

ACADEMIC INSTITUTION	McMaster University
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PROJECT NAME	Climaco Case Competition
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NEED AND AUDIENCE

The biggest issue facing our environment today is climate change. Although youth are passionate about making a difference, many face barriers to participating in climate justice activities due to financial, geographic, and social limitations. More specifically, high school students suffer the most challenges as it relates to a lack of climate change-focused education and opportunities available within the traditional learning curriculum¹. We established Climaco with the vision to bridge the education gap and provide high school youth with the opportunity to gain valuable knowledge and facilitate meaningful engagement within the climate justice movement. By placing an emphasis on foundational soft skills and incorporating elements of sustainable habit development, Climaco aspires to innovate the traditional case competition learning experience. We believe increasing accessibility for youth to get involved is critical because youth are most greatly impacted by climate change and thus, they are entitled to have their voices heard and be a part of the action.

ACTION TAKEN

Business Model: Partnering with local organizations and industry professionals to develop mutually beneficial learning engagements. In exchange for their resources and time, Climaco provides its partners with unique solutions and diverse perspectives on the business and sustainability issues they are encountering.

Approach: We have developed a non-traditional case competition that allows high school youth to tackle real business problems and develop problem-solving skills, with an emphasis on addressing global climate change and its stresses. Each case highlights a local sustainability problem and participants receive start-up capital to develop and present their solutions to community stakeholder leadership teams.

Key Actions:

- Curriculum Development: Identified highly demanded skills based on projected hiring trends and incorporated social justice and climate science knowledge aimed to develop holistic problem solvers
- Case Development: Partnered with Burlington Food Bank (BFB) and Burlington Green Youth Network (BGYN) to present a food insecurity case problem to the participants
- Workshop Offerings: Partnered with stakeholders to offer 7 workshops to participants providing knowledge and resources. Topics include but are not limited to Problem-solving and brainstorming, & environmental and social governance goals

Key Partners: BFB & BGYN

IMPACT

- Team recruitment: We recruited 9 executive team members (high school and university students) from across Ontario to create, plan, and execute a case competition with our team
- Participant recruitment: We recruited 11 youth from Ontario for the competition this year, through social media promotions, local school board connections, and student event outreach
- Recruited 7 local leaders, from organizations like Hamilton Street Railway and Fridays for Future Toronto, to provide workshops on anti-racism, problem-solving, and business concepts
- Developed partnerships with BFB & BGYN to provide high school students the opportunity to solve real accessibility and food insecurity issues

Given that, COVID-19 has consistently changed the secondary academic year schedule, we have pushed our competition to start and finish during the month of March 2022 (7th - 31st). We project the following impact next month:

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| 1. # of green entrepreneurial solutions created and pitched to BFB: 4 | 5. # of entrepreneurs directly impacted: ~25 |
| 2. # of green solutions presented to BFB's executive leadership team: 1-2 | 6. # of entrepreneurs indirectly impacted: ~11 |
| 3. # of volunteer hours students will receive: 60 hours/student | 7. # of people exposed to entrepreneurship as a viable career path: ~30 |
| 4. Increase in food insecurity & climate knowledge: ~40% | 8. # of people improving their entrepreneurial skills and/or expanding their professional connections: ~30 |

STANDARD METRICS			
(These metrics are related only to the project presented and represent work done since March 1, 2021)			
Individuals educated on climate action	35	Businesses educated on climate action	2
Litres of water conserved	n/a	Metric tonnes of waste diverted	n/a
GHG emissions diverted	n/a	Dollar value of waste diverted in CAD \$	n/a

PROJECT START DATE	November 1st, 2021
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IS THIS PROJECT WHOLLY-OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE TEAM?	Yes
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