

# The Sprout Story + Curriculum

## Our Story

***Give young people the proper tools and skills and they will change the world.***

For over a decade, TakingITGlobal has worked to inspire, inform and involve young people in the process of developing a more inclusive, peaceful and sustainable world. That work has taken us to some of the far corners of the earth and into the lives of everyday heroes. The children, peasants, fastidious students, businesspeople, hip hop musicians, incredible teachers, break makers, computer programmers, graffiti artists and farmers, are all united by a common vision: to better tomorrow.

To attain this vision, The Pearson Foundation and TakingITGlobal formed a partnership in Spring of 2008, which resulted in the development of an innovative, online learning program focused on digital literacy, networking and communications for youth. The inception of the Sprout e-course has helped to kick start TakingITGlobal's foray into a new means of providing young people with the proper learning tools and skills to change the world, while expanding its reach to international young leaders worldwide.

Building upon the initial support of the Pearson foundation, the Sprout e-course has evolved into localized regional variations, including: Youth for Change (Arab Region), Innovative Students (Asia-Pacific) and translated version of Sprout in Spanish.

In July 2010, TakingITGlobal led an evolution of the Sprout E-course. Now Sprout is accessible to even more individuals as a self-directed 9-week online course. Due to the continued support of The Pearson Foundation, in January 2011 TakingITGlobal launched the **Pearson Fellowship for Social Innovation**. The Pearson Fellowship for Social Innovation is an international fellowship program that supports the most promising social service projects created by TakingITGlobal's network of youth leaders.


All Sprout alumni are eligible to apply for 20 Fellowships with seed grants of \$1000 US each. Pearson fellows receive coaching from experienced social innovators or subject matter experts who consult with them as they implement their project plans. Fellows take part in a supported online community where they can network with and learn from their peers. Additionally, Fellows have access to special online materials and training designed to help them take their projects from the planning stage to reality.


## Key Competencies in Social Entrepreneurship


Here are some of the most important skills and competencies that you will develop and hone over the course of your Sprout journey.


A Program of:





 **Leadership:** One of the best ways to inspire one another is to set the example. We encourage you to always look for ways to improve, develop new capacities and celebrate the achievements. Be aware of your responsibilities, know the program and make it your own by involving yourself actively within it.


 **Teamwork:** Understanding the dynamics of group relationships is the first step to working effectively and respectfully with diverse teams. Sprout is comprised of learners of all abilities and we strive for a united team. When working in your Peer Groups, you are encouraged to step up and take on tasks, identify your roles and skills and complete your lessons.


 **Critical Thinking & Problem Solving:** You are always encouraged to use your judgment effectively to analyze and evaluate evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs, as well as other points of view. Identifying and asking the right questions to clarify various points of view can also lead to better and more effective solutions.

 **Flexibility & Adaptation:** Taking action on an issue in your community requires you to be adaptive, taking on a variety of roles, job responsibilities, schedules and contexts. The more flexibly and adaptively you work, the more resilient and responsive your project will become.

 **Initiative:** Knowing your strengths, weaknesses and limits is a big step in understanding how many tasks you can realistically manage. Working independently requires that you monitor, define, prioritize and complete tasks without direct oversight from the Sprout Team. Set goals and prioritize tasks!

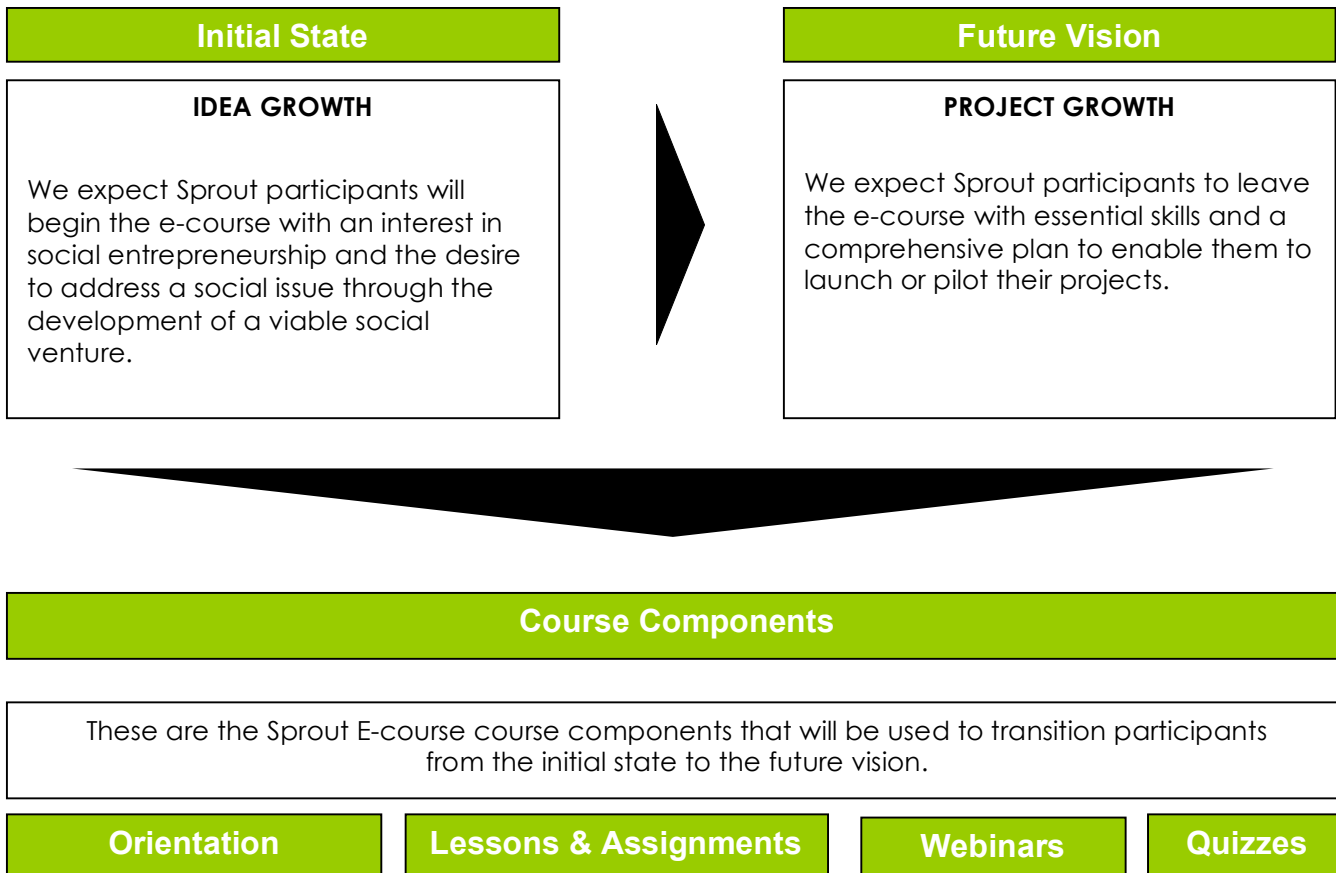
 **Productivity & Achievement:** Sprout participants are expected to produce a high quality of work, to challenge themselves intellectually and take full advantage of the resources the E-course offers. In order to achieve your goals in the face of obstacles, it's helpful to prioritize and manage your workflow.

 **Time Management:** Being organized isn't always easy but planning time to incorporate the E-course into your life will help you find a healthy balance.

 **Communication:** Communicating clearly means articulating your thoughts and ideas effectively. Responding open-mindedly to different ideas and values can also help to leverage social and cultural differences to create new ideas and increase both your innovation and quality of work.

## Course Components

The following framework was used to evolve the Sprout concept.



The Sprout E-course is a **9-week e-course** including 1 orientation week, 6 weeks of lessons and quizzes, and 2 weeks of independent work. The curriculum is structured into four modules as follows: design, plan, connect and assess.

Each module requires participants to complete one lesson and several related assignments. At the end of each module, participants will complete a quiz and self-assessment to progress to the next module. Two professional development webinars on topics of universal benefit to aspiring social entrepreneurs are interspersed throughout the e-course.

The final component of the E-course is development and completion of a Final Project portfolio. This is an opportunity to compile and polish the content developed in the module assignments into one cohesive project.

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## Curriculum Overview

### Module 1 DESIGN

*This introductory module aims to engage the Sprout participant in exercises to help them design his/her project.*

**Addressing Issues:** Each participant will be asked to identify and explain the social and/or environmental challenges they aim to address with their project and explore the issues related to the project as well as the connections between them.

**Stakeholders:** One lesson will explore the concept of a project stakeholder analysis and guide participants in identifying their project stakeholders. The Sprout E-course distinguishes between different types of stakeholders and determining their degree of power and interest in the project.

**Mandate:** A final lesson will launch the participant to begin drafting a clear and effective project mandate, including the project's unique purpose, mission statement and vision statement. The curriculum uses the SMART methodology to help participants establish SMART goals which comprise a set of long-term, high-level, measurable goals to strive towards achieving.

### Module 2 PLAN

**Action & Contingency Plan:** So many good projects get stalled at the “idea” stage. This module is designed to support the participant in identifying the actions they plan to take in order to achieve their project's goals. The initial exercises in this module are designed to guide the participant into forming a practical action plan which includes potential challenges and risks they may encounter. As part of their project planning, they will work through the development of a contingency plan to address barriers to project execution and how to overcome them.

**Team Building:** Once a set of actions have been articulated, the participant will begin to explore building their team. Several lessons enable them to express their project's values and the qualities and skills needed to uphold those values and effectively pursue the project's goals. A big component of the team building lessons is the articulation of how the team's skill areas will be used via a simple team structure chart. This lesson is also designed to enable thoughtful decisions about the importance of a strong project team dynamic as well as the ways in which the participant plans to recruit and engage team members.

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### Module 3 CONNECT

**Budgeting:** The first lesson of Module 3 focuses on increasing the participant's existing financial literacy as it pertains to their project. Participants will draft a realistic basic budget for their projects that can be adapted to suit the funding criteria of a potential funder, investor or sponsor. This is a rudimentary exercise designed with the intent to have participants begin to research and project the costs and revenues associated with their projects.

**Financing & Sustainability:** Additionally, participants will be asked to articulate an overview of their project design and its specific resource needs to a prospective funder, investor, sponsor or donor.

**Marketing:** This set of lessons is designed to encourage participants to practice communicating essential information about their project in a clear, simple and quick statement and to a wide variety of audiences. The goal is to boost their project's profile, create awareness and gather interest. In this lesson they will also learn how to create an effective Marketing Campaign using social media tools like social networks, wikis, and photo sharing. A marketing campaign is a strategic way to reach the right audiences in the right place at the right time and generate excitement and awareness about the project.

### Module 4 ASSESS

*Sprout aims to encourage the development of viable and valuable impact projects.*

**Evaluation:** This final Module asks the participant to reflect on the importance of monitoring and evaluating their project and guides him/her to think strategically about crafting a basic evaluation framework. Ultimately, the participant should be able to brainstorm the types of impact the project aims to create and the criteria or indicators that will define the project's success.

The second portion of this lesson is designed to provide a tool to critically assess and document the capacity of the project to use its strengths to overcome its weaknesses, and to explore the opportunities available that will help the project grow, despite the presence of some unavoidable challenges along the way.

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## Online Classroom

The Sprout e-course is delivered completely online through the use of various technologies. We use ElluminateLive! as our preferred online webinar technology. Participants will be introduced to the platform in their Orientation week.

Over the course of Sprout, all learning and engagement will take place in a customized classroom developed by TakingITGlobal (see screenshot to the right). This platform is asynchronous and will be accessible to you 24/7 to download and submit your assignments.

The screenshot shows the Sprout e-course online classroom interface. At the top, there is a header with the Sprout e-course logo, Pearson Fellowship for Social Innovation, and TakingITGlobal (INSPIRE. INFORM. INVOLVE.) and Pearson Foundation logos. A "Logout" button is in the top right. Below the header is a green bar with a lightbulb icon containing a plant, representing the "Your Classroom" section. To the right of this icon is a "Welcome to the Sprout E-Course" message. Below the welcome message are three icons: a folder for "View your E-Portfolio", a group of people for "Go to the Lessons", and a lounge for "Visit the Lounge". Below these icons is an "Announcements" section with a "Post" button and a message dated April 25th, 2011 by Kristle Calisto-Tavares. On the right side, there are two vertical panels: "Contact Info" for Kristle Calisto-Tavares (Program Manager) with phone, Skype, and email details, and "Course Library" with a list of resources including Peer Group Contact Info, Orientation Guide, Peer Group Guide, and Submitting Lessons Guide.

## Technical Requirements

In order to successfully participate in the Sprout E-course, here is what you will need:

- **Reliable Internet Connection:** You can speed test your Internet connection here: <http://www.speedtest.net/>.
- **Current Internet Browser Version:** We recommend that you use the most current version of your Internet browser.
- **ElluminateLive! Software:** We use ElluminateLive! for synchronous events such as orientation and webinars. Visit the [Blackboard Collaborate support page](#) for technical support and requirements.
- **Adobe Reader:** This software is the global standard for electronic document sharing. You can download the latest version of Adobe Reader here: <http://get.adobe.com/uk/reader/>.

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