

Constraints that make ReX stronger | Road to ReX - part 10

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Find a realistic pace for circular growth

When exploring ReX initiatives, you quickly come up against questions about time, resources and commitment. These constraints may seem annoying at times, but they actually help you make realistic choices. They enable you to find a pace that suits your organisation and to increase the likelihood of lasting results.

Every social enterprise has its own strengths and context. This framework helps you take the most relevant steps for your situation. We have bundled all insights into one publication.

Download the full publication here

Why constraints provide a powerful starting point

Many companies want to get started with repair, refurbishment, remanufacturing or reuse, but don’t know where to begin. ReX requires new processes, new roles and sometimes new partners. And this involves uncertainties.

Making your organisation’s constraints visible gives you control. You can identify which steps are feasible today, understand where more knowledge is needed, and find out in which areas your organisation is ready for experiments that will make ReX visible and tangible.

ReX in balance: sharpening scope, resources and timing

While your motivation clarifies why you want to get started with ReX, this section helps determine what is realistic and feasible today. This exercise prepares you for the next section (strengths), where the scope is further refined and translated into concrete products, target markets and intended collaboration outcomes.

As a framework, we use the classic project management triangle: scope - resources - time. Not to develop a full project plan, but to gain clear insight into the scale, pace and strategic importance of your ReX exploration.



Costs

budg

A practical approach in four clear steps

1. Define the constraints that determine your room for manoeuvre

Start by identifying your time and budget. How is ReX organised at the moment?

- No formal budget
- Ad-hoc resources
- Project-based allocation
- Structural embedding

The point is not to find the ‘right’ answer, but to gain insight into your room for manoeuvre.

After this, consider the perceived degree of urgency within your organisation: do we just take our time, do we evaluate annually, do we aim to be operational within a year, or do we strive for profitable activity? This discussion will clarify the desired speed of action.

2. Clarify boundary conditions (resources and urgency)

In this step, the objective is not to define a total budget, but to understand how resources are currently allocated, deployed and managed.

Resources (time and budget)

Map how ReX is currently supported within your organization:

- No formally allocated resources (on top of existing responsibilities)
- Ad hoc decisions per initiative
- Temporarily organized as a project
- Structurally embedded in strategic objectives

This insight determines your effective room for manoeuvre and the type of collaboration that is currently realistic and feasible.

Urgency and pace

Explicitly discuss:

- How much time you allow yourself to learn and experiment
- Which external deadlines play a role (market developments, regulation, headquarters targets)
- What pace is both realistic and strategically desirable

This discussion prevents misunderstandings, creates shared expectations and clarifies within what timeframe tangible results are expected.

3. Make your assumptions explicit

Assumptions are unavoidable at the start of ReX. Be clear about them so you can test them later. For example:

- How many products are in use?
- How often do products come in?
- What is their residual value or quality?
- How much time does repair take?
- How much are customers willing to pay?
- How will collaboration with partners go?

For each crucial assumption, write down one sentence explaining why it’s important. This will help you to work out which assumptions you need to validate first and avoid surprises later on.

Use the Action & Test Cards to translate your key assumptions into concrete hypotheses, tests, measurement criteria and learning points, enabling you to adjust in a structured and evidence-based way based on practical insights.

Action & Test Card

sirris innovation forward

Title:

1 Hypothese (Action Purpose)

We believe that

2 Test (Action Definition)

To verify that, we will

3 Measure (Action effect)

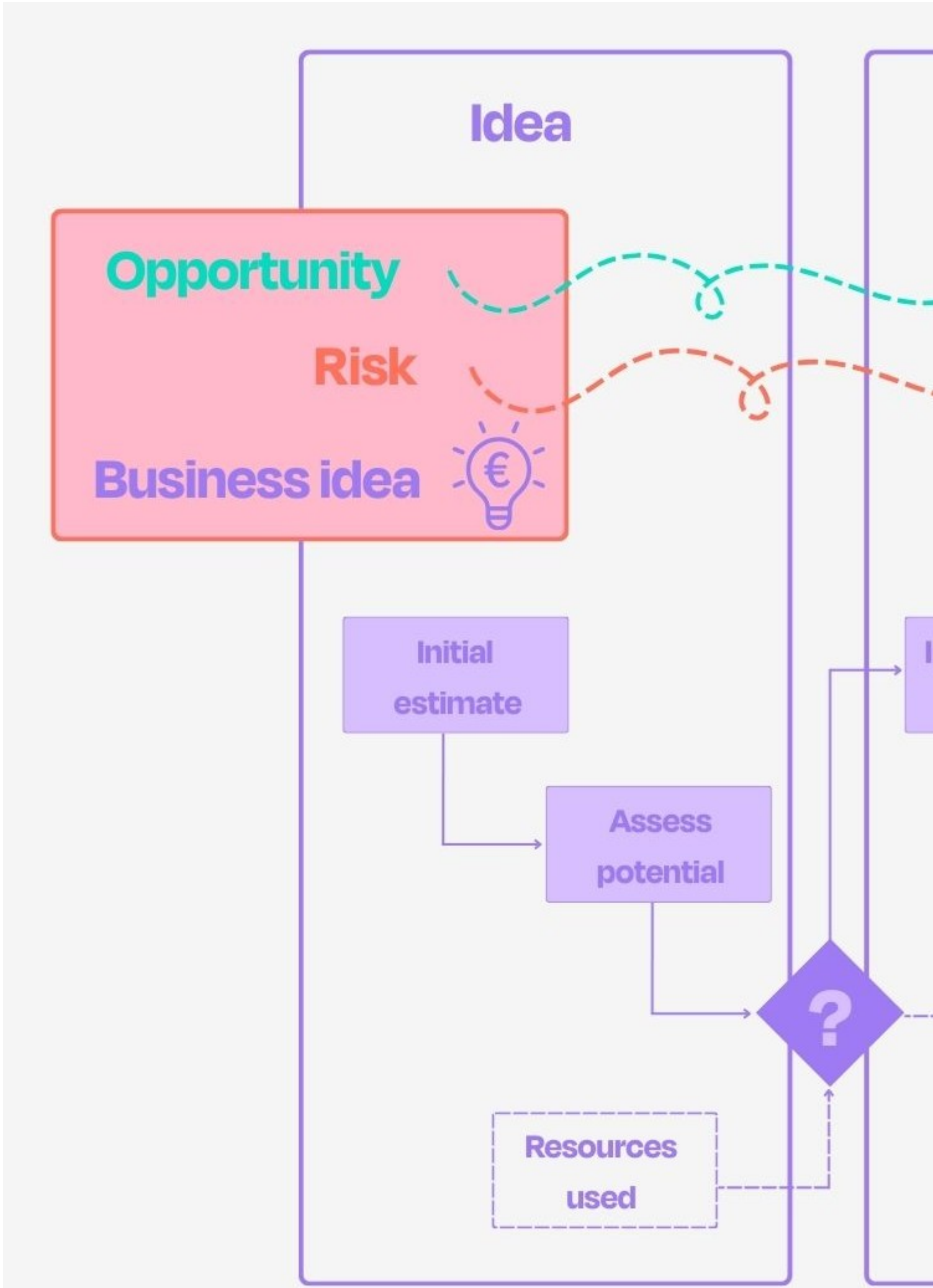
We will measure

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4. Plan resources in small, sequential steps

Once your constraints are clear, develop a step-by-step plan. Work in short, sequential actions, each of which tests a single assumption. Only invest the resources needed for this learning process.

The ReX team should update the sponsor or management after each step, so that they are properly informed when resources are made available for the next phase. The further you get, the more important collaboration with partners becomes, and the process will take shape.


Idea
Opportunity
Risk
Business idea
Initial estimate
Assess potential
?
Resources used

Practical collaboration with ReX partners

Operational ReX partners play a role in cleaning, disassembly or testing. A clear description of the desired situation helps ensure effective collaboration.

Draw up a list of desired outcomes. Be specific: Decide how much money you're prepared to invest in the learning process and when evaluation is necessary. Classification into must-have, nice-to-have and no-go clarifies expectations and prevents misunderstandings later on.

Further reading tips

- Reduce risks and increase potential returns
- Test and learn step by step with the Action & Test Card

Conclusion

If you understand your constraints, you will build feasible ReX initiatives faster. By clarifying budget, urgency, space and assumptions, you can set a realistic pace. ReX can then develop on a basis of knowledge, trust and collaboration.

Summary

ReX initiatives gain strength when you make your organisational boundaries explicit. By clearly defining budget, pace, experimental space and assumptions, you build feasible ReX solutions step by step and increase the likelihood of sustainable, widely supported outcomes.

A look ahead at the series

Discover the other articles in the ReX series:

- Discover the full ReX series
- Part 1: ReX activities for sheltered workshops: opportunities and collaboration
- Part 2: room for manoeuvre for ReX Initiatives in sheltered workshops
- Part 3: the driving forces for ReX Initiatives

- Part 4: your strengths with regard to ReX initiatives
- Part 5: ReX goals for sheltered workshops
- Part 6: co-creation for ReX initiatives
- Part 7: a solid business case for ReX collaboration
- Part 8: one ReX revenue model, multiple business cases
- Part 9: the motivations that drives ReX forward
- Part 11: strengths as a Lever for ReX

Discover the Remanumaat project

Would you like to learn more about this topic and how collaboration within ReX strategies works?

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pport from VLAIO.

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