

# RESOURCING YOUR *INFUSIONOMICS* INITIATIVE:

Mobilizing the People, the  
Money, and the Stuff  
You Need



by Amy L. Sherman, Becca Saunders, and Rose Merritt  
Sagamore Institute's Center on Faith in Communities

*Resourcing Your Infusionomics™ Initiative: Mobilizing the People, the Money, and the Stuff You Need* by Amy L. Sherman, Becca Saunders, and Rose Merritt.

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This report is available in digital PDF form for free from the Infusionomics™ website (<http://www.infusionomics.com>).

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	4
Part One: People.....	5
Part Two: Money.....	10
Part Three: Stuff.....	14
Conclusion.....	19
Appendix.....	20
Sample Email Letter to Bank Requesting a Meeting.....	21
<i>Economis</i> Fact Sheet.....	22
Bank Involvement Response Sheet.....	23
Store Manager's Guide.....	24
Sample Grant Proposal for a Private Foundation.....	27
Sample Grant Proposal for a Corporate Foundation.....	30
How to Hold a Silent Auction.....	32
Corporate In-Kind Donation Sources.....	34
Testimonials on Influence of <i>Economis</i> Implementation.....	36
Fast Facts: Why Financial Literacy is SO Crucial.....	37

# Fundraising Manual for *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> Implementers

## INTRODUCTION

Since you've picked up this manual, chances are you work with a school or after-school program that has taken on the vital work of teaching economic and financial literacy to youth through the *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> program. Today's economic woes have raised awareness of just how important this kind of training is. Thank you for your hard work to communicate effectively and creatively on these critical subjects, so that youth are empowered to become economically healthy adults. This manual exists to help you do this work well, by creating a firm financial and volunteer footing to under gird your efforts so that they are sustainable.

Put simply, to operate your *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> program well, you need people, money, and stuff. The program entails costs and time—like any worthwhile endeavor. And if you are like most nonprofits, time and money are not necessarily in generous supply! Thus, this manual offers numerous suggestions—based on the real life experiences of organizations that have implemented economic and financial literacy programs—about how to cut costs and how to raise resources. Here you will find ideas about where to recruit *volunteers* and what kinds of helpful roles they can play in your program. To help you solicit *financial support* for your program, we have included various tools such as grant proposal templates and “talking points” for fundraising meetings/events. And we have researched avenues for how ministries like yours can seek *in-kind contributions* that can enhance your program without adding to your budget. Most likely, not every one of the ideas included in this workbook will be new to you, but we hope you discover a few “light bulbs” that will infuse new energy into your program.

Those of us involved in leading the *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> efforts are eager to hear your own good ideas, as well as any testimonials you may have about what has worked, or not worked, in your efforts to raise the support necessary for implementing a strong program. If you have tips or cautions to share with other implementers, we hope you will let us know.

Good luck!

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## PART I: PEOPLE

One of the first questions school leaders and community practitioners ask about the *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> program is: How much time will my staff need to devote to this? That's a valid question, and there are some parts of the program that will indeed require staff attention. As you journey through the process of becoming a certified *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> school, you will hear more about the role of staff. However, volunteers can do a lot of the work, too. Volunteers can, for example:

- Teach financial literacy lessons
- Arrange field trips and special events
- Assist with data entry into *Economis*
- Solicit in-kind donations for your store
- Manage the inventory and/or operate your store
- Serve as guest speakers on economic and financial literacy topics
- Provide business/entrepreneurship coaching
- Open up opportunities for you to make fundraising appeals
- Write grant proposals

Below are listed several possible sources for finding volunteers to help with your *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> program.

### **Volunteers from Local Financial Institutions**

Since *Economis* is a financial literacy program, employees of financial institutions may be willing to volunteer with your organization to promote economic education. First, you need to identify banks and credit unions in your area. Once you have identified them, you can find their phone numbers online or in your local yellow pages. Depending on the thoroughness of the bank's website, you may be able to identify the specific staff people who would be best to speak with. Typically we have found that the best people are those involved in the bank's community affairs or community involvement department, and/or the bank's Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) officer. These people are responsible for developing, implementing, and maintaining relationships with community organizations and complying with federal regulations concerning investments in low-income neighborhoods.

You should make an initial contact with these individuals by mail or email. (If you could not identify the correct person to contact by studying the web page, call the bank and ask who the CRA officer is, or whether the bank has a community affairs office. You will want to confirm a specific person's name and correct contact information.) Keep your initial letter/email fairly short. You want to communicate basic information about your *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> program, and request a face-to-face meeting with the individual to discuss how the bank might partner with your program. See the *Appendix* for a sample letter and an *Economis* Fact Sheet that you might want to include. At the meeting itself, you can talk about your economic and financial literacy efforts with youth and ask if they would be willing to partner with you through volunteer service.

Bring a Response Sheet that lists a menu of ways the bank might be involved with you. (See the *Appendix* for a sample Response Sheet.)

Also be prepared to hear about any existing financial literacy program the bank may already operate. It may be that the way the bank personnel desire to be involved with your school/organization is through that existing effort. Some bank-operated programs we have seen include set presentations on banking and savings, savings incentives programs where the bank will match the savings of young people just beginning a new savings account, and the Capital One/Junior Achievement mobile Finance Park™.

### **County Extension Offices:**

One source of potential volunteer help is found through the cooperative extension system. You may have heard people tell you to “call your local extension office” but you may not be sure what it is. Essentially, it’s a nationwide educational network that aims to help people use research to improve their lives.

The service is provided by the states’ designated land-grant universities, where each state and territory has a state office. There is also a large network of local and regional offices within each state. Typically the offices are directed by veterans who are able to offer helpful, research-based information. Often these offices have a large staff as well as a number of volunteers. Connecting with your extension office could provide you with volunteers who are ready and eager to help you successfully implement and run *Economis*.

To find your local extension office, go to the map of the United States found here: <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension/>. Click on your state. This will take you to your state’s extension web page. You’ll notice that with most states there are local county offices as well as extension district offices. (You can choose to find contact information for either or both.) Once you find the office you are looking for, click on its link. Now you will be at that county or district’s extension system’s web page. Look for contact information and once you find it, give your extension office a call.

County extension agents sometimes make presentations at public schools and youth clubs (e.g., Girl Scouts) about various life skills arenas such as health, safety, and nutrition. You will want to learn whether the extension service in your locality provides any youth-based training on financial literacy, and if so, what that involves. You may want to invite the agents to present their own set presentations or discuss with them your curriculum and whether they’d be interested in helping teach it.

### **Service-Learning Programs at Nearby Colleges and Universities**

Local colleges and universities can provide a wealth of student volunteers who are actively seeking opportunities to be involved in the community. In some cases certain degree programs, schools, or classes mandate that students log a set amount of community service hours. In other cases college students are looking for service opportunities where they contribute to the community in a meaningful way.

Identify nearby colleges and universities. Then go to the college/university's website by typing in its web address (if you know it) or by "googling" the name of the college or university. Next you should try to determine which degree programs, schools, centers, and offices promote community service and involvement. Examples of centers that often include a service-learning component are "Center for Civic Engagement", "Center for Social Justice", "Center for Service-Learning", and "Center for Community Involvement". See if you can find centers of such names on the university's website, and retrieve their contact information. Many of these centers provide internship opportunities and courses that require students to be involved in the community. In addition, many of these centers have a directory of community organizations where you could advertise your organization and request volunteers.

Degree programs in education, sociology, social work, social justice, and civic engagement may require community service. You might also want to contact the business school/department at the university. Contact department chairpersons with information about your *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> program and see if their students might be interested in helping out.

If you can't easily find any degree programs, schools, or centers involving service-learning, you can use the search option that most universities have on their webpage. Locate the "search" box on the webpage and try typing in the following search phrases: "community service", "service-learning", "service opportunities", or "community involvement". Hopefully these searches will direct you towards centers, programs, or courses that involve community service.

If all else fails, you could call the phone number that is listed on the university's webpage and ask the university representative if the college has service learning opportunities. Then they may be able to transfer you to someone who could help get you plugged into a center or program where you would be able to recruit volunteers.

## **AmeriCorps VISTA**

AmeriCorps is a national network of programs that provide stipends to individuals who wish to serve public and nonprofit organizations addressing needs in low-income communities. More than 70,000 adults join AmeriCorps annually; the program is particularly popular among recent college graduates. Nonprofit organizations can apply to host AmeriCorps members (typically for a one-year period, which can sometimes be extended) and thus gain essentially free staff to help develop, lead, and implement their programs.

To gain AmeriCorps members you need to contact your AmeriCorps state commission office. To do so go to: <http://www.americorps.org/about/contact/statecommission.asp>. Once you find your state office, click on it. You will then see contact information. It is helpful to first call the director listed and ask him/her about the process for gaining AmeriCorps members. The process for requesting volunteers varies by state, which is why it is helpful to call the state office first. Some states will have you submit an application while others will let you post requests for volunteers in their online directory.

## **Recruiting Volunteers Via Online Resources**

Increasingly in our digital age, nonprofits are utilizing the Internet to recruit volunteers. While we have not found this to be a particularly fruitful strategy in the groups we have worked with, it does not require a lot of time and at a minimum, it provides your organization with some exposure. Of the various Internet volunteer-matching services, we would recommend you consider posting your volunteer opportunities on the following two sites:

Christian Volunteering (<http://www.urbanministry.org/volunteer/volunteer-search>)

Volunteer Match (<http://www.volunteermatch.org/nonprofits/partnerships/>)

You will create an organizational profile and provide information about volunteer opportunities. Once your profile is posted, volunteers can find you by searching through organizations and opportunities. The downside of these sites is that the organization basically has to wait to be contacted by interested volunteers. The good thing is that posting online allows a wider window of awareness of your organization.

The best way to cultivate a donor is to invite people to participate in a specific project.

### **A Special Volunteer Role: The *Economis* Store Manager**

The *Economis* store provides many opportunities for volunteers to help. There are a number of roles they can fill. Volunteers can be in charge of setting up and stocking the store. This involves searching for in-kind donations and other items to put in the store as well as uploading the information on the items into the *Economis* system so kids can see what is available through the online store. Another important role that volunteers can fill is managing purchases. For example, one volunteer could keep track of what is purchased online and fulfill those orders, putting together packages ready for pick up by the students who bought those items. Volunteers can also serve in person at your “point-of-sale” store. (All of this will be clearer to you once you have learned about how to establish and implement the *Economis* store.) A high school or college student who enjoys working on computers is a great candidate for the online work. Families or local church groups, such as a Women’s Circle, are great candidates for coming in to your school to “man” a point of sale store. For much more detailed information on how to use volunteers to operate the *Economis* store, see the *Store Manager’s Guide* in the *Appendix*.

### **Money Follows Involvement**

We listed the “people” part of this fundraising manual first, because those wise in the field of philanthropy teach that money tends to follow volunteers. Thus, when you invest energy in recruiting and placing volunteers, you are often simultaneously laying the groundwork for creating donors. Indeed, you should concentrate more on “donor development” than on “fund development.” And donor development involves three basic, sequential stages: Participation, Engagement, and Ownership. The best way to cultivate a donor is to invite people to participate in a specific project. Create short-term, high touch opportunities for people to get engaged—opportunities that allow participants to get a taste of the vision and values of your ministry. If

they have a good experience, they will often seek more information about your work, or even ask if there are additional ways they can help. When they do so, you can invite them into the “engagement” stage, where you provide more information about your cause and help them identify additional ways they can serve. The ultimate goal is for these people to become so excited about your organization’s vision and work that they “own” the cause and values, and become advocates within their own spheres of influence. But achieving that great end starts by creating an “on ramp” for volunteer participation in your initiative.



## PART II. MONEY

While the *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> program is not particularly expensive, you will need to raise some money. Some portion of staff members' time will be devoted to the program. Additionally, you need to supply sufficient inventory to your *Economis* rewards store. We encourage implementers to offer at least a few "big ticket" items in the store, so that there is some high value, expensive items that students will be encouraged to save toward. You may need money to purchase some of these big ticket items (like iPods® or field trips), though we also have some suggestions for you in Part III of the manual on how to acquire such things affordably—or even for free.

You may also desire money to use for a tax-match or philanthropy-match. While these types of monetary contributions are not integral to the running of *Economis*, they do enhance its implementation. In *Economis*, taxes are deducted from each student's paycheck to simulate tax deductions in the "real world". At the end of a semester (or whatever point in time you choose), if you had raised real dollars, then you can invite the students to decide how to spend the "tax dollars" that have accumulated within the *Economis* mini-economy. (Note: you need not actually raise the exact dollar equivalent of the students' aggregate tax collections. You can take any amount of funds – \$100 or \$500, for example—and simply tell the youth that this represents their tax contributions, and that now they have to decide as a "commonwealth" how to distribute this revenue.) Similarly, you can seek to raise money for a "philanthropy match." Again, in *Economis* students can choose to participate in giving. As they do, virtual philanthropic dollars accumulate. You can raise real money that represents this amount, and then invite students to decide what to do with it. In Indianapolis, several *Economis* implementers enjoyed philanthropy match dollars from a local charitable foundation. They received some training from a local nonprofit that educates students on youth philanthropy, and then the youth determined their own giving strategies. One group helped out their local SPCA while another met practical needs in their local neighborhood through a group called "Angels in the 'Hood." In our exit interviews with the students from Indianapolis, many identified this feature of the program as their favorite.

Below are listed some potential financial investors for your *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> program.

### **Local Banks/Credit Unions:**

We've already discussed engaging local banks and credit unions in the program, by starting with efforts to recruit volunteer involvement by bank personnel.

As you seek specifically to gain financial sponsorship from these institutions, it will be helpful for you to gain an understanding of the bank's past and current community involvement. In order to do this, try browsing first through the bank's website. You want to look for links that say "Community Involvement", "Corporate Philanthropy", "Community Investment", or similar phrases. Sometimes these links will be at the very top or bottom of the page, often in smaller font. You may also find information on the bank's community involvement through clicking on "About Us". Other times you may have to use the "search" function. To do so you need to find the search box at the top, side, or bottom of the page. In the box you could type things like "Community Involvement", "Corporate Philanthropy", or "Community Investment". Once you

find information on past community partners, you can see if the bank has a history of financially contributing to programs similar to yours.

You can also do “google” searches that list the name of the bank, your city’s name, and “financial literacy.” Such searches sometimes turn up copies of newspaper articles or press releases that contain information about the bank’s corporate giving efforts in these sorts of programs in your locale. And, of course, when you meet face-to-face with bank personnel, you can ask them whether they have a specific grant program to which you might apply for funding.

There may also be a local, regional, or state association of banks or credit unions in your area that has its own charitable arm. In Virginia, for example, the Virginia Bankers Association recently launched its own private, statewide charitable foundation to underwrite financial literacy programs with youth. To learn about possible associations in your area, you can do a “google” search utilizing your city or state’s name, and phrases like “bankers association”, “credit union association”, “credit union network” and such.

Obviously, you are most interested in general sponsorship dollars for your *Infusionomics*<sup>™</sup> program. However, take time to think of particular donation initiatives that might especially appeal to the firms from which you are soliciting. For example, a financial investment firm might be open to making a small donation to your school to support a stock market investing competition among the students engaged in *Economis*.

It is also worthwhile for you to learn whether there is a chapter/affiliate of the national Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy in your area. Jump\$tart (<http://www.jumpstartcoalition.org/>) is the leading national network focused on financial literacy education. If there is a local chapter of Jump\$tart in your area, contact the director and seek a meeting. He/she is likely to be very knowledgeable about organizations and foundations in your locale that are interested in supporting financial literacy projects.

### **Brokerage Houses/Financial Advisors**

Firms that provide financial and investment counseling might also be interested in financial education. Such firms include Morgan Stanley Smith Barney, Charles Schwab, Merrill Lynch, and American Express Financial Services, among others. You can conduct “google” searches using these companies’ names and your city name to locate branch offices in your locality. You can then contact them to get the name of the staff person with responsibility for community or public relations. Then send an inquiry letter requesting a meeting (this could be modeled on the sample letter to bankers that is provided in the *Appendix*). Employees from these

firms can be invited in as guest speakers or teachers for the financial literacy lessons that focus on investing. You can ask such firms for general sponsorship dollars, but you may also consider requesting funding for a special initiative, such as a stock investing competition. You can explain the virtual stock investing that is possible through *Economis*, for instance, and then ask for a \$200 gift that you could present to the student(s) whose virtual stock portfolios perform most strongly over a certain time period.

## **Corporate Grants**

Corporations generally prefer to give to organizations and programs that take place within the community where they are headquartered, or where their branches/franchisees do business. Therefore, it is important to identify what corporations are headquartered in your city or region. An easy way to do this is by using the Grantsman Center, which has a listing of corporate grants within your state. Go to <http://www.tgci.com/funding.shtml> and click on your state. You will be taken to your state's website. You will notice a box with four links to funding sources in your state. To find corporate grants in your state you will click the third option: "corporate giving programs in your state". Next you will see a list of foundations that have headquarters in your state. Once you identify these foundations you can find their website by "googling" the name of a particular foundation. Once on their homepage, look for links that say things like "Community Involvement", "Corporate Philanthropy", "Supporting Communities", "Grants", or "Community Investment". (Note that these links are often in small print on the side or the bottom of the page. You may need to look around on the website for a while in order to find information on their financial giving.) Once you find the right page, you will likely see what types of programs or organizations the corporation funds. There will usually be grant guidelines and restrictions. You should also be able to find instructions on how to go about applying for a grant, information on typical grant amounts, and the deadlines/schedules for grantmaking.

You may already be aware of certain corporations that are headquartered in your city. If that is the case then you can "google" the corporation to find their website and follow the steps listed in the paragraph above to find information on their corporate giving.

## **Local Foundations**

Community and family foundations in your area are another potential source of funding. Community foundations are nonprofit, tax-exempt, grantmaking organizations. You may already know of community foundations that are in your area. Or you may be unaware of local foundations. If you find yourself in that boat, there are a few online search engines that will connect you to foundations in your community.

One of these is the Community Foundation Locator (<http://www.cof.org/Locator/>). Go there and once you see the map of the United States, click on your state. Then you will see a list of foundations located within your state. The names of the foundations in this list are hyperlinked to their individual websites. On those sites you can find information about the foundation and a description of the grant application process.

The Grantsman Center offers a similar map here: <http://www.tgci.com/funding.shtml>. As described above, you need to click on your state. Then you will be taken to a page with a box of

local funding sources in your state. Within that box there are four links: top grantmaking foundations in your state, community foundations in your state, corporate giving foundations in your state, and your state's homepage. You will be most interested in the first two links. First, the top grant making foundations are the foundations that give the most money annually within your state. The second link in the box is to community foundations. These are foundations that give in your state as public charities and that have a wide spectrum of charitable interests. These usually have a geographic focus on a particular city or county within the state. Each foundation name on the list links to a website, which has information on the foundation and a description of the grant application process.

Another listing of foundations is here: <http://www.foundations.org/communityfoundations.html>. This website requires a bit of legwork to find foundations in your area. It contains a list of foundations in alphabetical order. The foundations are for states, cities, or counties. You should scroll through the list to see if your state, city, or county is represented. Each foundation listed has a link to its website, which has information on their foundation and a description of the grant application process.

If you have never written a grant proposal to a private foundation, you may find the Sample Grant Proposal in the Appendix helpful.

## **Local Professional Clubs**

Professional clubs in your area—such as the Lions Club or Rotary Club--may participate in charitable giving. To find local chapters of such groups you can start by visiting the clubs' national websites. For the Lion's Club ([www.lionsclub.org](http://www.lionsclub.org)), the Rotary Club ([www.rotaryclub.org](http://www.rotaryclub.org)), and the Ruritan Club ([www.ruritan.org](http://www.ruritan.org)), you will see links that enable you to search for a club in your city. This typically leads to a list of several clubs. Unfortunately, the quality of information provided on local club sites varies. In some instances you may find only contact information, in others there may be lists of club officers and descriptions of club activities. In any event, eventually you will want to track down contact information for the club's president (or other officer) and contact them to make them aware of your initiative. Such clubs are sometimes eager for community group representatives to come and make presentations about their work.

## **Fundraising Events**

You can also consider holding specific fundraising events in order to solicit funds from individual donors. Chances are, as a nonprofit, you are already engaged in these sorts of events annually – things like annual banquets, walk-a-thons, golf tournaments, and the like. If not, the chapter on special events in the book, *Fundraising for Dummies*, may be a useful introduction. Some organizations also have success with Silent Auctions. This is a good low-cost fundraiser. You can ask for donations from individuals, churches, or local businesses and restaurants and then auction off those items either online or at an event. See the Appendix for a *How To Hold a Silent Auction* guide.



### III. STUFF

One of the *Keystone Economic Principles*<sup>TM</sup> is that people respond to incentives. Thus, *Economis* is an incentive-based mini-economy. Students will earn points (virtual currency) for their participation and achievements in your program. And those points must have a real value to the youth; they need to be transferable for products or services that are attractive to students. In short, your rewards store needs to have an inventory that is motivational!

*Economis* implementers have devised a variety of ways of keeping the cost of their store inventory affordable. One way is by including inventory items that have value to the students but that don't cost your organization much (if anything). For example, some implementers have included an inventory category called "privileges." Privileges might include things like a homework pass, 2 extra credit points on a test, extra recess time, permission to not wear the school uniform one day, and so on.

Your rewards store needs to have an inventory that is motivational!

Another cost saver is to offer special events for sale in your store—events that another organization will put on for you at no or little charge. For example, local churches or volunteer clubs or service or arts groups might be willing to organize activities like:

- a games night (like an indoor "field day") with 3-legged races and such
- a "drive-in" movie night outdoors utilizing an LCD projector and screen, complete with refreshments like popcorn and lemonade
- a performance (a concert, dance performance, short play) for your students
- an interactive arts activity (a drum circle, a ceramics class) for your youth
- a scavenger hunt
- a 3-on-3 basketball tournament
- a "Punt, Pass, and Kick" tournament.

Of course, you will also need to offer some tangible merchandise. For small snack items (chips, cookies, juice) you can contact your local food bank. You may be able to pay a small membership fee and then have access to food purchased by the pound at affordable rates. You can also seek donations of baked goods from local churches or women's groups. You will also want to have mid-priced products (for example, movie tickets, school supplies, \$5 iTunes® gift card) and higher-priced items (for example, field trip tickets to sporting events or amusement parks, iPods® or other electronics goods, \$50 gift certificate to a popular clothing store) in your inventory. The latter "big ticket" items are needed to motivate students to save at least some portion of their earnings over time.

Below are listed various organizations from whom you may be able to solicit donations of merchandise for your *Economis* store:

## **Churches**

Often during the holiday season (Thanksgiving through Christmas), congregations sponsor various kinds of toy drives or food drives, or encourage families to purchase Christmas gifts for needy families. You can capitalize on this holiday largess by encouraging churches to stock your *Economis* store as an alternative to their typical Christmas giveaways. Parishioners can donate items such as DVDs, toys, CDs, clothing, school supplies, arts and crafts supplies, board games, gift cards to popular stores such as Footlocker™, The Gap™, Old Navy™ or your local mall, or gift certificates to local fast food restaurants, to the *Economis* store. These donations will provide incentives for the kids throughout the year to participate in the program.

A great example of this kind of church involvement comes from Charlottesville, Virginia, home of Charlottesville Abundant Life Ministries' annual Christmas store. Every year the ministry asks for donations from a church they partner with to stock their Christmas store. They provide clear examples of what kinds of items they are looking for, such as Hispanic and African American dolls, sporting goods, games, bath sets for women, and more. New items are collected and ministry staff and volunteers take an afternoon to sort and price the products (using the virtual currency of the *Economis* program, which in this case is “Blue Bucks” that equate to amount .25 cents each.) Then the priced items are transported to the Abundant Life Center, which is decorated in such a way as to transform it into a “department store.” Kids come in and can shop using the “Blue Bucks” they have earned throughout the semester to purchase Christmas gifts for their family and friends—as well as a little something for themselves! Through this program, church members get to experience the joy of giving to the needy, but in a way that protects the dignity of the recipients, since through this approach the children use their own earnings to become givers themselves.

Churches can also support your *Economis* program by sponsoring and organizing the kinds of special large group activities noted earlier (e.g., 3-on-3 basketball tournaments, game nights). These kinds of events have the added benefit of creating community service opportunities for families in the church. Often families are looking for volunteer opportunities in which the whole family can participate. Such events are also a good fit for service opportunities for the church's senior high youth group. Don't be afraid to ask church leaders to help out in these ways—you may discover that these fun, low-time-commitment service opportunities will prove attractive to pastors looking for ways to get their congregants involved in community ministry.

## **Local Businesses**

Local businesses are another source of potential in-kind donations, especially companies with limited storage space and quick product turnover. Stores like Big Lots™, T.J. Maxx™, and holiday stores have fast turnover where they need to frequently get rid of older products so that they can sell new inventory. You could go to the Big Lots™ store, for example, and meet with the manager(s). Tell them about your school/organization and the *Economis* program. Ask them what they do with leftover inventory and if they would be willing to donate it to your organization. (See the sidebar for some talking points to highlight in such a meeting). You could arrange to have a volunteer or staff member call them on some consistent basis (e.g. twice per month) to check on the status of leftover inventory, to see if there were items the store would be willing to donate.

A number of chain stores and restaurants, such as Best Buy™ and Applebee's™, are willing to donate gift cards to community organizations. A long list of such businesses can be found in the *Appendix*. Typically to procure these gift cards you will have to arrange a meeting with a local manager, or mail in a written request, or fill out an application.

### **Local Sports Teams**

You may be able to receive free or reduced cost tickets to sporting events in your locality. First, identify all your local sports teams, both college and professional. On the homepage of most professional sports teams' websites, there's a link that says "community" or "community involvement". Once you click on that link, you will be taken to a new page that has information about donation requests and/or charitable foundations. There will be instructions on how to request donations from the team as well as instructions for applying for grant money.

Many college teams also donate tickets and unused merchandise. Some colleges call this "sponsorship" or "corporate hospitality". You will want to find the team's website and look around the web page for these words or use the search box. Then you should find directions on how to request donations. In addition, for some of the lesser-known sports (e.g., wrestling, volleyball, lacrosse), admission to games may be free. To make attending such an event extra special, you could request that a coach or player give your student group a short presentation before the start of the competition. For example, the coach or player could introduce the rules of the game and/or highlight winning strategies. This kind of introduction can help your students enhance their enjoyment of watching the contest.

### **Local Entertainment Venues**

Contact managers at local entertainment venues such as museums, movie theaters, miniature golf courses, arcades, bowling alleys, and amusement parks. During a meeting with the manager or community liaison, provide an overview of the *Economis* program. Ask them if they would be willing to donate tickets to your organization or provide discounts such as "2 for 1" entrance fees.

### **Tips for Soliciting In-Kind Donations**

1. Keep your presentation short
2. Consider bringing a participating student with you, to either participate in the presentation itself or to say a few words about what he/she has learned from the program
3. Note that *Infusionomics*™, by teaching economic and financial literacy skills, is equipping young people with marketplace skills. Business owners should appreciate that!
4. Find out whether "excess inventory" is a challenge for the business—and present yourself as a potential solution. Note that you will be able to put their excess goods to a positive use.
5. Assure the business that you will publicly acknowledge their partnership—they will get some good "PR" out of helping you!
6. Be prepared to give *specific* examples of the kinds of merchandise that would help your program – T-shirts, sporting goods, candy, electronics, etc.
7. Have a plan for the logistics of cooperation. That is, you should be prepared to tell the businessperson that you have a person(s) who will make regular contact to learn about available inventory and that your organization has the capability to come to the store to pick up the items and transport them. Keep in mind that the business wants to liquidate excess inventory as soon as possible—that is the benefit to them (creating shelf space for incoming new inventory). So you need to be able to assure them that your group has the capacity and flexibility to quickly respond to the business' alerting of you of their excess inventory.

## **Local College Clubs**

There may be organizations on local university campuses that would be willing to sponsor and chaperone a special field trip for some or all of your students. In Charlottesville, VA--home of the University of Virginia--the Law Christian Fellowship, the Graduate Christian Fellowship, and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship have all been active in providing this service to students involved in a local urban ministry. Club members use their own vehicles to transport youth to the local Putt Putt™ or ice skating rink, pay the entrance fees, and play with the youth. While ministry staff can also attend as extra chaperones, most responsibility for the events rests with the college group. These outings are very attractive to the youth and don't cost the ministry anything!

## **Community Arts**

It might also be worthwhile to spend time investigating local community art programs. Some of these groups might be willing to volunteer some of their time to conduct a performance or workshop for your kids for which you could sell tickets in your store. Maybe a theatre group would give you free tickets to a performance or dress rehearsal or maybe a music group could run an interactive workshop like a drum circle that the students could be a part of. Maybe a local artist or photographer would hold a drawing or photography workshop. To learn about art groups in your area "google" terms like "community arts" + your city or "youth arts" + your city or "art nonprofit" + your city. Chances are a local nonprofit arts initiative believes strongly in the power of art in the lives of children and would be interested in partnering with your youth. This would be a great way to sell something in your store that costs you little to nothing.

## **Craigslist:**

Craigslist is a network of online classifieds from different cities across the country and around the world. You can find all sorts of things on Craigslist including jobs, personal ads, items for sale, services, and donations. People who want to give away stuff can also make postings on the website and you can receive them!

You start by going to [www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com). Towards the right of the homepage there is a column titled "U.S. States". Click on the name of your state. This takes you to a new page where you can click on your city. This will take you to your city's Craigslist page. In the middle of the page is a box entitled "For Sale". Within that box there is a link that says "Free". Click on that and scroll through the listings of free stuff. It's kind of a grab bag. Some days you may find some great items that you could sell in your *Economis* store; other days you might not find anything useful. If you find something you want simply email the person who posted the listing and arrange a pick-up! Since the "inventory" on Craigslist is constantly changing, you may want to recruit some high school students who enjoy being online and assign the task of regularly browsing Craigslist to watch for desirable items.

## **Freesharing**

Freesharing is very similar to Craigslist in what it has to offer but is a little different in terms of accessing the site. The upside of Freesharing is that every item on it is free (though you do have to make your own pick-up arrangements). The downside is that it is a random collection of items. The site consists mostly of used items that people are looking to pass on instead of

throw away. You may have to spend significant time really searching for something in order to find what you are looking for. If you go to [www.freesharing.org](http://www.freesharing.org) and scroll down a little you will find a map of the states. Click on your state and it will bring up a list of online groups for different areas in your state. Once you determine if there is a group for the area in which you live you can join that group. It's a Yahoo group so if you don't already have a Yahoo account you'll have to create one. This isn't too difficult and it is free. Even if your city or county does not have a group you may be able to join a nearby group. Once you gain access, you will click on "Messages", which is located on the left side bar. This will bring up a list of messages that users have posted starting with the most recent. Some of the posts will be offers of items and some will be requests for items.

Again, using either Craigslist or Freesharing to procure items for your store may prove time-consuming. Checking in regularly on the sites and browsing around for possibilities may be a task that you can assign to a computer-savvy volunteer who enjoys being online.

### **Online Excess Inventory Sites**

Having excess inventory is a problem in the business world but one that can benefit groups in the nonprofit world. Excess inventory costs millions of dollars in warehousing, asset tracking, and insurance coverage every year. Therefore many businesses choose to donate excess inventory to charitable organizations, which also allows businesses to earn a sizable tax write-off.

There are several nonprofit gifts-in-kind companies that facilitate the transfer of excess inventory from companies to deserving nonprofits, schools, and organizations. We focus here on those that are free or have a small membership fee:

**ExcessAccess** (<http://www.excessaccess.com/>) is an Internet database service matching donors and recipients that are in the same geographical area. Nonprofits must pay a \$5 flat registration fee to use this database. Nonprofits then create a wish list and are notified when local inventory comes in that fulfills the requests on the wish list. Examples of donated items are electronic equipment, furniture, seasonal items, decorations, food, toys, and clothing.

**Throwplace.com** ([www.throwplace.com](http://www.throwplace.com)) is an online market where individuals, charities, nonprofits, and businesses can exchange excess goods and surplus inventory free of charge. Nonprofits register on the site for free, then they can browse donated items and their location. Nonprofits can take up to 5 items per month from the inventory for free; beyond five items, there is a \$5 per item charge.

## CONCLUSION

This workbook has hopefully equipped you to think well about the people, money, and stuff you need to garner to implement a successful *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> program. But in conclusion we should mention one more key ingredient: PASSION!

Your excitement about what can be accomplished in youths' lives through *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> is contagious. The better you understand the value of what you're doing, the better you can communicate why others should get involved.

We're excited about this initiative because of the real-life difference it has made in the lives of kids and ministries. The "testimonials" page, located in the *Appendix*, captures some of the enthusiasm of students, parents, and program directors who have been involved in our earlier demonstration project (which utilized *Economis* and the accompanying financial literacy curriculum). As you can see from reading these, this initiative not only teaches new skills, it leads to new patterns of thinking and behaving that help youth flourish. Additionally, teachers who have integrated economic literacy into their curriculum have seen math scores rise, interest in learning/school attendance increase, and behavior improve in the classroom. Some of these teachers have also implemented special projects, like auctions and plant sales, which have expanded the scope for kids to apply their economic learnings in fun new ways. Older youth who have participated in the financial literacy classes have actually thanked their teachers for instructing them on "real life" issues that they know they will face in the near future—topics like credit cards and renting apartments and buying used cars.

This program is also particularly timely. The sad facts on the economic illiteracy of much of America—including our youth—have been known for some time. (The final document in the *Appendix* summarizes some of those statistics, to help you make the case that an initiative like *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> is desperately needed.) But the consequences of economic and financial illiteracy are a regular source of public conversation these days, as our economy struggles to rise out of a recession that was precipitated, at least in part, by poor financial decision-making on the part of consumers and lenders. In short, we believe the time is very ripe for a project like *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> and that you are likely to "gain a hearing" as you go out to solicit support for it, since it addresses head-on one of the biggest contemporary problems we're facing as a society.

So...may a fire be stirred in your belly for the importance of this work, and may the practical tools in the manual aid you as you launch out to create the support network you need to empower youth through this innovative program!

## APPENDIX

1. Sample Email Letter to Bank Requesting a Meeting.....	21
2. <i>Economis</i> Fact Sheet.....	22
3. Bank Involvement Response Sheet.....	23
4. Store Manager's Guide.....	24
5. Sample Grant Proposal for a Private Foundation.....	27
6. Sample Grant Proposal for a Corporate Foundation.....	30
7. How to Hold a Silent Auction.....	32
8. Corporate In-Kind Donation Sources.....	34
9. Testimonials on Influence of <i>Economis</i> Implementation.....	36
10. Fast Facts: Why Financial Literacy is SO Crucial.....	37

## Sample Email to Bank Personnel

Dear [name of CRA officer or bank employee in the community affairs division],

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I work with [name of your school/organization]. We are operating a creative youth economic/financial literacy program here in the X neighborhood of [your city] that [name of bank] might be interested in. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet briefly with you at the bank to tell you more about this. In the meantime, let me provide just a little background information.

Our [school/organization] serves X number of low-income youth, ranging in age from X to Y. We've been reaching these youth through our activities since [year of your founding].

Our economic/financial literacy initiative is called *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup>. Our focus is on equipping our students for healthy economic futures by offering economic education in a very interactive, creative, and fun way.

A crucial component of the program is *Economis* – an online mini-economy that gives youth an interactive way to learn and practice financial life skills such as saving, investing, understanding the stock market, and managing credit. To further solidify the students' understanding, we accompany *Economis* with short classroom-based financial life lessons. (I've enclosed a brief Fact Sheet on *Economis*.)

We would be delighted to partner with [name of bank] in this program. We are looking for bank employees to volunteer their time to help teach the financial life lessons or make special presentations. There are also various opportunities for how the bank and its employees can support our incentives store. I can tell you more about these things when we meet, as well as give you a brief demo of the *Economis* mini-economy.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this request. I hope we can find a convenient time to meet. I will follow up this email with a call soon.

Sincerely,

[Your name  
Your title and contact information]

## ***ECONOMIS* Fact Sheet**

[Name of your school/organization] is promoting youth financial literacy through an interactive program called *Economis*. We are seeking for local banks in [your city] to support us in this effort.

### ***Economis...What's the Need?***

Nationwide in the USA, nearly 90% of students fail to score above a "C" on the basic financial survival skills exam, and nearly 2/3rds of teens don't know what an interest rate is. With low-income parents unbanked, or using disadvantageous financial institutions (rent-to-own, payday loan advances), many urban youth lack the financial life skills they need to thrive.

By teaching youth financial life skills, *Economis* strengthens their ability to participate effectively in the mainstream economy as they mature. Such skills and knowledge can protect these youth from negative choices (e.g., mismanaging credit cards and falling into debt) while encouraging them in positive behaviors (e.g., delayed gratification, the discipline of saving).

### ***Economis...What is the Mini-Economy?***

*Economis* sets up an incentive-based system for program participation and achievements while helping youth learn financial literacy skills such as appropriate use of credit and on-line banking, investing, and shopping.

### ***Economis...How Does It Work?***

Each student in the *Economis* program receives a debit card, synched with a virtual on-line checking and savings account. They swipe their cards each time they are engaged in program activities, thus providing the school or nonprofit with a comprehensive and accurate monitoring of their participation. Throughout the program:

#### **Students EARN...**

- By the *timeclock* or by an *accomplishment*

#### **Students SAVE...**

- In their virtual on-line savings account or by purchasing CDs

#### **Students INVEST...**

- By building a virtual stock portfolio

#### **Students SPEND...**

- Through the nonprofit's on-line "store"

#### **Students GIVE...**

- By selecting amounts to deduct for charitable giving from weekly paychecks

### ***Economis...How Does it Benefit Youth?***

- It helps youth gain financial literacy skills, in an experiential, hands-on, interactive way
- It can help youth avoid future problems caused by mismanaging credit cards
- It teaches youth about personal financial responsibility
- It gives youth a concrete understanding of saving and investing
- It teaches youth that actions have consequences...in an experiential way that "sticks!"
- It grows life skills such as delayed gratification, planning, and cost/benefit analysis

[your organization's name and contact information here]

## Bank Involvement Response Sheet

How Can My Bank Support the *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> Initiative?

- Be a LOCAL SPONSOR (\$3000 plus volunteer support)

Our school can place local sponsors' logos on the debit cards used by youth and highlight these sponsors in communications with the media.

- Provide volunteer support (encourage the bank's employees to be listed as part of the Volunteer Instructors "Speakers Board")

- Provide in-kind donations (e.g., computers, software)

- Participate in the "Stock the Stores" Christmas Program, encouraging our employees to donate gifts

- YES, we want to be part of this, but here's how: \_\_\_\_\_
-

## The Store Manager's Guide: Making Your *Economis* Store Run Well

Managing the *Economis* store is like being the manager at a department store. Here are some tips and guidelines that will make things simple and efficient for both the sellers (ministry leaders) and the buyers (kids).

**Before you begin:** Organizing and implementing your *Economis* store can be broken down into three categories: building your store, adding inventory, and managing purchases. These are interrelated and affect each other, but they are set up separately, so it is important to consider a few things before you begin:

- What types of items do you want your kids to be able to purchase with the money they earn? What rewards and incentives do you already give your kids? What affordable items can you add? Do you have a relationship with churches, companies, or individuals that could donate items?
- Can your items be broken down into categories? For example, if a lot of your items are related to sports, you could create a sports category that includes basketballs, baseballs, and other sporting items. Make some thematic connections between your items.
- Think about the size of your items and the frequency in which they are purchased. Some will be easier to check out at a counter, and some will be easier to fulfill through an online purchase.
- How much do your kids typically earn from timeclocks and transactions in a given week? Month? This will affect the price of the items in your store.

**Building Your Store:** See page 12 of the *Economis Set-Up Manual*, “Set up Inventory Categories,” to build the “departments” of your store. (*The Economis Set-Up Manual* is found on the *Economis* site at [www.economis.net](http://www.economis.net) for groups that have registered to use the software.)

- Remember, these are not the *items* in your store; they are the *categories* in which you will put your items.
- Visualize what a department store looks like and imagine it without the products. This “itemless” store is what you are building in this step.
- These categories can be used for both your online shopping and your POS store terminal.

**Adding Inventory:** See pages 12-13 of the *Economis Set-Up Manual*, “Add Specific Products to your Inventory.” (*The Economis Set-Up Manual* is found on the *Economis* site at [www.economis.net](http://www.economis.net) for groups that have registered to use the software.)

- In this step you are adding the specific items that the kids can purchase.
- The added items are made available for both the online store and the POS store terminal.
- **Pricing:** When you determine the price of your inventory, consider how much kids typically make from timeclocks and transactions. You want to give the kids an incentive and promote delayed gratification, but you don't want to make it so that they can only purchase one thing throughout the year.
- **Storage:** You will probably want to store your entire inventory in one place and organize it by category (like a mini warehouse). This will make it easier to fulfill online orders and to set up your POS store on “store day.”
- **Tracking Inventory:** If you go to *Administration, Inventory*, click the *Track/Manage Inventory* button, and click the *View Full Report* button, you will be able to see a report

of the availability of all the items. Tracking the inventory will allow you to see when you need to “stock up” on certain items.

- **UPC Barcodes (for retail items):** Some of the items in your store will have barcodes on them (for example, candy bars or cans of soda). You can make it so that when a student purchases these retail items, all you have to do is scan the barcode, and Economis will process the sale. When you add these products to your inventory (or edit your inventory), you can enter the codes into the system by going to *Administration, Inventory*. Click on *Add New Inventory* (or *Edit Existing Inventory*). Make sure the cursor is in the blank “UPC Code” row. Scan the barcode and the UPC number will appear in the blank space. Make sure all the other information is filled in for the item, and click “save inventory.”
- **UPC Barcodes (for non-retail items):** For your items that do not already have barcodes, creating barcodes for them might make your POS terminal easier to manage. Your best bet is to create a laminated sheet with barcodes of all the items that do not already have barcodes. When those items are purchased at the store, you simply scan the barcode on the laminated sheet. (Instructions are also listed below on how to create these barcodes.)

## Managing Purchases

There are two ways to allow kids to purchase items: the online store, and a POS store. You will probably use the POS store most often, but an online store will give kids the freedom to purchase items whenever they want, and perhaps make the purchasing of some big-ticket items easier.

### Online Store

- **Order Fulfillment:** It is important that you appoint one person (most likely the “store manager”) to put in charge of fulfilling orders. This person will be notified by email when an order has been placed (email is determined under *Manage Shopping Cart*). This person should check these orders on a regular basis and deliver the items when they are purchased.
- **Pictures:** Visit [www.elevateurbanyouth.org](http://www.elevateurbanyouth.org) for pictures of common inventory items.
- **Inventory:** Inventory categories for the online store are decided by going to *Administration, Shopping Cart Management, Manage Shopping Cart*. At the bottom of the page is where you select the categories of items you want in the online store.
  - o **Note:** You probably don’t want too many small items in the online store, as it will be a hassle to try to fulfill orders for every pencil and cookie that is purchased.

### POS Store

- **Store Day:** The best way to use a POS Store terminal is to have one day of the week be your “Store Day.” Set up a POS terminal and display all the items that can be purchased. Have the kids line up to make purchases and appoint one volunteer or staff person to be the clerk who checks out the items that the kids choose. (To create the store go to *Manage POS Terminals* and click on *Add POS Terminal*. You will be able to choose the items that you want in the POS Store here.)

## Downloading TechnoRiver Free Barcode Component

- 1) Go to <http://www.technoriversoft.com/freebarcodesoftware.html>.

- 2) Scroll down until you see the “Download the Free Barcode Component Software here!” option on the left of the page. Click on that button.
- 3) Click on [“Free Barcode Software Component - v2.0 \(Exe\) 3 Meg”](#)
- 4) Follow the steps to download and install the software.

### **Creating Bar Codes**

- 1) Open Microsoft Word.
- 2) Under the **Insert** menu, select “Object.”
- 3) Under the “Create New” tab, find TechnoRiver Free Barcode Component in the list and double-click.
- 4) Make sure that the box to the left says “CODE39” under “Symbology.” If not, select “CODE39” under the “Code Type” tab.
- 5) In the text box, a barcode number is created for you. You can either keep this number or make up your own number. Once you have created the barcode, click “OK.”
- 6) In order to change the size of the barcode in your Word document, left-click outside of the barcode, then left-click inside. You should be able to move the barcode as preferred.
- 7) Continue to repeat steps 2-5 for all the products for which you want to make barcodes.

### **Notes:**

- a. It is important that you type in the name of the corresponding product right below the barcode once you create.
- b. Once you’ve created the barcodes for your products and written the names below them, print them out and laminate the sheet(s). You will use this sheet at the store; instead of putting a barcode on every product, you can scan this sheet whenever each product is ordered. For example if you make a barcode for a ministry T-Shirt, instead of printing out 50 of the T-Shirt barcodes, you can just scan the barcode on the laminated paper when someone purchases a T-Shirt at the POS terminal.
  - i. **Note:** Make sure the cursor is in the box that says “UPC” when you scan the item. If it doesn’t read the barcode, check the connection between the scanner and the computer. If it says “item not found,” make sure the inventory item was chosen for the store.

# **SAMPLE: Grant Proposal for a Private Bank Foundation**

## **PROPOSAL FOR XYZ BANK FROM ABC MINISTRY**

### **Statement of Need**

According to research by the national Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy, America's youth lack financial literacy skills. Nationwide in the USA, nearly 90% of students fail to score above a "C" on the basic financial survival skills exam, and nearly 2/3rds of teens don't know what an interest rate is. In Virginia, high school seniors tested in 2006 knew on average only about 55% of the correct answers on Jump\$tart's exam. Youth in low-income families face additional challenges, as many of their parents are unbanked, or use disadvantageous financial institutions such as rent-to-own store or payday loan advances.

By teaching urban low-income youth financial life skills, ABC Ministry's *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> program will strengthen their ability to participate effectively in the mainstream economy as they mature. Such skills and knowledge can protect these youth from negative choices (e.g., mismanaging credit cards and falling into debt) while encouraging them in positive behaviors (e.g., delayed gratification, the discipline of saving).

### **Program Goals and Measurable Objectives**

ABC Ministry, nonprofit youth services provider active in the [name of neighborhood] in urban Richmond since [date], will reach [x] students through its initiative.

Through this initiative, students will:

1. increase their knowledge of financial life skills so that as young adults they will be less likely to mismanage money, credit, and debt;
2. have opportunities to steward resources, practicing savings, investing, and smart shopping; and
3. develop good decision-making skills as they come to understand opportunity costs and learn to delay gratification and plan for the future.

As an ancillary benefit, because of implementing *Economis*, ABC Ministry will increase its organizational ability to track and monitor program participation and track program outcomes.

### **Program Activities and Timetable**

ABC Ministry will launch *Economis* as part of its 8-week Summer Enrichment Program on [date]. The program meets every weekday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. In addition, we will integrate the *Economis* mini-economy as part of our After School Tutoring Program, which meets every weekday from 3 to 6 p.m. during the academic year.

In brief, *Economis* is a customized, on-line token economy system through which youth learn financial life skills in a highly engaging, interactive, and fun manner. Through *Economis*, youth participate in a virtual economy and can earn, save, manage a personal on-line savings account and checking account, invest, handle a credit card, buy/sell stock, and purchase goods through an on-line store. All these transactions mimic very closely the "real world" economy, thus emphasizing the positive and negative consequences of various financial decisions (e.g., students see real gains in their virtual bank accounts when stocks they've purchased increase in value, and they see real debits when they pay their credit card bills late and are assessed fees). *Economis* will provide incentives for youth participating in ABC's educational programs: youth earn credits for time spent in our enrichment and tutoring programs as well

as for achieving certain accomplishments. We plan to award bonuses for both character development outcomes and academic improvements. Youth can then redeem those credits for rewards determined by the organization (e.g., snacks, field trips, T-shirts) and sold in our online “store.”

To further enhance the educational impact of the program, students will be taught a series of financial life skills lessons using a professionally developed curriculum that has been piloted with success among over 1,000 urban low-income youth. (According to an evaluation by the Sagamore Institute for Policy Research, nonprofits implementing *Economis* and the affiliated curriculum raised financial literacy scores among participating students by an average of 26%.) The curriculum includes age-appropriate lessons featuring engaging, hands-on activities to capture the students’ interest. Topics covered include savings, making economic choices, consumer education, investing, opportunity costs, entrepreneurship, and profit, among others.

**While staff from ABC Ministry will implement most lessons, we would like to ask XYZ Bank volunteers to participate as well as guest instructors.** These volunteers could utilize the prepared curriculum or teach from their own financial education materials. Given our active schedule, there will be ample opportunities for volunteers from XYZ Bank to be involved in this capacity.

The program will launch at ABC Ministry on [date]. We will conduct a pre-test during the second week, to establish a baseline of understanding of our students’ financial literacy. The program will continue through [tell how long]. Our evaluation activities will occur in [when] and will consist of focus group interviews with parents and post-tests to measure financial literacy gains among participating students.

### **Key Staff**

ABC Ministry’s Leadership Team includes: [provide names of key staff and their qualifications, experience]

### **Projected Program Budget**

**ABC Ministry is seeking support in the amount of \$4375 from XYZ Bank:**

Set-up Hardware ( <i>Economis</i> debit cards and card readers)	\$375
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Store Inventory (initial products such as school supplies, novelties)	\$500
--	-------

Staff Stipend (cover small portion of the key program coordinator)	\$1500
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“Tax Match” Fund	\$1000
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*In the Economis virtual mini-economy, students are paid a salary for program participation and receive a direct deposit paycheck weekly. To simulate the real economy, taxes are withheld from their paychecks. The tax match fund would provide real U.S. dollars to underwrite a student-led civics project wherein they will determine how to spend their “tax revenues” for the benefit of the commonwealth.*

Philanthropy Match Fund \$1000  
*Economis participants can make virtual charitable contributions. The philanthropy match fund will enable us to provide real dollars to underwrite a student-led philanthropy project wherein they will design and implement an initiative benefiting their neighborhood.*

**TOTAL \$4375**

**Evaluation Plan**

1. ABC Ministry will conduct pre- and post-tests of participating youth, to measure knowledge gains in financial literacy. These instruments were developed by Dr. Amy Sherman of the Sagamore Institute for Policy Research, with input from professional educators and staff at the Powell Center for Economic Literacy.
2. Our Program Director will conduct structured interview focus groups with selected parents of participating youth, in order to gain a qualitative assessment of the project’s impact on youths’ growth in life skills such as delayed gratification, using cost/benefit analysis in decision-making, and planning for the future.

## **SAMPLE: Short Grant Application for a Corporate Philanthropy**

[*Customize to your particular school, organization, city, and program in the places italicized.*]

Less than 17 percent of high school students report participation in a school-based personal finance class. For urban at-risk students, the need for financial literacy instruction is especially critical, since they are witness to adults making poor financial decisions in their day-to-day lives. It's a tragedy that so many youth graduate or leave home without a basic knowledge of how the economic world works. They are forced out into the economic world unprepared and ill-equipped to make wise financial decisions. For that reason, *our school* is targeting *our city's* youth through providing financial education and hands-on instructive programs (*and entrepreneurship opportunities, if relevant*).

*Our school* implements the *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> program, a multi-faceted and multi-partner initiative that aims to excite and equip youth with economic and financial literacy skills and knowledge of youth entrepreneurship. We work with high-risk kids ranging from *age/grade* to *age/grade* in our community. We use a professionally developed and tested economic and financial literacy curriculum for the various grade levels. *Explain how you teach the lessons: gather kids together on day – for example, start with attention-grabbing introduction; teach lesson; offer hands-on activity to reinforce lesson.* These mini-lessons cover such topics as saving, investing, interest rates, understanding scarcity and opportunity costs, trade, profit, consumer education, budgeting, and independent living.

Perhaps the most influential of our hands-on programs is *Economis*, a web-based “token economy” for use in urban settings. *Economis* creates an incentive-based system for program participation and achievement. Students earn virtual currency by participating in our school's activities (*give an example or two*), as well as through their accomplishments, such as punctuality or reading a set number of books. Each student has an online checking account, into which they can make deposits, purchase Certificates of Deposits, and/or save their money in an interest-bearing savings account. They can also build their own virtual stock portfolios and earn dividends based on current Wall Street prices. We have created an online store where students can spend their money on selected merchandise or on tickets to participate in special activities or events. Finally, students have the opportunity to give portions of their money to charity.

*Economis* works hand-in-hand with our instructive curriculum. The lessons and hands-on application both work together to help our youth gain financial literacy skills. For example, using the knowledge in the classroom about budgeting, students can log in to their *Economis* account and create and implement their own budgets. After learning about investing, students can go to their account and make decisions about how to invest their money.

The [*name of the corporate foundation*] supports youth programs that aim to better the lives of youth. It's of paramount importance that kids in *our city* learn basic economic principles. We believe that in order for our youth to have financial success as adults, their education needs to start *NOW*.

In summary, the *Infusionomics*<sup>TM</sup> youth economic/financial literacy initiative builds youth who are equipped to make good choices, plan for the future, delay gratification, and manage personal resources. The program is empowering to low-income youth as they see their bank balances rise with their own efforts and thrift. Everything in *Economis* simulates the real-world economy as closely as possible, for hands-on learning that feels relevant to students and that “sticks” with them as they experience the consequences--good and ill--of their money management decisions.

**PROJECT BUDGET**

Project Staff (% of Project Coordinator’s time)	\$1,500
Inventory for <i>Economis</i> Reward Store	\$1,500
Youth Philanthropy Projects	<u>\$500</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,500</b>

**TIMELINE**

**January**

- Conduct Student Orientation
- Administer pre-tests with all students
- Begin the Financial Life Lessons
- Implement *Economis*

**February-April**

- Continue Financial Life lessons
- Hold Periodic “Reward Store” days

**May**

- Finalize Financial Life Lessons
- Implement Youth Philanthropy Projects
- Administer post-tests
- Conduct data analysis to measure student gains in financial literacy

# Holding a Silent Auction

*Silent auctions serve as an effective fundraising tool for community groups. The Brushy Fork team from Floyd County, Kentucky, organized a silent auction to help raise money for their computer gift project. The Technology Gift Incentive Foundation Team (TGIFT) donates a computer annually to a deserving student from Floyd County. Below are some planning steps and issues team members considered as they organized their silent auction.*

## Before the auction

1. Schedule your silent auction in conjunction with another event that will bring in a good-sized crowd of people. For example, the TGIFT team held their silent auction during a dinner at which they awarded their first computer.
2. Gather items for the auction from team members, local businesses and other people who support your work. Items at the TGIFT auction included gift certificates, autographed books, art prints, crafted items such as quilts and needlework, tea sets, food baskets, and curios. You can combine several small items into a basket to help raise the bidding price. Log items as you receive them so you will have an inventory of donations.
3. Create a bid sheet for each item. The bid sheet should provide a space for bidders to record their bidding number and amount of bid, recognize who donated the item for the auction and provide any pertinent information about the item. (See sample bid sheet at right.)

BID SHEET	
Item: Quilted Wall Hanging (hand-made by a local artisan)	
Donated by: David Crafts	
Opening Bid: \$50.00	
Bid number	Bid amount
1.	\$50.00
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____
8.	_____
9.	_____

^ Create a bid sheet for each auction item.

Silent Auction Sign-In Sheet	
Name: _____1	_____
Telephone: _____	_____
Address: _____	_____
Name: _____2	_____
Telephone: _____	_____
Address: _____	_____
Name: _____3	_____
Telephone: _____	_____
Address: _____	_____
Name: _____4	_____
Telephone: _____	_____
Address: _____	_____

## During the auction

1. Create a sign-in sheet for bidders on which they can record their name, address and telephone number. This sheet should be numbered so that each bidder receives a bidding number, which they place on the bid sheet for items they wish to buy. This sheet also provides contact information for any winning bidders not present when the auction closes.
2. Once a bidder has signed in, he/she uses the assigned bidder number to bid on items of interest. This simplified bidding process keeps bids anonymous until the auction is over.

^ Have bidders sign in and receive a bid number.

## Closing the auction

1. Closing the auction takes some time so the TGIFT group closed their auction just after dinner and before the keynote speaker began his address. Attendees at the dinner were able to take a quick break and make last-minute bids before the speech began. During the speech three TGIFT members processed the auction bids.
2. When the silent auction closes, two or three people can use the bid sheets to determine who receives each item and how much each person owes. TGIFT used two people—one called off the winning bidder and amount from each bid sheet and the other recorded the information on a totals sheet. A third person grouped auction items by winning bidder and labeled the grouped items with the winning bidder's number.
3. Each winning bidder's name was then matched to that person's bid number. The items won and the amounts owed were recorded on a 3X5 index card and used as a receipt when the person checked out of the silent auction.

WINNER AND BID AMOUNT PER ITEM		
Item number	Bidder number	Amount
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____

^ Transfer items won and amount owed for each bidder from this sheet onto 3 X 5 cards so bidders can check out.

## Miscellaneous considerations

Get permission to hold a silent auction if you are using a public area or someone else's property. Make sure the property owner does not have any policies against using the space for fundraising activities.

Gathering items to auction can take a lot of time and energy. The group holding the auction should plan a work session a few days before the auction to inventory auction items, log them in and determine starting bids.

Someone in the group should be responsible for writing thank you letters to individuals, businesses and organizations that donated items for the auction.

Gift certificates can be easy to lose at an auction. If your auction items include gift certificates, keep them in labeled envelopes in a box during the auction. Just put out the bidding sheet with pertinent information and pull the gift certificates for the winning bidders at check out time.

<b>Bidder # 7: Alice Crowe</b>		
Item 5	lamp	\$25.00
Item 11	photo	5.00
Item 16	t-shirt	4.00
Item 27	quilt	75.00
Total owed		109.00

^ Use the 3 X 5 card as a receipt for bidders.

## Happy auctioning!

*Special thanks to Brushy Fork Associate Delora Kraus from TGIFT in Floyd County, Kentucky, for providing information for this toolbox.*

## Corporate In-Kind Donation Sources

### Applebee's™

<http://www.applebees.com/GuestFAQ.aspx?q=1>

For gifts in-kind or gift certificates

Requirements:

- Submit request in writing on organization's letterhead
- Can mail it to local restaurant

### Baskin Robins™

<http://www.baskinrobbins.com/about/InCommunity.aspx>

Scooper Star Rewards: gives gift certificates to schools and youth organizations a way to reward kids for their work

Requirements:

Contact local Baskin Robins

### Best Buy™

[http://www.bestbuyinc.com/community\\_relations/local\\_donations.htm](http://www.bestbuyinc.com/community_relations/local_donations.htm)

Each U.S. Best Buy store has the discretion to support local nonprofit organizations with donations of product or gift cards. Donations come directly from local Best Buy stores to support 501c3 organizations within 50 miles of the store, including schools, libraries and after-school clubs.

Requirements:

Fill out eligibility form here: [http://69.12.29.100/crnew/product\\_donation\\_eligibility.asp](http://69.12.29.100/crnew/product_donation_eligibility.asp)  
Meet with manager at local store.

### Gap Inc.

Gap™, Old Navy™, Banana Republic™

[http://www.gapinc.com/public/SocialResponsibility/sr\\_com\\_giftcards.shtml](http://www.gapinc.com/public/SocialResponsibility/sr_com_giftcards.shtml)

Appreciation Cards (gift certificates) to Gap, Old Navy, and Banana Republic

Requirements:

- Submit a one page letter (on organization letter-head) including:
  - brief description of organization
  - organization's federal tax-exempt number
  - description of the project for which the appreciation card will be used
  - date that donation is needed
  - how Gap, Inc.'s contribution will be acknowledged at the event

\*send the letter to the relevant appreciation card site, as determined by desired store and nearest location.

### Sprint™

<http://www.sprint.com/citizenship/commitment.html?id8=vanity:community>

Sprint offers "Community Sponsorships" to organizations that target K-12 education, youth development, arts and culture, diversity and civic infrastructure.

\* These sponsorships can come in the form of cash and/or in-kind donations.

Requirements:

- fill out online community sponsorship request

Sprint also gives *In-Kind Donations* in the form of calling cards, office supplies, computers, tvs, and the like.

**Wal-Mart™ (and Sam's Club™)**

<http://www.walmartfoundation.org>

Wal-Mart gives grants (cash donations) locally based out of local Wal-Mart and Sam's Club stores.

Requirements:

- talk to the Community Involvement Coordinator at the Wal-Mart nearest you.

## **Testimonials on the Influence of *Economis* Implementation**

“Once you have financial literacy down pat when you’re young, when you become an adult it will be second nature to you. Then when you’re older you’ll be in control of your finances without worrying about debt.”

--Stuart Walters, youth participant at Church Hill Activities and Tutoring

“One high-school senior at the end said ‘thank you, I needed this’ about what she learned regarding bank accounts vs. paycheck cashing stores.”

-- LaShanda Rorie, Program Director Oasis of Hope CDC

“*Economis* has taught me to start saving early. If you start later and deposit more, you’ll get less than if you start saving early and even deposit less.”

-- Blaine Crabtree, 8<sup>th</sup> grade student, The Oaks Academy

“Cheryl has more of a desire to save and cut back for bigger and better things. Now she’s saving it because at the end of the summer she wants to be able to get manicure and a pedicure and get her hair done and wants use her money to do that. So whereas before if she had ten dollars in her pocket, the ten dollars was spent, now she’s saving for a long-term goal of what she wants to do.”

--Renee Deputy, parent of a student at Shepherd Community Center

“[This training] was something I never had that early on. There is a need for more financial education at that age.”

--Dale Crabtree, parent, The Oaks Academy

“We’ve had an incentives-based philosophy on our goals, and *Economis* helps solidify that and includes the technological aspect. It helped us think through exactly what we expect of our students. To quantify that and write out and define what we want to see was helpful.”

--Jesse Kell, Teacher, Elijah House Academy

“Before I learned the *Economis* program I used to spend money like crazy, like there was no tomorrow...when I learned the *Economis* program I learned that you really do need money for other things, not just things you want. Because “no” is an answer.”

-- Cameron Blevins, student, Elijah House Academy

“Learning financial life skills strengthens youths’ ability to participate effectively in the mainstream economy as they mature. The skills Smart Money for Kids reinforces can protect these youth from negative choices like mismanaging credit cards and falling into debt while encouraging them in positive behaviors like delayed gratification and the discipline of saving.”

-- Dr. Amy L. Sherman, Sagamore Institute for Policy Research

## **Fast Facts: Why Financial Literacy is SO Crucial**

- Only 10.2% of high school seniors score a “C” or better on the Basic Financial Survival Skills Test.
- 79% of students age 16 through 22 have never taken a class in personal finance.
- 42% of teenagers between ages 18-19 have credit cards.
- 64% of teenagers don’t know what an “interest rate” is.
- Two-thirds of teens admit that they could use more lessons on money management.
- 70% of college students hold credit cards. One-fifth carry debts on these cards of more than \$10,000.
- The average American household owns 14.7 bank, store, & credit cards & carries an unpaid balance of \$5900 on them!

