

DBS Foundation Social Enterprise Grant Programme – 2015 Recipients

Name: **Bettr Barista**

Country: Singapore

Description: The core of Bettr Barista's operations is centred on a specially developed Holistic Training Programme - customised to reach out to disadvantaged women and youth in Singapore. The programme goes far beyond work skills, aiming to empower these women and children via a combination of professional coffee education, life and emotional management skills, as well as physical training. From offering paid attachments and permanent career opportunities with industry partners, to mentorship roles in their active alumni community, Bettr Barista helps these marginalised groups rise above difficult life situations and take responsibility for their own futures.

Bettr Barista works with social service organisations, family service centres and other community groups to identify potential programme participants. Their business model centres on providing professional coffee education and internationally-recognised certification for industry professionals and creating coffee-themed experiences for corporate clients and events. They have plans to initiate a micro franchise coffee cart model which is yet to be piloted.

How the grant will be used: The DBS Foundation grant will be used to strengthen their headcount, business development as well as enhance marketing capabilities.

Name: **BlueRen**

Country: Singapore

Description: BlueRen is a clean technology company that aims to address the social challenges of waste management with a novel (patent pending) technology that converts unsorted plastic waste into high performance nano-carbon additives. Currently, only 9% of nearly 870,000 tonnes of plastic waste generated in Singapore is being recycled. These additives add value in terms of strength and have immense potential in the concrete manufacturing industry. The use of this additive can decrease cement usage by up to 30%, thereby reducing the need for its import into Singapore.

By capturing low value waste plastics and turning them into high value additives suitable for enhancing concrete strength, BlueRen seeks to deliver an eco-friendly product through a sustainable process. Through this technology, BlueRen also provides a cost effective alternative to waste collectors for disposing plastic waste.

How the grant will be used: The DBS Foundation grant will be used to develop their prototype and optimise the conversion process. BlueRen will also engage with customers, obtain feedback and gather interest for its eco-friendly concrete.

Name: **E&I Food Concepts**

Country: Singapore

Description: E&I Food Concepts is a food and beverage business in Singapore specialising in gourmet style European cuisine. The SE trains youths in the intricacies of French cooking

techniques, allowing staff to experience the entire process of running a restaurant and pick up unique skills.

At-risk youth and young adults who have been employed and trained by E&I Food Concepts have later moved on to become chefs at reputable restaurants. E&I Food Concepts is keen to promote the expansion of their business through smaller stall concepts within modern hawker bars. The SE has also forayed into private dining and food consultancy.

How the grant will be used: The DBS Foundation grant will be used to help E&I Food Concepts staff obtain the necessary certifications via professional courses, so as to maintain the quality of their business as well as increase their headcount.

Name: **Shanghai Better Education Development Centre (上海百特教育咨询中心)**

Country: China

Description: Shanghai Better Education Development Centre addresses the social challenge of children not having access to relevant educational resources due to the restriction of policies, experience and time. They have established various experiential learning centres in three cities in China, offering after school reading and homework tutorship for children aged 2-12. The SE developed a cartoon character, Aflatoun, and has since devised educational content based on this character. The content is shared via interesting lessons and at their centres which are located closer to communities with migrant workers or low-income families. Each centre is financially sustainable, as programmes offered and fees charged are tiered to match the affordability of the community they serve.

More recently, the Suzhou Park Government has offered a site of 200 square meters to this SE to build an Aflatoun experience hall.

How the grant will be used: The DBS Foundation grant will be used towards building this facility in Suzhou that will also focus on providing financial literacy for children.

Name: **Beijing Bao Yi Technology Development Co. Ltd. (北京保益互动科技发展有限公司)**

Country: China

Description: Dedicated to improving living difficulties experienced by the visually impaired by means of technology, Beijing Bao Yi Technology Development is developing software which can transform ordinary smart phones into voice-based mobile phones suitable for the visually impaired. When installed on any Android device, it will allow children to listen to their favorite stories. Simple gestures will help the children open and listen to books they would have otherwise only be able to access after learning Braille.

The catalogue hierarchy will also suggest reading content based on the child's reading preferences and patterns. With their new project "World in Eyes", over ten thousand hours of audio books, thousands of children's books and other content supplements will be made available to the visually impaired children.

How the grant will be used: The DBS Foundation grant will help further develop and strengthen this reading software which is exclusively designed for visually impaired children.

Name: Sampurn(e)arth Environmental Solutions
Country: India

Description: With an ever increasing strain on natural resources, mishandling of waste has emerged as one of the most pressing problems of today. Urban India generates more than 150,000 tonnes of waste daily while Mumbai alone generates 10,000 tonnes of waste. Sampurn(e)arth works towards building socially, ecologically sustainable as well as financially viable zero waste models where waste management and recycling is tackled at the source in a decentralised fashion.

For the past three years, the SE has refined its business and operations model, increased its capacity, while also elevating the dignity and working conditions of waste collectors in Mumbai. Over the next three years, the SE hopes to increase their waste handling capacity as well as employ many more informal waste collectors.

How the grant will be used: The DBS Foundation grant will be used to expand services used as working capital, as well as help scale the enterprise by investing in human resource and organisation building.

Name: Bodhi Health Education
Country: India

Description: With its mission to provide quality medical education, Bodhi Health Education aims to leverage technology to increase awareness of its importance among health professionals and community health workers.

Using well developed education modules, Bodhi helps deliver complex medical topics to semi-literate women in an interactive and engaging way using pictorial content and videos in regional languages. Bodhi provides engaging pictorial content through low cost technology, penetrating rural India where this health awareness is needed most. More importantly, the SE delivers offline access in remote areas as well as reduces dependency on trainers. It also helps make health education fun by offering gamification based solutions.

How the grant will be used: The DBS Foundation grant will be used to upgrade its technology platform, build the Maternal and Child Health Training Curriculum, as well as build marketing and field intervention efforts such as training 3,000 community health workers in the northern and north eastern states of India.

Name: Asher International eco-Health
Country: Taiwan

Description: As sea levels rise with global warming, excessive underground water tend to cause large areas of land subsidence. Asher International eco-Health proposes a solution to alleviate land subsidence and offer safer food in Taiwan. By promoting the natural eco-health aquaculture method (NEAM), safe fish products are produced. NEAM helps cultivate certain fish species in moderated ratios in order to create a healthy ecosystem. The ecosystem can generate water with nutritious elements with less need for water replacement. With no hormones, antibiotics and chemicals used in the entire process, the fish produced are healthy and safe for consumption. By adopting NEAM, fish farmers save water and electricity costs as well as get a higher selling price for their healthy fish. With no current business solution to land subsidence, local residents

benefit if NEAM is adopted as floods are also prevented by this method of aquaculture.

How the grant will be used: The DBS Foundation grant will be used towards marketing Asher's method to fishing farmers and getting them to upgrade to aquaculture. The grant will also aid product development and provide more job opportunities for local disadvantaged residents in Taiwan.

Name: **Buy Directly From Farmers**

Country: Taiwan

Description: With commercial large-scale agriculture replacing clean natural farming in Taiwan, an urgent need arose to bring health back to food consumption. To address this need, 12 volunteers in Taiwan started "Buy Directly From Farmers" (BDF), an SE dedicated to empowering farmers in Taiwan and helping others to understand how their lifestyle and eating habits impact the environment and the way food is grown.

BDF helps connect farmers to urban customers through information such as sharing farmers' locations and life stories through social media and selling eco-friendly, fresh quality produce through their ecommerce platform. Currently BDF works with over 60 farmers and has a wide community of 107,000 customers, collectively creating a positive change in their communities.

How the grant will be used: The DBS Foundation grant will be used to upgrade their current ecommerce platform making it compatible for use on all devices including tablets and smart phones. The grant will also be partly used for building the agriculture community network.

Name: **Vasham Kosa Sejahtera**

Country: Indonesia

Description: Vasham offers an end-to-end service for smallholder farmers helping them in their growth out of poverty. Some challenges that the SE helps address include the smallholder farmers' limited access to credit, fair markets, farm inputs, and information. They provide a complete agribusiness solution for smallholder corn farmers called Konco Programme, which includes the delivery of quality farm inputs on credit, operational cash loans, agronomy training, field support, and direct market access to industry off-takers.

Vasham's business model does not charge interest; instead, they enter a profit-sharing agreement of 90% to farmers and 10% to the SE ensuring shared alignment of their goals of improving productivity and increasing income. Vasham's product development is based on four themes of innovation - improving farmer productivity, quality, reducing farming costs, and reducing risk so as to increase smallholder farmer income.

How the grant will be used: The DBS Foundation grant will be used to expand their business operations in Sumatra and Java as well as build a standardised recruitment and training programme for their field team.

Name: **Wedo Global Limited**

Country: Hong Kong

Description: Wedo Global is an SE based in Hong Kong that aims to create harmony amongst people of different cultural backgrounds by addressing issues related to cultural understanding and conflict. They aim to enhance global awareness, cultural understanding and sensitivity by conducting interactive multi-cultural workshops, community-based walking tours and overseas tours, thereby promoting peace and understanding in culturally diverse contexts. They also advocate multi-cultural education and work towards employment and empowerment of ethnic minorities.

How the grant will be used: The DBS Foundation grant will be used to build an online global platform for small groups and individuals looking for unique cultural experiences. It will also be used to increase capacity so as to cater to a fast growing demand for such experiences. The grant will also be used to employ ethnic minority underprivileged groups to form a global team with participants from diverse cultural backgrounds.