

IMPACT REPORT

2023



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1. Introduction and Objectives of the Impact Report

This Annual Impact Report outlines the journey undertaken by **Startacrowd** in its first year as a “**Società Benefit**”.

Startacrowd officially acquired the status of “Società Benefit” in January 2023, explicitly stating in its articles of association the intention to pursue its growth trajectory in a **responsible, sustainable** and **transparent** way.

This translates into the commitment to pursue, alongside profit objectives, one or more objectives of common benefit, defined as achieving positive effects for businesses, investors, individuals, communities, the environment, and other stakeholders.

This report thus serves as an initial roadmap to guide Startacrowd's conduct in the years ahead, adhering to a sustainable development model that seeks to balance strategic, organizational, and managerial decisions to create value for shareholders and for all stakeholders mentioned above.

The Company is committed to annually communicating, with transparency and accuracy, the results achieved and the challenges encountered in pursuing the common benefit defined in its articles of association.

At Startacrowd, we recognize that transforming into a “Società Benefit” represents a paradigm shift — a profound change in our corporate identity and a bold move driven by the conviction that the market is destined to evolve to adapt to emerging socio-cultural demands.

Achieving the status of “Società Benefit” is, for all of us at Startacrowd, the culmination of the Company's commitment, which, since its founding, has embedded positive ESG principles (Environmental, Social, and Governance) into its business model.





1.1 Who We Are

Startacrowd is an **startup** and **“Società Benefit”** that operates within the financial information sector. The company was established in July 2020 with the goal of enhancing the quality of financial operations between early-stage innovative companies and market operators by providing advanced analysis tools and accurate, reliable data.

By integrating the potential of emerging technologies with an advanced system of data collection and processing, Startacrowd supports the decision-making of innovative companies and market operators, with the aim of making the early-stage innovation market more transparent and fair.

Startacrowd places a strong focus on **financial services for innovative companies**, combining consulting activities with the development, production, and commercialization of high-value innovative technological services designed for the players of the innovation ecosystem.

The Company's organizational structure is built around **three closely interconnected business lines** that communicate and reinforce each other:

The first one is the division focused on **corporate finance consulting services**, named **StartaConsulting**, active since the company's incorporation.

The second one, the technological core of the company, is **Xeedom**, Startacrowd's proprietary **Data Intelligence platform**. Its development began prior to the company's establishment, and its commercial launch is scheduled for 2025.

The third and final business line refers to a suite of tools aimed at automating part of the services provided by the Company. The first of these is a **fundraising planning platform** called **StartaRaise**, developed in the last quarter of 2023 with the goal of streamlining fundraising planning activities for startups.





1.2 Our Business Lines

Currently, Startacrowd's **business model** is composed by three main business lines:

▪ **STARTA**CONSULTING

StartaConsulting is the consulting division of Startacrowd, specializing in **strategic financial consulting services** for startups, innovative SMEs, and businesses focused on innovation. The aim of StartaConsulting is to provide a strategic guidance to optimize the financial and operational management and make the company investment-ready.

▪ Xeedom

Xeedom is Startacrowd's **proprietary data intelligence platform** for researching, analyzing, and monitoring innovative companies, supporting investment, financing, and Mergers and Acquisitions operations (M&A). The platform's goal is to support decision-making processes and mitigate the risks associated with the evaluation, selection and monitoring of startups and SMEs by integrating advanced data collection and processing systems with artificial intelligence.

▪ **STARTA**RAISE

StartaRaise is a SaaS platform designed to support **fundraising planning** for innovative companies. This tool simplifies round planning activities by allowing the top management of startups and SMEs to model scenarios involving the entry of new investors, manage the cap table, and intuitively track its evolution over time. StartaRaise represents the first of a series of tools designed to automate the services provided by the company.



2. What It Means to Be a “Società Benefit”

Italy was the **first country in Europe** and the second in the world, after the United States of America, to introduce the **“Società Benefit” status** into its legal framework in January 2016 through the “Legge di Stabilità” (Law No. 208/2015).

The “Società Benefit” model combines business activity with the creation of positive effects, or the reduction of negative ones, on stakeholders.

A “Società Benefit” is a company that, as stated in paragraph 376 of the Law, "in conducting its business activity, pursues one or more common benefit in addition to the purpose of profit, operating in a responsible, sustainable, and transparent manner towards people, communities, territories, and the environment, as well as cultural and social assets and activities, entities, associations, and other stakeholders."

The “Benefit Company” status can be achieved either at the company's inception or by transforming an existing company, provided certain requirements are met.

First, the obligation to update their articles of association or by-laws to explicitly include the term "Società Benefit" and specify the dual-purpose company objective.

Second, the administrative body of a “Società Benefit” must manage the company responsibly, sustainably, and transparently, balancing the interests of shareholders, the pursuit of common benefit, and stakeholders.

Finally, a “Società Benefit” must appoint an Impact Manager and annually publish a report to measure its progress (Impact Report).

Said report, to be attached to the financial statements and published on the company's website (if available), must include:

- 1) A description of the common benefit objectives** and the circumstances that may have facilitated or hindered their pursuit;
- 2) An assessment of the impact generated**, carried out using an external evaluation standard that considers the evaluation areas identified in Annex 5 (Article 1, paragraph 378) of the “Legge di Stabilità”;
- 3) A section dedicated to the company's future objectives** in terms of common benefit pursuit.



2.1 Startacrowd's Transformation into a "Società Benefit"

Startacrowd decided to embark on a transformation journey by becoming a "Società Benefit" on January 5, 2023.

The transformation of Startacrowd into a "Società Benefit" is the realization of our commitment to integrating sustainability into the company's business model.

Indeed, our approach to sustainability is based on the assumption that **innovation and sustainability** are closely interconnected. For this reason, sustainability has been an integral part of our business strategy since the incorporation of Startacrowd.

The decision to acquire the "Società Benefit" status comes from the desire to equip the company with an **innovative corporate model** that reflects the ideas and ambitions at the core of our project. Furthermore, obtaining this status solidifies our intention to continue progressing in alignment with the European Union's 2030 Strategy, with an eye towards opening new growth opportunities.

In a context where sustainability has fully entered the business vocabulary, we are convinced that the transformation into a "Società Benefit" represents a starting point for us and will guide us towards continuous improvement and towards the pursuit of increasingly ambitious goals.





2.2 Appointment of the Impact Manager

In order to comply with the obligations set forth by Law No. 208/2015, Article 1, Paragraph 380, Startacrowd appointed an **Impact Manager** on January 5, 2023. The Impact Manager is an internal professional working for the Company, who holds a Ph.D. in Business Economics and Management with specialization in Strategy and Corporate Policy. He has expertise in sustainable investments and experience as a university lecturer at prestigious local universities.

This appointment highlights the company's commitment to sustainability and its intention to build a governance sensible to ESG topics and focused on the pursuit of common benefit goals.

The Impact Manager is responsible for carrying out tasks and functions aimed at achieving the common benefit and is therefore engaged in the following activities:

- a)** Developing and implementing a plan for the pursuit of the common benefit;
- b)** Analyzing and monitoring performance to measure the social and environmental impact generated;
- c)** Preparing the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the company's performance in terms of ESG using external standards;
- d)** Preparing the annual Impact Report to measure progress against the set objectives and those of coming years.





2.3 Selection of External Standard

Startacrowd adopted the **B Impact Assessment (BIA) framework**, developed by the Standards Advisory Council of the U.S.-based non-profit organization **B Lab**, as its reference standard for evaluating the impact it generates.

The BIA was created four years before the introduction of the “Società Benefit” status, thanks to the efforts of the first certified B Corporations. It serves as a promotional tool for B-Corps and “Società Benefit”, providing an effective method for business activity reporting.

Startacrowd's decision to adopt the BIA as its external evaluation standard in its first year as a “Società Benefit” reflects its commitment to adhering to the highest industry standards. While more complex than most impact evaluation tools, the BIA stands out as the most comprehensive and thorough standard available.

For these reasons, Startacrowd identified the BIA in its articles of association as its reference external evaluation standard.

Characteristics of the Impact Assessment™

- **Prestige:** The BIA is the measurement standard for obtaining the B Corp certification (minimum score: 80 points).
- **Comprehensiveness:** It analyzes multiple operational practices of a company (including workers, suppliers, and governance practices) as well as the characteristics of the products/services offered, to understand how they generate positive and negative effects.
- **Flexibility:** With over 100 customizable versions tailored to the size, industry, and geographic area of the company, the BIA is the most adaptable tool available.
- **Educational value:** The assessment's structure allows entrepreneurs and founders to use it as a guide to improve their company's performance and impact.
- **Transparency:** All criteria and weightings used to evaluate the impact areas are always visible and can be consulted at any time.
- **Simplicity:** Designed to meet the highest industry standards (B Corp), the assessment is nonetheless simple, intuitive, and suitable even for small and medium-sized enterprises.
- **Dynamism:** The constant collection of user feedback and biennial updates make this protocol particularly dynamic.



2.4 Evaluation of the Impact Generated

The **evaluation of the economic, social, and environmental impact** generated by Startacrowd in 2023 serves as the starting point for measuring the company's year-over-year improvement and the impact generated by its products and services.

The evaluation areas of the **B Impact Assessment** are as follows:

1. Governance

Evaluates the company's overall **mission** with a focus on its social purpose, policies, and practices aimed at social/environmental impact, ethics, and transparency.

2. Community

Assesses the company's **civic engagement and impact** on the community where it operates, considering aspects such as diversity and inclusion, and relationships with the community, territory, and suppliers.

3. Environment

Evaluates the company's **environmental impact** in terms of environmental management practices.

4. Workers

Examines the company's practices concerning the financial, physical, professional, and social well-being of its **employees and collaborators**.

5. Customers

Evaluates the company's **customer management** practices in terms of product/service quality, ethical marketing, data security, and feedback channels.

Below is a **summary of the results** obtained by impact area:

| Impact Area | Score |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Governance | 17 |
| Community | 13 |
| Environment | 5.1 |
| Workers | 26.7 |
| Customers | 1.9 |
| Total score | 63.9 |

The **overall score of 63.9** achieved by Startacrowd in its first year as a "Società Benefit" sets the foundation for the company's future ESG developments and the implementation of new performance measurement tools.

This result demonstrates the company's commitment to pursuing its common benefit objectives from the very first year, promoting continuous improvement of the team, the work environment, and the community in which it operates.

Notably, scores related to the **Business Model** and **Ethics and Transparency** (Governance Area), as well as the score for **Worker Satisfaction** (Workers Area), show positive results aligned with the prerequisites for potential B Corp transformation.

For Startacrowd, the obtained B Impact score represents the beginning of a journey aimed at defining, planning, and pursuing increasingly ambitious goals.



3. Our Common Benefit Objectives

3.1 Objectives

Each of the business lines identified and described in the preceding sections aims, in different forms and ways, to achieve the common benefit objectives outlined in the company's articles of association.

The **common benefit objectives** explicitly stated in Startacrowd's articles of association are:

- **Minimizing the risk of failure for innovative companies such as startups and innovative SMEs.**
- **Reducing the financial gap of innovation-focused companies.**
- **Facilitating value transmission to stakeholders for these companies.**

Startups are high-risk enterprises, and securing the financial resources needed to ensure growth and sustain investments often represents a challenge for the management teams of innovative companies, especially for those in early-stage.

Additionally, a key challenge for many startups is communicating their value to the market. This difficulty often stems from the lack of transparency in information disclosure within the startup ecosystem.

Through its business lines and services, Startacrowd commits to its client to:

- **Reduce business risk and increase success probabilities.**
- **Improve access to financial resources to grow, thus promoting employment.**
- **Facilitate value transmission to the market and stakeholders.**
- **Favor innovation processes related to sustainability for companies and non-profit organizations within its community.**





3.2 Results

This section presents the results achieved in 2023 in terms of pursuit of the common benefit objectives.

Regarding the **statutory objectives** for the pursuit of the common benefit outlined above, in 2023 Startacrowd has completed the following activities:

- Designed, developed, and launched **StartaRaise**, a proprietary fundraising planning tool aimed at reducing the financial gap for startups and innovative companies.
- Decided to **offer StartaRaise for free** without feature-based limitations, with the goal of simplifying fundraising activities for as many companies as possible.
- Accelerated the development of the proprietary **Xeedom platform**, through which the company aims to provide a range of data-driven technology solutions tailored to support businesses and market operators.
- Developed an **ESG Rating** for companies registered on the platform, promoting sustainable finance and enhancing initiatives that support sustainable business models.

- Made a **donation to a non-profit association** that promotes innovation with the ambition of positively impacting the economic and social fabric of Italy's startup ecosystem.

In addition to common benefit objectives, the company also identified and pursued the following goals:

- a) **Enhancing the local territory and its resources by promoting the social well-being of the community at a local level.**
- b) **Promoting sustainable work practices that aim to improve work-life balance and foster a dynamic and positive work environment.**





In an effort to **enhance the local area and promote the social well-being of the community**, Startacrowd has:

- Renewed an **agreement with a local educational institution** to promote an educational program (Paths for Transversal Skills and Career Orientation) for two students, totaling 215 hours spent at the company's office.
- Promoted a **curricular internship** of 50 hours with a student from the bachelor's degree program in Management for Business and Economics at the University of Pisa, aimed at developing a thesis project.
- **Reduced the impact of travel and commuting** by encouraging virtual meetings and offering financial incentives for employees who use public transport.

As the team grew and new external and internal collaborators joined, the company's organizational structure also evolved. To **continuously improve the work environment and employee well-being**, the company has:

- Introduced one day of **smart-working** per week for all team members to strengthen team spirit.
- Structured **decision-making processes** allowing employees to actively contribute to strategic planning.
- Developed a **monthly feedback system** through in-person or online meetings to foster employee growth within the company.

- Created an **employee satisfaction survey** to measure the team's level of satisfaction.
- Promoted **team-building activities** to strengthen team cohesion, as well as participation in industry events and networking opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- Formalized **salary equity** for employees with similar roles, tasks, backgrounds, and ages, even before the EU Directive 2023/970 mandating equal pay for men and women in similar roles came into force.
- Designed and implemented a **training plan** for two employees in Big Data & Analytics and Digital Integration of business processes.
- Introduced meal vouchers as **employee benefits**.





3.3 Future Objectives

In the coming year, Startacrowd plans to continue pursuing the common benefit objectives described above, with the following initiatives:

- Integrate a new team member with diverse skills, backgrounds, and experience to enhance team heterogeneity and foster a **culture of teamwork** and personal growth.
- Encourage the creation of new professional roles within the company by activating **educational programs and internships**.
- Further **reduce the impact of travel and commuting** through additional measures or policies.
- **Allocate a percentage of revenue** to a non-profit organization that shares the company's values and mission.
- Increase **employee satisfaction** by improving corporate benefits.
- Promote a **corporate culture of respect and inclusion** by drafting documents to explicitly outline values, codes of conduct, and corporate policies.
- **Support employee training on ESG topics**, sustainable innovation models, entrepreneurship, and innovation through participation in or organization of events, training sessions, webinars, and roundtables.





4. Conclusions

This Impact Report represents the beginning of a **journey toward sustainability** for Startacrowd, which we hope will guide us toward continuous improvement and increasingly ambitious goals.

As outlined in the previous sections, during this first year as a “Società Benefit”, Startacrowd has implemented concrete actions to achieve common benefit objectives.

The results achieved represent only the starting point from which we will continue working to set increasingly significant objectives year after year.

The company is also committed to ensuring maximum transparency by providing annual reports on the progress made regarding statutory objectives and the goals set out in this report.







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