cashflow Contracts with other funder parties.		
<i>October – December 2023</i>			
Build confidence in platform service delivery	Review and assess progress and steps for further growth.	All team members that were involved through the year.	

Secondary priority: Develop deeper presence in at least one African country. We are doing a lot of work in Sierra Leone, Ghana, Kenya and can develop a deeper understanding of the

problem we are solving, that helps to inform our solution better in a particular geography, including formalising the non-SGB institutional relationships etc. Goals for this would be developed over time as progress materialises. However, the important point here is that overtime to be successful in a given country we need to develop a deeper presence and traction for it to grow and be successful in that particular country. In the meantime, we would still onboard businesses outside of the UK, but we would only accelerate that once we have country level traction and confidence in how best to do so.

Other priority: Where possible we would also be positioning for the development of the investment readiness and diaspora direct investment subscription services. However, this is only positioning through research and building of understanding to inform how this service can be developed. This would only go forward if funded externally through a grant and we could hire staff to do this, rather than add to any of the current staff's capacity.