

WhaleWorks Publication No. 004

Entrepreneurship Institute

Developing Tomorrow's Business Leaders & Community Innovators

Mission

The WhaleWorks Entrepreneurship Institute empowers youth and emerging entrepreneurs with practical business knowledge, leadership skills, financial literacy, and mentorship. Participants learn how to transform ideas into sustainable ventures while strengthening the local economy and building confidence through real-world experiences.

Community Need

Many young people have creative ideas but limited access to business education, mentors, or startup resources. This program introduces entrepreneurship as an attainable career path while supporting workforce readiness, innovation, and community economic development.

Program Curriculum

- Business Planning & Business Models
- Marketing & Branding
- Budgeting & Financial Literacy
- Customer Service Excellence
- Sales & E-commerce Fundamentals
- Social Media & Digital Marketing
- Public Speaking & Pitch Development
- Leadership & Team Building
- Business Ethics & Community Responsibility
- Youth Business Showcase

Career & Leadership Pathways

Participants gain skills applicable to business ownership, nonprofit leadership, management, hospitality, marketing, retail, tourism, digital commerce, and community development. Students work with local business leaders and mentors to develop professional confidence.

Three-Phase Funding Strategy

Phase I – Launch (\$20,000)

Develop curriculum, purchase training materials, provide mentor support, host workshops, and launch youth business projects serving 40–60 participants annually.

Phase II – Expansion (\$60,000)

Create a dedicated entrepreneurship classroom, establish micro-business competitions, provide scholarships and seed funding, expand mentoring, and serve 150–250 participants annually.

Phase III – Innovation & Business Incubator (\$250,000)

Develop a community entrepreneurship center with co-working space, startup mentoring, pitch competitions, business accelerator programming, and partnerships with regional businesses and colleges.

Resources, Partnerships & Outcomes

Resources: Business planning software, laptops, presentation equipment, classroom furnishings, educational materials, and guest speakers.

Partnerships: Whale of a Cone, local businesses, chambers of commerce, schools, financial institutions, colleges, and volunteer professionals.

Expected Outcomes: Increased financial literacy, youth-owned business ideas, stronger leadership skills, workforce readiness, local business engagement, and long-term economic opportunity for Grays Harbor County.