

RREV's Innovative Pilot Template

As part of the **Innovative Mindset and Pilot Development** courses being offered through several of Maine's institutions of higher education, the RREV project uses a consistent template for the creation of all future pilots. Because every pilot created and tested with RREV funds WILL BE published in EnGiNE, we want all of Maine's educators to have the assurance of consistency.

This template provides an outline of the components required of an Innovative Pilot. The information in this template will serve as the basis for requests for school/district level project funding.

Section 1: Define the Need

A. Describe your innovation.

Consider what evidence supports the need for an innovation, and the evidence that suggests your innovation will improve the current situation.

The town government of North Haven is currently undergoing a significant revisioning process to ensure the island's sustainability for coming generations. This work has included several community forums, surveys, and small-group conversations in order to determine a focused subset of community priorities. Town administration recently progressed to its second priority: Workforce Development and Economic Diversification. The objective for priority two is "foster a diverse economy that sustains both a year-round workforce and the human infrastructure (childcare, healthcare, education) needed to support that workforce." North Haven Community School (NHCS), as the only educational institution, is essential to the future of the island's economy, workforce, and human infrastructure. Our innovation endeavors to reinforce and expand our K-12 institution's educational offerings to assist North Haven with meeting its objective for priority two.

In order to foster a diverse economy and support the island's human infrastructure, our innovation will become a partnership with town administration to create a unique **K-12 and adult lifelong learning hub housed in our Projects Building**. This endeavor will necessitate the hiring of a new full-time coordinator to serve as a liaison between NHCS and local community organizations. Funding will support contract employment with local tradespeople who can lead short-term teaching residencies, working both within our K-12 population and adults. Improvements will need to be made to our Projects Building space to make it safe and accessible for all. New equipment purchases will also be necessary to support a variety of trades and educational programs for multiple age groups and skill levels.

The school hired two local community members as part-time Projects Building Coordinators, the first time in several years staff persons have been assigned to this space. They are currently receiving a stipend for their work, although it would be most effective to hire a full-time individual. Funding for these positions is currently provided by a surplus in funds from the North Haven Foundation, which, as a result, has now been depleted. Funds from our foundation grant also provided additional hourly compensation for project leaders who provide expertise and support on, for instance, boatbuilding and carpentry.

In addition to coordinators and project leads, I (Shaun Johnson) am working with a larger team of staff and community members to organize our Projects Building programming. These individuals are:

- Cecily Pingree (Board Member)
- Laura Serino (Board Member)
- Amilia Campbell (Projects Building Coordinator)
- Maddie Hallowell (Projects Building Coordinator)
- Todd Martin (1-2 Teacher)
- Amanda Labelle (Art Teacher)
- Shaun Johnson (Principal)

Coinciding with construction of a new school facility, the school worked with the Shelter Institute to design and construct a timber frame structure with an attached greenhouse to house the school's career and trades program. Students spent a week in residence at the Shelter Institute to construct a portion of the building. For several years, the building housed classes such as marine mammal anatomy and physiology, including multiple skeletal reconstructions which are on display at the school, carpentry and woodworking, small engines, and boat building. The greenhouse has been home variously to an aquaculture and hydroponics array, which provided greens for the school lunch program, native plant horticulture, and seed starts for the school's outdoor garden.

Funding for staff for what became known as the Projects Building has come through various sources. For much of the building's existence, the staff person associated with the building was an employee of the Midcoast School of Technology, and high school students enrolled in programs supported by MCST received credit for CTE courses. Changes to the funding model from a percentage of the student body to a specific minimum number of students enrolled resulted in the loss of funding for that program and the associated tools and materials. Although the district had the opportunity to assume funding for that teacher to remain on staff, they declined. Garden and greenhouse staff has come variously through the school's science program and through a short-term grant from Chellie Pingree to establish the garden and school lunch program, although the school did then assume the cost of a part-time garden and greenhouse coordinator.

Following the loss of MCST funding for an 80%-time teacher specifically tied to the Projects Building and the tools and materials required for programs such as carpentry and small engines, the building served as storage for a period of time, and was repurposed during the pandemic to house a temporary enrichment program for elementary students. It is also often used as an indoor space for afterschool programs such as Garden Club and Outing Club.

Although the physical design of the building reflects the natural beauty of Shelter Institute timber frame projects, it also suffers from some significant design limitations that make it largely unsuitable for sustained use by students across the entire K-12 spectrum. For example, stairs leading to an extensive loft space are not to code, rendering the space inaccessible, and two large sets of barn doors on separate sides of the building do not shut properly, which means the entire building bleeds heat in the winter. The building also lacks the fundamental storage and workspace necessary to sustain educational programs long-term. Lack of dividers in the space mean that woodworking and boat building programs spread noise and sawdust into designated "clean" spaces intended for work with robotics and audio/visual editing software, and the noise of the building's boiler and vents have made it impractical to set up a recording studio in the space, as was intended.

Ultimately, our challenges are similar to other island schools, perhaps more so. NHCS needs to offer in a sustained way alternative pathways and options for all of our students because, as an island community that is an hour-long ferry ride from the mainland, CTE and other diverse course offerings are inaccessible to our students. Virtual courses offered via smartboard technology don't cut it. Additionally, our community is in

desperate need of, for instance, electricians, carpenters, builders, plumbers, medical personnel, educators, and appliance technicians. It is unreasonable and inefficient for NHCS, as an island school, to rely on mainland institutions for this kind of programming. We need to prepare our own from within.

B. Identify which students would be impacted, targeted, or supported by the innovation.

Review the evidence – quantitative and qualitative data and research – that indicates this group of students is considered the most vulnerable and would benefit from the described innovation.

Data you can use to inform your innovation, rationale, and targeted student population include the performance of various groups of students (e.g., students in rural locales, students from low socio-economic conditions, students with disabilities, students who are EIs, students at risk for dropping out, student who are homeless) with regard to academic achievement, graduation rates, social emotional and mental wellness, economic data, and/or workforce participation.

NHCS currently enrolls approximately 50 students K to 12. Although our school population is small, our students represent a relatively wide spectrum of abilities and needs. They also deserve the same diversity of educational experiences as mainland students. For example, in most cases, high school students have a variety of courses from which to choose in each subject to earn their credits. We have one teacher per subject area and are therefore limited in what we can offer our students at any time. Through forums and town halls, our parents have time and again expressed the desire for their students to have a greater variety of options with core credits and electives. In fact, we recently hosted a screening of the film *Most Likely to Succeed*, followed by a panel discussion of community members and educators. Those in attendance overwhelmingly supported the project-based and inquiry methods shown in the film.

With regard to CTE programming and instruction in trades, engineering, and fabrication arts, our only option is for students to attend the Midcoast School of Technology. This is a fantastic resource, yet the bar is rather high. Our students cannot typically take advantage of the exploratory programs in 9th and 10th grades and can only attend programs during their junior and senior years two days per week. This imposes a variety of logistical hurdles; for example, our school schedules don't exactly match, it disrupts the rest of their school program, and ferry transport can be complicated, especially in the winter months.

We have an urgent need for an island-centric CTE learning hub, workshop, and/or makerspace that is amenable to ages 6 to adult, totally self-sufficient, and can host a wide variety of courses and activities. We are also in dire need of a program that can withstand the kinds of attrition common to island schools, that can shift, change, and grow to meet the needs of students and match the abilities of the human resources we have available in the community. NHCS is tremendously privileged to have an actual building in which to begin this work. Nevertheless, our innovation will gather the curricular, human, and capital resources necessary for this auxiliary space to succeed, which were certainly not in place when the structure was first built.

Section 2: Describe the Innovation

A. Describe the goals of your innovation.

Consider how your innovation will meet the needs of the identified target student population(s) and how you plan to achieve your goals. Additionally, consider any changes in policy, practice or structures you expect as a result of the innovation.

NHCS will partner with the North Haven town administration to assist with workforce development and economic diversification. Our innovative idea of an island learning hub will provide a variety of CTE and alternative education programming across our entire K-12 population and extend to adults throughout the community who seek additional licensure, certification, micro-credentials, and other technical or job-specific training. Through these efforts, we endeavor to spark interest in technical fields for all K-12 students and meet critical workforce needs for our island community. It should not take up to a year for a family to get a kitchen range replaced, which is the typical wait time on North Haven. Given the expense and logistical challenges transporting workers to the island, there needs to be a much more concerted effort to prepare, train, and certify our own electricians, plumbers, and other workers in high-demand career fields specific to our island community.

NHCS is currently undergoing a significant redesign of our school schedule. We will be implementing a FLEX Friday approach starting in the fall of 2022 for all students. With additional professional development for our staff provided by [PBLWorks during the summer of 2022](#), all day every Friday during the school year will be devoted to rigorous and gold-standard project-based learning. Students in all grades will have extended periods of time to work on individual or team-oriented passion projects. Projects will be carefully planned and designed, culminating in a community “exhibition” at the end of each quarter. Our Projects Building will feature heavily in this new model so that students can leverage various “maker” resources, equipment, and technologies to support their project needs. A FLEX Friday approach will also enable us to provide additional support, interventions, and enrichment to support individual student needs.

[One final goal of our innovation is to provide the space and momentum for our new Offshore Year Program, starting in the fall of 2023.](#) The Offshore program is designed for high school students and will invite students from around the country to live and learn on North Haven for an entire year focused on marine science, environmental justice, and civic engagement. This program will be made possible by an extensive partnership with the Hurricane Island Center for Science and Leadership. Offshore Year students will make frequent travels to Hurricane, working with their scientists and educators on climate issues that will impact North Haven. Developing our Projects Building space through this innovation will create a physical and metaphorical anchor to our Offshore program and enhance our ability to partner with local community organizations, such as the North Haven Conservation Partners, who supports our outdoor learning and garden clubs.

B. Describe activities included in your plan for each stage – preparation (P) or implementation (I) – of your innovation.

- **Preparation** includes building stakeholder awareness, establishing routines and processes, and coordination of logistics.
- **Implementation** includes planned implementation activities, as well as professional development for the educators participating in the innovation.

Note: The following table includes information on prior activities that have been completed since our previous submission, which is demonstrative of the tremendous progress we have and will continue to achieve.

	Activity	Purpose	Stage (P or I)	Date of Completion	Person Responsible
1.	Compile and analyze community data and input previously collected through town halls and forums.	To consolidate information already available to generate a new vision for our Projects Building and innovations.	I	July 2022	Principal Shaun Johnson; Projects Coordinator Amilia Campbell and Maddie Hallowell

2.	Connect and organize with local community partners.	To create a cohort of projects “adjuncts” in a variety of skills areas or trades to lead workshops with students and adults.	I	January 2023	Principal Shaun Johnson; Projects Building Committee
3.	Complete PBL101 workshops.	To train our entire staff in an organized K-12 framework for project-based learning.	I	September 2023	Entire school faculty
4.	Meet with town administration on economic and workforce priorities for North Haven.	To discuss preliminary findings on Priority Area Two and develop a tentative outline of available programming for adult learners and future workforce needs.	I	February 2023	Principal Shaun Johnson; Town Administrator Rick Lattimer (meet with a consultant hired by the town to provide a written assessment on these matters)
5.	Alignment and coordination of projects	To develop a scope of project ideas and coursework with input from multiple constituencies	I	March 2023 (completed on an ongoing basis, the first of which prior to the start of the year)	Principal Shaun Johnson; Projects Building Committee; K-12 leadership team; community partners and/or projects “adjuncts”
6.	Soft pilot of projects	To implement two to three short-term projects in the building space from a pre-existing list of ideas	I	January 2023	K-12 staff; Projects Building Coordinator; community partners and/or “adjuncts” (this included two Little Free Libraries, a renovation of a wooden playground shed, refinish and paint for a wooden canoe, and refurbishing a North Haven Dinghy).
7.	Design and build necessary additions and changes to our Projects Building.	To prepare the building space to work safely with students K to 12 and adults. Projects include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stairs brought to code ● Bathroom renovation ● Rebuild barn door and add insulation ● Change from oil heat to pump 	P	September 2023	Principal Shaun Johnson; Facilities Committee; Projects Building Committee
8.	Coordinate with JMG	To establish a certification pipeline for on-island apprenticeships so that students can accrue hours	P	June 2023	Principal Shaun Johnson; Courtney Naliboff (staff)
9.	Offshore Year pilot	Prepare the Projects space for housing the entire Offshore Year program, including an office and meeting space in the loft	P	September 2023-June 2024	Principal Shaun Johnson; Kim Rosenbaum (staff); Amilia Campbell (staff); John Van Dis (Hurricane Island)

Section 3: Define Innovation Outcomes & Measure to Assess Outcomes

- A. Identify the outcomes (*i.e., student outcomes, changes in instructional practices, changes in student practice*) that you expect to see as a result of your innovation.

Consider both short-term and long-term outcomes, at different points in the time (e.g., at 6 months, 12 months, 2 years and 3+ years).

NHCS is an inextricable part of the North Haven community and critical to fulfilling the town's overall vision:

"North Haven is a remarkable island community – resourceful, caring, safe, and inclusive – committed to sustaining a thriving year-round economy, stewarding our natural resources, and preserving scenic beauty for current and future generations."

We anticipate the following outcomes of our innovative Lifelong Learning Hub, which will both benefit the school and our entire community:

Within six months:

Successful transition to quarterly community "exhibitions" of student projects (previously once per year)
100% of K-12 students complete at least two major "exhibitions"

Within one year:

Growth in student engagement vis-a-vis Panorama school climate survey tools (pre to post)
Stable and/or increased enrollment of students across the K-12 spectrum
Off-island student enrollment in our Offshore Year Program to begin the fall of 2023

Within two years:

Annual growth in student engagement vis-a-vis Panorama school climate survey tools
Increased retention (or decreased transience) of the high school student population
Self-sustaining enrollment in and tuition funding for our Offshore Year Program
Offshore Year program funding shifting to the regular school budget
Annual growth in post-secondary courses and workshops held at NHCS in our Projects Building

Within five years and beyond

Growth in collaboration between town administration and our various educational programs
Graduates of NHCS and/or participants in our post-secondary programs transitioning directly to careers in critical workforce areas on North Haven.
The ability to independently train and certify new teachers in our methods to overcome hiring and recruitment challenges
Recruit additional certified tradespersons who can official apprentice local students and adults

- B. Describe your plan for collecting and reviewing data to assess your innovation outcomes.

Potential data to collect includes qualitative and quantitative data (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups, observations, exit tickets, and on-demand assessment(s) that can be considered.

	Data Type	Baseline (B) Interim (I) Summative (S)	Frequency of Data Collection	Person(s) Responsible for Collection and Data Quality
1.	Student projects per quarter	B,I,S	quarterly	Principal Shaun Johnson and school leadership team
2.	Student enrollment	B,I,S	Annual	Laura Macdonald (AA) and Kelsey Jones (GC)
3.	Offshore year enrollment	B,I,S	Annual	Kim Rosenbaum (OY)
4.	Post-secondary course enrollment and quality	B,I,S	Annual	Amilia Campbell (PBC)
5.	Collaboration between school and town administration	B,I,S	Annual	Principal Shaun Johnson, Projects Building Team, Administrator Rick Lattimer
6.	Workforce participation and development	B,I,S	Annual	Principal Shaun Johnson, Projects Building Team, and Town Administrator Rick Lattimer

- C. Describe how you will **scale and sustain** your innovation, including necessary policy changes, changes in mindsets, capacity-building activities, and **long-term financial sustainability**.

Consider the system changes that this innovation will require and promote.

Our proposed innovation is part of a larger process of cultural and instructional change at North Haven Community School. NHCS has a longstanding tradition of project-based, outdoor, and experiential education, largely due to its geographic isolation, autonomy, and small size. Its identity as a relatively progressive utopia of alternative teaching methodologies and experiences filtered over the last decade or more as a result of staff and administrative turnover, rapid changes in the local Board of Directors, and complex political variables.

With renewed stability and a clearer vision comes the community and faculty’s overwhelming interest in reconnecting with the school’s more progressive and project-based roots. From the perspective of NHCS, this will require ongoing professional development to build teachers’ knowledge and practice of project-based and experiential learning. Some of these practices are already codified in school board policy. For example, high school students must complete four fall expeditions and four knowledge fair exhibitions in order to graduate.

Graduation policies will need to be refined as we revise our various project exhibitions and expeditions. Faculty, with the assistance of community members, will need to create a brand new adult learning and career

certification program that can be housed in our Projects Building. With this innovation's success in its early stages, we can make this programming part of our annual appeal to the North Haven Foundation, thus ensuring its long-term financial stability.

- D. Describe the feasibility review you engaged in during the development of your innovative pilot plan, including which aspects of the plan for the pilot were reviewed, which stakeholders were engaged, feedback received and revisions made to the plan as a result of the feedback.

As mentioned previously, a clear and sustainable vision for our Projects Building eluded NHCS year after year. Just a few years prior, staff, families, and the community engaged in significant revisioning and redesign work of our entire school program with the assistance of consultants from the organization Rural Aspirations. Curricular scopes and sequences were created, various evaluation rubrics tested, habits of work listed, and personalized learning plans were rolled out, albeit somewhat hastily. In the aggregate, all of this work underscored near unanimous agreement that the Projects Building can and should be the genesis of our own island CTE or alternative pathways program that includes projects and other experiential and internship opportunities for K-12 students. Town halls generated a great deal of survey and anecdotal data solidifying this vision. Planning documentation, rubrics, and vision work already existed; however, the bulk of this work was completed by faculty and leadership that are no longer with the school.

To a large degree, feasibility reviews, stakeholder engagement, and feedback already occurred over the last several years. NHCS and our school community have been waiting for the opportunity to turn inertia to action. Such an opportunity is partly due to new local school leadership that has a background in alternative methods of teaching and learning, and views project-based and experiential curriculum and pedagogy as essential to student engagement and successful outcomes. Answering the call through RREV to refine and refocus our innovative idea owes a great deal to those who've already laid some very important groundwork. Our innovation also comes at a great time for the entire North Haven community as they engage in the creation of a new community vision, in particular planning for economic diversification and workforce development. NHCS can play an influential role in this process.

Myself, along with our two Projects Building Coordinators, attended a virtual event titled "CTE for All Panel Discussion: Engaging Students, Growing Businesses, & Strengthening our Communities." This panel presentation specifically addressed how local businesses can benefit from meaningful CTE at area schools. A significant challenge on North Haven, especially as it has to do with CTE, is acquiring the personnel that are officially certified to supervise apprenticeships. Many of our on-island partners who perform crucial tasks like building and infrastructure do not have the certification that allows them to supervise apprentices, thereby giving them the hours necessary for licensure. This is a significant barrier to young people entering the trades and for our community partners to be able to train new employees. We anticipate coordinating with JMG to forge some kind of partnership, whereby high school students can begin some early apprenticeship experiences. Our EMS chief, who is also on staff, is working on an EMS explorers program through JMG.

Section 4: Identify Key Expenses

- A. Identify the key expenses associated with the preparation, implementation, and ongoing refinement of your pilot.

Expenses could include staff time, materials, professional development activities, facilities, and other related expenses. This section does not need to include specific costs, but rather list out the different costs that should be considered to implement the innovation.

Key expenses can be grouped into a few different categories for both short and long-term development of our innovative idea.

Human Resources

- \$50,736-Permanent hire of a FT Projects Building/Community Coordinator (salary based on Step 1 of the current teacher contract, plus benefits)
- \$18,000-Stipends for adjunct instructors from our community to work with K-12 students and adults
- \$7,000-Staff time for professional development (summer)

Infrastructure

- \$6,000-Safety and ADA compliance updates to our Projects Building (loft stairs)
- \$7,000-Closure and improved insulation of one set of barn doors
- \$2,500-Bathroom remodel to allow more storage space
- \$1,750-Creation of office space in an open loft for Projects Building staff, adjuncts, and volunteers

Equipment

- \$4,500-Tools and other equipment necessary for projects based on student interest and community needs
- \$3,500-Consumable materials, such as lumber, 3D printing filament, and various types of boards for laser cutting

Total: \$100,986