GSEC is a business plan competition that invites students from around the world and across disciplines to find creative & commercially sustainable ways to reduce poverty through new business development.

GSEC business plans provide social and financial returns on investment. Participants increase their global awareness & develop their knowledge and understanding of how to take a business plan from inception to implementation with the advice & involvement of a wide base of knowledgeable contributors.

“GSEC strengthens the competitive spirit of participants and positively stretches them to be more than they can be such that after the competition, their ways of thinking — which were synonymous with what has been leading the world in problems — would give way to new modes of thinking and doing things…those that seek to solve social problems through business ventures.”

GSEC T Eam m EmbEr

GSEC is organized by the University of Washington Global Business Center with the support of the UW Department of Global Health.

Visit the GSEC website for more information: foster.washington.edu/gsec/

GSEC Develops Leaders Who Think Differently and Make a Difference

GSEC Teams have come from Africa, East & Central Asia, India, and the U.S. Business plans have offered innovative solutions to complex global poverty issues in a range subject areas such as: alternative energy, agriculture, healthcare, technology, and resource & waste management.

Plans ideas have included: mobile medical units for rural Indian populations, biofuel production in India and Ghana, sustainable hardwood timber production in Central America, hand-cranked radios and mobile wind turbines for nomadic populations in Mongolia and Kazakhstan, organic and fair-trade agriculture in Zimbabwe, a women’s sunflower oil cooperative in Kenya, and a micro-enterprise for biodegradable disposable tableware in rural India.

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GSEC provides outstanding international educational and practical opportunities for participants. GSEC promotes the creation of innovative solutions to global poverty by fostering interdisciplinary collaborations among academic, not-for-profit, government, and private sectors. As a unique business plan competition, GSEC business plans consider the social and financial returns on investment and are judged on three criteria:
• Effect on the quality of life & poverty alleviation in the developing world
• Financial sustainability
• Feasibility of implementation

Participation Opportunities
• Support GSEC - including, but not limited to:
  - Sponsorship of a team’s travel costs,
  - GSEC award sponsorships,
  - GSEC event sponsorships,
  - In-kind sponsorships.
• Mentor a Team: long-term (Dec-Feb) and short-term (GSEC Week) mentorships available
• Judge a Team: select teams (Nov) or judge in competition rounds (GSEC Week)

2009 Timeline
November 12, 2008: GSEC Applications due (detailed criteria on the GSEC website)
November 2008: Executive summaries reviewed by selection committee
December 2008: Teams selected & invited to compete in GSEC 2009
December 2008 - January 2009: Mentors are assigned & work with teams
January 15, 2009: Full business plan due; teams seek feedback from mentors
February 12, 2009: Final business plans due
February 23-27, 2009: GSEC Week

Visit the GSEC website: foster.washington.edu/gsec/
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