

## How to make your biobank sustainable? Check these **nine recommendations**

Sustainable biobanking is complicated. It requires the right balance on a social, financial, and operational level, in the context of a biobank's individual situation. Still, biobanks can improve their sustainability by following these nine recommendations. Make sure to check the links for additional information.

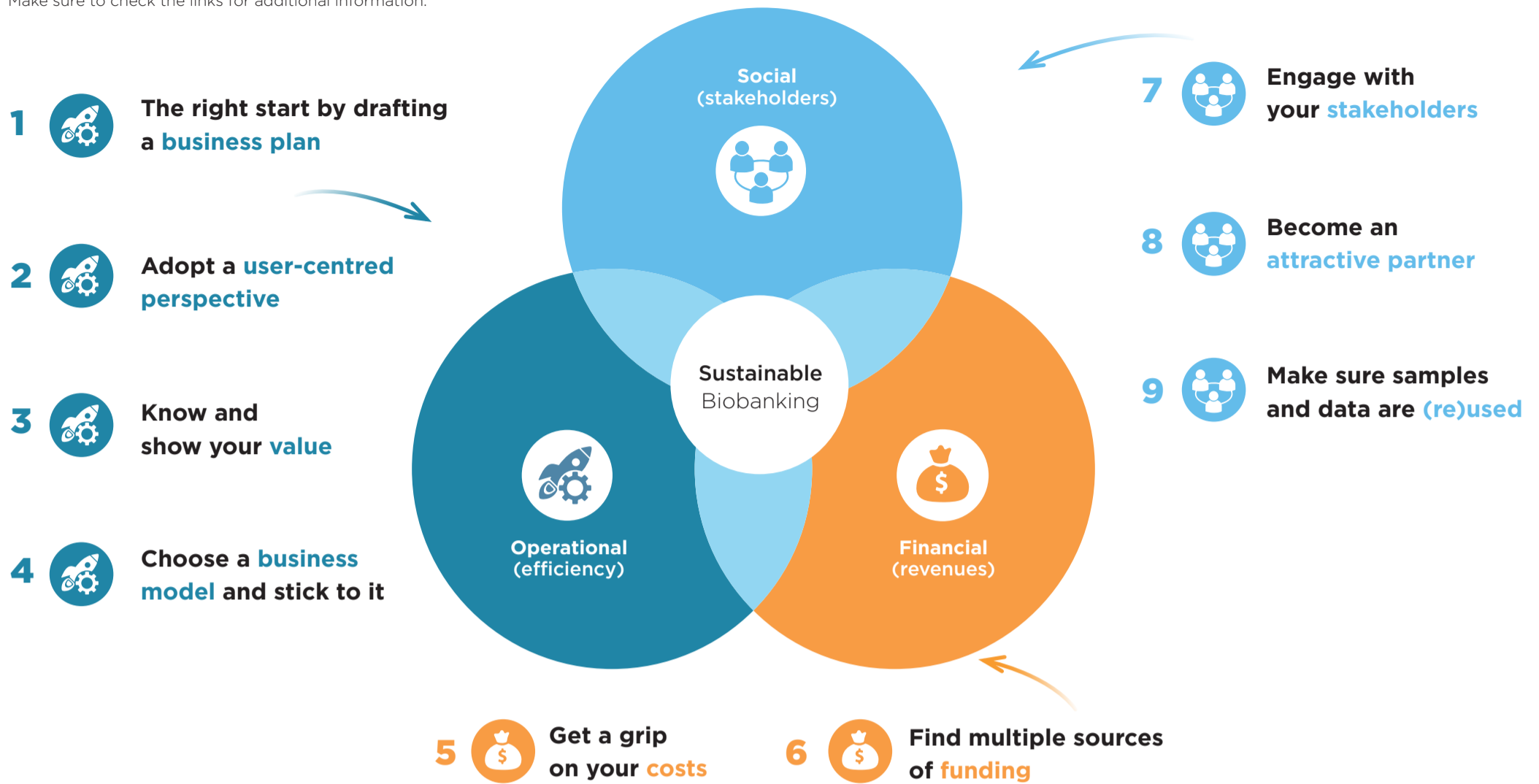


Figure based on work by Watson et al., A framework for biobank sustainability, 2014.

**1**

### The right start by drafting a **business plan**

Biobanks need to plan for sustainability before starting operations. Clearly formulating ambitions and strategies in a business plan will help gather support from stakeholders, identify and tackle obstacles, and structure the organisation and its finances appropriately. Make sure to involve key stakeholders and external support.

- Your biobank **business plan template**
- Start with a **SWOT analysis**
- Perform a **stakeholder analysis**

**2**

### Adopt a **user-centred perspective**

Biobanks should put their users first. Focus on ease-of-use, standardisation, and transparent procedures; establish continuous feedback loops via user surveys and/or focus groups; and clearly communicate your value proposition.

- Clarify your **value proposition**
- Good practices:** learn from other biobanks

**3**

### Know and show your **value**

To be sustainable, biobanks need to create value for their key stakeholders. BBMRI-NL's Biobank Value Model provides insight on the types of value a biobank has to offer and can be used to determine points of improvement. Be sure to track performance indicators to substantiate your value claims and showcase your value via available channels.

- Check the **biobank value model**

**4**

### Choose a **business model** and stick to it

A business model describes the processes required to create value, such as the value proposition, intended users, the biobank's products and services, and its financing. Choosing one or a mix of feasible business models and organising your biobank accordingly will help plan for sustained success.

- Develop a business model with the **Business Model Canvas**
- Examples of **biobank business models**

**5**

### Get a grip on your **costs**

Understanding your finances allows for informed-decision making and future planning. Carry out periodic cost analyses, including accurate budgets and projections. In addition, take full advantage of institutional resources and support services, and look for synergies and cost-saving measures without compromising on quality.

- A list of **cost-saving measures**
- Three online **cost calculators**
- Learn** from other biobanks

**6**

### Find multiple sources of **funding**

New funding sources take time to develop, so start well before existing sources dry out. Perform periodic screens for new grant opportunities. In addition, strategic partnerships, with patient organisations, research institutes, or, with the right conditions, private companies, can provide additional funding. The implementation of a cost-recovery program should be standard practice.

- Background information** on biobank funding
- Learn** from other biobanks

**7**

### Engage with your **key stakeholders**

The key to success for any organisation is the satisfaction of its key stakeholders. Identify the stakeholders necessary for your biobank's long-term future. Involve them from the start, through governance positions or meeting invitations, to make sure the biobank will deliver the value they need.

- Perform a **stakeholder analysis**
- Get an overview of **biobank stakeholders**
- Learn** from other biobanks

**8**

### Become an **attractive partner** for industry

Industry values quick service, transparent pricing, and clear intellectual property agreements. Start a dialogue with private parties at an early stage, to build trust and ensure collected samples and data are fit-for-purpose. Be transparent towards other stakeholders about industry collaborations and make sure appropriate safeguards are in place.

- Bottlenecks in **public-private partnerships**
- Perspective of industry** on academic biobanks
- Learn** from other biobanks

**9**

### Make sure samples and data are **(re)used**

Biobanks should strive for maximum (re)use of their samples and data, hereby increasing both their scientific and societal impact. Sharing will result in new collaborations and publications. Biobanks can increase (re)use by providing easy, swift, and transparent access; by improving visibility and by targeted marketing.

- Join Podium**, the one-stop-shop for sample and data requests
- Be visible in the **BBMRI-NL Catalogue**
- Closely follow the **FAIR principles**