



**Bunker Hill  
Community College**

imagine the possibilities

# **Sustainable Entrepreneurship: BHCC Student Run Business**



## **Sustainable Mini-Grant Program**

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## **II. Project Abstract**

### **Background:**

This year, Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) embarked on several initiatives to expand the spirit of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial studies across the BHCC campus. Specifically, some of these initiatives include creating cross-discipline entrepreneurship certificates, creating an Entrepreneurship Club, expansion of the Community Center for Entrepreneurship, hosting several entrepreneurial seminars, and developing an on campus, student run business. The focus of this proposal will center on the Entrepreneurship Club and the student run business.

The goal of the Entrepreneurship Club is to provide an environment in which students with an entrepreneurial spirit can meet to share ideas, forge new friendships, establish networking opportunities and develop business skills to be utilized in the real world.

Another objective of the Entrepreneurship Club will also seek to inform, support, and inspire its members to be entrepreneurial and seek opportunity through enterprise creation. To that end, our goal is to create a student run business, which entails building a mobile kiosk that will be the catalyst to help in vending school themed apparel and related goods. Based on student research and feedback, we will design BHCC apparel and related merchandise to market to the student population, faculty and staff. This venture will be operated, staffed and managed by members of the BHCC Entrepreneurship Club. Additionally, our preliminary research has determined that there is an abundance of products we could offer that are specifically geared toward eco-friendly living. We will identify those products that fit our business model and offer them at BHCC. These products will be relevant and useful to students while studying here at Bunker Hill.

The value of entrepreneurial minded students executing a real-life business plan and working together to build a profitable, self-sustaining business will be a significant hands on learning experience.

### **Incorporating Sustainable Entrepreneurship:**

Entrepreneurship is more than simply “starting a business.” The definition of entrepreneurship is a process through which individuals identify opportunities, allocate resources, and create value. This creation of value is often through the identification of unmet needs or through the identification of opportunities for change (Watson 2010). With the advent of BHCC’s sustainability initiatives, we feel our project would be a key opportunity to marry the tenets of entrepreneurship with a sustainability approach.

While the typical entrepreneurial approach will tend to focus on those activities that lead to market penetration and bottom line profits, a sustainable entrepreneurial tactic will view market success and environmental innovations equally. Sustainable entrepreneurship in this approach will employ the fundamental aspects of creating and managing a business, coupled with educating and incorporating various types of environmental innovations.

Consequently, this sustainable entrepreneurship approach to the student run business will foster the spirit of creating a viable business venture while providing environmentally beneficial products to the BHCC community at large.

Conceptual approaches to incorporate sustainable entrepreneurship into this venture are vast. Below are some examples that are planned to be incorporated through this project.

- Our vending kiosk will be constructed from 100% recycled materials. We will promote the factual information regarding the materials used on the actual vending kiosk.
- Our product line will offer a variety of organic/recycled cotton apparel. Initial talks with our school designated supplier (Barnes & Noble) indicate that there are several available products that fit these criteria. Although these products are a bit higher in price, this will be a sound approach to reinforce sustainability. These materials are produced without the use of harsh chemical bleaches or dyes, and are allergy free. Recycled cotton is cotton fabric which has been made from recovered cotton that would otherwise be cast off during the production process.
- We plan on educating all of our customers (and hopefully up-sell) them on the benefits of purchasing eco-friendly apparel as opposed to conventional apparel. While initially we may have to offer both products based on initial start up costs, we will direct our buyers to the organic line. Additionally, informational sell sheets will be provided to explain that the cotton in their T-shirt is constructed of cotton grown without the use of pesticides and employing production methods that have a low impact of the environment and are U.S. certified 100% organic.
- We plan on offering other suitable products that are eco-friendly. Our supplier has a wide product line of promotional items that can be customized for BHCC. These products include travel mugs, backpacks, pens, notepads, frames, journals, mouse pads etc. These products are made from post consumer plastic bottles and containers and are made of either 100% or 51% post-consumer recycled materials.
- Design and promote BHCC sustainability and “green living” on a T-shirt design. This will tie BHCC, entrepreneurship and sustainability together in one product and will help convey the message of BHCC’s commitment to sustainability.
- Our retail operation will not offer plastic bags as carry option.
- We will research utilizing paperless receipts in our transactions. Receipts can possibly be sent electronically.
- Work to cross promote. The Entrepreneurship Club can cross promote green initiatives through our retail operation in conjunction with the Sustainability Club. For example, if the Sustainability Club was holding an awareness campaign such as “America Recycles Day” or “Clean Air Day” we could market eco-friendly products in conjunction with the campaign to support the initiative.
- Another by-product of this venture can be to partner the Entrepreneurship Club with the Sustainability Department and Sustainability Club to help promote and manage their eco-friendly events at BHCC. With mindful planning, this partnership can help our budding entrepreneurs in sharpening their marketing and promotional skills, while helping to expand the reach of sustainability awareness campus-wide.

Funding in the amount of \$3,000.00 is requested at this time to help finance start up activities to integrate sustainability into this entrepreneurial venture. Ultimately, by incorporating eco-friendly products and practices into this business, BHCC students will unify the practices of entrepreneurship with strong sustainability component, creating a multi-faceted business model.

### **III. Project Significance**

With sustainability management a recognized priority at Bunker Hill, and Entrepreneurship initiatives fast following, it would be the perfect time to meld the two concepts to produce a business concept that would demonstrate how an entrepreneurial concept can be financially viable while also being environmentally friendly. Typically, most entrepreneurial ventures are focused on economic viability first and foremost, without regard to much else. This venture, from its inception, will be designed with a sustainability component at its core, and will demonstrate how a business venture can be both commercially successful and environmentally conscious.

Once success of the venture is demonstrated, the sustainability concepts can be incorporated into entrepreneurial courses as examples of successfully creating an eco-friendly enterprise. We will prove that an enterpriser can create any type of venture while keeping sustainability at the forefront, and not have profitability as its sole motivator and primary driver.

Overall, this venture, unique in nature, will have an immediate, positive impact in teaching the link between sustainability and entrepreneurship. These practices can be relayed as fundamental to any business approach, and not viewed as a novelty. The underpinnings of this endeavor will aim to promote an awareness and behavioral campaign to support other sustainable initiatives at the college through the marketing and promotional efforts of the business.

As socially conscious entrepreneurship is fast becoming a popular business approach, employing sustainable entrepreneurship will soon inspire this same attention. With concerted efforts and a commitment to teach and share these leanings, creating eco-friendly ventures will eventually be the rule and not the exception.

## IV. Project Plan

As we are in the beginning stages of developing the student run business and have just completed the formation of the BHCC Entrepreneurship Club, timing for this project is optimal. The project plan below is under development, and depicts not only club creation and activities, but in tandem, creation of the student run business that will be a major deliverable of the club.

<b>Task:</b>	<b>Assigned to:</b>	<b>Deliverable Date:</b>
Create Entrepreneurship Club.	T. Fontes	Completed
Begin holding weekly club meetings.	J. Kirk	Completed and Ongoing
Hold student focus groups for product ideas.	W. Souza	Begun – Due by 2/15/11
Create social media pages.	J. Dowdell	Completed
Hold initial recruitment event.	J. Kirk	Completed
Create Business Plan for Student Run Business. Submit for funding solicitations.	M. Nicola W. Souza	Begun – Due 1/25/11
Plan and execute club membership drive.	J. Kirk J. Dowdell J. Anzalone	1/30/11
Create and execute marketing materials for the Club and store.	J. Dowdell J. Kirk	2/3/11
Begin product design elements.	All Club Members	2/15/11
Begin design elements of kiosk.	All Club Members	2/15/11
Initiate contact with B&N vendors for pricing. Research sustainability products available.	T. Fontes W. Souza	Begun, dependent on design elements. Will finalize once designs are completed.
Determine outlets for kiosk construction that can be completed with eco-friendly elements.	M. Nicola T. Fontes	2/15/11
Make determination for initial product offerings (order size, design particulars etc.)	J. Dowdell/J. Kirk All Club Members	2/15/11
Begin layout for business rollout – Staffing, Finance, Accounting, Marketing, Promotional activities etc.	J. Kirk J. Anzalone T. Fontes	2/15/11
Meet with Office of Sustainability Management to determine all eco-friendly approaches have been covered and tie to college-wide initiatives.	T. Fontes	2/15/11
Determine funding is in place for preorder and kiosk construction.	T. Fontes	2/15/11
Award kiosk construction contract.	T. Fontes	2/18/11
Place initial product orders.	J. Kirk W. Souza	2/18/11
Begin grand opening marketing.	J. Dowdell J. Kirk	2/28/11
Launch Student Run Business.	All Club Members	3/04/11
Research upcoming student events to attend.	J. Kirk	3/04/11
Document sustainability wins from business.	T. Fontes	6/01/11
Determine appropriate incorporation into business curriculum.	T. Fontes	6/10/11
Document, share and advertise sustainability wins with Office of Sustainability Management.	T. Fontes	6/10/11

\*Note: Names listed present team leaders only. Sub-committees are being created for all major deliverables.

## V. Enhancement of Student Outcomes

From its inception and throughout the business creation process, sustainability will be a primary goal of the student run business. Each step in developing and executing the business plan will encompass a sustainable component. In order to measure and calculate the impact of our efforts, appropriate measurable criteria will be identified to indicate to what degree our entrepreneurial strategies have contributed to overall BHCC sustainability campaign.

This concept will teach our entrepreneurs that business creation does not have to be devoid of environmental considerations while pursuing optimal profitability. Our intent is to develop a business model that will illustrate financial success while delivering environmental value and sustainable attributes any business can employ. Development of sustainable business principles will be as important as implementing the business plan itself. Ultimately, successful implementation of this venture will afford us to:

- Educate students on how to develop a venture with significant sustainability components.
- Provide students with the hands on experience of operating an enterprise with a strong sustainable themed business model.
- Help to ensure that BHCC students understand the doctrine of the college's overall sustainability commitment, and work to manage this venture to that end.
- Relay through teachings and practical experience that profitability is a fundamental goal of any business effort, but does not have to be the primary goal. Implementing sustainability tenets should be an equal measure of business success.

While a simple business concept in nature, many lessons can be learned from this experience. Measurable successes will be integrated into existing BHCC business courses illustrating the win-win created from this venture. We will have solid, practical evidence of a successful and profitable business model which will have been developed with the concept of sustainability as its hallmark.

Courses that these leanings can be integrated into include but are not limited to:

- Introduction to Entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation
- Small Business Management
- Accounting
- Principles of Marketing
- Principles of Management
- Introduction to Business
- Operations Management

Additionally, as more interdisciplinary certificates are developed, these approaches can be incorporated cross discipline, and be relayed to other business models. For example, assume a BHCC culinary student embarks on a certificate in Culinary Entrepreneurship with the goal of opening their own bakery. Not only will they learn the principles of enterprise creation, on equal footing, they will learn how to build their business on a foundation of sustainable management policies. This will help the student to understand that incorporating sustainability components into a business is not a "nice to have" but an integral part of their business development. Ultimately, the goal will be to educate students that sustainability efforts are as commonplace in a business plan as any other factors to be considered. Integrating these teachings will not only educate the student in sustainable entrepreneurship, it will also strengthen their understanding of BHCC's overall commitment to college-wide sustainability.

## **VI. Statement of Assessment Plan**

Several measures of assessment will have to be taken into account in order to prove the success of this project.

1. First and foremost, our business venture has to be successful and profitable. Furthermore, an equally important success measure will be the integration of sustainable approaches to the retail operation.
2. “Pushing” the customer to purchase BHCC organic products vs. customary ones will be a primary goal. Success will be measured by eventually phasing out non-sustainable products and converting to all organic product offerings.
3. Increasing the awareness of sustainability will be promoted by educating our consumer (students, faculty and staff) on their consumer purchase decisions, pre and post sale.
4. A measured goal will be executing our business plan with solid linkage to the overall goals of BHCC’s sustainability efforts.
5. Success will be accomplished by documenting the sustainable successes and methodologies used in our entrepreneurial venture and incorporating them into BHCC curriculum. An additional win will be the incorporation of these approaches across multiple disciplines, where their impact will not be limited to just business students, but college-wide.

**VII. Budget Worksheet**

The attached budget only encompasses and accounts for the anticipation of \$3,000.00 for the applied grant and how these funds would be applied to this venture. We are in the process of determining other start-up costs and anticipate that this project will exceed this amount. Other funding will be procured from grants and other sources as identified by the Dean of Professional Studies and the Community Center for Entrepreneurship.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Source</b>
Initial Order of Organic Apparel	\$2,085.60 for 10 lots of 24 full color organic tees (240 total)	Club Colors (our supplier) as initially quoted
Initial Order of other related organic apparel and other retail items	\$2,000.00 est.	Will include sweats, eco-friendly pens, totes etc.
Allocation of funds to ensure Kiosk construction is made with sustainable materials.	\$1,000.00	Kiosk construction to be determined, however this allocation will help defray overall construction costs.



## **Project Summary**

The traditional approach to Entrepreneurship tends to focus primarily on identifying opportunities to exploit for the sake of profitability for the benefit of the entrepreneur and related stakeholders. A new and maverick concept of incorporating sustainability with entrepreneurship is becoming more commonplace with current business development approaches. Sustainability approaches combined with entrepreneurship can still meet the original premise of profitability, and in addition, yield benefits such as utilizing renewable resources and reducing our personal and commercial carbon footprint in the process.

Emphasizing sustainability within an entrepreneurial venture makes the enterpriser think about the steps of business development and in concert, helps to identify policies and procedures that will not be detrimental to environmental resources. Progressive thinking about sustainability concepts do not have to be difficult, and most entrepreneurs would probably not be reluctant to such approaches if they understood them. The main issue is to become educated in how sustainability works, and understand that it can be implemented without sacrificing progress and profits. Recognizing that both can work in unison and have the same if not better results is the goal of this effort. Ultimately, students should learn that entrepreneurship and sustainability should not be mutually exclusive.

This retail venture, early in its inception, has the promise of training and educating a new breed of entrepreneurs in sustainability approaches. A major win for Bunker Hill Community College will be illustrating sustainable entrepreneurship in a working form, and then relaying these successes across the curriculum through interdisciplinary teachings.