

Master Gardener Program Re-organization

Sponsor:

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Overview of the Project

In existence since 1977, the University of Minnesota Master Gardener Program provides volunteers trained in horticulture to educate their local communities on best practices in consumer horticulture and environmental stewardship. In 2010, over 2,000 volunteers statewide provided nearly 129,000 total volunteer hours reaching over 243,000 adults and 55,000 youth. The program is coordinated by the University of Minnesota Extension and has its academic home in the Department of Horticulture.

Currently, the program is undergoing a strategic reorganization with the goal of better aligning its mission of providing trained and enthusiastic volunteers to educate communities with a sustainable program structure. The scope of the first phase of the project was to develop a number of possible scenarios that can be vetted and translated into a business and implementation plan that optimizes on the research-based expertise of the Master Gardener volunteers while providing a management structure allowing the program to thrive.

Based on information gathered during Phase 1, the focus of this second phase of the project will be exploration of revenue generation for the state-wide Master Gardener program, specifically the viability of an online gardening course for home gardeners. A business plan will be created addressing market demand, integration into the existing Master Gardener Program, and obstacles to implementation.

Project Team

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