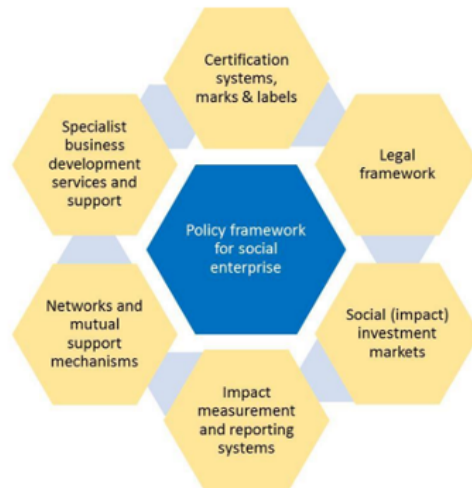


# Social Enterprise Ecosystems



In this lecture we are going to look at the concept of social enterprise ecosystems.

## Social Enterprise Ecosystem



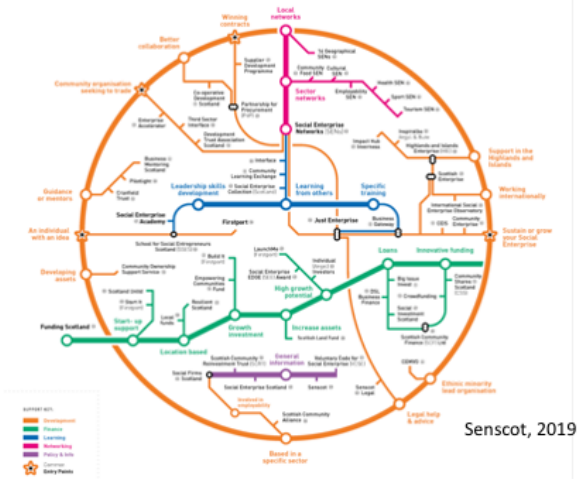
European Commission,  
2015, p. xiv

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Social enterprise ecosystems aim to provide support for social entrepreneurs and social enterprises in a geographical place. Six components that are often included in a social enterprise ecosystem are:

- Networks and mutual support mechanisms
- Specialist business development services and support
- Certification systems, marks and labels
- Legal framework
- Social (impact) investment markets, and
- Impact measurement and reporting systems

# Scotland's Social Enterprise Ecosystem



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Networks and mutual support mechanisms are a very important feature of social enterprise ecosystems. This is an illustration of Scotland's social enterprise ecosystem. It shows Scotland's practitioner-led social enterprise networks are at the apex of the ecosystem. Scotland is recognised as a world-leader in social enterprise.

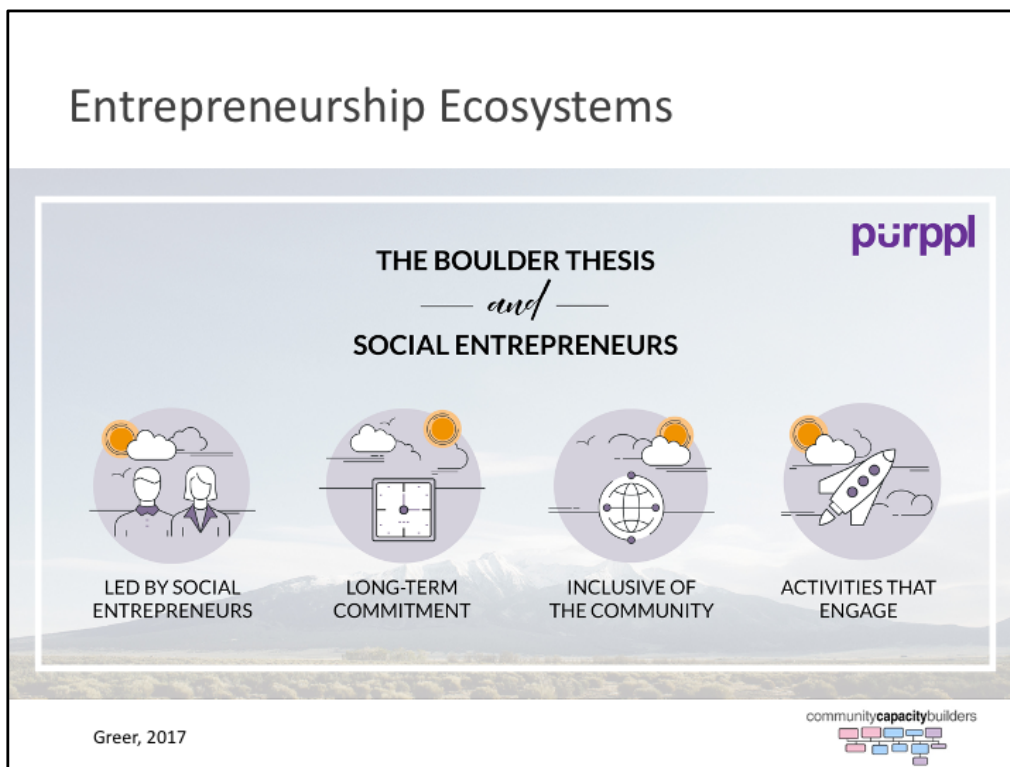
## Entrepreneurial Ecosystems



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This principle of having practitioner-led entrepreneurship networks at the apex of entrepreneurship ecosystems is also a common feature of mainstream entrepreneurial ecosystems – as highlighted in Brad Feld’s book ‘Building an entrepreneurial ecosystem in your city’ which discusses the ‘Boulder Thesis’ to developing entrepreneurial ecosystems.

# Entrepreneurship Ecosystems



This Boulder Thesis approach has also been applied to social entrepreneurial ecosystems.

The four principles of the Boulder Thesis are:

- Entrepreneurs must lead the startup community.
- The leaders must have a long-term commitment.
- The startup community must be inclusive of anyone who wants to participate in it.
- The startup community must have continued activities that engage everyone in the ecosystem.

## References:

- European Commission (2015), A map of social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe, viewed 13 April, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=12987&langId=en>
- Greer, J (2017), The Boulder Thesis: A Theory for Social Entrepreneurs <<https://www.startuprev.com/the-boulder-thesis-a-theory-for-social-entrepreneurs/>>
- Senscot (2019), Social Enterprise Ecosystem, viewed 13 April 2020, <<https://senscot.net/resources/social-enterprise-ecosystem-scotland/>>