

The Social Hub Glasgow delivers five times the social impact of a traditional hotel, study finds

Glasgow mixed-use ‘hybrid hospitality’ venue generated almost £10 million of social value in first year as operator progresses plans for Edinburgh expansion, based on social return of investment (SROI) research conducted by UK consultancy RealWorth B Corp certified The Social Hub, which operates more than 21 hubs across Europe, distributes 1% of global annual revenue to the TSH Talent Foundation, supporting ‘changemakers of the future’

A pioneering Glasgow venue that mixes hotel, student accommodation, and coworking generated almost £10 million of social value for the city in its first year of operation – delivering more than five times the social impact of a traditional hotel, according to a new independent study.

The report, carried out by social value consultancy RealWorth and supported by Glasgow City Innovation District (GCID), found that **The Social Hub Glasgow** – also home to rooftop bar and restaurant SíSí and accessible spaces for the public – generated £9.9m of social value between September 2024 and August 2025 through its contribution to wellbeing, skills, employability, entrepreneurship and community participation.

Researchers concluded that the Merchant City venue creates 5.5 times more social value per square metre than a conventional Glasgow hotel – an estimated £5.53 of value per square metre for every £1 created by a standard urban hotel – reflecting its unique innovative model, which combines hotel accommodation, student housing, coworking space, events, community programming and public amenities under one roof.

The Social Hub Glasgow was the first venue of its kind to open in the UK in 2024, introducing a European concept that blends hospitality, student living, coworking, learning and community

spaces, food and beverage, and public spaces within a single development. The company now operates 21 hubs across Europe and is progressing plans for a second Scottish and UK location in Edinburgh.

The study found that entrepreneurs, students, community organisations and local residents were among the biggest beneficiaries of the model, with the venue also generating £2.9 million in education and job quality outcomes through coworking, mentoring, and collaboration.

Researchers – who engaged with more than 100 groups and representatives in compiling the report – also found that 78% of coworking members reported improvements in the quality of their work as a result of the collaborative environment, while 80% of students believed living at The Social Hub would improve their future career prospects, more than 60 community organisations also accessed free event space during the year.

The report finds that the venue extends beyond a traditional hospitality business and now plays a significant role in Glasgow's innovation and regeneration ecosystem.

Among the impacts identified were support for startups and entrepreneurs, skills development, improved wellbeing and social connection, additional student accommodation capacity and the creation of a civic space where businesses, residents, students and visitors regularly interact.

Alisdair Gunn, Director of Glasgow City Innovation District, said: "The Social Hub has become an important part of Glasgow's innovation ecosystem because it creates something every successful innovation district needs: a place where people can come together.

"Innovation doesn't just happen in offices, laboratories or lecture theatres. It happens when people from different backgrounds, sectors and disciplines meet, share ideas and build relationships. The Social Hub provides exactly that kind of environment.

"The findings of this report are significant because they demonstrate that investment in connection, collaboration and community generates tangible economic and social benefits. In my view, every innovation district should have a The Social Hub venue."

Ben McLeod, General Manager of The Social Hub Glasgow, said: "When we opened The Social Hub Glasgow, our ambition was never simply to create another hotel. We wanted to create a place where people could learn, stay, work and play, while feeling part of something bigger.

"What this report demonstrates is the value created when different communities come together under one roof. Whether that's entrepreneurs finding collaborators, students building professional networks, community organisations accessing space, or visitors discovering Glasgow, those interactions create lasting benefits for the city.

"The model has already proven successful and transformational across Europe, and Glasgow embraced it from day one. We're incredibly proud of the role The Social Hub now plays within the city and, as we progress plans in Edinburgh, we're excited about the opportunity to build on that success."

The venue has hosted a wide range of events and partnerships over the past years, including The Social Hub's annual Better Society Academy, which included a keynote speech from First Minister John Swinney, and initiatives linked to Glasgow Tech Week, Scottish Creative Network, AccelerateHER, Glasgow Pride, Merchant City Festival, and the Glasgow Comedy Festival.

James McGowan, Principal Consultant at RealWorth, said: "Our assessment found that The Social Hub Glasgow is creating substantial social value across a diverse range of stakeholder groups, from students and entrepreneurs to local residents and community organisations.

"What makes the findings particularly interesting is the scale of the difference compared with a conventional hotel model. The Social Hub demonstrates how mixed-use, community-focused developments can deliver significantly greater value by bringing together accommodation, workspace, learning opportunities and social connection in a single destination."

Glasgow forms part of a growing European network of The Social Hubs spanning cities including Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Madrid, Paris, Rome and Vienna. The company operates more than 10,000 rooms across Europe and is currently developing new hubs in Lisbon and Turin, alongside its proposed Edinburgh development.

The report also highlights the role The Social Hub is playing in addressing wider challenges facing Glasgow, including access to flexible workspace, driving innovation, and the need for more inclusive city-centre spaces.

Researchers concluded that The Social Hub has evolved beyond a traditional hospitality venue to become a platform for innovation, entrepreneurship, learning and community building, positioning it as a potential model for future city-centre developments across the UK.

More than 100 people and organisations were consulted as part of the research.

About The Social Hub

The Social Hub is a European hospitality brand that blends traditional hotel stays with a vibrant, community-focused experience for guests, coworkers, and locals. Founded in 2012 by entrepreneur Charlie MacGregor, the company redefines the role of hotels in cities – offering spaces where people from all walks of life can learn, stay, work, & play... but more importantly, connect with each other.

Headquartered in Amsterdam and a Certified B Corporation, The Social Hub is built on a commitment to social and environmental impact. Its unique hybrid model combines premium design-led short and long-stay hotel rooms with student accommodation, coworking spaces, meeting and event facilities, restaurants and bars, 24-hour gyms, and open-to-the-public spaces like rooftops, parks, and cultural venues.

With more than 10,000 rooms across 21 hubs in Europe's most dynamic cities – including in Amsterdam (two hubs), Barcelona, Berlin, Bologna, Delft, Eindhoven, Florence (two hubs), Glasgow, Groningen, Maastricht, Madrid, Paris, Porto, Rome, Rotterdam, San Sebastian, The Hague, Toulouse, and Vienna – The Social Hub creates inclusive environments that bring together diverse groups of people under one roof.

The Social Hub also leads a wide-ranging social impact programme, including the TSH Talent Foundation – which is supported by a pledge to donate 1% of the company's annual global revenues – and hosts more than 6,000 community-centric events each year across Europe, helping spark new ideas and lasting connections in every city.

Two new hubs are currently under development in Lisbon and Turin as well as a proposed development in Edinburgh.

For more information, visit www.thesocialhub.co.

Contact details

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