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Project Proposal: Project Better Futures

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Background

This project is inspired by the Study of the U.S. Institute for Student Leaders on Global Environmental Issues (SUSI), a 5-week intensive leadership course funded by the U.S. Department of State. The Institute was hosted by the East-West Center in collaboration with the University of Hawai'i Environmental Center and over fifty organizations. The program's vision is to develop a vibrant network of young leaders dedicated and equipped to innovative positive solutions for today's environmental challenges by bringing together 20 extraordinary students from Burma, Phillipines, Malaysia and Thailand to explore the diverse ideas in American society and how people collaborate to address environmental issues. One of the main objectives of the program is to design, create and execute a project upon their return home, while keeping in mind, the ideas they have collected during their time in the U.S.

There are countless issues in this world that have been caused by man; despite the efforts to solve these issues one at a time, they still persist. Most of today's issues fall into two major topics, environmental and social issues. It is a relief to see the attention that today's people have given to these issues. However, there are not many that have committed to solving them and to heal the aftermath. Some do not feel the sense of responsibility and some feel they are incapable of doing such things. People deserve the chance to help others and, for some, to be helped. This project is an attempt to change the perspective and attitude of people toward committing to better society, the environment and themselves. People need to stop, and scrutinize themselves and the interactions they make with their surroundings and perhaps people need to be taught that properties of a leader. A large stone is heavy if only one person carries it but with the help of others it becomes effortless. We live on the same planet and share the same species; if everyone lends one helping hand, any issue can be lifted.

Project Summary

Project Better Futures is a program that will train young leaders on sustainability issues. It will challenge its participants to design creative and innovative solutions for real life environmental and social issues. The program will give participants the opportunity to advance their skills in leadership, teamwork and communication through a series of workshops and will be acquiring knowledge in this area of study experientially. Through out the course, these future leaders will absorb subject matters both individually and collectively. As an evaluation, the participants will pick an issue, design a project to solve the issue and present their ideas in a "Gallery of Solutions". The mission of this project is to empower young people with the right tools to positively contribute to society and to encourage them empower others with the tools they have as a leader.

Objectives

Participants will complete the program with:

- Better understanding of issues regarding sustainability, namely environmental and social issues
- New leadership skills and relationships for creating positive change through developing community and ecological resilience
- Project development experience with peers, local communities and partner organizations

Expected Results

- Completed team projects
- Final showcase at Gallery of Solutions
- An action plan to implement in the future



Activities

Workshops

The purpose of the workshops are to provide the necessary tools and mindset of a strong leader. It will be an opportunity for each participant to discover the kind of leader they truly are. This will be done by engaging them in a series of exercises and lectures to gain the experience and knowledge in leadership. These workshops will be taught by SUSI alumnus and guest speakers with experience in leadership.

Power of Conversation

A leader has the power to persuade others. Many great leaders possess the power to convince large groups of people all at once, but most of the time it is not necessary. Perhaps by convincing the right person can make a huge difference. This workshop will provide the fundamentals of a good conversation and exercises to supplement the subject matter. Participants will be trained to have short, but effective conversations and to deliver an elevator speech.

Futures

Even futurists cannot predict the future, but one can identify preferred futures. Leaders should be able to plan their future and this workshop will provide the framework on anticipating possible futures. It is similar to setting a goal, but this workshop will allow participants to travel through various paths to reach the same future. The workshop will challenge the creativity and visualization of their futures. With a clear picture in their heads there is a high possibility of reaching their aims. "Any useful idea about the future must appear to be ridiculous" (Dator's second Law).

Site visits

Motivation and inspiration is a key factor that drives people to take action. Without the two, although some may have the urge to take measures, one may not have enough ideas to clearly envision a solution. However, by giving the participants real life examples of on going projects and an opportunity for them to interact with the coordinator of these projects. The benefits of this activity are the participants get to learn from people who are actively solving sustainability issues and they will also gain valuable contacts, hence expanding their network.

Team projects

This activity is the core of this program. The team projects will serve as a proving ground for the participants. It offers the participants a chance to practice the skills they have acquired from attending workshops, it is also an opportunity for them to refine their teamwork skill and also to express their creativity. This activity will take every participant step-by-step, from start to end of a project. If any of the participants were to create a project in the future, they will have familiarized themselves with all the formalities.



Action Plan

Date	Task
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write proposal• Structure course work and workshops
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find sponsors• Propose project to venue of choice (most likely ISE international school)
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruit participants• Find partnership for site visits
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review course structure and workshop• Hold trial run workshops and presentations
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project Better Futures workshop starts<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 days of workshop and training• 2-3 day of outings• 2-3 days of designing a project• 5 days of writing proposals and submission• Presentation day in Gallery of Solutions held at ISE<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invitations will be sent to everyone• Start personal projects
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project follow up
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal evaluation<ul style="list-style-type: none">• done by participants and mentors• External evaluation<ul style="list-style-type: none">• done by teachers and advisors



Budget

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
Transportation	1	\$200.00	\$200.00
Sustenance	5	\$300.00	\$1,500.00
Accomodation	5	\$150.00	\$750.00
Course Materials	1	\$350.00	\$350.00
Miscellaneous	1	\$150.00	\$150.00
		Subtotal	\$2,950.00
		Tax 0.00%	\$0.00
		Total	\$2,950.00



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Contact Information

It is an honor to have the opportunity to share my project with fellow state alumnus; I hope that you have enjoyed reading this proposal. If anyone found this project to any interest and would like to learn more, please do not hesitate to email me or drop a comment on the project website.

Sincerely Yours,

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