



Cornell University
The Johnson School
Center for Sustainable Global Enterprise



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Call for Entries

2nd Annual Base of the Pyramid Narrative Competition - 2008

The [Center for Sustainable Global Enterprise](#) at Cornell University's Johnson Graduate School of Management is accepting submissions for its 2008 Base of the Pyramid (BoP) Narrative Competition. This short-essay competition seeks to highlight the challenges of implementing business in underserved markets and identify innovative business initiatives or solutions to those challenges.

The Competition:

The 2008 BoP Narrative Competition has been created to help identify cutting-edge experiences of business innovation in underserved or marginalized communities.

Winning submissions must clearly articulate a business challenge that an organization working in low-income communities is striving to overcome, in addition to the resulting business model or initiative. Experiences and business models may be successful or unsuccessful, provided the challenge and solution-attempt is elaborated upon.

Organizations highlighted may be either non-profit or for-profit enterprises. Initiatives highlighted should illustrate a unique approach to poverty alleviation through an innovative product, service, technology, or business model.

This competition is looking for short essays illustrating BoP enterprises that meet the following three criteria:

1. They are based on private-sector business models that are locally transformational. In other words, the business creates mutual value, such as capacity building and wealth creation, for both the community and the enterprise. Implicit in this is the expectation that the business will be partner-intensive in an effort to achieve the greatest success.
2. A strong element of the Triple Bottom Line must be embedded in the business strategy – consideration of the environmental, societal, and economic impacts of the business. There must be motivation displayed to improve the quality of life for the community while simultaneously being sensitive to normative culture. Simply creating economic activity without regard for the local environment, community, or cultural impact is not in the vein of a BoP Enterprise.
3. There must exist the potential and an aspiration for scale and replication. The inability to grow and expand a business fails to meet the objective of transforming the local society and economy.

Narrative Guidelines:

- 500-1000 words
- Written in English
- Microsoft Word or Text format
- Double-spaced, size 12 Times New Roman font
- Joint authorship is permitted
 - Each co-author's personal information must be submitted with the narrative
- More than one submission is permitted per person
- A separate cover page or first page must be created that includes the following:
 - Narrative title. The narrative title must be included at the top of each subsequent page.
 - Author's name(s). References to the author(s) must not appear anywhere in the narrative text or footnotes.
 - Author's contact information including email address(es)
 - Clearly indicate whether it is a Developing Country Business or Developed Country Business
- Footnoted references for facts or statistics
- Illustrations or photos are optional and must be the property of the author(s)
- All essays must be the original work of the author(s). No previously published material will be accepted. Any form of plagiarism will result in automatic disqualification.
- Incomplete submissions will not be considered.

Eligibility: Open to all – professionals and students. No geographic restrictions. This competition may be of particular interest to students of business, development, journalism and the social sciences working in unique situations for the summer or exposed to unique experiences in economically challenged areas of the world.

Awards: Submissions will be divided into two categories, Developing Country Businesses and Developed Country Businesses. Winners will be announced on or about January 15, 2009. The winners will be asked to submit a short biography and photo to be used in publicity. The award will be presented to the author(s).

Developing Country Businesses – Sponsored by the [Office of Microenterprise Development](#) in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade, USAID

1st Place

- \$4000 USD
- Invitation for one author to present story at the 2009-2010 Cornell University Base of the Pyramid (BoP) Learning Lab, including round trip airfare (economy class) and accommodations
- Submission published on the [BoP Learning Lab](#) website
- Exclusive interview and feature on www.NextBillion.net
- Leading participant in [USAID's Speaker's Corner](#) (dates to be determined)

2nd Place

- \$2500 USD
- Submission published on the [BoP Learning Lab](#) website
- Exclusive interview and feature on www.NextBillion.net
- Leading participant in [USAID's Speaker's Corner](#) (dates to be determined)

3rd Place

- \$1000 USD
- Submission published on the [BoP Learning Lab](#) website
- Exclusive interview and feature on www.NextBillion.net
- Leading participant in [USAID's Speaker's Corner](#) (dates to be determined)

Developed Country Businesses

Special Mention

- \$1000 USD
- Submission published on the [BoP Learning Lab](#) website
- Exclusive interview and feature on www.NextBillion.net

Deadline: Midnight, October 5, 2008.

Submission¹: Submissions are to be submitted online at www.bopnetwork.org. If access to the internet is unavailable submissions can be mailed and must be post marked no later than September 30, 2008. Mail to:

BoP Narrative Competition
Center for Sustainable Global Enterprise
Cornell University
142 Sage Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

Inquiries: Please direct inquiries to bop@johnson.cornell.edu. The subject line should read "BoP Narrative Competition Inquiry."

About the BoP Learning Lab



The Base of the Pyramid (BoP) Learning Laboratory is a membership-based consortium of leaders from companies, NGOs, multilateral organizations, and universities. Lab members work together to discover and implement win-win solutions that open new opportunities for business value creation while simultaneously expanding the development horizon of the world's poorest people and communities in ways that are culturally appropriate and environmentally sustainable.

¹ **Note:** All entries become the property of the Center for Sustainable Global Enterprise at Cornell University and may be reprinted or referenced in its online and print publications.

The BoP Learning Laboratory is managed by Cornell University's Center for Sustainable Global Enterprise located in the Johnson Graduate School of Management. Since the lab's inception, it has grown to become a global network, with ongoing activities at universities around the world. It recently launched an e-journal and website to track and report business activities and innovations in-low income communities around the world.

Further information on the BoP Learning Lab is available at <http://www.bopnetwork.org>.