

# Social Venture Challenge

## *Doing good through business*

### Squamish-Lillooet/Sea to Sky Region

The Whistler Centre for Sustainability, through its Local Economy Action Network (LEAN) program, is facilitating this unique and fun opportunity to encourage and support social ventures in developing and launching a new (or expanded) business initiative. Supported by Squamish Savings Credit Union and Community Futures Howe Sound, the Social Venture Challenge will provide mentorship, business and capacity-building support to select social ventures that meet the program criteria. Social ventures will be supported with learning opportunities to assist with the development of their business concept; they will then pitch the concept to the community and a panel of judges, and the winning social venture will receive a prize package including \$3000 cash (in a Squamish Savings deposit account) and financial strategy coaching.

#### **WHAT IS A SOCIAL VENTURE?**

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A social venture is an organization (business or non-profit) that uses business strategies to create community impact. Furthermore:

- The common good is its primary purpose, literally 'baked into' the organization's DNA;
- Addressing a cultural, social and/or environmental need is the principal goal of the organization or initiative, which serves the common good through its products and services or through offering employment to people who face barriers to mainstream employment;
- Products and services are delivered through business activities, whether as a significant earned income stream in a non-profit's revenue sources, or as a for-profit business/enterprise;
- Surpluses and profits are principally reinvested into its social, cultural and/or environmental mandate.

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

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*Is there a social and/or environmental problem facing our region that you think you can help address or alleviate? Do you have a business idea that can help address the problem that you need help with developing? Is there an opportunity you want to take advantage of? Do you have a social venture that could achieve greater levels of success?*

The Social Venture Challenge aims to raise the profile of, and provide support to, social ventures in the Squamish-Lillooet/Sea to Sky region. To be eligible, your organization should be operating in the Squamish-Lillooet/Sea to Sky. We are looking for applicants that represent a range of:

**MISSION:** Organizations focusing on addressing social, environmental, and/or cultural needs, and on creating employment for people facing barriers to employment.

**OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE:** Non-profit organizations, for-profit companies, co-operatives, and community contribution companies are all eligible. Young social entrepreneurs and Aboriginal-owned ventures are encouraged to apply.

**DEVELOPMENT STAGE:** We're looking for social ventures that are just starting out, or trying to expand a small but proven operation.

**GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY:** We are looking from applicants from the Squamish-Lillooet/Sea to Sky region.

Up to six social ventures will be selected and notified by June 12, 2015. These enterprises will be matched with a mentor(s) to help them fully develop their business concept and pitch. Social Ventures should be prepared to commit a minimum of 40 hours (over three months) to participate in four two-hour cohort-based learning sessions, prepare their business concept (using the [Social Business Model Canvas](#) framework), meet with mentors, develop a short video, and deliver a final presentation and pitch in September.

The Social Venture Program for selected applicants is valued at \$1200. Due to funding support from Squamish Savings and Community Futures Howe Sound, selected social ventures only need to contribute \$75 to help cover the costs of administering the program. Those applicants who attended the Social Ventures learning event will receive a discount of \$25.

Examples of existing Social Ventures in the region:

- Whistler Community Services Society [Re-Use It](#) and [Re-Build It](#) Centres
- [Squamish Rebuild](#)
- [Pearl's Value and Vintage Store](#) (Howe Sound Women's Centre)
- [Splitrock Environmental Sekw'el'was](#)

## TIMELINES

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To apply for this opportunity please complete the following application and submit by e-mail to [info@whistlercentre.ca](mailto:info@whistlercentre.ca) by May 29 2015.

<i>Application deadline</i>	5:00pm May 29 2015	<i>4 learning meetings</i>	June – July
<i>Social ventures selected</i>	June 12	<i>Angel Den / video</i>	July – August
<i>Match with mentors</i>	June 15	<i>The Pitch</i>	Early September

The Social Venture Challenge is generously supported by:



# Social Venture Challenge

## APPLICATION FORM

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### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of social venture and name of organization (if different)

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Contact person and position

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Web and social media addresses/pages

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### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Please provide a short description of your social venture and the social/environmental challenge you hope to address through participation in the Social Venture Challenge. This will be used in promotional and event materials, and may be shared with event partners and sponsors. (100 words)
2. Which of the following best reflects the stage of development of your social venture?  
 launch (1 day-1 year),  1-3 years,  3-5 years
3. What is your social venture's mission? (50 words)
4. What is the annual operating budget of the social venture?
5. How many staff and/or volunteers work in the social venture? (If social venture is part of a larger organization, please provide information for each.)

**DESCRIPTION AND OPPORTUNITY**

1. Please tell us the social or environmental problem you've identified and how your social venture will address it. (200 words)
2. Please describe your social venture's leadership capacity and team. (max 200 words)
3. What would you like to gain out of participating in the Social Venture Challenge? (max 100 words)
4. How are you working towards self-sufficiency as an enterprise? If you have already achieved self-sufficiency, how are you working towards scaling your operations and increasing your social impact? (max 100 words)
5. Describe the opportunities you have identified in your market and any challenges you face. (150 words)
6. How will you measure the social impact of your enterprise? (100 words)
7. If possible, please include your most recent financial statements, business plan and any other documents that you feel are important to understanding your enterprise.

Please email your completed application form to [info@whistlercentre.ca](mailto:info@whistlercentre.ca) with the subject Social Venture Challenge application in the subject line by 5:00pm May 29, 2015.