

Business Plan

Business Name:	The Social Science Centre, Lincoln
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1. Summary

The Social Science Centre, Lincoln, is a not-for-profit co-operative providing higher education in the Social Sciences.

1.1. Objectives and actions

The objects of the Co-operative are to make available higher education in the social sciences and to facilitate the participation of its members in higher education through mutually beneficial activities

1.2. Date of commencement: May 3rd 2011.

1.3. Legal structure

The Social Science Centre, Lincoln, is a not-for-profit, non-hierarchical, unincorporated co-operative, democratically governed by consensus.

2. Introduction

2.1. Mission statement

The Social Science Centre, Lincoln, is as an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to realise their common needs and aspirations for higher education through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

2.2. Values

The Social Science Centre believes that

2.2.1. Opportunities in higher education should be available to all regardless of their ability to pay

2.2.2. Experiences in higher education can be equally and mutually beneficial to both academics and students

2.2.3. That co-production of higher education involving students and academics can generate a unique and original outcome

2.2.4. That a co-operative business model of democratic governance will be a natural home for the proposed activities

2.3. Key Objectives

2.3.1. To bring together academics and people wanting to engage in higher education in a co-operative organisation.

2.3.2. To facilitate the co-production of programmes of higher education in the Social Sciences

2.3.3. To support the delivery and the activities of such programmes in an accessible way.

2.4. Key Actions

2.4.1. Recruitment of academic members

2.4.2. Promotion of the Centre

- 2.4.3. Recruitment of associate members
- 2.4.4. Co-production of curricula
- 2.4.5. Negotiate evidence of learning
- 3. Products and Services
 - 3.1. Higher Education in Social Sciences (e.g. Sociology, Politics, Philosophy)
- 4. Markets
 - 4.1. All members will be drawn internationally, nationally and locally.
 - 4.2. Academics will be people from a relevant discipline with a concern for the future of higher education and its accessibility.
 - 4.3. Students will be over 18 years old, evidencing enthusiasm for learning in the Social Sciences.
 - 4.4. This service is believed to be unique. Other institutions offering similar learning charge tuition fees but offer accredited qualifications, which the Centre will not do in the initial stages.
 - 4.5. Recruitment of academics and students will be key to success so initial marketing should be carefully planned
- 5. Marketing Plan
 - 5.1. Co-operation and co-production are at the heart of the Centre's philosophy and must be reflected in its identity.
 - 5.2. Academics need to understand the important principles of accessibility and mutual benefit. They should be recruited first. The innovative nature of the Centre may be a significant attraction.
 - 5.3. Students will be identified for their interest in the aims of the Centre and an understanding of how the Centre will work and the nature of the outcome they can expect.
 - 5.4. Academic members can be identified through established networks
 - 5.5. General publicity to be planned through general media releases.
 - 5.6. Online presence to be developed as a reference to the Centre.
- 6. Business Milestones
 - 6.1. Recruitment of 20 students
 - 6.2. Recruitment of 20 local staff
 - 6.3. Recruitment of Associate members: Yr 1: 10 members; Yr 2: further 20; Yr 3: further 40; Yr 4: further 80; Yr 5: further 160 members. Total: 330 Associate Academic members in five years.
- 7. Organisation
 - 7.1. Initially the co-operative is to be established as an unincorporated association, with all participants as its members.
 - 7.2. Governance
 - 7.2.1. Members will bear joint and several liability.
 - 7.2.2. General meetings of members will determine the main strategies of the business and delegate responsibility for operations to individuals or small committees on the basis of consensus decision making.
 - 7.2.3. The co-operative will not initially register as a charity.
 - 7.3. Members
 - 7.3.1. A list of associate and academic members is appended.
 - 7.3.2. There are no plans to employ staff in the initial period, but to deliver the activities through volunteer time and effort.
 - 7.3.3. Member recruitment will include development activities for their engagement in and understanding of the governance of the co-operative.
- 8. Resources.
 - 8.1. Premises

The activities will require access to premises for the purpose of meetings between the members. These may be as many as 40 members initially. It is likely that shared accommodation with other

organisations will be used in the first instance. A single base would be preferred as a “home” where messages, resources, notices, etc. can be left for sharing. The co-operative will seek to secure access to local educational library facilities for its students.

8.2. Equipment

Possible acquisition of ICT hardware for students will be considered if necessary.

9. Finance

9.1. It is planned that each member will contribute equally to meeting the costs of the co-operative.

All members will be asked to contribute a monthly payment equivalent to one hour of their net monthly wage. Details can be found here: <http://bit.ly/gwwTKm>

9.2. Receive donations from supporting public

9.3. Receive grants from supporting organisations

9.4. Profit and Loss

9.4.1. A profit and loss forecast can be found here: <http://bit.ly/eXf1Z1>

10. Appendices

10.1. Profit and Loss forecast

10.2. Suggested member contributions

10.3. Statement of values