

# Bringing Social Innovation to Your Classroom - GreenHouse at United College

GreenHouse is the University of Waterloo's social impact incubator, hosted out of United College. With 10 years of experience supporting youth-led social innovation and entrepreneurship, GreenHouse can help you bring social innovation and design thinking into your classroom with a variety of engagement opportunities that equip students with the tools to build their entrepreneurial mindset and develop their skills in critical thinking, problem solving, communication and risk taking.

These engagement opportunities are suitable for classrooms where students are learning about environmental and/or social justice issues; examining the needs and opportunities to take action on these issues; proposing new policies, programs, products or services; and/or, collaborating on a team project.

## Sample Workshop Offerings

### Intro to GreenHouse / What is social innovation and entrepreneurship?

- What is social innovation and entrepreneurship? How can students make social and environmental change using social innovation and processes?
- Featuring examples of GreenHouse alumni with ventures/projects related to your class content

### Problem Definition

- Emphasize the importance of deeply understanding a problem space before developing solutions
- Align the problem definition process with existing frameworks, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Take an empathetic and human-centered approach to defining and scoping your problem
- Learn how to engage with diverse stakeholders to gather insights and identify needs

### Asking the Right Questions + Engaging with Stakeholders

- Plan and prepare for stakeholder research and interviews including defining your goals, identifying stakeholders, and framing your questions
- Review and practice interview techniques that result in deep and meaningful insights
- Extract patterns, needs, and insights to identify opportunities for innovation

## Ideation & Prototyping

- Understand what ideation and prototyping are and how it fits into the innovation process
- Generate creative ideas through ideation techniques
- Discover the ways different prototypes can strengthen your ideas
- Learn how to test your prototypes and gather insights for informing next steps

## Pitching

- Learn what content and structure goes into crafting a persuasive pitch
- Identify key messages, tailor your pitch to different audiences, and build credibility as a presenter
- Strengthen verbal and non-verbal communication skills and confidence in presenting
- Understand how to connect with audience members and judges during and after a pitch

## Business Models for Social Impact

- Understand the unique challenges and considerations for developing business models for social impact
- Engage with examples of social impact business models
- Explore ways to approach the short and long term financial plan for your social venture

## Developing an Entrepreneurial Mindset

- Define an entrepreneurial mindset and identify ways to apply it to both your academic and career pursuits
- Evaluate your own entrepreneurial mindset using the [Berkeley Innovation Index](#)
- Encourage thoughtful reflection on how your project has contributed to developing your skills in critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, risk taking, collaboration, trust, etc.

## Peer Mentorship

- Understand what mentorship is and why it is important
- Develop a set of best practices for mentorship, based on your personal experiences
- Practice mentoring using in-class examples and role play scenarios

## Customization and Special Requests

Each of the above workshops can be easily customized to suit the needs and interests of your students. If there is a topic that you are curious about within social innovation and entrepreneurship that is not listed, reach out to our team to discuss additional workshop offerings.

## Guest Speakers

We have lots of wonderful alumni in the GreenHouse community who generously share their time and expertise by delivering workshops, participating on panels, and sharing their experiences as guest speakers.

## Coaches

If your students are working on developing their own ideas, GreenHouse can bring alumni into your classes as coaches to provide support. Coaches will work with teams as they progress through the innovation cycle, providing unique insights and guidance based on their own entrepreneurial experience. Coaches are an additional resource to TAs, and can provide up to 15 hours of support over the term, and can support up to 5 teams of students each.

## Community Partners

GreenHouse has established relationships with many local purpose-driven organizations who are keen to work with students by providing real-world innovation challenges, access to industry-specific knowledge, and feedback on ideas. These collaborations are available on a case-by-case basis dependent on the scope of the class, the capacity of the community partner, and the timeline of the project.

## Other Workshops and Events

GreenHouse regularly runs workshops and events that are open to all students in the UW community. These workshops are typically offered once/term.

### Finding Funding for Your Social Venture

Hosted in two parts, this workshop series will help attendees identify potential sources of funding for their social impact projects or ventures, learn how to use your network to pursue funding opportunities, and cover tips and tricks for effective grant writing.

### Storytelling for Social Impact

Storytelling is a hugely important tool for sharing your experiences, captivating your audience, and building your venture. Learn to shape your presentations based on your specific goals and outcomes, whether that is finding funding, building a team, inspiring action, and other calls to action.

### Social Impact Showcase

Every term, GreenHouse hosts the Social Impact Showcase to highlight the work of our current students and award grants from the Social Impact Fund. This is a great event to attend if you're interested in getting involved with any of our events and programs, want to hear about inspiring change happening in our community, and are interested in meeting passionate changemakers.



Note: these workshops and collaborations are possible thanks to our generous grantors. If your class engages with at least two workshops, we require students to complete a voluntary survey to help our partners better understand the types of students that participate in work-integrated learning opportunities, and the skills that they develop through these opportunities. In exchange for completing the survey, students will receive a \$20 gift card incentive.

**To learn more about how GreenHouse can collaborate with your classroom, reach out to our team to discuss your goals and interests. We look forward to hearing from you!**