

Project summary: “Green Accounting Leadership program”

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Executive summary

Project goal

The Green Accounting Leadership Program is designed to increase awareness and competence among Mongolian undergraduate accounting and finance students by providing an in-depth understanding of green accounting practices and the broader impacts of climate change. The program is committed to developing a generation of professionals who are not only skilled in their field of study, but also have a sense of responsibility for the sustainability of the planet. With a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of the trade off between business profitability and environmental protection, they are more likely to become ethical and thoughtful decision makers in the future.

Define the issue

Major consequences of climate change include adverse impacts on ecosystems, potential damage to infrastructure, and threats to animal and human health. The long-term effects of climate change affect people and the entire environment (*Why It's Important to Learn about Climate Change*, 2023). Due to Mongolia's special economic structure, which is dominated by mining, financial literacy has become crucial in resolving the conflict between the natural environment and the commodification of resources. With the increasing benefits brought by mining, environmental problems are increased as well. Soil erosion, water pollution, and grassland degradation are instances of environmental issues. From 2000 to 2015, Mongolia lost more than 400 square kilometers of land, or 0.5% of its total area, due to open-pit coal mining. In this context, companies are beginning to realize the urgency of adopting sustainable practices to mitigate their impact on the environment, and now they are working on it.

Therefore, as a key force for the future development of society, it is particularly important for college students to recognize the importance of climate change and the environment. The knowledge is necessary for them to realize the effects of climate change. By developing students' awareness and understanding, they can take action to

prevent problems from occurring and have a wider range of meaningful employment options. Through this training, accounting students can also contribute to achieving a better and sustainable future in different positions.

Methodology

Inspiration for our methodology comes from the success of analogous initiatives, notably the Undergraduate research experiences or UREs program (Griswold, 2019) which has demonstrated the effectiveness of incorporating research, surveys, and practical experiments into the curriculum. Our program will adopt a similar approach, focusing on personalized feedback and active engagement through various platforms, including digital media, to disseminate knowledge and stimulate action towards climate change solutions. Specific methods of participant evaluation and feedback will include peer reviews, project presentations, and regular assessments.

Methodology 1. Problem solving tree: Rationale for the need of the program

Accounting and finance students generally have insufficient understanding of the climate change issue. This issue leads companies and organizations to make decisions that are only profit oriented and ignore their responsibility to the environment and the needs of society. Also, the future employment of accounting and finance students affects the flow of money in the market to a relatively large extent. When they have a better understanding of climate and environmental issues, they will also side-step the development of environmentally friendly, energy-saving and emission-reducing technologies. The causal analysis is summarized in ***Chart 1. Problem Identification tree (Cause and Effect)***

In order to find the solutions for the above mentioned problem, the following problem tree is outlined. The project developers will conduct in person interviews with industry experts including the university lecturers to better evaluate needs assessment. We came out with an idea to organize a “Green Accounting Leadership Program” by increasing the awareness of the students. This way interconnection of the industries will increase and it will also help companies to focus on environmentally friendly products and operations. Please refer to ***Chart 2. Problem Solving tree (Solutions and Outcome)***

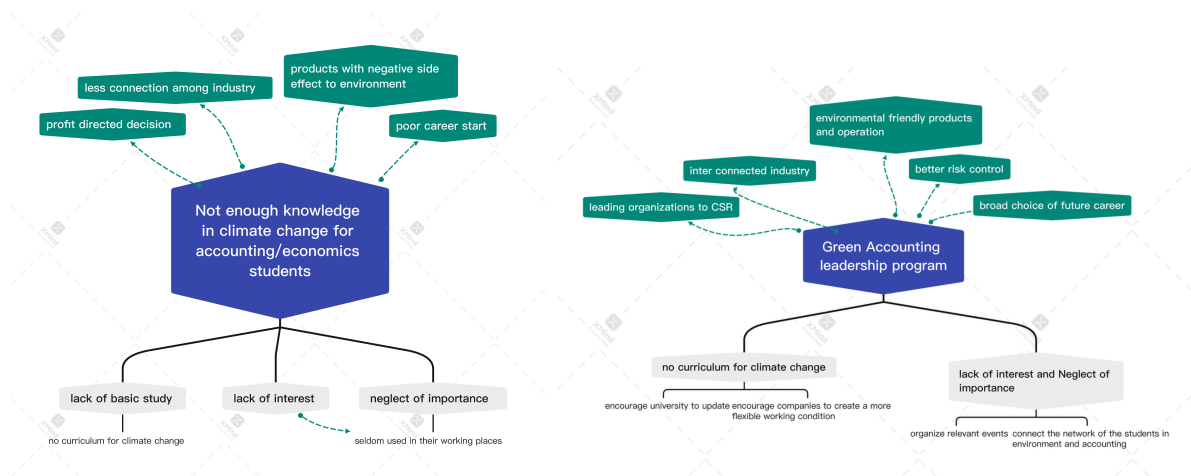


Chart 1. Problem Identification tree (Cause and Effect) (left)

Chart 2. Problem Solving tree (Solutions and Outcome) (right)

Define the solution

To achieve this, the program is designed specifically for third and fourth-year students in accounting and finance, exposing them to critical environmental and climate change challenges. Scheduled to run biennially for three months, the program seeks to build a comprehensive understanding of environmental sustainability and sustainable business . Its broader mission is to foster cross-disciplinary collaboration, thereby enriching the academic experience and preparing students for the multifaceted challenges of the future workforce.

Methodology 2: Stakeholder analysis

Seven stakeholder groups devote themselves to the project. They are students, employers, educational institutes, funders, mentors, lecturers, government, and professional organizations. The summary table of stakeholders is in Appendix A.

Each stakeholder holder group will provide benefits to the green accounting leadership program from different aspects.

Students will provide feedback on the program. The feedback will be used to improve the program.

Employers will be the motivation for students to participate in the program and employers can help the green accounting leadership staff team determine the structure of the program and inform what industry needs from future employees.

Educational institutes will have a role in the partnership. The partner universities are expected to collaborate to develop the program together and exchange helpful resources.

Funders will be the main financial supporters. The financial support can help the green accounting leadership staff team reach more resources and stabilize the continuity of the program.

Mentors and lecturers will take part in the delivery of the program to students and give consultation for the development of the program.

Government will have the lowest impact on the project. The project is not related directly to the government. Because the project is mainly conducting the short term program at the university, the project should be accomplished under educational policy in Mongolia.

Professional organizations can be partners and consultants of the program. They are representatives of professional groups or professionals in industry. Thus, their feedback and recommendation will be essential to the program.

Methodology 3: Key Elements for the short-term sustainability program

According to the benchmark review, there are essential elements for the sustainability program that can be a standard of the green accounting leadership in Mongolia. Those elements are extracurricular activity (de Sousa, 2022, p. 113), core activity (Griswold, 2019, p. 20), and leadership (Teslenko, 2019, p. 14). Example of extracurricular activities to make students realize the importance of sustainability is the Value Your Environment Week campaign is one of the sustainability campaigns at the North-West University, South Africa. Representative students will discuss selected sustainability subjects during the whole week that the campaign takes place (de Sousa, 2022, p. 113). The program should have these core program activities that develop sustainability skills for students. The Undergraduate research experiences or UREs is a case study of a short-term sustainability program which is successful (Griswold, 2019). The program activity of UREs can be a baseline or standard for the green accounting leadership program in Mongolia. Examples of core program activities are seminars in career preparation, research under supervision by faculty, site visits, etc. (Griswold, 2019, p. 20). The last element is that universities should provide students with opportunities to take part in leadership. At the University of British Columbia, Canada, volunteer students are assigned to be involved in managing activities that correlate to climate change and sustainability (Teslenko, 2019, p. 14).

Program content

The curriculum is structured around weekly seminars and classes that cover a broad spectrum of topics, including but not limited to:

- Building soft skills and self-development training.
- Leadership and negotiation.
- Networking opportunities with industry leaders and environmental advocates.
- Site visits to organizations exemplifying best practices in environmental sustainability.

These components are carefully selected to equip students with the necessary tools to jumpstart their careers successfully while fostering a lifelong commitment to sustainability.

Project Budget Overview

The Green Accounting Leadership Program is committed to providing a comprehensive and accessible educational experience for Mongolian undergraduates in accounting and finance, free of charge. To uphold this commitment, a structured funding strategy is essential to cover the various operational and programmatic expenses.

Funding Requirements

Our budget is primarily allocated towards:

- **Training fees:** Compensation for specialists and educators who will develop and deliver the curriculum content.
- **Administration:** Operational costs including staff salaries, program coordination, and student support services.
- **Logistics:** Expenses related to site visits, materials, and resources required for the effective delivery of the program.

In alignment with our vision to foster community involvement and extend the reach of our initiative, we propose that mentors and industry experts contribute to the program on a volunteer basis. Their invaluable expertise and commitment to sustainability and education will significantly enrich the program content and student experience.

Funding Strategy

To ensure the program's viability and success, we are actively seeking financial support through partnership and grants to collaborate in education, environmental sustainability, and community development. Our potential funding sources include:

- **Government Grants:** Funding from environmental or educational departments that support green initiatives and sustainability education.
- **Corporate Sponsorships:** Partnerships with businesses and corporations, especially those with a focus on corporate social responsibility (CSR) towards environmental sustainability.
- **Professional organizations:** Grants from organizations dedicated to advancing education and leadership development in fields related to accounting, finance, and environmental stewardship.
- **Non-Profit Organizations:** Support from NGOs and other entities that advocate for climate change awareness and action.

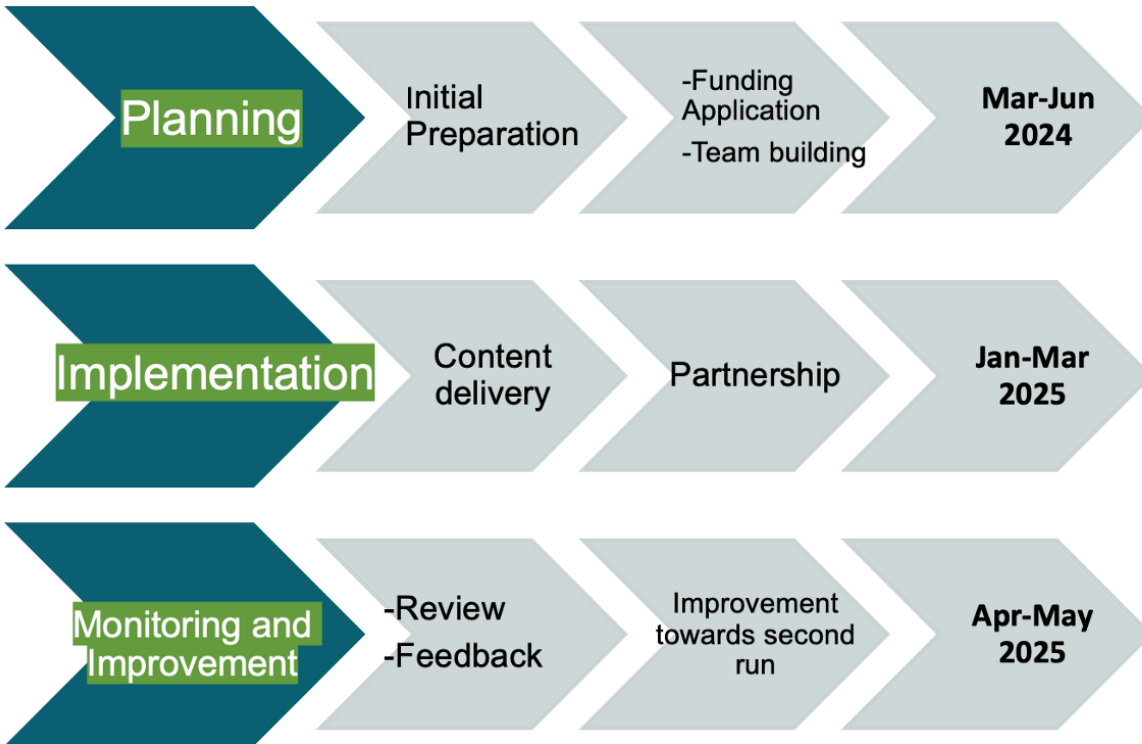
Potential fundings

Fund ers	Name	Amount	Requirements	Source
U.S. Embassy	2024 local grants program—NOFO	Total: \$25000 Average funding amount: \$5000	<p>The critical theme requirement for the project:</p> <p>Conservation of Natural Resources and Improving Air and Water Quality</p> <p>Air and water quality issues can affect public health, deter investment, and constrain economic growth. Good stewardship of natural resources and national parks can lead to sustainable economic diversification. Promote research, public awareness, technical assistance, stakeholder cooperation, and innovative sustainable solutions to air and water quality and natural resource management. <i>(2024 Local Grants Program – Annual Program Statement Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), n.d.)</i></p>	https://mn.usembassy.gov/education-culture/grant-programs/
Canada Fund	The Canada Fund	Not giving information	The requirement of eligible projects. At least one of the requirements needs to be satisfied: 1) Inclusive governance, including diversity, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.	https://canadafundmongoli

	for Local Initiatives(C FLI)		<p>2) Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.</p> <p>3) Growth for everyone, including women's economic rights, decent work and entrepreneurship, investing in the poorest and most vulnerable, and protecting economic outcomes.</p> <p>4) Human dignity, including health, education and nutrition.</p> <p>5) Environmental and climate action, with a focus on adaptation and mitigation, and water resource management. (<i>Project Summary</i>, n.d.)</p>	<p>a.mn/en/application/</p> <p>https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fcanadafundmongolia.mn%2Fdownload%2F2021%2F2021-22_CFLI_ProjectSummary.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSE LINK</p>
Global Environment Facility (GEF)	The Small Grants Program (SGP)	\$50000 in total	<p>“The GEF SGP provides grants of up to USD 50,000 directly to CSOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) to undertake local projects that contribute to the global environment while generating sustainable livelihoods.” (<i>Global Environment Facility (GEF) - Small Grants Program</i>, n.d.)</p> <p>Topic includes: “Education, Forestry, and Other Land Use, Gender, Health, Industry and Infrastructure, Jobs, Nature-based Solutions and Ecosystem Services, Rural Development, Youth” (<i>Global Environment Facility (GEF) - Small Grants Program</i>, n.d.)</p>	<p>https://ndcpartnership.org/knowledge-portal/climate-funds-explorer/global-environment-facility-gef-small-grants-program</p>

Project milestones:

To make this project feasible there are following actions that need to be taken in place. The summary of the activities are listed in the following graph.



Conclusion and findings

Based on our findings we have found out the short term leadership program can be beneficial to students by allowing them to participate in extracurricular activities.

The success of the Green Accounting Leadership Program relies on the generosity and vision of our partners and sponsors. Through collaborative funding efforts, we aim to empower undergraduate accounting students to become leaders in the transition to a sustainable economy. We are committed to transparency and accountability in our budgeting and funding processes, ensuring that every contribution directly benefits the program's objectives and participants.

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Appendices

[A] Stakeholder Analysis Table

Stakeholders group	Name of the Stakeholders	Interest	Potential Impact of Stakeholder	Level of involvement	Strategy
Name of Stakeholder		Positive (+)	High: Essential to involve	Informed, Consulted, Partners, Controlling	When to get involved?
		Negative (-)	Medium: Desirable to involve		Communication Strategy
		Unknown (?)	Low: Involve if possible		
Students		+	medium	informed	survey
Employers (companies who may hire the students)	-Auditing firm -Companies	+	high	partners, controlling	preparation, implementation,
Educational institute	-Mandakh University -University of Finance and Economics	+	medium-high	informed, consulted	preparation, implementation,

	-National University of Mongolia				
Funders	US Embassy in Mongolia (Local Grant Program)	+ -	high	controlling	preparation, implementation, and giving updates
Mentors, lecturers	-Academics -Industry experts	+	high	consulted	preparation, implementation,
Government	-Ministry of Finance -Central Bank of Mongolia	?	medium-low	informed	preparation, implementation
Professional organization	Mongolian Institute of Certified Public Accountants -Mongolian Sustainable Finance Association	+ -	medium-high	consulted, partners	preparation