



F23 PREL9131-01 Public Relations Principles I

Assignment 3- Communications Plan- NCISIC

Submitted to: Dave Mammoliti

Submitted by: Bhrigu Bagga (4464289)



Table of Contents

<i>Organizational Overview</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Product/Service Description</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>SWOT</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Research Summary</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Goals</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Objectives</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Target Audience</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Key Messages</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Strategy and Tactics</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Timelines</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Budget</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Evaluation and Measurement</i>	<i>13</i>



Organizational Overview

Niagara College is a public post-secondary educational institution based in the Niagara region, Canada. The institution offers over 130 diploma, graduate certificate, apprenticeship, and Bachelor's Degree programs. Recently, the college announced that it welcomed 11,000 students on campus during the ongoing Fall 2023 term, out of which 5,500 are international students.

Product/Service Description

The college is launching a service to support its massive number of international students by setting up the Niagara College International Students' Incubation Centre (NCISIC). Students with innovative, tech-based start-up ideas will be supported under this initiative.

Through the centre, the college aims to offer the following services:

1. Infrastructure: Workspaces, including computers, printers, and office supplies, will be provided.
2. Legal & Financial Advice: A comprehensive understanding of Canadian legal and financial working styles will be provided. This shall include registering a company, understanding licensing/permits requirements, taxation, and financial advice, etc.
3. Market Research: Students could benefit from free consultancy on conducting market research and access to data from market research firms.
4. Grants: The college will have an annual fund of \$1.5 million for the top three startup ideas. The fund will be equally divided among the three in the form of grants.



SWOT

Strengths

1. Research Rankings: According to a publication called *Canada's Innovation Leaders* by Research InfoSource Inc (2023), NC is the number one college for research in Ontario and the second countrywide.
2. Funding Support: The same report states that NC attracted more than \$18.2 million in funding to carry out innovative projects in 2021.
3. Completed Research Projects & Partnerships: The college is ranked #1 in terms of completed research projects (228) and research partnerships (190)
4. In-house Educational Resources: The college is known for its applied education, offering 130 programs in different fields, ranging from business, tourism, and media to medical sciences. Expert guidance can be provided through professors already teaching at the college. The college can also leverage study materials and case studies from its previous projects.

Weaknesses

1. Lack of Experience: The college does not have prior experience in hosting startups.
2. Narrowing Down Fields: It can be challenging to narrow down the centre's field of specialization with 130+ programs. A fair system will have to be created to give equal opportunities to students from diverse study backgrounds.
3. Physical Spaces: Finding or creating new spaces might be strenuous and require additional funding.
4. Cultural and Linguistic Barriers: Despite great ideas, the college might need to bridge cultural and linguistic barriers to run successful businesses.

Opportunities

1. Revenue Generation: The college can upscale its revenue through promising start-up ideas. Contracts with students offering equity or return on investment with an interest rate can be explored.



2. **Partnerships:** The college can foster new partnerships with existing incubation centres and government programs promoting similar businesses. Canada's Accelerator and Incubator Program's (CAIP) investment in Ryerson University is a great example.
3. **Grow Existing Projects:** Niagara College is already a leader among Ontario post-secondary institutions in the Green House Technology Network (GTN) and Southern Ontario Network for Advanced Manufacturing Innovation (Sonami). Through this center, the college can encourage innovation in these areas.
4. **Public Image:** Reportedly, 5500 students at the college are international and pay exorbitant tuition fees. An initiative for their most significant asset would earn the college praise from students, families, and society overall.

Threats

1. **Business Environment:** A Statistics Canada report suggests that threats to small businesses are growing in Canada. These factors are beyond the college's control.
2. **Geopolitical Tensions:** The world is experiencing multiple wars, conflicts, and diplomatic tensions. The college will have to carefully analyze immigration statuses and possible threats to students' ability to remain in Canada.
3. **Market Saturation:** Small businesses are major contributors to the Canadian economy; startups will face tight competition and market saturation.

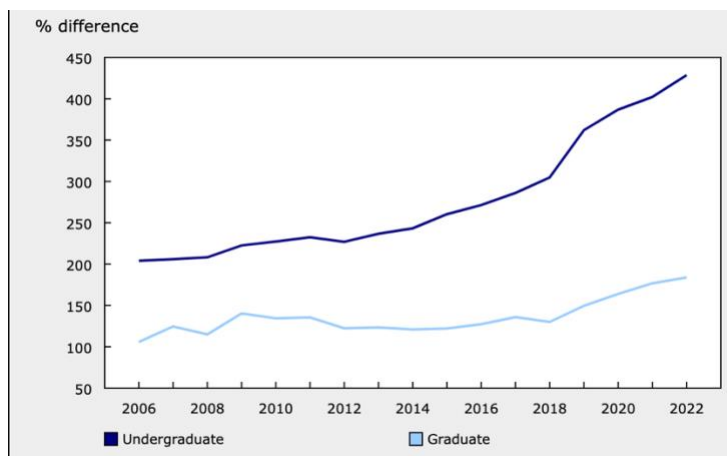
Research Summary

Below are the findings from the research done around the service:

1. Niagara College is well known for its emphasis on research work. This experience can be utilized by helping startups with market research, entry, and distribution.
2. With a proven record of successful fundraising, the organization should find funding support with ease.



3. Rich experience in project completion and cross-organizational partnerships can be greatly beneficial for upcoming entrepreneurs.
4. The college can present an ethos, pathos, and logos-based pitch for the service because the need for such an initiative is paramount. Some relevant facts are mentioned below:
5. Data from Statistics Canada show that average tuition costs for international graduates (\$27,149) and undergraduates (\$45,242) are the highest in the province of Ontario.
6. International students pay significantly higher sums of tuition fees compared to their Canadian classmates. Below is a graph that illustrates the percentage differences in their fees at undergraduate and graduate levels.



7. The centre will have to face the challenges of rising inflation (57.5%), rising cost of inputs (44.7%), rising interest rates and debt costs (40.6%), recruiting and retaining skilled employees (35.6%), and cost of insurance (34.1%).



Goals

1. To promote the launch of NCISIC.
2. To create awareness of the services offered by the centre among international students.
3. To invite angel investors, brands and organizations to co-sponsor/fund the initiative.
4. To enhance public image, with a specific focus on the idea of #NCCARES for its international students.
5. To attract government grants and support for the centre.

Objectives

1. Design digital invitations and concept note for the launch of NCISIC.
2. Identifying key audiences of the launch event.
3. Secure positive coverage in at least 5 local, 3 national and 10 international media outlets.
4. Design a social media campaign: announcing the initiatives across Niagara college handles, launching NCISICs' social media handles, designing posts, videos messages etc. Aim to achieve 10,000 organic followers within the first 6 months.
5. Designing government specific communication, inviting them to support as well as inaugurate the initiative.

Target Audience

1. The key target audiences are: parents, international students, media, investors and government.
2. The demographics can be further narrowed down by looking at country-wise data: countries with highest numbers of International students, countries with highest level of visa approval rates etc.



Key Messages

- The campaign would revolve around the idea of #NCCARES.
- Niagara Colleges to incubate international students, announces \$1.5M in grants.
- Get hands-on learning with a Niagara College program and upon graduation incubate your business on campus! #NCCARES
- #AppliedDreams just took a leap forward!
- Do you want to be your own boss? Apply for grants up to \$500,000 if you have a business idea which stands out! #AppliedDreams #NCCARES
- First ever Canadian college to incubate International Students

Strategy and Tactics

Goal 1: **To promote the launch of NCISIC.**

Strategies:

Profile creation: Drafting concepts notes, brochures, websites, social handles etc for NCISIC.

Launch/Announcement: Organising a grand launch event.

Tactics:

Event: We can invite a senior government official/minister to inaugurate the centre's physical space. This can also be integrated with Niagara College's annual fundraising Gala.

E-Invites: Creative design with a mention of the announcement to be rolled out to possible investors, stakeholders, local leaders, and media outlets.

Press Releases: Issue press releases to local, national and international media outlets with a specific focus on international students.



Goal 2: To create awareness of the services offered by the centre among international students.

Strategies:

Info sessions: Host information sessions on the services offered by NCISIC.

Conduct information sessions and workshops on campus to directly engage with students.

Workshops: Host workshops with successful entrepreneurs.

On campus and social presence: Ensure active presence of the centre on campus as well as online.

Tactics:

Motivation: Motivate students to attend info sessions and workshops by giving gift cards or free food to participants.

Student messengers: Identify active students, engage with them and mobilise them to talk about the service with their friends. Word of mouth communication by setting up booths at college events.

Visibility: Increase visibility by pasting posters on campus and tips from experts on the theme of entrepreneurship, create engaging content on social handles.

Goal 3: To invite angel investors, brands, and organizations to co-sponsor/fund the initiative.

Strategies:

Investor specific events: Invite possible investors for a visit to the centre, host an events where they can share their experiences.

Alumni connect: Niagara College has a big pool of alumni, their skills and experiences can be leveraged.

Tactics:

Investor Outreach: Reaching out to investors through personalised letters and invites to the centre and also schedule in-person meetings to explain the idea of



NCISIC. This needs to be done on a regular basis with updates incorporated in communications.

Alumni Engagement: Alumni will be invited to be board members at various committees of the centre. Successful alumni will be encouraged to sponsor or invest in business ideas.

Goal 4: To enhance public image, with a specific focus on the idea of #NCCARES for its international students.

Strategies:

Storytelling Campaign: Promoting the idea that Niagara college cares for the international students and want them to settle and do well in Canada.

Community Engagement: Ensuring awareness about the centre in the college community and local neighbourhoods.

Social Media Advocacy: Communicating success stories of initial start-ups, funds collected, collaborations signed.

Tactics:

Success Stories: Publishing testimonials from industry leaders talking about the centre, first batch of entrepreneurs, writing blogs on good business practices and promoting all of these together as one success story of the centre.

Community Events: Having a booth at community events and college events with a career focus, open houses, orientations, convocations etc.

Social Media Toolkit: LinkedIn focused toolkit can be curated for staff members who can use it to post about the centre on their personal handles. This shall give a bigger, organic reach to professional audiences.



Goal 5: To attract government grants and support for the centre.

Strategies:

Policy Advocacy: Advocate and express the need of such an centre to government officials.

Research Partnerships: Research and apply for grants, partnerships with government programs.

Tactics:

Government-specific Communication: Curating targeted communications for government departments through letters, brochures, presentations, coffee table books etc.

Site Visits: Inviting officials to visit the centre to inaugurate it, award grants to the students but also just to review the progress.

Timelines

Oct 1, 2023 – Nov 1, 2023

Work on goal 1- to promote the launch of NCISIC and the launch event

Nov 1 2023 – ongoing

Work on goal 2, 3, 4 and 5:

- To create awareness of the services offered by the centre among international students.
- To invite angel investors, brands and organizations to co-sponsor/fund the initiative.
- To enhance public image, with a specific focus on the idea of #NCCARES for its international students.
- To attract government grants and support for the centre.



Budget

1. Marketing and Promotion	Pricing
Digital Marketing and Social Media Campaigns	\$50,000
Printed Materials (Brochures, Posters, Invitations)	\$10,000
Public Relations and Media Outreach	\$15,000
2. Events and Launch Activities	
Grand Launch Event	\$100,000
Information Sessions and Workshops	\$30,000
Booths at Community and College Events	\$10,000
3. Personnel	
Event Organizers and Coordinators	\$60,000
Technical Support and IT Staff	\$40,000
4. Technology and Infrastructure	
Website Development and Maintenance	\$25,000
Social Media Management Tools	\$5,000
Event Management Software	\$10,000
5. Miscellaneous Expenses	
Catering for Events	\$15,000
Gift Cards and Incentives	\$10,000
Travel and Accommodation for Guest Speakers	\$20,000
6. Contingency Fund (10% of Total Budget)	Contingency: \$40,000
Total Estimated Budget: \$400,000	



Evaluation and Measurement

1. **Social media metrics:** Analysing the social media growth of handles of NCISIC and also the posts about the centre on other Niagara college handles, blogs etc..
2. **Research strategies:** Using primary research to collect data about people's feedback about the centre and using sampling techniques to analyse it.
3. **Funding graph:** Classifying data on fundings received over the years comparing it to understand the support NCISIC has been receiving.
4. **News coverage:** Recording the coverage received after the main launch event in local, national and international media outlets.
5. **Feedback:** In-person feedback from students, government officials, investors will be key because they are the key stakeholder.