

## ECONOMIC INSERTION OF PHYSICALLY OR MENTALLY HANDICAPPED YOUTH

### STUDENTS PROFILE

4 students coming from different countries demonstrated interest in Venture Philanthropy and with interest/experience .re Handicap. Fluent in English, Spanish (for ideally two) and French (for one).

### PARTNER

#### **Fondation Demeter**

Charitable Foundation under the auspices of Fondation de France

c/o Fondation de France

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<http://fondation-demeter.com>

### PERSON IN CHARGE OF THE PROJECT

Pascal Vinarnic – Founder

Etienne Eichenbeger - Director - Wise Philanthropic Services

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTITUTION AND CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

Fondation Demeter was set up in 1994 to sponsor innovative economic solutions to social issues. Working with pilot programs in any geography over a period of 3 to 5 years, Demeter's sponsored projects try to demonstrate:

- an innovative economic solution is delivering social results
- scalability options can be identified and start to be executed upon
- impact is measured and is obtained with most adequate resource-minded business model to ensure best possible financial independence.

After 12 years sponsoring microfinance, Demeter is now focused upon the economic re-insertion of at-risk youth (ranging from ex-convicts to handicapped – all underprivileged and vulnerable youth Civic Society too often prefers to see “behind bars”).

At-risk youth represent almost 1 billion individuals from 16-to-24-year old with little hope of ever having a job. That group is at risk of becoming a prey to all forms of extremism if alternative integration solution cannot be

developed and made available to them. In the case of Handicapped, Civic Society has too often developed a hypocritical approach willing to help but claiming it cannot because of the “specific circumstances” related to Handicap. And Individuals or Employers prefer to pay taxes or fines rather than to provide real solutions.

## EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

Venture Philanthropy is trying to duplicate the venture capital model into the social sector. To ensure proper sharing of know-how is easily available and well disseminated, it is critical to document best practices experienced on field projects and to make those available to the widest possible audiences.

Demeter wants to develop a “library” of case examples based upon its own “empiric” field experiences to show best-demonstrated practices in the field of venture philanthropy – in Demeter’s case to be related with At-risk Youth successful insertion into Society. Each year over a 5-year period, one “topic” will be chosen.

Typically, 3 to 4 “organizations/programs” are selected to produce pre-defined deliverable contents and the media format is determined on a case-by-case basis. Demeter’s board is seconded by Wise Philanthropy Advisors, a group of expert advisors in the fields of venture philanthropy and communication. The students are offered to assist the advisors and Demeter’s board in all phases i.e. the specifications re. the defined field topic for 2018-19, the identification and selection process of the field experiences to be investigated, and the execution phase of the deliverables – giving them a complete picture from definition to results.

We expect Team to see themselves as future change-makers and this is an opportunity to practice how to define, execute and influence decision and policy making re. improving on social issues through sharing of proper information and clear recommendations – despite knowing very little initially about the topic under investigation. It is as well occasion to go from investigation to execution phases along one project.

## RESULTS AND DELIVERABLES INTENDED

Each year, between 3 to 4 case examples showing Best Venture Philanthropy Practices around one common topic. In each case, the deliverable media needs to be adjusted (case study, video, interview, cartoon, a physical object, an event) and specific support and sponsorship to be defined and developed.

NGOs traditionally focused upon “back-to-school” type of programs to prepare for the (re)-insertion of at-risk youth. And too often failed to obtain satisfactory results: jobs are not interesting causing significant turnover among employees; the social differences with the rest of the Civic Society increase due to jobs with little value added, hidden from the public, and/or having low-tech contents.

How much of poor employment rates among Handicapped individuals (between 20 to 50% in most countries) is the result of frustrating circumstances for such youth – and is it truly unavoidable for our societies (Civic, Corporate, Public) that employability will remain low and with poor records of satisfaction ?

But from time to time, we have come across experiences that prove the opposite – Mental or physical handicapped successfully employed in tech jobs, establishing or running companies. Are those “only” exceptions or what can be done so that become mainstream?

Despite such experiences being relatively well-known and documented, how come the Civic Society, Employers or Policy-Makers are not committed to such changes and too often prefer to continue with using taxpayers benefits or funding to run programs to apart such Youth from the rest of Society, hiding Society’s failures when success is possible.

With 10 to 15% of most communities suffering from some form of Handicap, the majority of such handicaps being acquired during lifetime and not from birth, what is required to change our (hypocritical as we do not seriously try to do good) behavior ?

### METHODOLOGY

Students define / investigate / compile in Part I. Then team works upon filed experiences Demeter has been involved with to define what to share and the best possible format for dissemination (Part II). After approval from Demeter's Board, team executes in Part III.

"Team" is composed of various Demeter board members, Wise's representative and one lead student per "case" though all the group continues to interact together as a rule. They meet mostly through digital media once / twice a week during Parts I & II. During Part III, Team liaises twice a month for follow-up.

### SCHEDULE

Part I: Investigation / Compilation of available experiences - for 6-week period to get students familiarized with topic of dissemination (till end of October).

Part II: recommendation of case examples and definition of contents / format re. dissemination of such examples (till end of February).

Part III: execution of dissemination format in collaboration with Wise Philanthropy Advisors (till end of April).

### LOGISTIC

The students will have access to the team projects' room, equipped with a computer, a printer and a phone.

Demeter and Wise will give access to their internal experience base (not necessarily under a formalized format) and will help the students with introduction and support to outside parties that need to be contacted for the project. If specific and pre-approved expenses are required to conduct the projects, Demeter will be funding those.