

## **Des Moines County Area Entrepreneurial Project**

### **Local Sponsor: Southeast Iowa Entrepreneurial Center**

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## **II. What is the concept and approach that you propose to implement?**

We propose to implement a multi-faceted approach that mobilizes local, regional, state, national and international resources. Proposed projects include: 1) creation of a local business start-up manual in both printed form and on-line versions, 2) holding of six focus groups to help determine a “brand” for Burlington and/or Des Moines County, 3) hosting of a one-day Sirolli enterprise facilitation workshop for community leaders, and 4) support of start-up expenses of Southeast Iowa Entrepreneurial Center.

### **A. How will your project improve the vitality of your community?**

We see this project accomplishing several objectives: 1) providing a common starting point for potential entrepreneurs, 2) helping our community create a unifying theme, i.e. brand, 3) providing a “spark” for local entrepreneurial efforts, by showing what a community can accomplish when united for a common goal, and 4) creation of a site to assist entrepreneurs during their early business start-up period.

### **B. Do you have specific objectives for your project?**

Specific objectives include:

- 1) creation of 25 business start-up notebooks (more can be printed when needed),
- 2) creation of an business start-up web site that anyone can access,
- 3) unifying community efforts behind a common “brand” for our community,
- 4) expose community leaders to a dynamic and different approach to building new businesses, and
- 5) creating a steady stream of new business start-ups..

### **C. Do you have specific outcomes that your are hoping to achieve or measurable indicators that you will be using to evaluate the success of your project?**

Measurable indicators could include: 1) number of business start-up notebooks distributed and start-up businesses resulting, 2) number of “hits” to our business

start-up web site, 3) general agreement on a “brand” under which we can market our community, 4) number of participants at one-day Sirolli enterprise facilitation workshop and resulting community efforts, and 5) number of new business start-ups facilitated by Southeast Iowa Entrepreneurial Center.

### **III. What were the important factors considered in determining the approach to be used?**

The most important factor in determining our approach was the active involvement of an interested group of local leaders desiring to enhance the vitality of our community.

#### **A. Are there unique community characteristics, unique features, or key factors regarding the approach planned that led you to conclude the approach selected is most appropriate for your community?**

Burlington and Des Moines County have been hard hit by recent plant closings and industry layoffs. Our committee feels that it is essential that we re-ignite the “spark” that has helped the area prosper in previous generations.

#### **B. What led you to believe that this concept is needed and or doable in your community?**

Business and governmental leaders, as well as the general public have called for more community efforts in support of local entrepreneurial efforts. Our County Board of Supervisors chairman has stated that he intends to include funding for support of local entrepreneurial efforts in their FY04 budget. The Burlington City Council has earmarked a portion of a local option sales tax for the creation of new jobs. Our chamber of commerce, community college, extension service and other groups are working together to enhance business start-up efforts.

#### **C. Where did you get the idea for your project and have you visited or found information about other communities in Iowa or other states that have used similar concepts? If so, please list them.**

Our project is based upon 1) local business start-up notebooks/web sites created by other communities, 2) focus groups conducted in other Iowa communities by CD-Dial, 3) a Sirolli one-day workshop conducted last year in Fort Dodge, and 4) community business incubators hosted by other communities, including Waterloo, Iowa.

#### **D. Are there specific steps and procedures that you have planned for implementation?**

The development of the business start-up notebook will be coordinated by SCORE with printing being done by Southeastern Community College and web site/mailling list creation being coordinated by Iowa State University Extension – Des Moines County. Focus groups will be organized by project sponsors and conducted by CD-Dial. Participants for one-day enterprise facilitation workshop will be recruited by project sponsors.

**E. Who will be involved in making the decisions and implementing the steps?**

Decision making and project implementation will involve Southeast Iowa Entrepreneurial Center, Downtown Partners, Small Business Development Center, Iowa State University Extension – Des Moines County, SCORE, Southeastern Community College, Iowa Workforce Development Center, Grow Greater Burlington and a dedicated group of local citizens and business leaders.

**IV. How many existing and potential entrepreneurial enterprises or service providers do you anticipate being involved?**

We intend to invite anyone interested in promoting business start-ups to become involved with this project. As a result of this community effort, we hope to assist in the creation of at least 25 new businesses.

**V. Source, Type (\$ or In-Kind), and Amount of Local Matching Resources.**

At this time, we are in the process of obtaining local matching resources. We propose to obtain a minimum of \$5,000 in cash match and an equivalent amount in in-kind match, primarily volunteer labor used in conducting our project. Local organizations that have expressed interest in supporting new business start-ups include the Des Moines County Board of Supervisors, Burlington City Council, Iowa State University Extension – Des Moines County, Burlington/West Burlington Area Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Partners, and the Southeast Iowa Entrepreneurial Center. In addition, local trusts and foundations will be approached for project financial assistance.

**VI. Please provide a brief budget description regarding how you plan to spend CVC funds.**

- 1) Local business start-up manual - \$1,000 (CVC funds) \$ 350 (cash) \$1,000 (in-kind)
- 2) Local business start-up web site/ mailing list - \$1,000 (CVC funds) \$ 350 (cash) \$1,000 (in-kind)
- 3) “Branding” focus groups - \$3,000 (CVC funds) \$1,000 (cash) \$1,000 (in-kind)
- 4) One-day Enterprise Facilitation workshop - \$3,500 (CVC funds) \$3,000 (cash) \$1,000 (in-kind)
- 5) Southeast Iowa Entrepreneurial Center - \$1,500 (CVC funds) \$ 300 (cash) \$1,000 (in-kind)

(Note: the figures used above are “best estimates” and represent projected needs and funding streams.)