WHAT IS THE RWU COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS CENTER?

The Roger Williams University (RWU) Community Partnerships Center (CPC) provides project-based assistance to nonprofit organizations and government agencies in communities in Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts. Our mission is to undertake and complete projects that will benefit the local community while providing RWU students with experience in real-world projects that deepen their academic experiences.

CPC projects draw upon students and faculty from RWU programs in areas such as:

- Accounting
- Architecture
- Business
- Communication
- Community Development
- Construction Management
- Digital Media
- Education
- Engineering
- Environmental science and sustainability
- Finance
- Graphic Design
- History & American Studies
- Historic preservation
- Justice studies
- Law
- Management
- Marketing
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Public Administration
- Public Relations
- Urban Design
- Visual Arts
- Web Development
- Writing Studies

The Center has completed projects ranging from market research and planning, historical research, mill redevelopment feasibility studies, urban policy analysis, design projects for affordable housing and education facilities, community business district revitalization, neighborhood revitalization plans, museum exhibit design, historic building rehabilitation studies, social services research, website and graphic design, environmental sustainability planning, and survey development.

CPC project services are performed by students in support of their educational experience. Applicants shall understand that any deliverables generated through an accepted project are intended to provide conceptual information only to assist in design and planning and as such are not intended, nor should they be used for, construction or other project implementation. Professional and/or other services may be needed to ultimately implement a sponsor’s desired goals.

HOW CAN YOUR ORGANIZATION PARTNER WITH THE RWU CPC?

As we prepare for upcoming semesters, we are seeking new projects that can benefit local communities while providing our student/faculty teams with opportunities to apply their learning, engage the community, and create final products that provide benefits to all.

We hope that your organization considers applying for project assistance with the RWU Community Partnerships Center this year. The next deadline for applications for projects is March 3, 2014.

In order to ensure ample time for faculty to develop curriculum to engage students in community projects, the CPC has moved to a year-long application period. Applications submitted for this deadline may be considered for either of the two upcoming academic semesters. The CPC will hold another call for projects in September of 2014, should your organization need more preparation time. In order to assist organizations as they prepare their applications, we are happy to answer specific questions by e-mail or by phone. We look forward to working with you in the future and encourage you to contact us should you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Stephany Hessler
Phone: (401) 254-5211
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Arnold Robinson
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RWU Community Partnerships Center
Roger Williams University, One Old Ferry Road, Bristol, RI 02809-2921 | Website: http://cpc.rwu.edu
CALL FOR PROJECTS
Spring 2015 & Fall 2015

Application Deadline: August 4, 2014

Application for CPC Project Assistance

Instructions: We encourage non-profit organizations and municipal agencies to contact the CPC with ideas for projects that can benefit the community while providing meaningful service-learning for RWU students. Please fill out the Application for Project Assistance, answering all applicable questions and including all supporting documents.

In order for any project to be considered for assistance, completed applications must be submitted to CPC Project Coordinator, Stephany Hessler, by 5 pm on August 4, 2014. Applications may be submitted by:

- Email: shessler@rwu.edu
- Fax: (401) 254-3565
- Mail: RWU Community Partnerships Center
  Roger Williams University
  One Old Ferry Road
  Bristol, RI 02809-2921

Any questions regarding the application process can be directed to Stephany at (401) 254-5211.

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SECTION 1: Organization Information

Name of Organization: Urban Ventures, Inc.

Mailing Address: 807 Broad Street, Rm 246, Box 29, Providence, RI 02907

Name of Project Contact Person(s): Jr Neville Songwe

Contact Information:

Phone: 401 780 8866
Fax: 401 780 8844

E-mail: jrsongwe@urbanventuresri.org

Type of Organization
- Public (town, city, municipality, special district, government agency)
- Private (citizen, non-profit)
- Other (please explain) – Government Non-profit

Description of Organization and Mission:

Urban Ventures (UV), is a non-for-profit, 501 (c) 3 organization, founded by the Rhode Island legislature, under the RI urban economic initiative in 1999.
Urban Ventures’ mission is to provide the general public and small businesses, with less than 50 employees, with business development assistance, through education, training and consultation.

On average, how many individuals does your organization serve per year?
- 100

How did you hear about the CPC?
- Email

SECTION 2: Project Description

Title of the Project:
Certified Bankability

Project Location (Address, City, State, and Zip):
807 Broad Street, Rm 246, Box 29, Providence, RI 02907

General Project Description (you may attach a longer narrative if necessary):

Many businesses describe the lending process as difficult to navigate. Urban Ventures’ "Certified Bankability" program will provide small businesses and entrepreneurs with technical knowledge regarding loans and the lending process. This program goal is to make the lending process for the borrower simpler navigate and predictable. The program is an introduction to the institutions that lend money to consumers, the process of securing a loan, along with some basic information on how lenders decide whether or not to lend to a borrower.

The "Certified Bankability" program will educate, prepare and evaluate a business’ bankability level. We will provide businesses with a "Bankability Certification Course and Kit". This course kit will include:

- Loan Education Program
  - The Benefits of Getting a Loan
  - Lenders
  - The Process
  - The Costs
  - What Lenders Look For in Applicants
  - Locking in Your Interest Rate
  - The Responsibility of Loans
  - Defaulting on a Loan
- Personal & Business analysis
- Use of Funds
- Business plan review and preparation

Potential Scope of Work/Tasks for RWU CPC1 (you may attach a longer narrative if necessary):

An educational course kit/guide:
- Loan Education Program
  - The Benefits of Getting a Loan
  - Lenders
  - The Process
  - The Costs
  - What Lenders Look For in Applicants
  - Locking in Your Interest Rate

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The Responsibility of Loans
- Defaulting on a Loan
- When & What to say to an accountant
- When & What to say to a borrower
- Post loan approval best practices

What will be the final product output for this project? (survey, website, design plans, drawings, etc.)
- A Loan Educational Course kit/guide
  - Hard copy
  - Online version

Proposed Project Schedule (when the tasks/project needs to be completed):
- 4 months (120 days) from the start date
  - First Draft - 60 days
  - Final Document - 60 days

Please provide the names and contact information for any staff members or volunteers who will be playing a primary role in the proposed CPC project.

- Board Oversight
  - Dr. Edward Mazze
  - Mr. Bob Fay
- Staff
  - Mr. Jr Neville Songwe

What resources/previous work would the CPC be building upon that you already have completed? (Please select all items that are applicable)
- Strategic Plan
- Marketing & Communication Plans
- Additional organizational documents
- Preliminary photos of the site/project
- Maps
- Previous research – Sample loan applications
- Survey results
- Architectural or building plans

What active support would your organization be able to contribute should your project be selected?
- Funding
- Volunteers
- Staff time
- Consultants
- Other (please list)

SECTION 3: Project Outcomes

Please describe how this project will benefit your organization and the advancement of your mission:

Urban Ventures’ mission is to provide the general public and small businesses with business development assistance, through education, training and consultation. This project will enable Urban Ventures create a predictable and effective educational, training and consultation format that can be measured, scaled, improved and customized to better suite Urban Ventures’ and our clients’ needs.
Please describe how this project might benefit the overall community, including specific groups that could benefit from this project (i.e. target populations, neighborhoods, specific town/city/region).

The project is targeting these specific audience listed below:
- Target population: Urban small businesses in Rhode Island
- City/Town/Region: Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls, Cranston, North Providence, West Warwick, Woonsocket

Benefits:
- Access to lending institution
- Access to finance
- Minimize loan default rates
- Educate audience on lending processes
- Increase chances of open and/or growing a business

Please explain why you have chosen to seek assistance from the RWU CPC with your project request, instead of undertaking the project using fee-for-services from a paid professional:

Working with external partners like RWU CPC, allows our non-profit access a vast pool of knowledge and enables us to use our very limited resources efficiently, while providing the local community with better and more streamlined services. It also provides Urban Ventures with a new and diverse perspective on how to assist businesses.

Please describe how this project will benefit RWU students.

The project will help link the liberal, technical, and professional education at RWU with real world small business case scenarios. It will also offer the students with community-engaged learning that takes them outside of the classroom and provides them with a deeper understanding, appreciation and commitment to relevant community issues.

SECTION 4: Financial Information

What is your organization’s annual operating budget? Please include a copy of your most recent budget with the application.

- $140,000

What are your major sources of funding?

- Rhode Island legislation – Community Grants

How much funding from your annual operating budget is set aside for this project (if any)?

- $2000

SECTION 5: Private Sector Involvement
Have you or your organization discussed the project with practicing professionals (e.g. architect, engineer, planner, consultants, etc.)? (please circle one): Yes / No

If no, please explain why:

SECTION 6: Supporting Documents

Please include the following items when submitting your application:

- Budget for the current fiscal year
- List of current Board members
- Copies of supporting resources identified in section 2 as needed to support your application