

**It is fundamental to apply both primary and secondary market research to your business idea to fully understand the feasibility of the project as well as key target market information.**

## Secondary Research

Secondary market research will give a reliable background look into your market, and how similar products or services have worked or not. By conducting such research it can give entrepreneurs an outline of where to take further research. It will reveal gaps in current data and areas for deeper investigation. Objective secondary research has many benefits for start-ups and entrepreneurs. The key ones are unbiased views, reliable data, valid results, and factual figures.

A good starting point is to do your secondary research first. That is, gathering research already available. If you can find someone else's research, and it is freely available for you to use, it will add credibility to your research and save you time and often money.

Secondary research also helps to focus your product or service on what market leaders, policymakers and trendsetters think are important. For instance a government report on employment levels in your area can help you to show how your enterprise recognises which people will benefit from your activities.

## Primary Research

By conducting primary research using unbiased panellists, entrepreneurs can gain the latest local information about the consumer's wants and needs, allowing them to adapt their product or service accordingly and gain a competitive advantage.

Start-ups have a series of barriers to overcome when seeking to evidence a need for the service or product. Primary research can help remove some of these. Once primary market research has been conducted and an idea has been modified and finalised into a



business plan, chances of increasing interest from funders will improve, and a lower risk will be evidenced.

Unbiased information obtained from primary market research can allow an entrepreneur to build a product and service which will meet client's needs. When a product or service can satisfy a need or a want in the target market the business plan pitch becomes far more valid and reliable.

### **There are different ways of obtaining and analysing information gained through primary research:**

- Questionnaires provide answers to standard questions. These can be carried out by mail, online or face-to-face and can cover a large number of people.
- Interviews are usually one-to-one and focus on a list of questions. A good method is to set up an I pad with the questions you want answered. Approaching people in the street and asking them to complete an I pad questionnaire works well and allows you to discuss your enterprise while the questions are being answered
- Focus groups enable a number of people to discuss ideas or topics together and provide a range of views.

Questions can be a mix of direct and indirect. Direct is when you are seeking a 'Yes' or 'No' response, and indirect is where your question is seeking more detail. An example of a direct question is "Do you like swimming?" The answer will be "Yes" or "No". An indirect question might be "Which do you prefer swimming or walking?" The answer requires more information.

Try not to load your question in your favour. Stay unbiased and factual. For instance a question like "We believe that carrots are better for you than onions, what is your preference?" is guiding your panel to say carrots. Instead you should ask "What do you prefer, carrots or onions?" Have a look at SurveyMonkey to see how to create an online questionnaire.

Once you have enough information you need to present it in a format that backs up your enterprise idea in a factual and informative way.

