



Participant Handbook

CHINOOK *Entrepreneur* CHALLENGE

Platinum Sponsor **ATB** Financial™

c/o Community Futures Lethbridge Region
2626 South Parkside Drive
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Community Futures
Alberta Southwest
Chinook
Crownest Pass
Entre-Corp
Lethbridge Region
Meridian
Wild Rose

2012

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Human Services

**Community
Futures** 
Growing communities one idea at a time.

Alberta Southwest
Chinook
Crowsnest Pass
Entre-Corp
Lethbridge Region
Meridian
Wild Rose



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HOW TO ENTER

Easy as 1, 2, 3...

- 1 – Read this [Participant Handbook](#)**
- 2 – Complete and submit the [Participant Registration](#) form**
(you must register to have access to the training sessions and to compete for the Grand Prize - scan/email and fax copies accepted to attend training sessions however the signed original must be received in order to be eligible for the competition)
- 3 – To compete and be eligible for the cash prize, complete and attach the [Submission Checklist](#) form along with your business plan**
(signed original Participant Registration (pages 15-16) and Submission Checklist (page 17) must be received at your local Community Futures office prior to 2:00 p.m., April 30, 2012 to be eligible for the competition)



ABOUT CEC

Welcome to the eighth annual Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge. Since the first CEC in 2005 we have awarded \$165,000 in cash, plus thousands more in in-kind prizes to participants just like you.

The CEC is more than a competition; it's an opportunity to build on your dream. Through the program you will gain business skills, write your business plan, get feedback on your ideas from regional professionals, network with key people including other entrepreneurs like yourself and have a chance at winning cash and prizes!

Many non-winning participants have gone through with their business plan and achieved great entrepreneurial success in their communities. In seven years, we have seen 566 teams and individuals participate and 184 eligible business plans.

We strive to make the program accessible and a valuable experience for all involved across southern Alberta. Many business experts are joining us to lend their knowledge for training sessions. Participants will be able to access training in a variety of ways: in person at the University of Lethbridge, via videoconference at libraries throughout the region connected with RISE Network or at Medicine Hat College, streaming online and through highlights after the sessions on our blog.

This year, we've received great support from our sponsors. Their help is greatly appreciated and will surely benefit us all. Please support these donors as they're supporting you as a local entrepreneur.



REGION

Community Futures Alberta Southwest

659 Main St, 2nd Floor, Pincher Creek
403-627-3020 - 1(800) 565-4418
www.cfabsw.com

Community Futures Chinook

5324 48th Ave, Taber
403-388-2923 - 1(800) 223-3330
www.biz-help.ca

Community Futures Crowsnest Pass

180 – 12501 20th Ave, Blairmore
403-562-8858
www.communityfuturescnp.ca

Community Futures Entre-Corp

202 – 556 4th St SE, Medicine Hat
403-528-2824
www.entre-corp.com

Community Futures Lethbridge Region

2626 South Parkside Dr, Lethbridge
403-320-6044
www.cflethbridge.com

Community Futures Meridian

125 1st Ave E, Kindersley
306-463-1850
www.meridianregion.ca

Community Futures Wild Rose

331 3rd Ave, Strathmore
403-934-6488
www.cfwildrose.ca



www.chinookchallenge.com

About Community Futures

Entrepreneurs are the key to fueling economic growth. Small businesses help create economic diversity and they play an important part in ensuring long-term sustainability for Alberta's rural communities.

For over 20 years, Community Futures organizations have been helping businesses and communities with financing, business advisory and economic development services.

Community Futures organizations are comprised of volunteers and staff who are actively engaged in helping to develop and implement community-based economic development strategies with a focus on rural economic diversification. Implemented strategies result in the growth within our rural communities; one idea at a time.

OUR CORE SERVICES

- **Financing (Alternative Lender)**
- **Consulting**
- **Business Training**
- **Business Planning**
- **Community Economic Development**



www.cfna.ca

Not sure what region you're in?

[LOCATION FINDER](#)



GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What is the Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge?

The Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge is a business plan writing competition designed and targeted toward new or existing business (individuals or teams) who have a sustainable and high-growth business idea.

Cash and in-kind prizes are awarded to the grand prize winner by an independent panel of Judges (see Competition, page 11). The Judges' decision is final and non-negotiable. Other prizes may become available (ie. runner-up prize(s)).

Free business training is offered to all participants in February and March, see training schedule and locations on page 10.

The Challenge is held in southern Alberta (see Challenge Region, page 5) and facilitated by a group of volunteers representing various organizations throughout Southern Alberta.

2. Participant Handbook

This Handbook is to be used as an agreement for all CEC participants. The Handbook contains key information regarding the rules and regulations, as well as recommendations, guidelines and important timelines. **By signing the Participant Agreement form you acknowledge that you have read and agree to the terms and conditions specified herein.**

3. Participants

Individuals and teams ("Participants") are eligible, teams must designate a Team Leader who can register four (4) total team members to participate in the training sessions. The Team Leader will be the primary contact person.

4. Guest Speakers

Speakers will be involved in the program to help participants develop their business plans. They can provide advice, consultation and draw on their own business expertise. Speakers will represent a broad range of industries and therefore provide a variety of expertise and experience relating to their specific background. All speakers complete and sign a non-disclosure agreement to protect information shared during training sessions.

5. Minimum Number of Entries

There must be a minimum of fifteen (15) eligible business plans entered on or before the deadline of 2:00 p.m. April 30, 2012 for the competition to proceed to the screening and judging stages. If there are not 15 business plans submitted to the competition, the organizing committee has the right to terminate the Competition with no prizes awarded.

University of
Lethbridge



Faculty of Management

Registration Starts Training Sessions

January 2012
February – March

All sessions are Wednesdays from **6:30 to 9:00 p.m.**

- February 1..... Session 1: Ideas To Action
- February 8..... Session 2: Market Analysis
- February 15..... Session 3: Financing and funding
- February 29..... Session 4: Marketing Your Idea
- March 7..... Session 5: Operations Management
- March 14..... Session 6: Financials I
- March 21..... Session 7: Financials II
- March 28..... Session 8: Putting It All Together

Business Plan Final Submissions Are Due **April 30, 2012**

Submissions must be received no later than 2:00 p.m. Participants may submit their plans at any of the partner Community Futures offices.

Business Plan Screening Finalists Announced Awards Ceremony

May 2012
June 2012
June 14, 2012



✂

snip and keep

IMPORTANT DATES

- January – Register for Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge (www.chinookchallenge.com)
- Feb. 1 – Session 1: Ideas to Action
- Feb. 8 – Session 2: Market Analysis
- Feb. 15 – Session 3: Financing and funding
- Feb. 29 – Session 4: Marketing Your Idea
- Mar. 7 – Session 5: Operations Management
- Mar. 14 – Session 6: Financials I
- Mar. 21 – Session 7: Financials II
- Mar. 28 – Session 8: Putting It All Together
- Apr. 30 – **SUBMISSION DEADLINE** (must be received at Community Futures by 2:00 p.m.)
- Jun. 14 – Finalist Presentations & Awards Ceremony



ELIGIBILITY

1. Eligible to participate

- a) Individuals or teams, new or existing business owners, students, researchers, or anyone with a **sustainable** business plan or concept.
- b) Sustainability of the business or concept will be determined in the absolute and sole unfettered discretion of the Organizing Committee and/or Judges.
- c) Teams must be living, working or attending school in the Challenge Region (see page 5).
- d) Teams must have one member designated as the Team Leader. Team Leader will be the primary contact person.
- e) Existing businesses must not exceed \$2-million in annual revenues.
- f) Existing businesses must be in operation for five (5) years or more to be considered existing business. A new business is under five (5) years.
- g) The proposed business must be located in the Challenge Region (see page 5).
- h) All business plans must be submitted no later than 2:00 p.m. on April 30, 2012 to be eligible.

2. Ineligible to participate

A participant is ineligible to participate in the Challenge if he or she:

- a) does not meet all the eligibility requirements.
- b) has won cash and/or prizes as a Finalist in a similar entrepreneur challenge.
- c) is a member of the Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge Organizing Committee, Screener or Judge (or any partner or business associate of a Screener or Judge), staff member (or staff equivalent), or any of the immediate family of the above that are on a team, is a mentor in the current competition year or operates with some formal business relationship with a Participant.
- d) solicits and/or Judges directly in which case the Participant will be disqualified.
- e) has won first place in the Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge in the past five (5) years;
- f) exhibits conduct which is unlawful, would reflect poorly on the reputation of the Challenge, is harmful with malicious intent to any of the sponsors in any way, or for any other reason at the discretion of the Organizing Committee;
- g) submits a plan that:
 - i) does not meet the submission guidelines as published in this handbook (see page 12).
 - ii) exceeds the maximum length for any section outlined in this handbook.
 - iii) uses a font, heading, line length, or margins in such a way that the amount of text on any given page exceeds the limit available using the recommended page setup and font specifications.
 - iv) does not have a signed Participant Agreement/Non-Disclosure Agreement or Submission Checklist.
 - v) does not agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this handbook.



3. Prizes

Winners must use all proceeds to fund the execution of the proposed business plan in the Challenge Region by December 31, 2012.

Finalists must disclose how they would utilize the prize money. The use of funds must be verified in writing by the participant and may be subject to an audit at the discretion of the Organizing Committee. Copies of receipts to verify must be submitted to the Project Coordinator by December 31, 2012.

4. General

- a) All claims regarding eligibility will be considered until April 30, 2012.
- b) Decisions made by the Judges are only subject to ratification by the Organizing Committee. Decisions made by the Judges on June 14, 2012 are final. In the event that a winner does not meet the requirements for the use of funds or is disqualified for any reason, the cash will be reallocated to the future operations of the Challenge and any other prizes will be dealt with at the discretion of the Organizing Committee.
- c) Organizing Committee has the right to refuse entry to any individual or team.
- d) All decisions made by the Organizing Committee are final.
- e) Organizing Committee has the right to amend this document and the conduct of the Challenge at its discretion even if the Challenge has commenced, so the Organizing Committee can best conduct the Challenge in the way it feels is having best regard to the circumstances.
- f) The Organizing Committee and the Judges have the authority to not award a prize or prizes if, in their sole unfettered discretion, they feel that the nature of the submissions tendered were not of the type or quality contemplated in the Challenge.



TRAINING

Training is FREE to registered participants. To register, complete and submit the Participant Registration form (see page 15-16) to your local Community Futures. You can also submit by fax or scan/email:

Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge
Fax: (403) 327-8476
Email: info@chinookchallenge.com

- **Community Futures Alberta Southwest** (659 Main St, 2nd Floor, Pincher Creek)
- **Community Futures Chinook** (5324 48 Ave, Taber)
- **Community Futures Crowsnest Pass** (180 – 12501 20 Ave, Blairmore)
- **Community Futures Entre-Corp** (202 – 556 4th St SE, Medicine Hat)
- **Community Futures Lethbridge Region** (2626 S Parkside Dr, Lethbridge)
- **Community Futures Meridian** (125 1st Ave E, Kindersley)
- **Community Futures Wild Rose** (331 3 Ave, Strathmore)

Scan/email or faxed Participant Agreement acceptable to attend training.

(to be eligible for the competition, signed original must be received prior to April 30, 2012.)

1. Training Schedule

All sessions are Wednesdays from 6 :30-9 :00p.m.

- Feb. 1 – Session 1: Ideas To Action
- Feb. 8 – Session 2: Market Analysis
- Feb. 15 – Session 3: Financing and funding
- Feb. 29 – Session 4: Marketing Your Idea
- Mar. 7 – Session 5: Operations Management
- Mar. 14 – Session 6: Financials I
- Mar. 21 – Session 7: Financials II
- Mar. 28 – Session 8: Putting It All Together

(course outline subject to change without notice, visit www.chinookchallenge.com for updated information)

2. Locations

a) Live at University of Lethbridge, Room L1060

b) Video conference

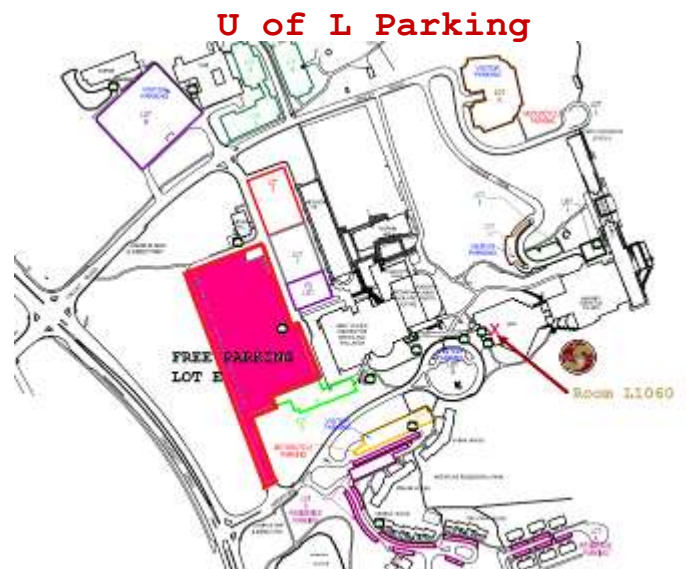
- Medicine Hat College
- RISE Network locations (within CEC region)
 - Chinook Arch Library System
 - Shortgrass Library System
 - Marigold Library System

Contact Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge project coordinator prior to 11:00 a.m. on the session date to confirm attendance.

c) Online – sessions will be available through streaming online video. Contact the project coordinator for details.

3. ****BONUS****

For every session you attend, earn a ½ point toward your competition submission to a maximum of four (4) points. **Don't forget to sign-in!**



COMPETITION

1. Process

a) Round 1 – Screening

- i) *Pre-Screen* - Organizers review for basic content, believability, professionalism, plan length, correct number of plans, signed Participants Agreements, and other key deliverables as outlined (see Submission Requirement, page 12 or Submission Checklist form, page 17).

***Plans not containing ALL of the required elements are eliminated.*

- ii) *Screening* – Each plan is distributed to three Screeners who review the plans according to the Evaluation Criteria (see page 13-14). Note the key section of the evaluation is the last one, where Screeners make their overall assessment.

Competitors can request their scoresheets after Finalists have been notified.

Competition submissions are kept confidential and archived with CEC records.

Note: the Organizing Committee retains the right to intervene if a recommended submission concerns a product or service that is unlawful, would reflect poorly on the reputation of the Challenge, or is considered harmful with malicious intent to any of the sponsors or any other reason at the discretion of the Organizing Committee. Decisions of the Organizing Committee are final.

The top three plans are then submitted to Round 2.

b) Round 2 – Judging

- i) The Judges are provided with hard and/or electronic copies of the three Finalists' business plans along with the Screeners' scoresheets.
- ii) Three Finalists will make 15-minute closed, oral presentations, followed by 15 minutes of discussion (Q&A) with the Judges.

Finalists will be disqualified for being late or missing the presentation appointment.

Finalists can bring product samples, electronic presentations, props, etc.

- iii) The Judges use the Evaluation Criteria to rank their top plan. The Judges are relied on to use their discretion to make the final assessment.
- iv) At the Awards Ceremony on June 14, 2012, the three Finalists make a summary presentation to the entire audience. The Judges will then confer and make their final assessment of the Finalists. All prize winners will be announced that day.



2. Submission Requirements

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 2:00 p.m. April 30, 2012

It is recommended to get in touch with your local Community Futures or the Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge project coordinator prior to submission to ensure receipt of all required elements.

- a) Participant Agreement (signed original received by 2:00 p.m. April 30, 2012)
- b) Plan Submission Checklist (signed original received by 2:00 p.m. April 30, 2012)
- c) Information Page:
 - i) business name
 - ii) full name of team members
 - iii) address
 - iv) phone
 - v) email
 - vi) list of employees
 - vii) submission date
- d) Table of Contents - Contains page numbers for each section
- e) Business Plan: 1 hard copy AND/OR 1 electronic copy (flashdrive, CD or e-mailed to info@chinookchallenge.com) by 2:00 p.m. April 30, 2012
(CEC is not responsible if Competitor becomes ineligible because computer files are corrupt or otherwise incompatible. *Submit early so project coordinator can confirm!*)
 - i) Executive Summary (1-2 pages)
 - ii) Product/Service (1-2 pages)
 - iii) Market Analysis (1-2 pages)
 - iv) Marketing and Sales (1-2 pages)
 - v) Management Team (1-2 pages)
 - vi) Operations Plan (1-2 pages)
 - vii) Implementation Schedule (1-2 pages)
 - viii) Opportunities & Risks (1 page)
 - ix) Financials (4-5 pages)
 - x) The Offering (1 page)
- f) Formatting:
 - i) 11-point, Arial or Times New Roman font; bold, underline or italic formatting acceptable
 - ii) Letter-sized paper (8.5" x 11")
 - iii) 1" margins
 - iv) 20 pages or less (excluding Cover, Information Page, Table of Contents and forms)
 - v) All pages must have the business concept/business name in either a header or footer
 - vi) Page numbers (first page after the Table of Contents is page 1)
 - vii) Plans with plastic page covers, coil or comb bindings will not be accepted
- g) Appendices should not exceed ten (10) pages and there is no guarantee that Screeners will view or assess the information.
- h) Pictures, graphics, charts are allowed within the business plan (however, may not exceed requirements as per above).
- i) Plans that do not have a professional appearance will be eliminated.

****SIGNED ORIGINALS of Participant Registration and Submission Checklist forms required to be eligible for the competition.***



3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

A. Executive Summary						
	1	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10
Business Opportunity Session(s): 1, 3, 8	No interest, low growth potential	Of little interest	Of average interest	Piques interest; warrants further reading	Piques keen interest; warrants further reading	Piques interest; fascinating, high growth and realistic
Completeness Session(s): 1, 8	Unimportant issues dominate	Some relevant issues covered; emphasis on less important topics	Majority of issues covered, poor quality	Relevant issues covered fully; good quality	All relevant issues covered very well	Comprehensive document containing all relevant information
B. Business Plan Elements						
	1	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10
Product or Service Session(s): 1, 8	Vague idea - development horizon not discussed	Idea clearly described, plausible	Feasibility ensured (e.g. functionality tested)	Concept detailed (prototype in the works)	End product clearly recognizable (prototype completed); keen interest from a pilot customer	Complete product or service, i.e. prototype complete; approved by applicable agencies
Competitor Analysis Session(s): 2, 8	Competitors not mentioned	Competitors considered; no advantage over competitors	Competitors considered; potential advantage over competitors	Competitors analyzed; clear but diminishing advantage over competitors	Competitors analyzed; sustainable advantage over competitors	Competitors well analyzed; very clear and sustainable advantage
Customer Value Session(s): 2, 8	No clear reason for customers to purchase product or service	Addressed but not correct	Addressed but marginal value at best	Value clear but low	Moderate value recognizable	High customer value; market survey conducted; first customers listed
Customer Segment Session(s): 2, 8	No clear customer segment	Target group only vaguely defined	Target group defined but hard to recognize	Market segmentation stated; target group defined	Market segmentation and target group defined	Clear, defined target group
Market Size Session(s): 2, 8	No market	Small diminishing market	Small stagnating or large diminishing market	Small growing or large stagnating market	Small booming or large growing market	Large or expanding market
Competition Session(s): 2, 8	Highly competitive market place	Tough Competition active or expected in the short term	Average Competition active or expected in the short term; tough Competition expected in medium or long term	Weak Competition active or expected in the short term, tough Competition expected in the medium or long term	Weak Competition active or expected in the short term, average Competition expected in medium or long term	No established competitors or industry leaders
Marketing Session(s): 4, 8	The 4 P's are not covered or only covered very poorly; marketing strategy on the whole unclear or unconvincing	3 P's are not covered or only covered poorly; individual ideas but marketing strategy on the whole unclear or unconvincing	2 P's are not covered or covered poorly; outline of marketing strategy recognizable, but with clear gaps	1 P is not covered or only covered poorly; marketing strategy clearly recognizable, but with obvious gaps	All 4 P's covered well; on the whole clear, consistent, and complete marketing strategy	All 4 P's covered excellently; very convincing and promising marketing strategy (high market penetration can be expected)



	1	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10	
Management Session(s): 5, 8	No notable experience and/or abilities	Little notable experience and/or abilities	One team member with notable experience	Several team members with notable experience but all major areas not covered	Team covers all major areas with notable experience and/or abilities	Team covers all major areas with notable experience and/or abilities and has a high profile person for the business	
Implementation Plan Session(s):5, 8	Not addressed	Unrealistic and incomplete planning	Not very realistic with significant gaps	Fairly realistic but planning incomplete	Realistic and thorough planning	Highly realistic and thorough planning	
Financial Planning Session(s): 3, 6, 7, 8	Critical assumptions not presented	Planning and expected return based on unrealistic assumptions	Planning and expected return based on somewhat realistic assumptions	Planning and expected return based on realistic assumptions but return not attractive	Planning and expected return based on realistic assumptions and return is attractive	Planning and expected return based on realistic assumptions and return is highly attractive	
Financial Statements Session(s): 6, 7, 8	Financial statements are not present	Financial statements are present but contain serious errors and are not realistic	Financial statements are present, contain some errors and are somewhat realistic	All financial statements are accurate but not realistic	All financial statements are accurate and realistic but may not reflect the sustainability of the business	All financial statements accurately and realistically reflect the sustainability of the business	
Risk and Risk Management Session(s): 2, 5, 8	No presentation of opportunities and risks and their effects; countermeasure missing	Incomplete presentation of opportunities/risks and their effects; counter-measure addressed but incorrect	Sufficient presentation of opportunities/risks and their effects; counter-measure correct, but not adequate	Satisfactory presentation of opportunities and their risks; adequate countermeasure	Good presentation of opportunities and risk and their effects; effective countermeasure	Outstanding presentation of opportunities and risk and their effects; innovative and effective countermeasure	
C. Overall Plan and Opportunity	5	10	15	20	25	30	
Business Plan and Opportunity Session(s): 1, 8	On the whole, little point in pursuing the business concept; has little potential, the planning is not well structured, and the presentation careless	Contains several interesting aspects, but in its present form, the overall concept is not very persuasive	Contains a number of interesting elements and possibly worth pursuing, but overall the concept has clear weaknesses in potential, planning, or presentation	On the whole, interesting and possibly worth pursuing, but planning and presentation have definite weaknesses	On the whole, attractive and worth pursuing; a business concept with great potential, potentially sustainable, contributes to the economy, and a convincing presentation	On the whole, highly attractive and persuasive in all main aspects; a business concept with great potential, easily sustainable; contributes to the economy; an inspiring presentation	
Score						/170	
BONUS	For every session you attend, earn a ½ point toward your competition submission to a maximum of four (4) points. Don't forget to sign-in!					(for office use)	/4

Other Comments

(Evaluation Criteria subject to change without notice, visit www.chinookchallenge.com for updated information)





**Government
of Alberta ■**
Human Services

ATB Financial™

CHINOOK Entrepreneur CHALLENGE

Platinum Sponsor **ATB Financial**

PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION

c/o Community Futures Lethbridge Region
2626 South Parkside Drive
Lethbridge, AB T1K 0C4
p: 403.320.6044 • f: 403.327.8476
e: info@chinookchallenge.com
w: www.chinookchallenge.com

Business Name: _____

Primary Contact: _____

Address: _____

City/Postal Code: _____

Telephone: (home) _____

(work) _____

(cell) _____

(fax) _____

Email: _____

Are you registering as a new or existing business? NEW EXISTING - How long? _____

How did you hear about the Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge? _____

If you plan to attend training, where? _____

Please check (✓) for each FREE training session you will be attending:

1	Feb. 1	_____	5	Mar. 7	_____
2	Feb. 8	_____	6	Mar. 14	_____
3	Feb. 15	_____	7	Mar. 21	_____
4	Feb. 29	_____	8	Mar. 28	_____

TO REGISTER:

(Registration deadline: 2:00 p.m., April 30, 2012)

Complete both pages of this registration form and return by:

2) Drop off:

- **Community Futures Alberta Southwest** (659 Main St, 2nd Floor, Pincher Creek)
- **Community Futures Chinook** (5324 48 Ave, Taber)
- **Community Futures Crowsnest Pass** (180 – 12501 20 Ave, Blairmore)
- **Community Futures Entre-Corp** (202 – 556 4th St SE, Medicine Hat)
- **Community Futures Lethbridge Region** (2626 S Parkside Dr, Lethbridge)
- **Community Futures Meridian** (125 1st Ave E, Kindersley)
- **Community Futures Wild Rose** (331 3 Ave, Strathmore)

3) Mail: 2626 South Parkside Drive, Lethbridge, AB T1K 0C

4) Fax: (403) 327-8476

5) Email: info@chinookchallenge.com



**** SIGNED ORIGINAL of this agreement must be received prior to 2:00 p.m., April 30 to be eligible for the competition. ****
(Scan/email or fax copies acceptable to attend training sessions.) (don't forget to sign back page)



CHINOOK Entrepreneur CHALLENGE

Platinum Sponsor **ATB Financial**

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

c/o Community Futures Lethbridge Region
2626 South Parkside Drive
Lethbridge, AB T1K 0C4
p: 403.320.6044 • f: 403.327.8476
e: info@chinookchallenge.com
w: www.chinookchallenge.com

Business Name: _____
Primary Contact: _____
Address: _____
City/Postal Code: _____
Telephone: _____
Email: _____

- Participant Agreement** (signed original received by 2:00 p.m., April 30, 2012)
- Plan Submission Checklist** (signed original received by 2:00 p.m., April 30, 2012)
- Info Page:** business name, first & last name of team member(s), address, phone, email, list of employees, submission date
- Table of Contents**
- Business Plan:**
 - Executive Summary
 - Product/Service
 - Market Analysis
 - Marketing and Sales
 - Management Team
 - Operations Plan
 - Implementation Schedule
 - Opportunities & Risks
 - Financials
 - The Offering
- Formatting:** Arial or Times New Roman, 11 pt, letter-sized paper, 1" margins, 20 pgs or less

TO SUBMIT:

(Submission deadline: 2:00 p.m., April 30, 2012)

➤ Drop off:

- **Community Futures Alberta Southwest** (659 Main St, 2nd Floor, Pincher Creek)
- **Community Futures Chinook** (5324 48 Ave, Taber)
- **Community Futures Crowsnest Pass** (180 – 12501 20 Ave, Blairmore)
- **Community Futures Entre-Corp** (202 – 556 4th St SE, Medicine Hat)
- **Community Futures Lethbridge Region** (2626 S Parkside Dr, Lethbridge)
- **Community Futures Meridian** (125 1st Ave E, Kindersley)
- **Community Futures Wild Rose** (331 3 Ave, Strathmore)

➤ Mail:

Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge
2626 South Parkside Drive
Lethbridge, AB T1K 0C

Team Leader (**Print Name**)

Signature

Date

**** SIGNED ORIGINAL of this agreement must be received prior to 2:00 p.m., April 30 to be eligible for the competition. ****



Action **COACH**
business coaching

INFORMATION PAGE

BUSINESS PLAN WORKBOOK

Business Name

Contact: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Team members: _____

Employees: _____

Submission Date: _____

This business plan contains information that is not to be shared, copied, disclosed or otherwise compromised without the consent of the business owner(s).



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(1 - 2 pages, session(s): 1, 3, 8)

Pique the interest of decision makers. This section is a brief overview of the most important aspects of the plan. Highlight the product or service, the value to the customer, the relevant markets, management expertise, financing requirements, and possible return on investments and exit strategy for investors where applicable.

The executive summary is a very important section of the business plan. Many people including your lending institution or investors, will begin their decision making process by information they find in the executive summary. The summary, placed at the beginning of the business plan, should highlight the most important parts of the business plan. Remember, its main focus is to capture the attention of the potential lender or investor, often readers will only read this section so make sure it is clear why they should be interested in your company or idea.

The executive summary should be no more than two pages in length and should include the following:

- A description of the business, the idea, the company name, and the services or products sold by the company.
- The ownership structure of the business and the management team who will be operating the business.
- The key objectives of the business plan
- The target market and what is creating customer demand for your product or service.
- Summary of the financial projections, profitability, and potential.
- The desired financing and capitalization needed for the business.

1. **Introduction** - What is the proposed name of your company? Give a brief description of your company. Is this a new company, if not, how long has the company been in operation?

2. **Founder(s) of the Business** - Describe your education, training, business background, or any other experiences, which will help you develop and implement your idea. Identify personal strengths that will be pertinent to the business.



3. **Mission Statement** - Develop a concise definition of the purpose the organization is attempting to fulfill. Answer the following questions:

1. Why does this company exist?
2. What is its' function?
3. Who does the organization perform this function for?
4. Who benefits from your companies success?

4. **Ownership Structure** - It is important to identify if the company will be a sole proprietorship, a partnership, or a limited company. A lending institution will not know how to structure the loan if this information is not present. Describe ownership within the company, (i.e. If the company is a partnership, is it a 50/50 partnership? Who has decision-making power?)

5. **Goals** - What do you want to accomplish from this on a personal level? What are your goals for the company (i.e. typically revenue or profit targets but there are many others). How will you accomplish these goals? Be detailed and credible in your description.

Short-term: _____

Long-term: _____

6. **Distinctive Features** - Why is your company special? Why will you be successful in the future? What distinguishes your product or service from what your competitors offer (i.e. why would I call your business instead of your competitor?) Be cautious with statements suggesting "better quality" or "lower price" be certain that you can back these claims.



PRODUCT / SERVICE

(1 - 2 pages, session(s): 1, 8)

Indicate how your product differs from those that are now or will be on the market. Include a short description of how far development has progressed and what still needs to be done.

1. **Profile of the Company's Products and Services** – What is the company's business? Describe the products or services that your company is offering. For organizational purposes, it may be easier to divide the company's operations into several key components and expand on these (i.e. The company may receive revenues through retail sales, wholesale sales, or by subcontracting its services).

2. **Distinctive Features** - Does your company offer any distinctive features? What makes you unique?

3. **Service and Warranty Policies (if applicable)** - Describe return policies, or client satisfaction policies. If this does not apply to your company, omit this section.



MARKET ANALYSIS

(1 - 2 pages, session(s): 2, 8)

Market size should be described and quantified. Use the number of customers, unit sales, and total dollar sales, etc. Indicate what main factors are now influencing or may influence the given industry segment. Define the strengths and weaknesses of your competitors both direct and indirect, including the positioning of your product/service.

1. **Primary Customer** – The majority of your customers will have some common characteristics (i.e. age, location, income, occupation, preferences, etc.) Attempt to narrow your market by determining similar client characteristics. Describe your targeted customer in detail. Why will this be your highest sale customer, what are the current trends leading to this, why will they buy from you? This will help to assist you when determining projected revenues, advertising needs, etc.

2. **Secondary Customer** – Describe an alternate customer market that may be available and describe their characteristics. This will not be your primary market focus but these customers will also use your product (if applicable). Again, go into as much detail as you can when describing this market.

3. **Market Size** – Describe the size of area your company will service and the number of potential customers. You may also include the amount of money potential customers currently spend on the products/services you plan to offer (determine this amount to the area you plan to cover).



4. **Competitors** - List the companies that will be your competitors for the product/service you plan to provide. Describe their strengths and weaknesses.

Competitor Name and Address	Strengths What they do right (service,price,quality,size, etc)	Weaknesses What they could do better (service,price,quality,size, etc)

Overall, how does your company compare with the competitors already established in the market area? The weaknesses of your competitors can be used to develop the strengths of your business.

5. **Market Trends**

- It is important to understand trends in the industry that you will be entering. These may include economic considerations, fashions, new developments, etc.
- If your company has several different products or services you may wish to create a subsection for each category.



MARKETING AND SALES

(1 - 2 pages, session(s): 4, 8)

Describe your strategies for market launch, marketing, sales promotion, and distribution. This section should include the 4 P's: product, price, place and promotion.

1. **Pricing** – Describe the method you will use for pricing your product or service. If there are any terms of payment please include them here (i.e. cash, 2/10, etc). Will you accept debit or credit card? There are four pricing factors to consider for your product or service:

1. What are the input costs? (i.e. What are your costs to offer the product or service)

2. What is the customer's perception of value? (i.e. does the customer consider the product of high quality, low cost, etc.)

3. What are the competitors charging?

4. What are the expected profit margins?

2. **Promotion** - Describe how you plan to market your product/service. Do you have plans to attend trade shows or place ads in trade magazines? Will you produce flyers to distribute to the public? Do you have any ideas for an advertising campaign? Do you have a plan in place to gain free publicity to create awareness about your product?



Determine a budget and time line (i.e. what months will this action take place) for the first year of promotion. You may use the following template or change it as necessary.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Advertising	\$ _____
Radio	\$ _____
Newspaper	\$ _____
Brochures	\$ _____
Public Relations	\$ _____
Trade Shows	\$ _____
Specialized Packaging	\$ _____
Website	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Month	Promotional Activities	Cost
Jan		
Feb		
Mar		
Apr		
May		
Jun		
Jul		
Aug		
Sep		
Oct		
Nov		
Dec		
Total		

3. Place

While in years gone by the geographic place of your business used to be the determining factor, now that definition has grown. Where do you offer your products or services? Do you need walk in traffic or are you a destination business? Do people need to hold/touch your product or can you reside entirely on line? Carefully consider the options you have as the place help to create your success.

4. Product

What specifically is your product and how unique is it? Is it a commodity (lots of versions of the same thing or something people can easily copy) or truly unique(a purple cow)? Most products today are very similar with only a few variations. Are the differences in your product enough to hang your hat on, or do you need to sell your company service and reputation rather than your product?



MANAGEMENT TEAM

(1 - 2 pages, session(s): 3, 5, 8)

Describe the business' owners, founders and key managers. Emphasize management qualifications that are particularly important for implementing your specific plan, as well as positions that still require reinforcement. Tasks and responsibilities should be clearly delegated and a simple organizational chart with a few levels should be designed. A list of candidates for a potential Board of Directors should also be included.

1. **Management** – Please identify who will be responsible for each of the key management roles and major responsibilities of the company (i.e. bookkeeping, finances, marketing, customer service, product development and purchasing, staffing decisions etc.)

List each major task/function and identify the person responsible for the task and whether they have specific training or education relating to the task.

2. **Labour and Personnel (If applicable)** – How many and what type of people will you require to run the company? What qualifications, experience, and education will they require? Will you provide training for them? How much in wages will you pay? Will your company provide benefits?

3. **Key Advisors**

- List the people who can work with you and give advice on setting up your company and the future management and growth of the venture. Naming a specific bank, lawyer or accountant does not mean you would be expected to retain them, only that you have someone in mind if the situation arises that you should require their services.
- This list may include family, friends, business associates, wholesalers, lawyers, bankers, accountants, and business counselors – anyone that you trust to assist you in the future and support your endeavour.



Person	Title	How they will assist you

4. References

- Provide 3 local and 1 family reference that can be contacted to give a character reference. Ensure you contact these people and let them know you provided their name as a reference.

Name	Phone Number	Occupation or Title

- 5. Resume** – Include a current resume outlining your past education, experiences, and work history.



OPERATIONS PLAN

(1-2 pages, session(s): 5, 8)

The business system model maps out the activities necessary to prepare and deliver a final product to a customer. Define necessary partnerships needed for production and distribution. Describe your product's life cycle and how you plan to maintain your edge. Detail what facilities you require, and how you plan on distributing your product or service. Discuss relationships with key suppliers.

1. **Regulations and Licenses** – What regulations (i.e. health and safety, standards, etc.) if any, are placed on your business by Federal, Provincial, or Municipal government? Is your business required to have a special license? Bonding?

2. **Location and Facilities** – Describe the site of your business, the facilities that are presently in place, the facility (leasehold) improvements required (desired), and the features that make this an attractive site for your venture. Attach sketches and drawings of the layout and plan for the site if applicable.

3. **Equipment** – Describe the necessary office, mechanical, operational, and transportation equipment that is required to run the business. Make a note if any of the equipment is already owned or needs to be acquired. If it is to be acquired, state whether it will be leased or purchased, and the costs involved in doing so.



IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

(1-2 pages, session(s): 5, 8)

Develop a realistic five-year plan, concentrating on the major milestones and the most important interdependent events.

Now that you have all this information, how are you going to make this happen? What do you need to do?

1. **Milestones** – Set specific milestones that will act as short-term goals for you and your company to work toward achieving. When these milestones are achieved, take time to congratulate yourself and your team (i.e. sales targets, revenues, etc.)

2. **Overall Schedule** – Please identify the 10 most crucial steps that must be completed prior to the opening or expansion of your business. Show when these activities will be done. A list containing many of the most common steps has been assembled to assist you.

What is the date you will begin operation of your business? _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____



Steps to be Completed	Date to be Complete	Actual date Complete
Purchase fixtures to be used for the business		
Purchase of equipment necessary to operate the business		
Purchase the business license		
Search for location to operate business		
Secure a lease		
Order signage for business		
Complete leasehold improvements		
Locate suppliers to provide necessary supplies to business		
Completion of initial advertising campaign		
Signing of initial contracts		
Secure financing from lenders		
Completion of business training		
Order inventory		
Determine bookkeeper		
Hire employees		
Other		
Other		
Other		
Establish a wage benefit program		
EI		
WCB		
Revenue Canada		



OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

(1 page, session(s): 2, 8)

Identify a margin of error for departures from your assumptions. Draw up both best-case and worst-case scenarios involving key operational milestones.

1. SWOT Analysis

Strengths

List the strengths of your business. What are your advantages, what do you do well, what relevant resources do you have, what do other people see as your strengths?

Weaknesses

List fundamental weaknesses of your business. What can you improve upon, what do you do badly, what should you avoid?

Opportunities

List the opportunities you see for the business. What are some of the relevant and interesting trends you are aware of in your industry? What are some of the changes in technology, government policy, social patterns, population, lifestyles, local events, etc?

Threats

List fundamental threats to your business. What obstacles do you face, what are your competitors doing, are the requirements for your business changing, is technology changing? Do you have bad credit or cash flow problems? Do any of your weaknesses previously listed threaten your business?



FINANCIALS

(4-5 pages, session(s): 3, 6, 7, 8)

Do the financial statements as presented accurately and realistically reflect the sustainability of the business? This section could include a pro-forma income statement, pro-forma balance sheet, pro-forma cash flow analysis and break-even chart for new businesses. Cost control measures could be included.

Include your projections for the next three (3) years.

Proposals that involve an expansion to, or diversification of, an existing business will be required to provide summaries of two years of their most recent historical financial information. It could also include summaries of projected gains from the new project.

1. Start up Costs – Identify expenses to begin or expand business operations

Equipment	\$ _____
Starting Inventory	\$ _____
Advertising	\$ _____
Professional Fees	\$ _____
Office Supplies	\$ _____
Rent	\$ _____
Land/Buildings	\$ _____
Licenses	\$ _____
Telephone	\$ _____
Utilities	\$ _____
Repairs	\$ _____
Leasehold Improvements	\$ _____
Vehicle Expense	\$ _____
Miscellaneous	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

2. Sources and Uses of Capital – Where will the money for start-up expenses be raised?

Owner Investment	\$ _____
Shareholders	\$ _____
Loan Monies	\$ _____
Line of Credit	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____



3. **Capitalization** – List any assets the owner(s) intend to invest personally (i.e. vehicle, office equipment, cash, computers, etc.)

4. **Assumptions** – List assumptions made to determine the projected financial statements.

5. **Financial Statements**

- BREAK-EVEN CHART



- INCOME STATEMENT



- BALANCE SHEET



- CASH FLOW PROJECTIONS

MONTH		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
CASH IN	START-UP													TOTAL
1)														
2)														
3)														
4) Cost of Goods/Services														
5) Cash from Sales (1+2+3-4)														
6) Opening Cash														
7) Loan Monies														
8) Shareholders Loan/S.E.														
9) Running Cash Balance														
10) Total Cash In (add 5 to 9)														
CASH OUT														
Management Drawings														
Advertising														
Insurance														
Professional Fees														
Office Supplies														
Rent														
Taxes & Licenses														
Utilities & Telephone														
Inventory														
Repairs & Maintenance														
Equipment Purchase														
Travel & Promotion														
Bad Debts														
Loan Payments														
Bank Charges														
Miscellaneous														
11) Total Expenses														
12) Net Cash Position														



Chinook Entrepreneur Challenge Legacy

2011

Winner

Pink Tie Events

Runners-Up

Earthstone Concrete Countertops and Creations
Platinum Garages

2010

Winner

InspectaCAR inc.

Runners-Up

CPR Engineer's House
Sugar Dreams

2009

Winner

Bridge Land & Energy Services Ltd

Runners-Up

Family Tree Child Care

2008

Winner

Inspire Studio and Gallery

Runners-Up

Clay for Kids Lethbridge

2007

Winner

Titan Contract Welding Ltd.

Runners-Up

Paws on the Run Pet Services Ltd.

2006

Winner

Relaxation Room

Agri-Value

BioDiesel ReFuel

2005

Winner

Southern Alberta Application Service Providers

Agri-Value

Spragg's Meat Shop



PARTNERS

Platinum

ATB Financial™

Gold

**Government
of Alberta** ■
Human Services

tecconnecto
An Alberta centre for new commerce

Silver

University of
Lethbridge



Faculty of Management



Lethbridge
Vehicle



Canada's Entrepreneur Gateway



ActionCOACH
business coaching



Bronze



RISE
NETWORK



Friends

DESK N FILE

PRINT PARTNERS

MEDICINE HAT COLLEGE

