Submission Form

**Background**:

* Think Science Competition was under the name of Science Fair for high schools. The project was launched on April 26, 2009. This tiered competition aims to challenge gifted students to think creatively and independently through designing and building innovative models or techniques with community benefits.
* Since 2009 till 2011, funds were granted to 53 high schools, with 550 high school students. Over two academic years, the students have worked under supervision of a 150 science teacher for 6 to 8 months to creatively identify, design, and build innovative projects in various science disciplines to address social issues in the UAE. During this period 200 interactive models with community benefits were built to compete at the emirate of Abu Dhabi level. Students were able to show case their projects in huge exhibitions 2500 visitors attended.
* In 2012 the Science Fair project has scaled up to cover all emirates, including university students in the scope of work. Then it became Think Science program where two additional projects were established to support the main mission of Emirates Foundation. Therefore, we work in partnership with the private and public sectors using venture philanthropy model to deliver social value through philanthropy, supporting young people in the UAE to give them the skills, outlook and opportunities they need to reach their full potential.

**Objective & Timeframe:**

1. **Discover** scientific **talent** among Emirati youth and provide them with **Guidance** **& Recognition**
2. Promote future career opportunities in S&T that connects youth across UAE with key stakeholders
3. **Inspire** and **Promote** awareness & enthusiasm for scientific innovations and **expose** them to interactive S&T activities

* The Think Science Program consists of three modules, accordingly the Target Audience

Will differ as follows:

* 1. **The Think Science Competition** is an annual science competition that aims to challenge gifted youth across the UAE to think creatively and independently to solving practical problems with community benefits.
  2. **Think Science Ambassadors** aims to empower selected youth to further develop their knowledge and analytical thinking, by enrolling them in S&T related educational programs and activities, in partnership with key stakeholders.
  3. **Science Engagement Platform** is an annual platform which provides opportunity for all related science sectors to be connected with the target youth, the platform will incubate a highly interactive experience, and will offer a range of hands-on activities that would be introduced by universities and key stakeholders

**Timeframe:**

1. **Analysis, Design & Preparation Phase** (May-Oct)

* Outline project goals and strategic plan, define project strategy and objectives
* Liaison with the concerned officials of all Educational Authorities in UAE
* Liaison with all stakeholders to explore possible collaborations
* Set rules/ regulations and evaluation Criteria

1. **Evaluation/Filteration Phase(Oct-Jan)**

* Receive the applications and proposals from 700 individuals
* Convene committees for Internal and external evaluation
* Provide applicants with feedback and recommendations
* Receiving the final proposals and the estimated budget.

1. **Technical Monitoring & Evaluation Phase (Jan – April)**

* Regular follow-up with Students during the execution phase (Liaison with at least 500 entity)
* Organize visits to schools for mentors for any technical support

1. **Final Awarding and Exhibition Phase** (Jan – April)

* Convene external Judges Committee (40 from Academia & Industry Sector)
* Evaluation Process, prepare the judging schedule of two competitions
* Awardees /Awards Info
* Prepare the last orientation session for all participants before the final Exhibition
* Organize the final Exhibition, and Awarding Ceremony

1. **Overall Evaluation - Post-Event Phase** (May – Aug)

* Measure the impact, overall Evaluation, and highlight key lessons learnt
* Review of executed round results
* Planning and budgeting the next round

**Project’s added value and importance**

* Youth will have the opportunity to engage in fun and interesting competition.
* Building confidence and enthusiasm through their successes and competitive spirit of the Fairs.
* Challenge gifted youth to think creatively and encourage teamwork.
* Engage youth in developing and executing scientific projects intended for community benefits, and industrial investments.
* Involve teachers and parents in a creative educational experience

**Challenges**

The following are needed to overcome the various challenges during the execution phase of the program:

* High level support and get government blessing
* Manpower to cover the national scope, as the target group is 15-24 youth from High schools and universities across the UAE.
* A portal to manage all end beneficiary proposals, and details, and to help in measuring the long term impact
* Strong Media Campaign, Media Coverage.

**Relevance of the project to the respective Action Line**

* This project is in line with the Emirates Foundation mission to support Youth Development and fostering community engagement and social enterprise.
* This project will identify young Emirati who can represent the future of the UAE science community.
* This project identifies and encourages youngsters who over time will become national scientific leaders and be capable of participating in science-based policy making and utilizing Science and Technology in helping society to prosper.

**Conclusion:**

**Think Science Program is package of three** key **modules** to inspire, empower and guide the youth of the UAE to ensure a sustainable future for the nation. This by using venture philanthropy model to impact the lives of youth positively and permanently by:

* Identifying, educating and informing on challenges facing UAE youth
* Developing sustainable enterprise based solutions to social issues
* Motivating and empowering UAE youth to be Think Science Ambassadors with powerful skills in order to participate and give back to society