

# Successful Innovative Ideas In Rural Areas (The IDEAS Project)

Dr. Marv Pichla  
Inspiring Innovations, Inc.

2017 Co-Learning Plan Series

Michigan State University EDA University Center for  
Regional Economic Innovation



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Michigan State University  
Center for Community and Economic Development  
EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation

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Inspiring Innovations, Inc.

Briley Township Board  
Montmorency County  
Atlanta, Michigan

**SUCCESSFUL INNOVATIVE IDEAS  
IN RURAL AREAS  
(The IDEAS Project)  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

The need to forever pursue an “Always A Better Way!” community development strategy is the foundation of this Co-Learning Plan. Broadly entitled: Leading From the Ground Up For Building Collaboration, Commerce and Communication, this Plan specifically centers on the development and initial use of a locally inspired IDEAS Guidebook. The IDEAS Guidebook is first intended to expand the spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation across multiple development sectors including community, business and education. The Guidebook is also designed to encourage involvement from all age and working professional groups within a small rural area to create an inclusive model for gathering new ideas for continual growth. The long-term goal for this Co-Learning Plan and the IDEAS Guidebook is to offer a simple, community-based, grass-roots strategy tool to initiate a bottom-up approach for building a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Briley Township Board and staff initiated the thought processes for uniting area residents, business and organizations around the goal of overall community enrichment.

### Briley Township Board

Bruno Wojcik, Supervisor

Mary Jo Whitmire, Clerk

Bonnie Valentine-Flynn, Treasurer

Nancy Kaiser, Trustee

Mary Freeman, Trustee

Stephanie Dice, Deputy Clerk / Notary  
(*Not in picture*)



Briley Township located in northeast Michigan is statistically considered a distressed community. The unemployment rate for that area of the State, Montmorency County is approximately 9.7% which is almost twice the unemployment rate of the entire State (4.9%). Additionally, based on recent data, nearly 23% of the Township lives below the poverty level and the per capita income is just over minimum wage earnings. As a result, the Briley Township Board and other community leaders began considering all innovation driven opportunities to assist them in leveraging existing assets, reaching beyond their geographic borders and nurturing young adults residing in the area to contribute to improving the region.

## **PROPOSAL**

A Co-Learning partnership was initiated between Briley Township and Dr. Marvin Pichla, Inspiring Innovations, Inc. based on their common priority to progressively address multiple challenges facing the Township community. The partnership also evolved via cooperative memberships on various northern Michigan local/regional/State planning groups and information shared concerning innovative projects piloted by Pichla in other comparable rural areas in Michigan.

Beginning facilitation of the Leading From The Ground Up For Building Collaboration, Commerce and Communication Co-Learning Plan and the priorities of the IDEAS Project ironically mirrored the eventual “sections” of the IDEAS Guidebook very closely. For example, the Briley Township Board members were first individually and collectively guided through the process of: What Do YOU/WE Want? This simple activity provided the following “Want” results:

- Total community involvement would be critical.
- Development ideas need to come from within the community.
- Communication in, around and about the area needs to be improved, positive and regular.
- Young adults need to be invited and encouraged to be a part of area community enrichment.
- Citizen ideas need to be appropriately developed before presentation action.
- We need all citizens, businesses and groups to be partners.

The discussions and outcomes of the Briley Township Board “What Do YOU/WE Want?” sessions, strategically led to the realization that a void existed in the community development process. Based on observational and basic research, no instrument was found to offer introductory guidance on cross-sector idea building. Available development assistance was primarily focused on small business start-up and entrepreneurship targeted toward private sector opportunities only. Hence, the proposal to create an IDEAS Guidebook as the principle action/product generated from the Co-Learning Plan was consensus.

*Quote: "I've looked and looked for a document that could help us as a community...in pamphlet form or online...but nothing."*

*– Briley Township Board Member*

An excerpt from the Briley Township website:



(Note: The "What Do YOU/WE Want?" exercise is recommended to all small communities as a great multi-sector idea building starting point.)

*Quote: "No one cares enough about small town/community USA. Our IDEAS Project will help all small areas by being proactive to the generation and promotion of ideas."*

*– Briley Township Board Member*

## **IDEAS PROJECT**

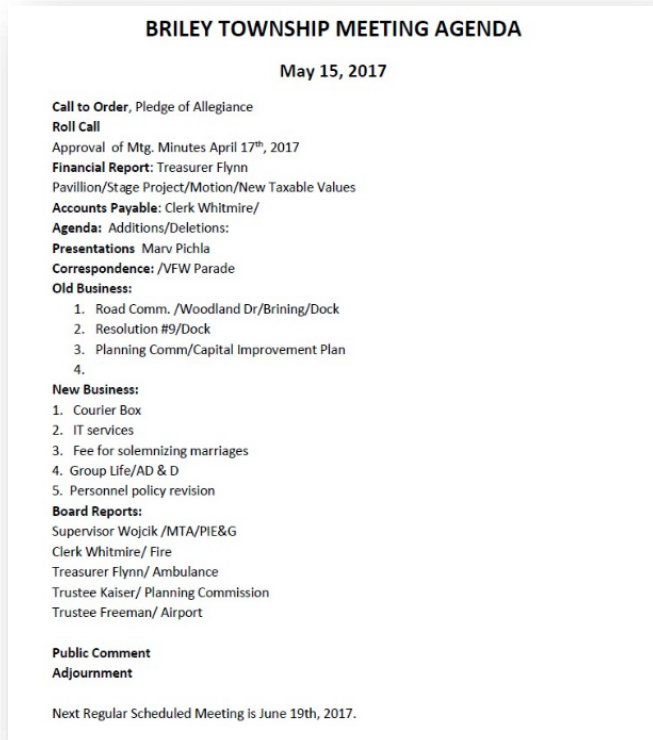
Development of the IDEAS Project began with a more detailed review of documents available which focus on multi-sector community development. With the directive that the IDEAS Guidebook would be simple, versatile, user friendly and serve as a common starting spot for any concept (large, small, public, private), it was necessary to not duplicate other publications or services.

IDEAS Project updates and discussion time was set aside at monthly Briley Township Board meetings. Status reports were provided and open discussion was encouraged to solicit additional thoughts and target service points.

Draft Guidebook sections were presented for review, critique and recommendations. Based on the verification that a “product-void” exists in the general community development arena, the goal of the Briley Township Board/co-learner partner and contributing local leaders was to build a IDEAS Guidebook that could pass a “Separate & Special” service review. However, to maximize the results/efforts of the observational and basic research it was agreed that information on all of the other economic development organizations/services would be included in the Guidebook “Resource Library” section.

***Quote: “I see the IDEAS (Guidebook) handout as a motivational tool to verbalize and assess ideas...it simplifies said process.” – Briley Township Board Member***

The most complete draft of the IDEAS Guidebook is contained on pages 11 – 25 of this Co-Learning Plan. It is critical to read through each Section of the Guidebook to understand the comprehensive simplicity, engagement and community-wide strategy of the document.



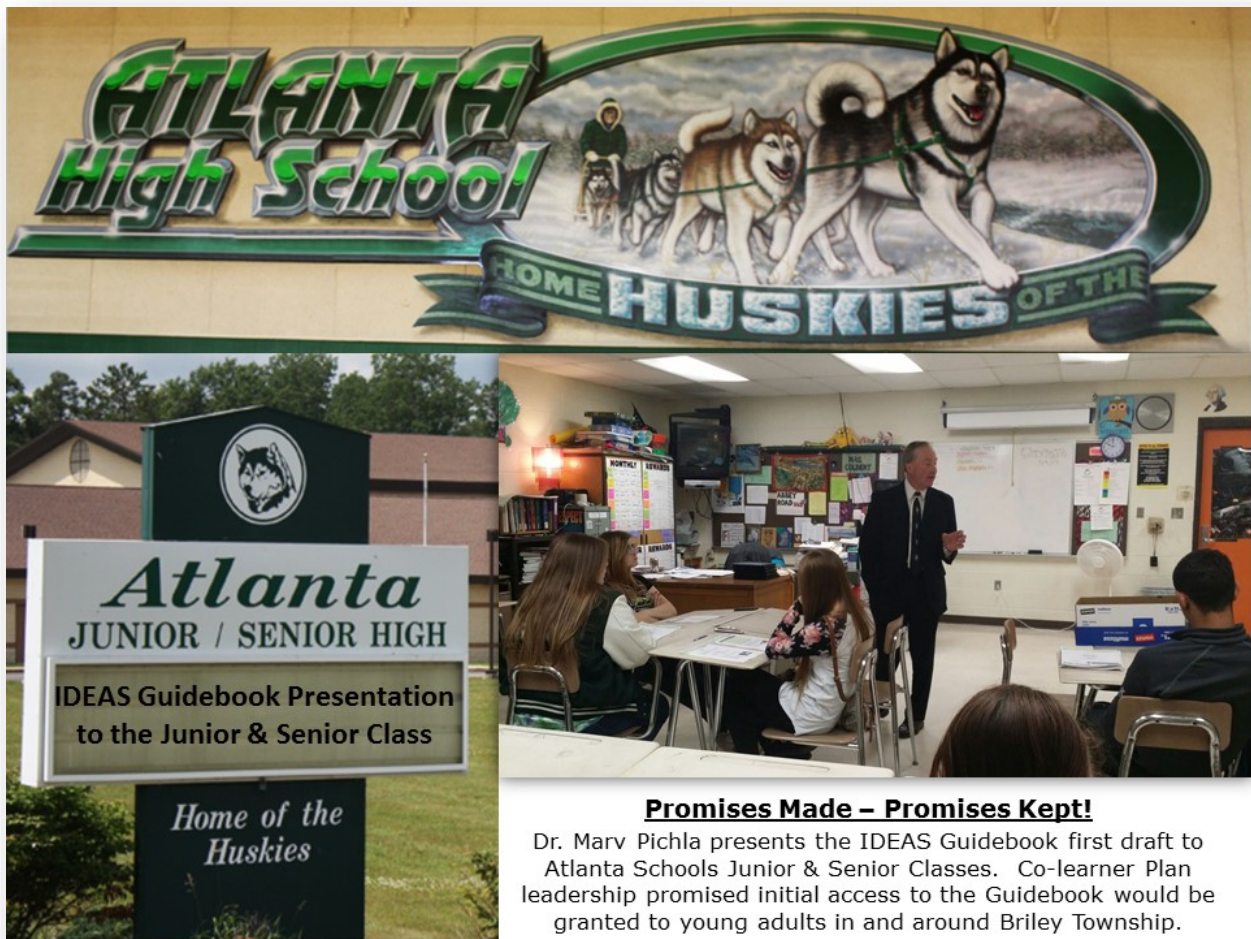


## IMPLEMENTATION

*Quote: "You just don't understand! No one listens to young people around here...or their suggestions!" – Atlanta Schools Student*

As the IDEAS Project and Guidebook reached a strong work-in-progress stage, it was agreed that the first presentation of its intent and purpose would be to the Atlanta High School Junior and Senior classes. The strategic benefit action was to:

- A. Reinforce the partnership initiative with the Atlanta School District.
- B. Introduce the IDEAS Project to young adults first to garner their early input, reactions and involvement.
- C. Obtain sample ideas from the young adult perspective about growing the City of Atlanta, Briley Township, Montmorency County and northeast Michigan.
- D. Curb the attitude and feeling contained in the quote offered to introduce the IMPLEMENTATION plan section.



### **Promises Made – Promises Kept!**

Dr. Marv Pichla presents the IDEAS Guidebook first draft to Atlanta Schools Junior & Senior Classes. Co-learner Plan leadership promised initial access to the Guidebook would be granted to young adults in and around Briley Township.



Engaging the local school district first was also highly appropriate based on the common development themes contained in the Atlanta Community Schools Mission Statement and the IDEAS Project and Guidebook.

### **Atlanta Community Schools Mission Statement**

The mission of the Atlanta Community Schools is to create an environment conducive to optimal learning which will prepare all of its students, preschoolers through adults, to function productively in a rapidly changing society.

To provide quality and equity in educational opportunities for all students', the district will maximize the use of all of its human, material and financial resources to provide an educational program that will meet the individual, social, emotional and intellectual needs of its students, build positive self-concepts, self-discipline, and enable them to become contributing members of society.

Because we believe that a quality educational program requires a partnership between the schools, the home, and the community, the district will strive to create and strengthen these bonds whenever possible.

In light of the fact that the Atlanta Schools Junior and Senior class sizes were less than 30, the opportunity to more effectively explain the IDEAS Project and introduce the Guidebook was beneficial. The Briley Township Board Supervisor was in attendance to invite the young adults to join a special Community Enrichment Committee intended to begin sponsoring events and opportunities which will enhance involvement from all area age groups. The Atlanta Schools presentations ended with an offer to all of the students to voice early suggestions that may fit into the IDEAS Project initiative:

*"We need a separate coffee shop with WI-FI for young people to gather and connect with other friends online."*

*"Why can't we get some/any form of a fast-food restaurant to open here? If one came others would follow."*

*"Does anyone think about taking one of the old, vacant buildings and convert it into a Youth Center?"*

*"Young people around here really don't know what's going on! There is nothing on Facebook or on real social media that we would look at to find out."*

*"I think we would help...but what do you want us to do...and show what's in it for us. That's what's missing."*

Promotion and building community ownership of the IDEAS Project was the next major task assumed by the Briley Township Board. In addition to partnering with the area school(s), a linkage was created with the Montmorency Tribune newspaper. The linkage involved having a Tribune reporter attend an upcoming Briley Township Board meeting to experience first-hand the open discussion related to the Project, and also to assist in promoting the series of IDEAS Guidebook Advisor Sessions that would occur in June 2017.

An excerpt from the Montmorency Tribune:

### **IDEAS! Guidebook advisor sessions**

Three IDEAS! Guidebook advisor sessions will be held in June at the Atlanta Jr/Sr High School library, located at 10500 Co. Rd. 489, Atlanta.

With these sessions, you can turn your idea into a reality. The IDEAS Guidebook is a tool to help build your IDEA. Community, business and education entrepreneurship IDEAS welcome.

The IDEAS advisor sessions are facilitated by Dr. Marvin Pichla, Inspiring Innovations, Inc. There is no registration required and the sessions are free to attend.

The first session, "What Do You/We Want?" will be held Wednesday, June 7, 2017, from 4-6 p.m. The second session "Who Are The Customers?" will be held Wednesday, June 14, from 4-6 p.m. The final session, "Show Me The Money" will be held Wednesday, June 21, from 4-6 p.m.

You can download a free copy of the IDEAS Guidebook at [brileytownship.com/ideas.html](http://brileytownship.com/ideas.html).

The provision of face-to-face IDEAS Guidebook Advisor Sessions was the most direct IMPLEMENTATION action undertaken by partners in this Co-Learning Plan. Facilitated by the Co-Learning Plan author Dr. Marvin Pichla, the sessions focused on the entrepreneurship and innovation challenges raised in the Guidebook "What Do YOU/WE Want?", "Who Are The Customers?" and "Show Me The Money!" Sections. Attendees at the Advisor Sessions first discussed the needs of small communities in Michigan that may not have a special, natural, geographic or business-related niche, and that they must therefore rely on their own collective creativity to spur community development.

*Quote: "The most important statement at this Session...was the use of the term WE WILL!" – IDEAS Guidebook Advisor Session Attendee*

*Quote: "We wrote idea papers in our 5<sup>th</sup> Grade class this year and here was my idea....!" - IDEAS Guidebook Advisor Session Attendee (Age 11)*

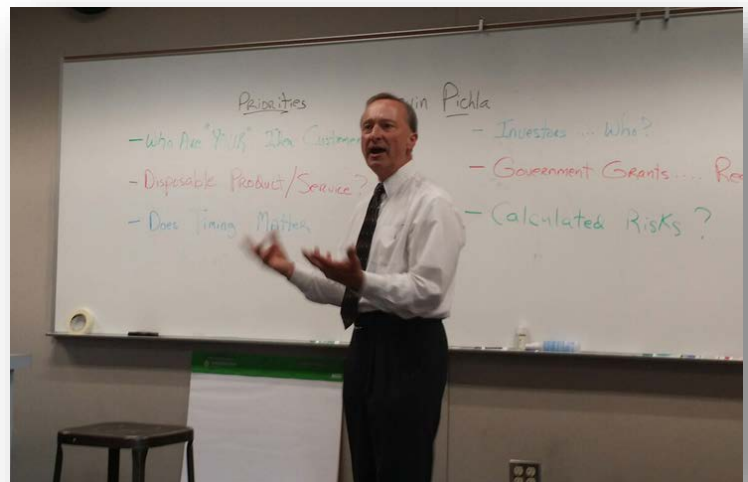
One of the most significant impacts of the IDEAS Guidebook appeared to be the directive in Section A: "What Do YOU/WE Want?" to draft an idea paper on one's concept. The value of this activity was driven by the requirement to put one's thoughts and dreams in writing and share it with others. During the

session, it was apparent that as attendees followed through on the idea paper process, they were discovering the extensive number of not-thought-through issues. These discoveries were ideal learning moments for all others in attendance.

Another high-value component contained in the IDEAS Guidebook was the Creative & Development Supply Chain diagram. Each Session used the Supply Chain as a visual to encourage all attendees to determine where their idea “fits” on the chart. No matter the entrepreneurship and innovative goal of an individual idea (collaborative, commerce, communication or education development), the Supply Chain enabled everyone to consider the level of their creativity action and picture what may be their next steps.

*Quote: “I will follow through the Creation & Development Supply Chain steps and then I know I will be ready for getting the right help for my motorcycle accessory idea.”*

*- IDEAS Guidebook Advisor  
Session Attendee*



Additional promotion and community ownership development strategies discussed and scheduled for later action by the Briley Township Board and partners included:

- Updating the Township’s website to include additional information on the IDEAS Project and link to the Guidebook.
- Posting access to IDEAS Guidebook information at local governments, businesses, libraries, churches and community organization buildings.
- Use of in-school television webcast service announcements.
- Multi-organizational newsletter articles.
- Inserts in Township mailings.
- Inserts in local market bagging of purchases.
- Posting on all public or private allowable boards of information.

## **BUILDING THE CULTURE**

One of the most significant benefits realized from embarking on preparation of this Co-Learning Plan, was the simple “sowing of seeds” designed to grow a culture of entrepreneurship in innovation in and around Briley Township. The seeds of this culture were not planted in a highly organized fashion or with the need for immediate gratification. Instead, the seeds for growing a Township culture of entrepreneurship and innovation were planted to nurture a greater acceptance of personal/community responsibility for growth and development (i.e. “WE (Briley Township) are so much more if WE are ONE together.”)

Based on this unique quietly evolving benefit, achieving the primary purpose of creating an easy to understand IDEAS Guidebook and reporting Briley Township as “THE” example of community responsibility acceptance quickly became a common grass-roots cause. Additionally, as part of achieving this purpose, discussion began concerning the need for individuals, organizations and even businesses to consider potential “unified priorities” to assist in selecting strong multi-sector development actions.

*Quote: “I’m just excited about how easy it seems to be...to build on an idea if we just get together and share.” – IDEAS Guidebook Advisor Session Attendee*

Examples of suggested “unified priorities” stemming from the Briley Township IDEAS Project included but were not limited to the following:

- Quality communication is a continuous improvement issue for all.
- Money is only one part of any form of positive community growth.
- Inclusion is a leadership responsibility.
- No “Lone Ranger” person/organization will arrive to save/grow the area.
- Working/trying to be like another area, defeats all parts of being “SPECIAL”.
- Young adults must/need to be involved at every community development level possible.

Another significant IDEAS Project action for Briley Township’s community development process was its quest to establish a regional identity that is creative, unique and sustainable. Discussion followed regarding “destination labels” that are given to other areas of the State (i.e. Traverse City is the Cherry Capital or Detroit the Motor City). A suggestion was made that Briley Township be designated as “The IDEAS Capital of Michigan”. Positive support was apparent from all involved. It was determined that if appropriate follow-through was achieved via implementation of the IDEAS Project and reasonable momentum was maintained, a designation as “The IDEAS Capital of Michigan” would be the type of special label sought by the area.

## **CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

This Co-Learning Plan: Successful Innovative Ideas In Rural Areas (The IDEAS Project), provided positive results in re-establishing the attention and support that needs to be given to fostering “home-grown” community building concepts. Likewise, this plan appears to show that no matter the focus of a concept/idea, small rural areas have a unique capacity to create a developmental, unified momentum that can result in quality innovative outcomes.

Briley Township through its IDEAS Project, is just beginning to realize and utilize the benefits of starting small. Further, by not allowing themselves to be held hostage by past precedents or opinions of duplicating existing initiatives, Briley Township and its surrounding community is on a strategic mission to find their own “SPECIAL”! Key factors that support their mission to be SPECIAL includes leadership through Inclusion, Mentoring, and Ownership in the process of soliciting multi-sector development IDEAS.

An additional innovative approach adopted by Briley Township through its IDEAS Project is the notion that “entrepreneurship” is not just a private business practice. Rather the IDEAS Project expects and encourages this entrepreneurial mindset to be the guide for building business, education and community development ideas in the region. This diversified entrepreneurship approach allows an “open-door” to all ideas large or small and a comfort zone that allows continuous improvement to be the measuring stick for any IDEAS Project...anywhere.

The Co-Learning Plan recommendations for development activities as a result of IDEAS Project include:

1. Begin with the IDEA to cooperatively consolidate a cross-community messaging system (“Bragging Briley” was an introductory tagline used to begin the process in northeast Michigan) to get the progress word out.
2. Recruit and promote the involvement of young people early in the pursuit of unique, fresh multi-sector community development IDEAS.
3. Size of successful IDEAS is not as critical as the number of people/groups they are shared with. (Remember, a good idea becomes GREAT when it is shared)
4. Create a user-friendly structure for soliciting, listening to and acting on
5. IDEAS. One size will NOT fit all, so be adaptive and good listening skills are a huge asset.
6. Recognize, identify and utilize the multiple entrepreneurship resources that exist. However, do not hesitate to customize your own because ownership matters in small, rural area development success.

*Ideas!*

IDEAS!

**IDEAS!**

Proposing – Growing – Presenting

**IDEAS**

That Build

Community | Business | Education | Entrepreneurship

Brought to  
Northeast Michigan by:





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III.	IDEAS Guidebook Advisor Sessions	
-	IDEAS Guidebook Advisor (coaching) Sessions are planned to be offered twice each year.	
-	The sessions would be approximately two (2) hours long and would be facilitated by a community enrichment specialist (Advisor).	
-	Two (2) hours would be dedicated to addressing each IDEAS Guidebook section for a total of six(6) face-to-face Advisor (coaching) hours.	
-	Announcements of the Date/Time/Location for the Advisor Sessions would be distributed community-wide.	

## **Briley Township's IDEAS Guidebook Purpose + Goals**

Community leaders in and around the Township of Briley have decided to develop and sponsor a continuing community enrichment “IDEAS” initiative...for EVERYONE. This IDEAS Guidebook is a tool to help encourage everyone to bring and build on their Community-Business-Education-Entrepreneurship IDEAS and prepare them for next step actions. Too often community enrichment IDEAS are missing an ingredient or two, are not totally “thought through” to be acted upon, or do not meet the specific needs of target customers. This IDEAS Guidebook and related Advisor Sessions are designed to assist in fine-tuning concepts, identify the customer(s) and target resources necessary to make an IDEA come alive.

It is equally important to note that Briley Township believes EVERYONE can contribute/benefit and therefore would like to invite you to join their Community Enrichment IDEAS initiative. There is no cost to listen and share in the IDEAS discussion. No one ever knows when their IDEA will begin to shine or when they may be able to help a community neighbor with their concept. Getting involved is the only option. No IDEA will be too large or small or challenging or costly to be discussed.

**Remember: An IDEA only becomes an IDEA when it is shared with others!**



## IDEAS Guidebook

### Section A

### What Do YOU/WE Want?

#### I. Preparing For Your “Shark-Tank” Moment

One of the first steps in making your IDEA come to life is to take yourself through an intense “Shark Tank” moment. This means that like the contestants in the TV show, you need to ask yourself very direct questions about your IDEA?



- What do you want to build?
- What problem do you want to solve?
- Where would it be located?
- Who would produce it?
- Why would people use/buy it?
- Is it a hobby or a business?
- Do you want to make money or save the world?
- Have others done/built it before?
- Who would be your best partner...or your competition?

Some or all of these questions need to be addressed and thought through before moving forward with your IDEA.

By spending early time discovering the answers to the What Do YOU/WE Want? questions in this IDEAS Guidebook, you will find others much more willing to listen and consider. (Remember those two words! Listen and Consider!)

#### II. Start Making Notes

Another important step in growing your IDEA is to begin and continue making notes on thoughts, creations, problems, people, organizations, strengths, weaknesses, (and the list goes on) that could affect bringing your IDEA to life!



Maybe you start with a one (1) page IDEA PAPER and you focus on Simple/Specific/Clear topics like:

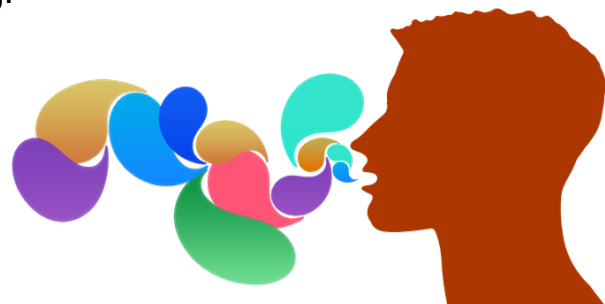
- A. *Background (Where did the IDEA come from?)*
- B. *Problem/Challenge (What product niche does your IDEA fill or problem does it address?)*
- C. *IDEA Proposal (What's the dream?)*
- D. *Actions (What do we do to get started?)*
- E. *Timeframes (How long to start and complete?)*
- F. *Outcomes (What do you hope to achieve?)*

The more items you write down, the more confident you become with your plan...or realize what else you need to consider. Regardless, progressive baby steps are good IDEA steps!

### III. **Adding Value Requires Writing & Speaking**

The third part of the IDEAS Guidebook What Do YOU/WE Want? Section is building the understandability of the product or service you are trying to create. Understandability would seem like an easy task...but it is not. Too often entrepreneurs (i.e. IDEA people) believe everyone thinks the same way they do and are almost offended when others don't seem to instantly "get" the IDEA they are describing.

One of the single most effective and efficient ways to build the understandability of your IDEA is to simply write and speak about it every chance you get.



These actions will steadily add-value to your IDEA because:

- You will prioritize the most important points
- You will become more Simple/Specific/Clear in your message
- People will begin to want to know more
- Ideas about building your IDEA will be offered
- Finally, the more times you write and talk about your IDEA, hopefully it will make even more sense to be pursued!



An IDEAS Section A “What About?” Scorecard			
What About?	✓	Legal Structure	
Product		Financing	
Service		Customer	
Ownership		Location	
Employees		Marketing	

IDEAS UNLIMITED NOTES!

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# IDEAS Guidebook

## Section B

### Who Are The Customers?

#### I. Finding The Value Of Your IDEA

Now that you have “honed-down” your IDEA and have a solid answer to the Section A: What Do YOU/WE Want? question, the next challenge is: Who Are the Customers? Because they determine its real value!

Remember, the goal of this IDEAS Guidebook is to assist anyone with cool concepts that can help build a Community, a Business, a School (education institution), or an Entrepreneurship opportunity. As a result the “customers” for these development areas will be very different. However, the processes you follow to Find The Value Of Your IDEA will be similar.

Think about these questions:

- Are your customers Local/Regional/State/Nationally based?
- Does your IDEA have seasonal limitations?
- Does personal/family income impact the value of your IDEA?
- Is your IDEA a product or a service?
- Are “return” customers a benefit?
- Is your product/service unique or is competition high?



#### II. Watching The Clock

No matter if your IDEA is poised to serve a Community, a Business sector, an Education segment, or create an Entrepreneurship opportunity, the timeframes for product/service delivery are very important.



Potential customers will always be Watching The Clock to make sure your IDEA is delivered on time and is available during all of the advertised time periods promised. This requires all involved to be confident and consistent in planned production schedules and NOT make promises you can't keep to customers.



### **III. Delivering The Goods**

Equal to prioritizing timeframes for product/service delivery, how you accomplish Delivering the Goods' is critical. Assigning personnel responsibilities is a major consideration for success of your IDEA in this area. Again there are a series of questions applicable to the Delivering the Goods' challenge:

- Do customers come to you...or do you deliver?
- Is delivery packaged/online/daily/monthly?
- Are there specific deadlines (could it spoil or is it connected to a calendar specific event)?
- What could happen to impede delivery?
- Who else must you count on?
- Could the weather cause problems?





## IDEAS Guidebook

### Section C

### Show Me The Money!

#### I. Even A Lemonade Stand

No matter the service or product that your IDEA is built on money and other resources will be needed to make it happen. Unfortunately many times an IDEA stops when it appears that finding the right kind and amount of financial support just doesn't seem possible.

Well, one of the biggest goals of the IDEAS Guidebook is to work hard to positively address the Show Me The Money challenge and offer creative options that may be the \$ answer! But first again we need to ask some more questions:



- What are the direct costs that need to be addressed in order to bring life to the IDEA?
- Who or what organizations may be interested in partnering?
- Has your IDEA been tried before and was lack of money the reason for its failure?
- Are small business start up grants or loans a possibility?
- What about the newest opportunity for entrepreneurs such as Crowd-Funding?
- Do you have the help of a financial person...who is wiser in this area?
- How much and how long could volunteers help make an impact?
- What are the beginning, secondary, and "down-the-road" costs?
- Have you created the interest, awareness and value of your IDEA in your community to possibly generate some financial support?

## II. More Homework

As you might have guessed, there is a lot of homework that goes with finding great results in the Show Me The Money section. There are SO many opportunities for Federal, State, Regional and even local grants. Some are quite big, but many are just enough to help push your IDEA. Never believe they will resolve all of your money concerns!

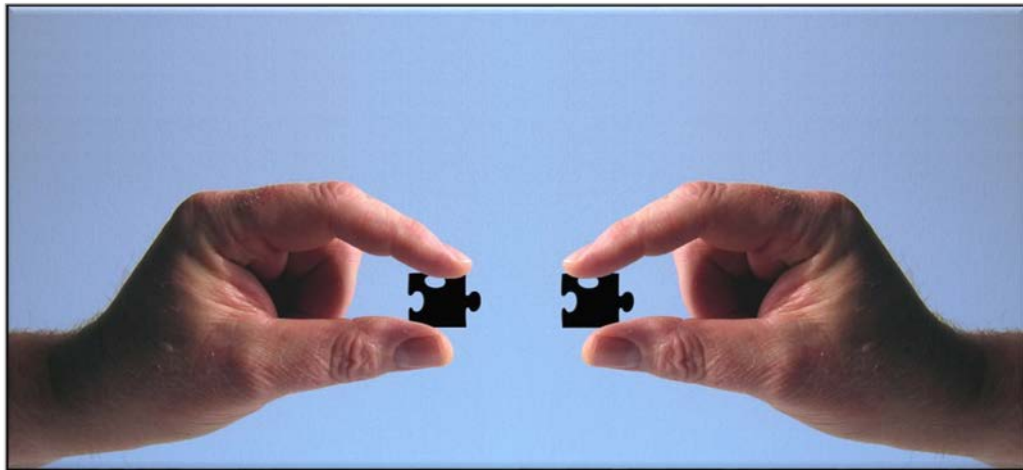
Creative financing is almost a necessity when considering a Community/Business/Education/Partnership project. This means that there are no simple designs for covering the costs for building your IDEA and that often the more creative you become in your finance area, the more likely you are to succeed!



In the Resource Library page of this IDEAS Guidebook, you will find a large number of emails for units of government, foundations, colleges and other organizations that offer special project funding opportunities. Be aware that this is only a SAMPLE LIST and there are probably many more but that means...  
YES More Homework.

### III. Partnerships Unlimited

The importance of team building applies as much to winning a baseball game as it does to building a winning IDEA. Partnerships Unlimited is a philosophy that can greatly impact not only the quality of your IDEA product or service, but also the timeframe for its development and introduction. Holding too tightly to your IDEA to keep it totally yours may have a reverse effect it and unintentionally “strangle” it from growing life.



Partners can be family members, community connections, business colleagues, compatible organizations, religious groups...the list is large. It is critical to NOT eliminate anyone off the list too early based on thoughts about their “Fit” with your IDEA...because they are just YOUR thoughts. Many times we miss an opportunity for a great partnership because we made an uninformed decision for the other person or group because we didn’t even talk to them!





## IDEAS Guidebook Resource Library

### **Aisle M: Money Resources**

<http://www.discovernortheastmichigan.org/nemcog.asp>  
<http://www.grantstar.org/small-business-grants-michigan>  
<http://www.michigancrn.org/small-company-innovation-and-commercialization-assistance/>  
<https://ambergrantsforwomen.com/business-grants-women-michigan/>  
[http://www.michigan.gov/business/0,1607,7-255-52647\\_49817---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/business/0,1607,7-255-52647_49817---,00.html)  
<http://www.michiganbusiness.org/grow/incentives-taxes/>  
[http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1568\\_51684---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1568_51684---,00.html)  
<https://www.michiganfoundations.org/directory>

### **Aisle P: Promotion Resources**

<http://www.atlantamichiganchamber.com/>  
<http://www.hillmanchamber.org/>  
<http://www.lewistonchamber.com/>  
<http://www.discovernortheastmichigan.org/bizlinks.asp>

### **Aisle R: Research Resources**

<http://www.michipreneur.com/michigan-startup-resources/>  
<http://www.michiganbusiness.org/start-up/business-assistance/>  
<http://www.michiganbusiness.org/cm/files/fact-sheets/michigantechnicaleducationcentersmtec.pdf?rnd=1493863652952>  
<http://score-michigan.com/>  
<https://www.sba.gov/offices/district/mi/detroit>  
<http://sbdcmichigan.org/>  
<http://www.northernlakes.net/business-assistance/business-planning-tools/>  
<http://www.canr.msu.edu/productcenter/>

### **Aisle C: Creation & Costs**

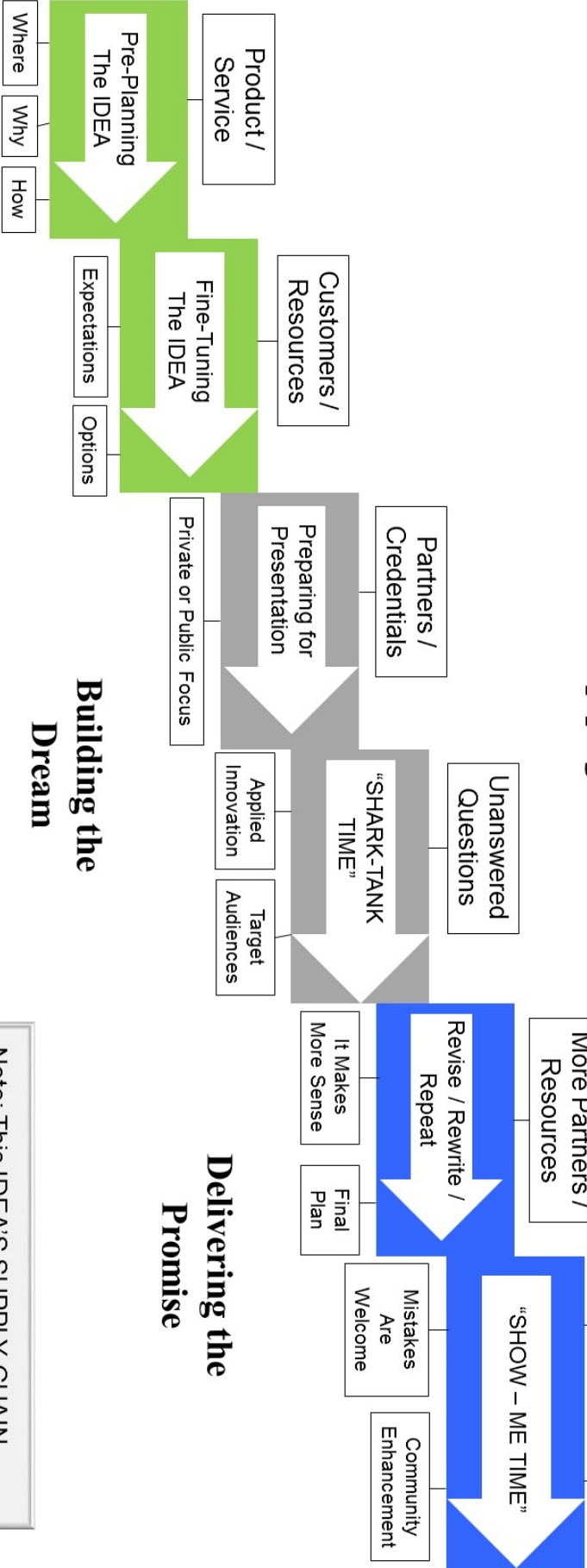
<http://www.michipreneur.com/michigan-startup-directory/>  
<http://www.michigan.gov/statelicensesearch>



# IDEAS GUIDEBOOK

## Creation & Development

### Supply Chain



**Finding Our Way**

**Building the Dream**

**Delivering the Promise**

Note: This IDEAS SUPPLY CHAIN offers a visual of the creation and development process. Where do you (your organization) "FIT" in this community enhancement chart.

12626 State Street, Atlanta, Michigan 49709

## Guidebook in the works for those pursuing projects or grant funding

by Yvonne Swager

Staff reporter

A grant for \$8,000 will help develop a guidebook for those pursuing projects or grant funding. Dr. Marvin Pichla, Inspiring Innovations Inc., said the grant was possible through a regional economic innovation component at Michigan State University.

Pichla serves with Bruno Wojcik, Briley Township Supervisor, on the board for the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments. Pichla said Wojcik asked him to begin a community development initiative, and the guidebook is a main piece of that initiative.

Three areas of focus in the guidebook will include how to be detailed in describing a project and how to relate who will benefit from the project as well as how to evaluate if all the bases have been covered.

"It will try to help them develop it, so it will see the light of day," Pichla explained.

He'll be attending Briley Township meetings to keep people updated on the progress, he said, and he hopes to have a completed guidebook within the next 60 days.

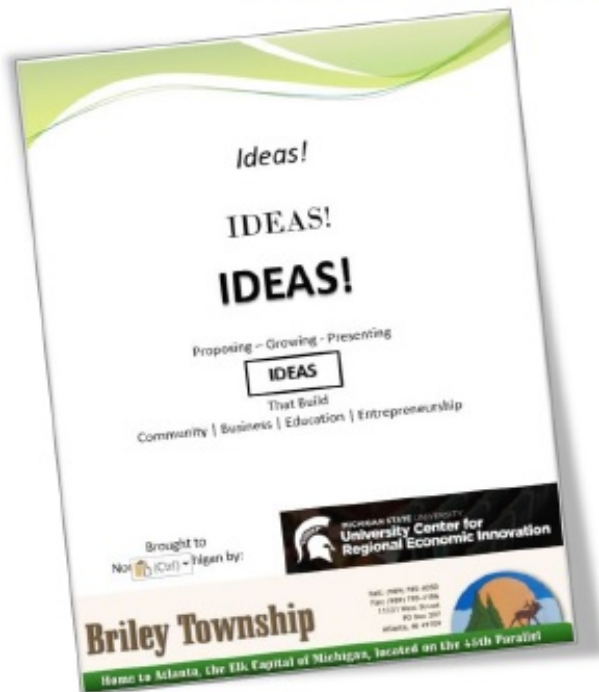
"In April, I will have a more detailed draft of the guidebook," he said.

Once completed, the guidebook will be 15-20 pages, and Pichla told the Tribune he was hoping it would eventually be available online. He plans to conduct two-hour sessions at no charge in the future to help people understand the guidebook. Pichla said he believes MSU will be sharing the guidebook with other small communities throughout the state.



# IDEAS! Guidebook Advisor Sessions

## Turn YOUR Idea Into a Reality



### About the IDEAS Guidebook:

- A "Tool" to help build your IDEA
- Community/Business/Education/Entrepreneurship IDEAS welcome
- Concepts, Customers, Partners, and Resources

### Attend & Share!

Download your free copy of the IDEAS Guidebook at:  
<http://brileytownship.com/ideas.html>

The IDEAS Advisor Sessions are facilitated by Dr. Marvin Pichla, Inspiring Innovations, Inc.

- Free to attend
- No Registration Required
- Held at:  
Atlanta Jr./Sr. High School Library  
10500 Co. Rd. 489, Atlanta MI

### "What Do You/We Want?"

Wednesday, June 7, 2017  
4 – 6 pm

### "Who Are The Customers?"

Wednesday, June 14, 2017  
4 – 6 pm

### "Show Me The Money!"

Wednesday, June 21, 2017  
4 – 6 pm

# Briley Township

Hall: (989) 785-4050  
Fax: (989) 785-4186  
11331 West Street  
PO Box 207  
Atlanta, MI 49709



Home to Atlanta, the Elk Capital of Michigan, located on the 45th Parallel

# TRIPLE III TIME: What Is A “Culture” of Entrepreneurship & Innovation?

Posted by [Inspiring Innovations, Inc.](#) May 12, 2017

Over the last few months I have been privileged to work with a fun, down-to-earth group who very much want to develop their area community. By develop I mean: (1) the total community as a great place to live, (2) the business arena to expand employment opportunities, (3) the enhancement of education possibilities at all levels and (4) the interest in entrepreneurship. Yes, it is a large challenge...but focusing on only one area at a time...just does not seem effective or efficient.



The “tool” we have developed to facilitate our initiative is an “[IDEAS Guidebook](#)”. In simple terms the IDEAS Guidebook walks people through the idea-to-concept-to-product/service process. It is a very inclusive document and has “IT MUST BE FUN!” as its core philosophy. But how is this part of the: What Is A “Culture” of Entrepreneurship & Innovation? TRIPLE III TIME message?

The answer is that when people ask what I am up to these days...I proudly respond that “I am growing a grass-roots Culture of Entrepreneurship and Innovation.” A culture that is based on ideas...ideas from anyone and everyone in the community. A culture that embraces a “partnerships unlimited” practice and a culture where age or status doesn’t matter.

Also when I brag about developing a Culture of Entrepreneurship and Innovation I report that community leaders understand that it (the Culture) must come from inside the community...and not expect culture building commitments from the outside. They also look at their IDEAS Guidebook not as a manual for guaranteed success...but rather a booklet that encourages continuous support for the generation of ideas no matter how big or small.

Remember an idea is only a thought until it is shared with others.

These actions I think are the foundation elements of creating a “Culture of Entrepreneurship and Innovation”. What do you think?



# VET FEST



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## About REI

The MSU EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI) seeks to identify and develop new economic development tools, models, policies and practices to support innovative economic development high-growth enterprises and job creation in distressed regions across the state. REI has established a new economic development ecosystem to cope with the ever-changing global and regional dynamic(s). Through this ecosystem, we engage innovative and creative minds which result in new economic development practices.

The REI University Center was established in 2011 with support from the U.S Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, and in collaboration with the following Michigan State University offices:

Office of the Provost

Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies

University Outreach and Engagement

MSU Extension Office

College of Communication Arts and Sciences

School of Planning, Design and Construction

College of Social Science



Michigan State University  
EDA University Center for  
Regional Economic Innovation