



Team: 4

Green Connect Lagos Proposal and Business Plan

Team Declaration

The students named below all agree that they have contributed work of equal value to this group work and joint submission.

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Executive Summary

The growth of Urban areas in the Majority world poses many problems to sustainable development such as rising unemployment, increased pollution, increased energy consumption, overcrowding and proliferation of slums. Key to addressing these problems is creating a cluster of Green Businesses that can address urban challenges and support economic growth in the city in a sustainable way. Green Connect Lagos (GCL) is an app that provides a 'green jobs pathway' for people in Lagos. It will specifically target university graduates to provide eco-innovative businesses with the brightest employees. Overall, the app will support economic growth of Lagos, reduce unemployment, and contribute to sustainable development of the city through increasing the number of green businesses that are having positive social and environmental impacts.

Part 1: Description and Explanation of the Problem and Eco-innovation

The growth of Urban areas is a prevalent challenge to sustainable development. In 2020, 41.25% of Sub-Saharan Africa's population was living in Urban areas (World Bank, 2022), with this high population demonstrating the importance of addressing urban sustainability challenges, especially as urban populations continue to rise. The city of Lagos in Nigeria has a population of around 15,500 and is the 8th fastest growing city in Africa (Wendell Cox Consultancy, 2021). This growth has occurred despite Lagos having significantly less infrastructure than other cities of a similar size. Urban sprawl is associated with environmental impacts such as increased air pollution, growth in energy consumption, ecosystem fragmentation and agricultural land loss which results in lower species diversity and the removal of native vegetation (Johnson, 2001). In addition to this many social challenges are associated with urban growth such as overcrowding, proliferation of slums, overused urban facilities and urban poverty and unemployment (Nelson and Dawkins, 2016). Whilst the growth of Lagos provides many challenges, it also provides opportunities to transform the cities growth in support of sustainable development. Key to this, is building clusters of green businesses in Lagos that are focused on innovation, sustainability and supporting the cities growth. Whilst there are many examples of businesses in Lagos carrying out positive work in terms of environmental and social sustainability, they often lack the resource base and workforce to mobilise and expand, a challenge which has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our eco-innovation, Green Connect Lagos, is an app that connects people to jobs in the green economy. The app provides a 'green jobs pathway' to connect entrepreneurial graduates to innovative business, and over time we hope the app becomes a vibrant network where knowledge and ideas about the green economy can be shared. The app benefits three distinct groups; those looking for jobs in Lagos, businesses in Lagos and the wider population of Lagos through promoting sustainable growth of the city:

- This first group, job-searchers, are given a straightforward pathway into jobs in the green economy. The app will allow them to create a profile, share information about themselves and their skills and view job vacancies in the green economy. Through creating links with universities these opportunities would be provided to recent graduates, who might otherwise have left Lagos in search of work. An additional feature of our app would be an educational platform in which industry experts give webinars of post articles to provide an insight into work in the green economy. This would increase the job applicant's knowledge base and confidence when applying to jobs as they would have a secure understanding of the skills needed for future employment. They would have an opportunity to develop these skills in certain webinars, boosting their employability prospects.
- The second group, businesses in Lagos, would benefit through increased advertisement of their business and the jobs they are offering, helping them gain access to the brightest employees. Growing as an eco-innovative business can be challenging, because the priorities of the business are generally social and environmental, which differs to competitors in the market who focus on profit. Creating a cluster of businesses can be crucial to the success of these organisations as a strong network of eco-innovative businesses allows the sharing of knowledge, resources, and technologies, boosting the competitiveness of these companies, making them more resilient to financial challenges (Sarasini, 2015). Creating a physical cluster of businesses can be financially challenging and requires an appropriate space, therefore Green Connect Lagos will facilitate a virtual business cluster, which provides similar scope for communication without the financial and spatial barriers. In addition to this, if Lagos gains a reputation for having a thriving green-economy, it will attract further investments to support existing and new green businesses.

- The third group, the wider population of Lagos, benefits in several ways. Firstly, the app supports the growth of eco-innovative businesses that are having a positive social and environmental impact in the city. For example, Greenhill recycling is an example of a business Green Connect Lagos would support. It is a recycling company that creates opportunities for people living in densely populated, low-income areas within Lagos state to create value from their daily-generated waste (Greenhill Recycling, 2021). Green Connect Lagos will help expand the businesses success and as a result, the positive impacts Greenhill Recycling is having on the community and environment in Lagos will continue to grow. Secondly, if people living in Lagos have secure employment, accessed through Green Connect Lagos, they are more likely to invest in their housing and community. Overtime, these small improvements carried out by residents can improve the local community (Cities Alliance, 2022).

To develop strong networks, partnerships will be key to our business. One key partnership is with universities to access well educated graduates that have the right skills and knowledge to support eco-innovative businesses. Secondly, partnerships with organisations such as the Centre for Eco-innovation in Nigeria would be useful to grow the number of eco-innovative businesses involved in the app. Our app is unique to other job searching sites, because it is specifically focused on supporting businesses within the green economy. As a result, any company wanting to advertise on the app will have to demonstrate that they are having positive, social, or environmental impacts and are operating in a sustainable way. Resources will be invested into researching each company to ensure Green Connect Lagos is supporting sustainable change.

As an organisation, Green Connect Lagos has many direct and indirect links to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The main goals addressed through our app is Goal 8, Decent work and Economic growth, and goal 9, Industry, innovation, and infrastructure. Goal 8 is addressed through reducing unemployment and supporting economic growth at an individual, business, and city

level. Within goal 9 our app specifically aids the completion of target 9a “facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support” (United Nations, 2020). As explained above, our app supports sustainable development at many scales, mainly through maximising the ability of businesses in the green economy in Lagos to be successful. Once the presence of sustainable businesses grows in Lagos, consumers may begin favour companies being seen to have positive social and environmental impacts which could encourage change in other local businesses. Green Connect Lagos also supports goal 1, no poverty, and goal 10, reduced inequalities, through reducing unemployment and providing stable job opportunities to residents of Lagos. In addition, many individuals using the app would have migrated from rural settlements in search of improved income and a share of their income may be sent back to the rural areas as remittances. It supports goal 12, responsible consumption and production, by encouraging growth of the green economy. As the green economy grows, consumers will have more access to sustainable consumption sources and may be encouraged to change some of their habits as awareness of the green economy increases. In addition to the goals supported directly by Green Connect Lagos, the businesses advertising on the app will also be doing work to support many of the SDG’s. For example, Greenhill recycling supports goals 11, sustainable cities and communities, and 6, clean water and sanitation. All businesses wanting to advertise on the app will have to demonstrate how they are having positive impact and one way of doing this would be for them to demonstrate their links to the SDGs. Following this, as a secondary impact of the business, many more SDGs will be met, which demonstrates how Green Connect Lagos supports goal 17, partnerships for the goals, “strengthening the means of implementation for sustainable development” (United Nations, 2020)



The business model of Green Connect Lagos is very transferable and therefore, the future of the business would be to expand beyond Lagos to other cities in Nigeria, and Globally. The app would remain focused on supporting the green economy in cities in the developing world. The developing world is the target for our app because it is cities in the global south seeing the most rapid change, and therefore providing a dynamic environment for sustainable development. In addition, developing countries often struggle to grow their economy, because historically investments in developing countries are focused in areas of production or resource extraction. Not only are these industries not sustainable, but they also involve the exploitation of local communities being used to provide cheap labour (Raffer and Singer, 2002). Green Connect Lagos aims to empower the workers to support the growth of the city of Lagos' economy and take agency over their own businesses and innovative ideas. The growth of the green economy will have countless positive social and environmental impacts on the city and move the economy of these developing countries away from one which is exploitative and unsustainable.

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Part 2: Eco-innovation Business Plan

The information below conveys the key business model concepts with the relevant logistics for each segment in relation to GCL and its operations.

Key Resources (KR)

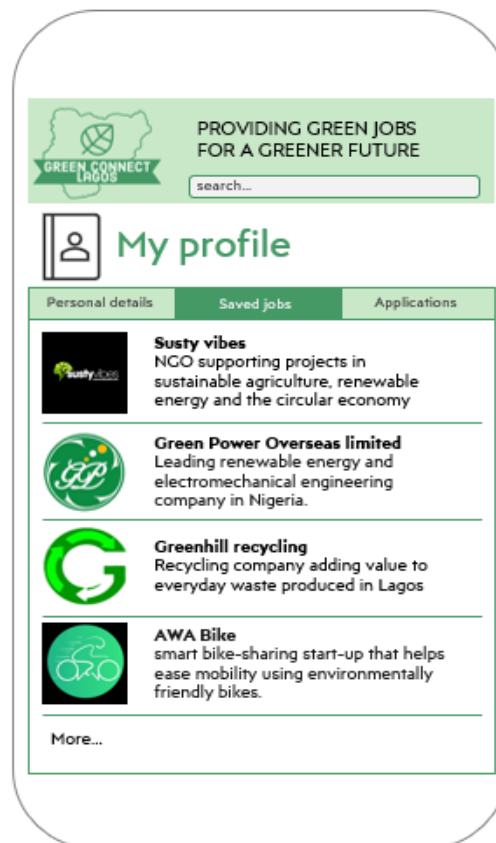
As with any company, GCL will require key resources. These fall into three main categories:

1. Human resources – A programmer must develop the app and keep it running after launch. A project manager on the ground in Lagos is also required. This links to intellectual resources, as they will supply the knowledge on the local area. In addition, customers are required to apply for jobs on the app, and local green businesses need to promote to supply these jobs. Finally, business professionals are required to perform webinars for users.
2. Intellectual resources – The knowledge to create an app of this type is an essential intellectual resource. Research and studying similar companies to gain insight into the process of running a job-advertising app is key. In addition, the project manager will supply knowledge of Lagos. This will include what green businesses will be interested in advertising on the app and the best university to partner with for graduates.
3. Financial resources – The SDG fund covers the start-up costs for the app. The app should then be self-sufficient, with all financial resources being generated through consumers interacting with its features.

Key Activities (KA)

Several key activities are required to meet our value propositions. These can be placed into 3 categories (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998; Strategyzer, 2019):

1. Platform – The main activity is ensuring the app is good quality for the consumer. The image below shows basic prototype of the app. This includes maintenance and reforming of the app based on customer feedback. Continuously recruiting new green businesses and graduates is also crucial, so both groups are satisfied with the service. This will be achieved through advertising in Nigeria using billboards and online advertisements.



2. Production – As there's only one, hiring a knowledgeable programmer is essential to guarantee a good quality app. This is a key activity that will act as the building block for new features.
3. Problem-solving – This key activity will be based on feedback received from consumers. We have a team in place for any problem that could arise. The programmer will solve problems within the app. The project manager will solve the human resource problems. For example, a surplus of jobs will be solved by increasing the number of universities connected to the app.

Cost Structure (C\$) + Revenue Streams (RS)

On average, an app of this size will cost around £42,000 (Dogtiev, 2022) to develop. This figure is caused by 3 main cost areas (Utility, 2020).

1. App development – The app requires front and back-end development. The front end is developing features the consumer will interact with, whereas the back end is server-side. The app will also require testing before launch.
2. Design – The programmer will have to ensure the user interface and experience are of good quality to maximise consumer experience. Licensing will also be paid to control access to the app.
3. Start-up costs – This cost is to advertise the app in Lagos, so a clientele base is formed at start-up.

The GCL team will consist of two employees: a programmer and a project manager in Lagos. The average UK programmer earns £35,000 per year (Indeed, 2022). The average Nigerian project manager is paid £13,500 per year (Glassdoor, 2021). These salaries are subject to change and rise as the company grows.

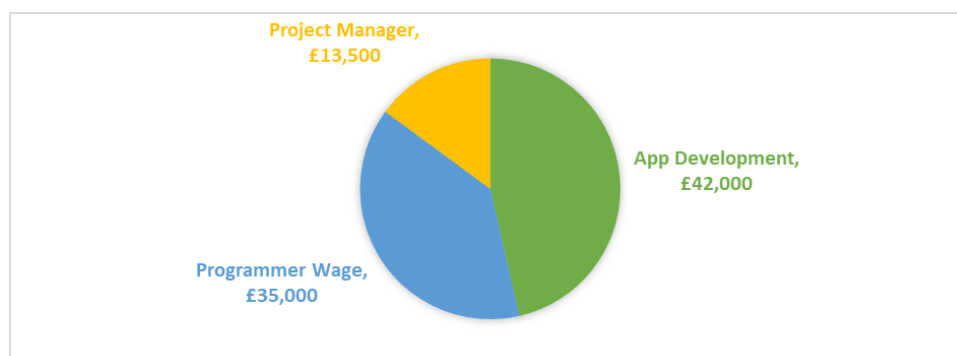


Figure 1: Projected costs for Green Connect Lagos

The initial start-up cost combined with the salaries of the GCL team create a cost of £90,500 in the first year (Figure 1).

To offset these costs, there must be revenue streams. There are 3 main revenue streams.

Firstly, money will be requested from the Joint SDG Fund. This is an organisation that invests money into start-ups solving the SDGs. In the last 2 years, they have invested £2,000,000 into companies solving green problems in Nigeria (Joint SDG Fund, 2020)



Figure 2: Projected revenue for Green Connect Lagos

The majority of this revenue will be generated through advertising. We will run similar ad costs to LinkedIn, with a base fee being charged and then further costs based on customer interactions. The base fee will be £5, with a further £2 charged per click. This is a premium fee as these advertisements will be brought to a unique audience of business professionals and entrepreneurs.

Recurring revenue will also be created through the green economy webinars. There is a fee of 50p to access a webinar. Each month, one webinar will be performed. This frequency can change based on demand.

Key Relationships/Partners

A key foundation for operating GCL are its key relationships it would have. For GCL to operate, at the level required to provide the best possible service, established reliable green businesses would be firstly introduced into the app. To be promoted on the app, businesses must meet an initial criterion.

- Businesses must illustrate how their enterprise meets 'green business' status.

- Established plan to reach a green goal in the future, within a 2/3yr period.
- Demonstrate how their business will support employees brought to them via our app.

Key relationships extend to GCL's target audience, students. Therefore, to target the suitable student graduates, our business will make ties with major universities in the Lagos region for example, Lagos State University. Relationships with universities in Lagos will allow for the suitable graduates to be directed to our app to locate job prospects in the green economy. Networking inside universities will be a key aspect of the relationship. The networking process will involve a representative of GCL going into these universities and promote the benefits of using GCL to find postgraduate jobs. Word of mouth will be initially vital for the development of the app as students find the benefits of being a part of GCL and as the suitable graduates are moved into suitable roles, the positive aspects of this transition will help grow credibility. Another key relationship, the Global Centre for Eco-Innovation would be a foundation upon new and existing green business can be established and supported. The relationship would involve the networking aspect of GCL as they would support the positive exposure for the business directing green businesses towards our app.

Customer Segments and Value Propositions

GCL's target audience are university graduates moving into the green economy, therefore the majority of customers of the service will be students creating a niche market. However, the app wont solely be open for student access suggesting a mass market as any individual will be able to use the service for the same outcome. Initially, the service will favour a niche market as the service will be tailored to postgraduate students with access to webinars providing support to students looking for work in the green economy, supported by established green businesses in Lagos.

The value propositions are illustrated in part 1 linking to the 'green jobs pathway' and how the 3 groups benefit from the value GCL will provide.

Channels

Partner channels is the keyway in which promotion on GCL and its associated activities will be run. Awareness for the business will be created via advertisement on social media plus physical advertisement in areas where the target audience, students, will see e.g., Campuses & university buildings. Promotion via posters and pamphlets would be a source of creating awareness for the business. There is a unique circumstance in Lagos in that there is a gap in the market which allows GCL to fill. Established green businesses are present in Lagos however the exposure of these businesses would be amplified with the help of GCL acting as a support network for growth plus providing a basis for establishing new green businesses via the help of GCL.

Customer Relationship

GCL will consist of multi-dimensional customer relationships with aspects of community-based relationships due to the establishment of a green business community. This green business community established by GCL will allow customers to view the various availability of green economy jobs, having access to key information related to the business in question such as their products or services available and its impact on the environment. Personal based relationships will also be a foundation for the business as customers will be able to interact with employers directly in the form of webinars in addition to having access to the support centre ran by GCL to help prospective customers in the search for green economy jobs.

The Future of Green Connect Lagos

With future growth of GCL this service will evolve with new possibilities. Further development to app interface along with wider access to supportive webinars from professionals in their field. The general growth of the app in relation to the number of businesses promoted on the app and the growth of customer usage. The ultimate growth goal would involve the creation of similar services being available in multiple cities around the world, leading to an overall growth in green business and positive environmental development.

Word count: 1497

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