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Ex-Cell workshop

Background & Timeline

The Ex-Cell project, funded by the Social Impact grant, launched in May 2021. Its aim is to rehumanise learning by focusing on learning's social, ubuntu-focused dimensions – collaboration, community-building and connectedness. This 5-day workshop has a theme of empowering participants to be better prepared for the business world by upskilling incarcerated persons and parolees to find employment and developing business plans to allow them to earn a living in the business world after their release. The programme is a free access initiative, open to the general public and therefore to people who are not attending the University. The educational component of the project entails SU lecturers and incarcerated participants learning with and from each other through dialogue and the sharing of experience.

By promoting educational and economic opportunities for the youth parolees, the project is further guided by the values and strategic themes embedded in SU's Vision 2040 as well as the National Development Plan. Similarly, all stakeholders benefit by learning from one another and sharing ideas, experiences, and knowledge.

Partnerships

The Ex-Cell project is a collaborative annual project between Stellenbosch University, the School of Accountancy, and the Department of Correctional Services.

The following staff presented the programme:

Designation	Name	Email address	Telephone
Co-ordinator and Presenter	Juan Ontong	ontongj@sun.ac.za	021 808 9230
Co-ordinator and Presenter	Sher-Lee Arendse-Fourie	sher@sun.ac.za	021 808 9941
Co-ordinator and Presenter	Ilse Frans	ilfrans@sun.ac.za	021 808 9525
Presenter	Cecileen Greeff	cgreeff@sun.ac.za	021 808 3426
Presenter	Orlando van Schalkwyk	ovschalk@sun.ac.za	021 808 9943
Presenter	Lee-Ann Pietersen	lkelly@sun.ac.za	021 808 9624

Outcomes

The Ex-Cell workshop has the following outcomes:

1. To rehumanise learning by focusing on learning's social, ubuntu-focused dimensions – collaboration, community-building and connectedness and to empower participants.
2. To Equip past offenders with business acumen skills in order to start-up of financially and socially sustainable businesses or find employment through relevant free education in the form of a workshop and post workshop support if needed
3. To aids the connecting of higher education institution's teaching mandate to its social impact mandate for the purpose of inclusivity and facilitating access to higher education.
4. The learning outcomes of the workshop included the following elements that the participants should have been able to do at the end of the workshop:
 - Communicate effectively within the course context.
 - Engage creatively with the course material with the aim of solving real-life problems.
 - Function effectively as a member of a culturally diverse team.
 - Maintain a point of view with respect to the various disciplines, as well as in relation to the interaction between disciplines, with due respect for the diversity of ideas.
 - Reflect on their own learning and attitude to learning, and demonstrate learning growth and progression; and
 - Have an increased commitment to the active promotion of social justice.

Outcomes of the initiative are linked to the following SDG(s)

SDG1: No Poverty & SDG4: Quality Education

- The workshops is hosted by the School of Accountancy at the Drakenstein correctional facility near Paarl. The only entry requirement for the workshop is for the participants to be near parole, without any other restrictions.
- The workshop is program based over a period of 5 days.

Analysing a business IDEA (using a provided case study) by doing:

- 1 *Market research (1 hour – Day 1)*
- 2 *SWOT Analysis (2 hours - Day 1)*
- 3 *Analysing supply and demand (1 hour - Day 1)*
- 4 *Budgeting and funding opportunities (2 hours - Day 2)*
- 5 *Ethical considerations in business (2 hours – Day 2)*
- 6 *Marketing (30 min – Day 2)*
- 7 *Crisis management and conflict resolution (1 hour – Day 3)*

Considerations when working with other people and finding a job

- 8 *Employing staff (30 min – Day 3)*
- 9 *Business etiquette (1 hour – Day 3)*
- 10 *Creating your CV (2 hours – Day 3)*
- 11 *Finding job opportunities (1.5 hour - Day 4)*
- 12 *Preparing for an interview (+ mock interviews) (3 hours - Day 4)*

Conclusion of the workshop

Presentation of business plans by students (4.5 hours - Day 5 (A week later))

- Provide assistance in the local community supporting, through equipping past offenders with business acumen skills the start-up of financially and socially sustainable businesses or find employment through relevant free education in the form of a workshop and post workshop support if needed.
- Provide free access to educational resources for those not studying at the university, namely past offenders in the form of in person workshops at the correctional facility in the pre-release period, where participants are aware that they will be eligible for parole in the near future and access to lectures.
 - The Ex-Cell workshop is a free courses leading to an attendance certificate
 - Free lunch, snacks, drinks (including water is provided).
 - Stationery is provided to participants to make notes, course workbooks and notes are provided as well as textbooks, motivational books, all free of charge.

Figure: Business book supplied to workshop

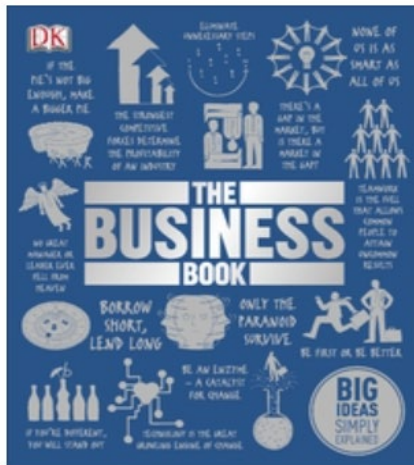


Figure: Students engaging with workshop material



Figure: A student presenting his business idea

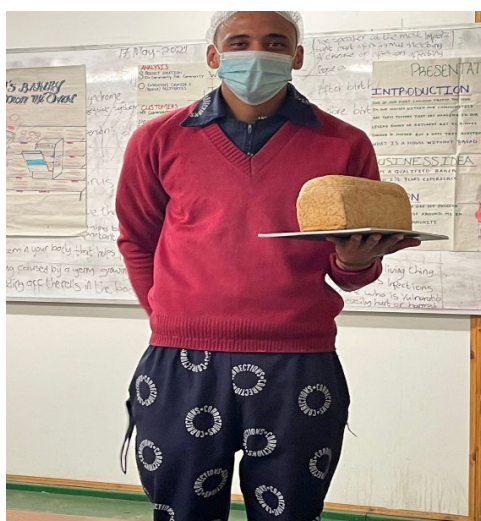


Figure: Lecturer presenting workshop topics



Figure: Students receiving certificates at closing ceremony

