A growing number of private and public actors are embracing cross-sectoral partnerships and novel organizational vehicles to solve pressing social and environmental challenges. Yet, social enterprises face a dual tension: they must achieve financial sustainability while offering a high quality, affordable product that addresses a social or environmental problem. Drawing from an innovative data set of health enterprises, this paper examines the determinants of double bottom line success for these hybrid organizations, testing the salience of extant scholarship’s attention to entrepreneurial traits, organizational behavior, and environmental factors. While the appeal of social enterprise is premised on the viable synthesis of social and market logics at one and the same time in organizational form, I find that successful social enterprises are characterized by founders who embrace a jurisdictional division between social versus financial expertise.

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