



## The Bluestem Grant a Sustainable Business Incubation Program

*offered to residents of Illinois by the Sustainable Business Center in Galesburg, IL*

### Overview

The Bluestem Grant, a Sustainable Business Incubation Program offered by the Sustainable Business Center in Galesburg, IL, is open to promising sustainable business ideas in the early stages of implementation. If you are selected as a business incubatee, you will be offered competitively-priced, subsidized rent, and a year of business fundamentals and sustainability support at the Human Links Foundation's Sustainable Business Center (SBC) in Galesburg, IL. Galesburg is a formerly industrial city with a population of 32,000, a thriving passenger and commercial rail system, a number of colleges, and a rich climate of independent business.

At the end of the incubation program (one year), your business may continue to operate out of the Galesburg Sustainable Business Center, with a gradual reduction of your rent subsidy.

This business incubator program is designed to help you improve the sustainability of all aspects of your business, in order to prepare you to graduate and operate as a high-profile example of truly sustainable business practices, and an agent of positive change in the broader business environment. As your business grows, you will also enrich the City of Galesburg and its surrounds through economic development and local employment opportunities.

### SBC Mission

*"The mission of the Sustainable Business Center is to bring jobs to the Galesburg area by nurturing and growing businesses that represent green technology in its purest form."*

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## Who should apply for this program?

We welcome applications from any Illinois resident with a burgeoning business that seeks to produce a sustainable product or service, and wishes to implement exemplary sustainability practices in their business model. The following are examples of characteristics that would make your business a good candidate for this program:

### Location

- Individuals or teams who are residents of the State of Illinois, willing to commute or relocate to Galesburg, IL

### Stage of business development

- Early-stage ventures of individuals or teams, without employees
- Prototype or beta version already produced
- Feasibility study completed
- Basic business plan (executive summary) articulated

### Business type

- Light assembly and manufacturing
- Distribution with limited warehousing
- Sustainable food services; services advancing the local food economy
- Services and E-services

### Theme of product or service

- **Efficient or improved alternatives to existing technologies** (e.g. technologies that reduce resource extraction, waste production, or overall energy consumption)
- **Waste stream recovery innovations** (e.g. tools for recovery of currently unharnessed/difficult to harness waste streams, or products made from unharnessed/difficult to harness waste streams)
- **Renewable energy-related products** (e.g. solar, wind, or biofuel innovations for localized scales)
- **Social justice-related innovations** (e.g. solutions for improving transparency or accountability in supply chain, or innovations to bring affordable access to basic human necessities)
- **Local food system-related innovations** (e.g. tools to improve local food production, or tools to improve distribution capacity for local foods)
- **Climate-related innovations**, e.g. tools to reduce or eliminate greenhouse gas emissions of a product, or tools to help reduce overall lifestyle greenhouse gas emissions)
- **Environmental support services**

### Sustainable business practices

Businesses that will commit to implement system-wide sustainability measures, such as:

- Product life cycle planning; cradle-to-cradle production philosophy
- Internalizing harmful externalities of business operations
- Carbon neutrality
- Filtering source materials by humanitarian and environmental criteria
- Supply chain transparency
- Innovative waste stream recovery

## Bluestem program benefits

The following advantages will come with acceptance into the Sustainable Business Incubation program:

- Funds up to \$15,000
- Relocation planning assistance, and a relocation stipend as deemed appropriate
- A space appropriate to your business needs, with competitive rent, in the HumanLinks Foundation's Sustainable Business Center at 2900 W. Main Street, Galesburg, IL (see space descriptions below)
- Monthly on-site workshops and seminars by industry professionals focused on business development fundamentals and key sustainability principles relevant to business operations (see incubation schedule below)
- A cohort of sustainably-focused entrepreneurs with whom to share in the sustainable business incubation and growth program
- Publicity through the SBC
- At the end of the incubation program (one year), you as a business incubatee may continue to operate out of the Galesburg Sustainable Business Center, with a gradual reduction of your rent subsidy over a mutually agreed-upon period

## Incubation spaces and amenities

A range of facilities are available at the Galesburg SBC, including:

**Office space:** The SBC has partially furnished office space with suites ranging from 100 square feet to up to 300 square feet. Amenities include daily dock delivery and UPS/FedEx drop, scanner/photocopy machine, high-speed internet, and a shared kitchenette with microwave, refrigerator, & dishwashing sink.

**Conference room:** A conference room outfitted with projection equipment is shared among tenants, and is typically reserved before use.

**Warehouse storage:** A large number of bays outfitted with fire suppression systems, as well as movable metal shelving racks, can be allocated to tenants.

**Manufacturing and assembly space:** Open-floor manufacturing and assembly space, with electrical outlets and some basic furnishings, can be allocated to tenants according to their space needs.

**Warehousing equipment:** Two fork trucks, pickers, and other warehousing equipment are shared among tenants. Multiple loading docks allow flexible use by multiple tenants.

**FDA-Certified Commercial Kitchen:** When the En Season restaurant is not serving customers, our 3,600 square foot certified commercial kitchen is available for food preparation, packaging, and distribution of finished products in an environment that offers the top level of food safety.

**Security:** Each section of the warehouse is only accessible to approved employees through a building-wide security system.

**Other:** A full-time facility manager is on site during business hours (7:30am-4:30pm). Custodial and maintenance services are included in rent. Tenants receive a discount at the on-site En Season restaurant. Restaurant and kitchen space can be reserved for events when not open to customers.

## Schedule of incubation year

September 2016	October 2016	November 2016	December 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move-in</li> <li>• SBC orientation session for all new business staff</li> <li>• Intensive business fundamentals crash course (appx. 10 hours)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar: marketing and branding</li> <li>• Galesburg Area Chamber of Commerce after-hours meet &amp; greet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop: Sustainable Systems and Industrial Symbiosis overview; Full Product Life Cycle exercise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar: Business Accounting</li> </ul>

January 2017	February 2017	March 2017	April 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop: Embodied Energy and Carbon Neutrality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar: Business Loans, Finance, and "Kickstart" campaigns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop: Transparency and Social Responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar: Small Business Federal and State Taxes</li> </ul>

May 2017	June 2017	July 2017	August 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop: Supply Chain Tracking and Sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar: Patents (with a patent attorney)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop: Internalizing Externalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar: Human Resources</li> <li>• Program completion ceremony</li> </ul>

(note: exact seminar/workshop offerings may be modified based on the needs of accepted incubatees)

## Expectations of program participants

Recipients of the Bluestem grant will be subject to the following expectations

- Relocate your business to the site of the Galesburg, IL Sustainable Business Center at 2900 W. Main Street, Galesburg, IL by September 1, 2016.
- Attend orientation, the intensive business fundamentals crash course, and 9 of the 11 on-site business skills seminars and sustainability principles workshops offered throughout the year
- Participate in sustainable practices exercises
- Operate your business in Galesburg, IL for at least one year
- Provide feedback on programs, space, and amenities, through evaluations and surveys
- Allow the SBC to describe your business in promotional materials, presentations, and sustainable business awareness campaigns

## About Galesburg, IL

Founded nearly 180 years ago, this community on the prairie continues to offer settlers a place to call home and realize dreams. Galesburg's tree-lined residential neighborhoods and revitalized downtown create a warm, small-town ambience.

Home to two colleges, several museums, and a vibrant arts community, the city of 32,000 (2010 census) offers plenty of cultural opportunities for residents and guests alike. Sidewalks, bike lanes, more than two dozen parks, youth sports programs, and robust athletic facilities make Galesburg a place where recreation and wellness easily can be both a priority and a lifestyle.

Located in the nation's heartland on Interstate 74, intersected by railroads, and less than an hour from two regional airports, the city's access to transportation adds to its appeal for both business and pleasure travelers. Galesburg is less than three hours from Chicago by Amtrak and about three and a half hours from Chicago or St. Louis by car.

Statistics on the regional economy, workforce, wages, and more are available on the [Knox County Area Partnership for Economic Development](#) website.

## About the SBC

The Sustainable Business Center is a business incubator located in Galesburg, Illinois. The 88,000 square foot incubator is designed for entrepreneurs and businesses that embrace environmental sustainability and responsibility through innovation and practice.

The center embodies the practice and principles of a triple-bottom-line business model. This philosophy, also known as the "three Ps," asserts that people, planet, and profit are all equally important to the continued prosperity of a budding enterprise.

## How to apply

Complete the application form at <https://form.jotform.com/DynamicSustainability/BluestemGrantApplication>, and submit with any relevant attachments by **July 17, 2016**.

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With questions, please contact:

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