

PROTOTYPE
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Supported Micro-Enterprise

Prototype Team



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The Big Idea

Guided help and hands on support for members of new-comer communities who are interested in using their unique talents and skills to start a small home-based business.



Who is This For?

Members of the Bhutanese community and other similar cultural groups who are looking to use their unique talents and skills to start a small home-based business for supplementary income.



What is the Problem?

New-comers who want to start a small business are often at a disadvantage and quickly become frustrated with the process of beginning a business.



Our Solution:

Entrepreneurship Broker (A Knowledgeable Guide)

Many newcomers have the interest in starting their own small businesses but do not know where to start. An 'entrepreneurship broker' acts as a guide, helping to get them on the right track and answer any questions. The guide must establish a strong working relationship with the individuals they are supporting and must have knowledge of the individual's cultural background.



1 The Guide Identifies Entrepreneurs

The guide would get to know individuals interested in growing a small business or 'side hustle'. The guide helps them to decide the scale of their business and how much growth is right for them.



2 Guided Visits to Local Markets

Individuals interested in selling goods in Canada must see first-hand what a Canadian small-business context looks like. Visits to markets and craft fairs help potential entrepreneurs to see what kinds of products are sold, for what price, and how items need to be packaged and displayed.



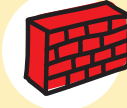
3 Getting the Proper Setup

The guide helps the individual to acquire equipment necessary for their small business and helps them to navigate the red tape and bureaucracy (licenses, permits, paperwork, accounting) that comes with starting a small business.



4 A Sense of Accomplishment and Integration

The individual is ready to produce their product and sell it on a small scale. They have built trust in their entrepreneurship broker who guides and advises; understanding how their business (side hustle) can work as a means to patch income. They are able to pass on their knowledge to other members of their community.



Barriers

New-comers who want to start a small business are often at a disadvantage because they have:

- Limited knowledge of suitable markets in a Canadian context (where to sell and what to sell)
- No access to start up funds and limited networks
- No credit rating established
- Lack of knowledge of systems such as taxes, licenses, accounting, or small business responsibilities
- Difficulty connecting to the marketplace and language limitations



More than a Business

Small side businesses can foster a strong sense of belonging as people feel able to use their unique talents and skills to contribute to the economic life of their homeland.

By enabling individuals to explore the possibility of starting a small side business you :

- Build confidence
- Foster a deeper understanding of business and selling in a western cultural context
- Provide a sense of accomplishment
- Support the economic integration of that individual

**WE NEED
YOUR HELP!**



Tried and True

To test this prototype, we facilitated a meeting between someone with an established relationship and strong working knowledge of the Bhutanese culture with a Bhutanese community member and trialled selling crafts at a local market.

In this process we learned:

- **The guide is essential for success.** Challenges cannot necessarily be predicted and without the essential support of a guide, the individual would be unable to pursue this pathway to employment.
- **Trust is essential for success.** The guide must have a deep understanding of the individual's cultural background to be able to bridge between the individual's home and Canadian contexts and must work to establish a strong and trusting relationship with the individual.



Next Steps

Multicultural Health Brokers is already on board with this project. They have begun testing with a knowledgeable Entrepreneurship Broker but need funds to sustain their work with newcomers who are starting small businesses.

If you can contribute funds to this project or are interested in taking part, please contact:

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CONTACT
INFO