SOCIAL INNOVATION

Facilitator Guide

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Social Innovation Facilitator Guide

Introduction

The purpose of the Social Innovation module is to offer the user an understanding of developing and implementing social innovation projects using practical learning activities and techniques. These techniques are taken and adapted from a number of social innovation resource in a way that can be applied to social projects and give current and future innovative thinkers the skills to make an impact from the frontline of a project.

The material encourages learning about the concept of social innovation and key areas where a social project can benefit from social innovation techniques. Therefore, the material is presented with a series of learning activities for the user to engage with the material at an accessible level for beginners, but the units contain techniques and insights useful for both supplementary education and workplaces who see the value of social innovation in their educational programs or current or future work.

This module consists of:

Unit One: Building Effective Social Innovation Ideas

Unit Two: Project Planning

Unit Three: Successfully Communicating and Building Relationships

The units are ordered for maximum educational benefit for people new to the concept of social innovation, whether as supplementary course material, learning the material independently, or for work. If you are already familiar with the concept of social innovation, you may still find topics in each unit that add to what you already know in terms of practical techniques and learning opportunities with supplementary resources. The material in the units often build from the others, however, learners should feel free to explore the content in whatever fashion helps them to solve the social problems they are passionate about.

It is estimated that the entire module (all three units of content) will take **15 hours** to complete.

Potential Module Uses for Facilitators:

- Social Project or Workplace Development
- Supplementary Educational Modules

Social Project or Workplace Development

Notes for Facilitators:

The Social Innovation Module provides practical techniques that would be useful for members of a social serving organization, or an organization interested in developing a social good initiative. In particular, the learning activities and techniques can easily be used for a variety of projects that could benefit from an innovative approach and activities can easily accommodate the exploration of an already formed idea.

The majority of the learning activities require interaction with others, such as team members or mentors whether by discussion, or feedback. These activities not only can provide team members with useful skills that build their capacity to contribute on projects, they also could form the basis of demonstrations, onboarding activities, workshops and presentations. These materials can supplement already existing materials you may have, or provide a starting point to introduce a new initiative.

Each unit provides a set of practical techniques to introduce to your team:

This module consists of:

Unit One: Building Effective Social Innovation Ideas

- Critical social problem exploration
- Facilitating group discussions for creative solutions to social problems
- Preliminary decision-making and assessing the feasibility of a project

Unit Two: Project Planning

- Setting project goals
- Identifying critical tasks and project planning
- Developing tools for project evaluation

Unit Three: Successfully Communicating and Building Relationships

- Identifying and connecting with relevant stakeholders
- Improving relationships and communication at work and within your team
- Communicating as a key strategy for project sustainability

Supplementary Educational Modules

Each unit will provide learners with topics pertaining to social innovation, and will supplement topics with practical learning activities, tools, and techniques for implementing each stage of a social innovation project. Although there are no required assignments in this module, there are recommended assessments that can be used for evaluation and guiding discussions. Ultimately, it is at the instructor's discretion on how to evaluate or assess learner performance; recommended assessments can be used as they exist, modified, or replaced as per the instructors preferred performance evaluation, interpretation of social innovation, or definition of social innovation. The implementation of discussion forums and gradebook items will be decided by the instructor or facilitator. The **recommended** assessments and performance evaluation are as follows:

Performance Evaluation

The below performance evaluation provides as a breakdown according to the frequency and rigor of each task in and throughout the module. This breakdown can be added to an existing gradebook, or modified to better fit the performance evaluation in place for the course in which the module will exist. It is at the instructor or facilitator's discretion to use this recommended performance evaluation, modify it, or create their own. Internal users using D2L by Brightspace can add this breakdown as a Social Innovation category to existing gradebooks.

Unit Reflection	60%
Discussion Posts	40%
Total	100%

The first component of the performance evaluation is the unit reflection. The unit reflection is intended to serve as a summary at the end of each unit. Effective social innovation is rooted in reflection, as such, it is important to take inventory of key learnings at the end of each unit and throughout the module to build a strong foundational understanding of what constitutes effective social innovation. Guiding questions will be provided in the unit, which can answered directly or simply used to steer the portfolio in a purposeful direction; however, it is suggested that all unit reflections meet the following criteria:

A clear articulation of key learnings as related to the unit
- Demonstrated growth through reflection of unit materials
- Ability to demonstrate how each unit's material builds upon each other creating a larger whole.

There will be a reflection task per unit. Consult the above performance evaluation for recommended weighting of grade items. The Unit Reflection provides specific guiding questions related to each topic, which are measurements of learner performance in relation to the module outcomes. As such, it is recommended the portfolio to carry more weight than the discussion boards. It is at the instructor or facilitators discretion whether the reflection questions will be used as graded items. Learners will be provided feedback regardless, as the learner guide will offer insights and feedback related to possible responses to guiding questions. The provided rubric can be used, adapted, or modified if the unit portfolio is used as a grade item.

Unit Reflection				
Criteria	Excellent	Proficient	Satisfactory	Limited
Articulation of Key Learnings Biggest takeaways; moments of marked change in respect to content and topics	Includes an integration of all relevant material, and makes connections to practical situations, or raises insightful questions.	Key ideas are present for more than one topic in the unit and thought out for all questions, but lacks insight on the connection Does not answer the thinking broadly question.	All questions are answered in basic form such as a list of key words, but not expanded on to show understanding.	Answers are missing to questions and the answers given do not reflect knowledge of the material.
Reflection Building upon key learnings; drawing connections; setting goals	Personal opinions/ Reasons, clearly connect to all topic material and show some genuine thought and interest in the material.	Personal opinions clearly connect to one topic and show some basic reflection.	Questions are answered briefly but limited reflection shows little thought about how material applies to their own situation ideas or situation.	Questions are not reflected upon at all in terms of the content of the unit.
Communication Spelling, grammar, syntax, accurate use of context specific vocabulary	Vocabulary present, and little to no spelling and grammar mistakes. Ease of communicating relevant or insightful ideas.	Some use of vocabulary and ease of communicating ideas, but limited thought in communicating their own ideas. Spelling and grammar problems exist.	Vocabulary reflects limited learning of content, but reflects an attempt to communicate Spelling and grammar problems confuse the reader.	Little attempt to communicate ideas Spelling and grammar mistakes overwhelm the content of the answer.

Discussions

The topic of social innovation will create opportunities to engage in discussion, therefore there will be a recommended discussion at the end of each unit. The frequency and content of discussion topics are at the discretion of the facilitator, but recommended topics are provided at the end of each unit to ensure learners and instructors alike have a landing spot for collaboration and community building. For example, Unit One, Topic One is to ensure learners are engaged with the concept of social innovation, and can think independently about what an innovative idea is, and its ability to address a social problem. Instructors or facilitators may choose to publish discussion forums for learner engagement, or keep them in draft mode if they are not going to be used. Discussion topics will be built according to the following:

Unit One Discussion

Directions

1. Make a post in the *Unit One* discussion forum that includes:
    a. An example of social innovation
    b. What you found as the interesting approach to a problem?
    c. What impact you see for these initiatives, or ones like them?
2. In addition to your post, respond to your peers with value added responses i.e., responses that build upon the insights or examples presented, pose a question etc.

Unit Two Discussion

Directions

1. Make a post in the Unit Two discussion forum that includes answers to:
    a. If you were asked to recommend one of the planning techniques you learned in this unit for a future or current social project, which would you be most likely to recommend? Why?
    b. If you were asked to recommend one of the planning techniques for your daily work, which would you likely recommend.
    c. Are your answers different? If so, why do you think that is? If not, why not?

2. Engage with your classmates, friends, or colleagues around your answers. Engage in discussion with others whose viewpoints may be different than your own.

Unit Three Discussion

Directions

1. Make a post in the *Unit Three* discussion forum that includes answers to:

    a. Given what you have learned in this unit, does the importance of communication for the success and continuation of a project surprise you, and why?
    b. Recall the cycle for building relationships:

c.

(Building Rapport Image © Bow Valley College 2018)

Which do you see as the most important stage of relationship building for a social innovation project, and why?

2. Discuss with your peers any learnings related to communication and relationship building that you will use the next time you are working with others.

Note: the above templates are recommended; instructors are free to tailor each discussion to their needs. The following rubric can be used, adapted, or modified if discussion boards are used as grade items.

Discussion Post				
Criteria	**Excellent**	**Proficient**	**Satisfactory**	**Limited**
Response to Question(s)	Questions are answered in full, and makes reference to all relevant unit content with answers unique and insightful examples and opinions.	Questions are answered in full with the majority or relevant content. Little reflection on personal opinions or experience.	Questions are answered in a limited fashion that reflect some grasp of the content. No reflection on personal opinion or experience.	Questions missing answers or grasp of the content. No attempt to reflect on personal opinion or experience.
Contributions to Learning Community	Engages and references another poster. Responses are value added to the topic by building upon the original post with a key insight, question, or extension of ideas presented in the post. Creates a dialog that others can follow or add to.	Engages and references another poster contributions add to and only agree with others but still can be added to by others.	Engages with another post, but contribution is limited and do not allow for further discussion.	No engagement with another poster, or limited engagement.
Communication Spelling, grammar, syntax, accurate use of context specific vocabulary	Vocabulary present, and little to no spelling and grammar mistakes. Ease of communicating relevant or insightful ideas.	Some use of vocabulary and ease of communicating ideas, but limited thought in communicating their own ideas. Spelling and grammar problems exist.	Vocabulary reflects limited learning of content reflects an attempt to communicate their contributions. Spelling and grammar problems confuse the reader.	Little attempt to communicate their contribution. Spelling and grammar mistakes overwhelm the content of the answer.

Questions for Consideration Answer Guide

The following answer guide is provided for those working through the module material on their own to get feedback on the questions for consideration. Often the questions in each unit are used to provoke individual and personalized thought around the material, and thus there are many ways to answer the question, but this will guide you in the right direction.

Unit One: Building Effective Social Innovation Ideas

Topic One: What is Social Innovation?

Learning Activity 1.1: Examples of Social Innovation

Questions for Consideration:

1. What social problem or challenge are they addressing with a new approach?

> Example 1: The special needs of children with disadvantages. For example, kids with autism are distractible and have a hard time concentrating.
>
> Example 2: Looking at ways to curb food wastage problems and how the food that is normally wasted could be used to feed the hungry.

2. How were others engaged in the project?

> Example 1: The others in this case are the students, school, and parent communities who work to coordinate a solution to the problem. Students develop ideas, parents and communities see the value of this initiative for their children.
>
> Example 2: The others in this case could include the art and entertainment community as well as other students and venders in the community and food services organizations who are all responsible for putting on the event.

3. What was their desired positive social impact? Was it accomplished?

> Example One: Positive impact could include: ability to engage in school and class activities without being distracted, able to interact in a school context with their peers. Build self-efficacy and confidence in their work.
>
> Example Two: Create awareness of food wastage problems as well as how the food that they waste can benefit marginalized populations such as the homeless. Build capacity and caring by raising the issue to inspire change in the practices around food waste.
> Answers will vary on whether the project was successful.

4. Are these projects big or small?

> Small in that it was accomplished with few initial people. Rather than a partnership of organizations with the intent to change social systems. However, they had a large impact on their communities, food banks, students and children.

5. Can you identify any similarities between the two examples?

> Answers will vary. They both take a step to making a contribution to the target group they are wanting to help. They see a problem and decide to do something about them.

6. Given the above examples can you think of one other social innovation?

> Answers will vary. Helping people in need, makes me think of the Women In Need Society. That helps women who are escaping domestic violence, and thus need items to help them start over.

Topic Two: Understanding the Problem

Questions for Consideration:

1. Can you think about another way to address the same problems introduced in the examples?

> Answers will vary. Answer is relevant as long as you are able to target the same problem as the example, your approach can differ greatly, or be inspired by what was accomplished in the example.

2. Can you find any evidence of your problem solution being implemented by others by searching the internet? If so, what do you think this tell you about your idea? If no, what does this tell you?

> Answers will vary. If you find a solution to your problem this can tell you that an idea like yours inspired someone to make a difference. Tells you there is more than one approach to solving a social problem. If you don't find a project like the one you are thinking of, maybe you should start one using the resources in these learning modules.

Learning Activity 1.2: Problem Definition Technique

Questions for Consideration:

1. Summarize what you've learned throughout this process.

> Answers will vary upon personal reflection. However, you should reflect on how complex the problem actually is, and any revelations you might have about how to solve a problem. Thinking about the people you are helping and why it needs to be addressed should inspire a solution.
>
> Input from others, give rise to new perspectives and ways of thinking about a problem you might not have addressed.

2. Did you find it helpful to engage with others around this problem? Did it help you in identifying unique ways to address the problem and help clarify your approach?

Answers will vary. As long as you give a concreate example why it was helpful, or not, and how the process took your idea and transformed it. Outcomes may be a simpler achievable solution, or that the idea becomes more complex. If the solution is more complex, it comes with challenges, but usually reflects genuine interest by all parties to find a solution. The key is how to make it manageable.

If the activity did not help clarify your approach, clearly articulate why, what challenges did this approach produce? Did it help you think about others perspectives on the problem? If no attempt was made to include people in the discussion, then the activity did not have a chance to develop your solutions whether as part of a class activity or at work.

Topic Three: Gathering Input and Ideas from Others

Learning Activity 1.3: Idea Generation Technique

Questions for Consideration:

1. Summarize the key points discussed at each stage of either the idea generation process, or perspective taking process. What are some key insights you uncovered?

Answers will vary. However, you should be able to point to one or two key ideas that you might not have thought of overall. And be sure to record other major topics of discussion that happen at the different steps.

2. What did you find rewarding or challenging about this process?

Answers will vary. But try not to default to "It was hard to gather many people together at once." This is often a challenge, think about any contributions made, or other process challenges such as:

Deciding on just one, solid idea, might be a challenge if you have a really engaged group.

For the perspective taking technique you may have difficulty putting yourself into the perspective of other people, or you might think that the different perspectives aren't genuine if they are just essentially role play. But the challenge is to get you to shift your perspective from one you use often (e.g., logical or cautious) to one more risky such as out of the box, or emotional? It might surprise you how passionate you become about a project at the emotional stage. Try to come up with one benefit for each perspective.

Topic Four: Before Jumping in: Can your Idea be Done?

Learning Activity 1.4: Feasibility Technique

Questions for Consideration:

1. From the SWOT technique can you come up with a list of steps you can take to minimize your threats and weaknesses?

> Answers will vary. Try to develop at least one way to minimize threats and weaknesses based on the idea or example that you chose to think about. Reflect on why you think there are many threats or weaknesses to the idea. What can you do to strengthen it, or offer solutions?

2. How can you refine your idea after going through this process? Are you more swayed to go forward with your idea or stop?

> Answers will vary. However, it will allow you to come up with a more grounded approach to your problem by thinking about your limitations. The decision to go forward is based on the motivations of those working with you. But remember to take some risk to become innovative. How can your opportunities help you in persuading decision-makers?

Unit Two: Project Planning

Topic One: Defining Project SMART Goals

Learning Activity 2.1: SMART Goals Technique

Questions for Consideration:

1. Can you think of an additional goal for the social innovation examples that addresses the SMART Goals?

> Answers will vary, answers for example should mention the example you chose, the area of SMART and how you would address the area of the SMART goal.
>
> Example 1: Lacks measurability – how might you be able to measure capacity of the community or how the program is helping children and families.
>
> Example: Measure the number of kids seen by wellness coaches. Have project team deliver presentations on child and personal wellness.
>
> These are measurable, achievable activities, and relevant. You can set a number of events you want to achieve in a certain time frame, and you can set a criteria for success. The project team can also measure adoption of these strategies by observation of existing staff, and how often it is discussed by staff and leadership. What steps are they taking to progress this approach?

2. Given the examples which social innovation is better prepared to develop effective SMART Goals?

> Answers will vary. Whichever example you choose, be sure to be able to show how this example can meet the areas of a smart goal, and why chose it over the other.

3. What areas of SMART did you find more difficult to develop for the examples?

> Answers will vary. Often measurability is hard to tie to social project goals, but if you break it down into what you really want to know in order to demonstrate a goal such as are you reaching the target group you want simply making a record of how many can demonstrate this goal is being achieved.
>
> Setting attainable goals may also be hard if you have complex problem or solution. Taking a step back and trying to simplify can often help.

4. Which area(s) of SMART do you think are the most valuable to have in your project plan as you move forward with your idea?

> Answers will vary be sure to explain why the area you've chosen is the most valuable with specific reasons.

Topic Two: Project Planning

Learning Activity 2.2: Work Plan and Logic Model Techniques

Questions for Consideration:

1. How did the project planning activity refine your SMART Goals?

> Answers will vary. Be sure to link the project planning activity to specific SMART Goals that it helped.
>
> For example, Attainable, Timeframe, and Measurable could be addressed.
>
> Project planning helps force you to break down your goals into attainable steps and putting a timeline to them. Breaking your project into simple tasks can allow you to find ways to now measure those tasks.

2. How did the project planning activity help you be aware of risks and solutions to help you manage your project?

> Answers will vary. Thinking about your project activities and a logic model can often help you uncover where you might need help as your project moves along. Such as the risk of running out of funding at certain points of your project, risk of turnover in staff.
> The logic model should help you to think about these issues. Solutions to the issues will vary by project and person.

3. How might the work plan techniques help you on a day-to-day basis?

> Answers will vary. For example, the high level plan can help you break down your daily tasks into manageable pieces, and help you establish daily goals for your work.
>
> The detailed plan can help you identify issues, and questions that may arise from others when they inquire about your work. Knowing some of the questions that might arise can help you address them before they are bigger issues.

4. How might the project plan help you when evaluating your project?

> The planning tasks and the overall logic model can help you break down your project. Each task should have a measurable activity for how you will know that the task is completed.
>
> The logic model specifically asks for evidence, the "how do you know?", or how can you tell?" aspect of your activities. By thinking about the evidence you might need to illustrate the effectiveness of a project you can come up with questions for your evaluation plan, and how to get the best evidence you can.

Topic Three: Evaluation Planning: How are we doing?

Learning Activity 2.4: Effective Evaluation Questions Technique

Questions for Consideration:

Quantitative Questions

Given the examples:

    a. Did you attend event one?
    b. Did you attend event two?
    c. What about the event did you like?
    d. Didn't you find the event helpful?
    e. Would you recommend this event to friends or colleagues?

1. If your goal is to determine numbers related to the event what question would you choose, and why?

> Did you attend activity one? Did you attend activity two? You can measure attendance at both events, and the increase or decrease from one to the other.

2. Which question(s) are leading?

> Didn't you find the event helpful? It implies that you should have found the event helpful

3. Which questions would you likely follow up with a qualitative techniques?

> What did you like about the event? If you find a decrease in attendance from event one to event two you might follow up with why did you not attend event two?

Qualitative Questions

Turn the following into open-ended questions:

    a. Did you like the event?

> What about the event did you like?

    b. Did you find the application helpful?

> Was the application helpful? Why or Why not?

c.   Are you planning to continue with the project?

> What are your plans for the future of the project?

Questions for Consideration

1.   Thinking about the difference between open and closed questions, which provides you with more information?

> Answers will vary. Qualitative questions can provide more in depth information, and can be often used as a follow up to quantitative information to provide context, and uncover a complex question that may not be captured in the responses of a quantitative questions.

2.   Why might it be important to ask both quantitative and qualitative questions?

> Asking both types of questions can provide you with a more complete question around a topic of interest. For example, by interviewing many people about the success of a project you allow people to describe what specifically they think made it a success or not. Whereas if you just asked the question. Do you think the project was successful? (Y/N) you limit yourself to a percentage like 75% Yes and 25% No.

Unit Three: Successfully Communicating and Building Relationships

Topic One: Planning to Work with Others

Learning Activity 3.1 People and Connections Technique

Questions for Consideration:

1. Why is it important to have input from a variety of stakeholders on your project?

> Variety brings different perspectives and allows you to address the needs of the people you are working for and with. The perspectives of many people will help ensure the best possible outcome for your project.

2. When looking a People and Connections Technique, and Community Engagement Plan are you more focused on establishing your stakeholder's needs or your own? How do you know this

> Others needs will help garner good will to your project. The tables offer more questions about what you can offer them, but it benefits you as well as they may have more connections you can explore, and they can ultimately offer to help you with your project.

3. From the techniques you used, what do you think are the key questions for;

   Establishing connections with stakeholders?

> Establishing common interests, and what the project can offer them in either experience or helping them with their own goals.
>
> Understanding how people are the same or different than yourself can help you understand these common goals, but also how you might be able to compliment (add to) what is already going on and identify gaps that you might not have identified alone.

   Maintaining the connections with stakeholders?

> Following up with more communications in the future as well as asking yourself what you can do to strengthen and grow the connection.

4. What does this topic tell you about communicating throughout a social project?

> Answers will vary, but it should show the importance of keeping communication going with people you want to work with, especially because by networking and connecting it can potentially reach more people than you could have alone.

Topic Two: Building Effective Relationships for Project Success

Learning Activity 3.2: Improving your Work Relationships Technique:

Questions for Consideration

1. Establishing productive working relationships and communication can help you avoid barriers to project success: List 2 barriers that you can avoid that you've learned in this topic.

> Loss of interest and engagement from the community or team members.
>
> Mixed Messages and conflict resulting from poor communication.

2. When building productive work relationships what are at least two key aspects of communication you should consider?

> Communication should be regular and ongoing and should provide a good balance of give and take between each other.

3. What lessons learned from making stakeholder connections can you transfer to establishing rapport and building relationships

> Establish common/shared interest.
>
> Understand the needs of others and how you can help others in their work.
>
> Making an effort for continuous communication and following up with them.

4. When you think about the practical steps for improving above. Can you place these steps into the cycle of building productive working relationships? What would you place where?

> Answers will vary. One possible combination is below.

    a. Building Rapport

> Positive attitude, try to see things through the other persons eyes.

b. Authentic Engagement

Improve your communication skills, do not jump to conclusions.

c. Productive Relationship

Deal with conflict as soon as possible.

Learning Activity 3.3: Feedback Technique

Questions for Consideration

1. How do the feedback questions address the practical steps for improving communication?

Focuses on the needs of the team, and building morale – seeing through other people's eyes.

Provides a way to deal with conflict before it appears by reducing miscommunication, and conflicting messages.
Ensures that everyone is heard and that their messages aren't coming through someone else.

Improves communication by thinking about how to invite feedback, and how often you hear from the different roles in a project.

2. Thinking about a positive work relationship that you have currently or in the past. Does the opportunity for feedback play a role in that positive relationship? How?

Answers will vary based on experience. Reflect on your answers for number one for how feedback improved the positive relationship. Explain in the context of your experience.

Topic Three: Communicating to Sustain your Project

Learning Activity 3.4. Techniques for Communicating Impact

Questions for Consideration

1. How might writing a summary help your motivation to continue the project?

Taking stock of all you have done can motivate you in the good work that you have done. You can be inspired that you take an idea and have seen it through. Your belief in the mission and the opportunities for your project to grow can help motivate you.

2. Which step of the summary writing do you think is the most important?

Answers will vary. Evaluation and Results are often vary important as well as the next steps, and your vision for what might help continue the project.

3. Once you've reflected on a project can you imagine starting another project?

> Answers will vary.

4. What potential audiences would be more interested in:
   a. your project summary

> Project Partner Stakeholders

   b. your personal experiences

> Community and target group stakeholders

   Did a. and b. differ?

> Answers will vary, but the community may be more interested in your personal experience and passion. The passion about your projects and the outcomes can potentially persuade interested parties to adopt activities, staff and or help transform the project into something new after being inspired by your experience.