

ACADEMIC INSTITUTION	University of Saskatchewan	PROJECT NAME	Build-a-Business
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NEED AND AUDIENCE

Build-a-Business addresses the need for entrepreneurship education for individuals living with intellectual disabilities in our community.

Our project is aimed at individuals with intellectual disabilities who have passionate ideas, hobbies and interests that they hope can be turned into a business. Our project started in 2021 when SaskAbilities, a local non-profit organization that offers programs and services for people with disabilities, reached out to our team regarding entrepreneurship education. They offer many services that help their clients find employment but did not have any related to entrepreneurship. They wanted to help those clients with aspirations of starting their own business and provide additional help to those who already had a business. Our team has previously created projects related to financial literacy and entrepreneurship, and this was a great opportunity for us to work with a new audience.

ACTION TAKEN

We started with a disability diversity training presentation for our team members to gain a better understanding of our audience so we could prepare our materials appropriately. We had a team of 3-4 members who created materials for and presented 5 workshops on the topics of starting a business, budgeting, marketing, accessing start-up capital, and promoting your business using social media.

This year, we created a business idea competition to allow participants to showcase their ideas and practice what they learned in the sessions for a chance to win a \$1,000 grant. At the end of the workshops, we had participants submit business plans that were judged by a local professional, and by our project team management. Business plans were graded primarily on their strategy for developing their business, timeline of their goals, and details of their budgets. We will be meeting with the winner of the grant in six months to ensure she has the support to succeed and will provide continuing advice as needed.

Throughout the entire course of the project, we partnered with SaskAbilities for access to their location for the in-person workshops, and to involve their clients with our program.

IMPACT

This year, we had six participants who gained entrepreneurial knowledge and skills in budgeting, marketing/social media use, and public speaking. All presentations were directly relevant to their experiences and to improving their businesses. We helped three existing entrepreneurs grow their business. We had one individual who received \$1,000 to invest in their business.

STANDARD METRICS

(These metrics are related only to the project presented and represent work done since March 1, 2021)

Number of businesses started	0	Number of existing entrepreneurs helped	3
Number of people exposed to entrepreneurship	6	Number of jobs created	0

PROJECT START DATE	January 2021	IS THIS PROJECT WHOLLY-OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE TEAM?	Yes
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