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| Short Title | Hoophouse |
| 1. Name | Christopher Konieczka |
| 2. Email | chrisk@clackamas.edu |
| 3. Department | Horticulture |
| 4. Please briefly describe your idea | <p>I am seeking funding for a hoophouse (high tunnel) containing minimal heating and supplemental lighting for the Organic Farming Program. The addition of a second 20'X96' covered structure setup for winter production would significantly expand the Organic Farming Program capacity to offer students year-round production experience. Specifically, this would allow for side-by-side comparison of production methods, crop varieties, and environmental conditions. Students would participate in developing and executing applied research in the new facility. Our current hoophouse would become the "coldhouse"-unheated growth under cover throughout the winter. The new house would become our "coolhouse", minimally heated and kept above freezing at all times. Supplemental LED lighting would also enhance our production and research.</p> <p>Having reliable farm-based data on winter production successes in our area will offer students skills that contribute to year-round income from their farm businesses. Not only can this increase overall revenue, but also support cash flow during the financially lean winter months immediately before significant cash outflows are needed to begin the season in spring. Furthermore, adding to our infrastructure for covered growing space can also develop our capacity to offer additional workshops, as well as host outside community groups for education and demonstration opportunities. To begin, the setup and assembly of the hoophouse itself can be offered as an income-generating workshop. Next, we will be able to host more workshops that rely on our comparative winter production research.</p> |
| 5. Indicate the strategic priority that this project supports. (check all that apply) | <p>Excellence in Teaching and Learning Community Connections Operational need</p> |
| 6. How does your idea support the College's strategic priorities? | <p>The proposed project supports "Excellence in Teaching and Learning" through improving available learning opportunities to be more targeted, scientific, and expansive in scope. The added space can accommodate more students and more crops, facilitating more and better learning opportunities overall. We would be the only community college facility in Oregon offering training in four season vegetable production. This idea is the result of student feedback and discussion in class about desired curricular improvements. Secondly, it offers an excellent opportunity for widening our circle of "Community Connections". For example, I have been in discussion with the OSU Extension Small Farms Team about hosting various statewide courses here and the increased covered space would enable higher enrollments in workshops and a longer season of possible courses. Other possible collaborators include Clackamas County Master Gardeners, Small Farm School, and biology field experiments from the CCC Science Department</p> |
| 7. What contribution would this project make to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan? How does it contribute? | <p>Better facilities and curricular offerings will attract a wider range of students. This corresponds with Strategic Goal 1.1 Create a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce. Strategic Goals 2.3 & 2.4 are a logical extension of this - Reduce barriers for recruiting and onboarding underrepresented and underserved students & Increase retention and completion for underrepresented and underserved students. Demonstrating the potential for increased cash flow and year-round income can reduce the fear many economically disadvantages students hold that pursuing a personal interest like Organic Farming may not support their basic living expenses. Among the student feedback that has led to this application was the suggestion to give the new hoophouse an indigenous name, recognizing the land the college is on and following the example of the Wacheno Welcome Center.</p> |

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| <p>8. What problem, need or gap in service will be addressed? What evidence is readily available to illustrate the need or support the goal(s) of the project? Please include links to data sources if known.</p> | <p>Adequate space for instruction and production, as well as the expansion of education in winter production—an increasingly popular (and economically important) sector of small-scale agriculture is the primary gap addressed through this proposal. During the 2021 season we maxed out our production area. Covered space is the most valuable on most farms and also offers the potential to teach production year-round. In addition, student enrollment in the Organic Farming Certificate courses was a need identified through the ARE process. Improving our capacity and aligning our curriculum with current small farm practices and technology can help to improve our enrollment, DEI commitment, and community impact.</p> |
| <p>9. What is the benefit of this project (e.g. revenue potential, impact on student enrollment, retention, completion, etc.)?</p> | <p>There are several benefits. First, we can offer a more complete look at becoming an economically sustainable small farm. It is hoped that this will result in better enrollment, retention, and completion numbers for the Certificate Program and the Horticulture Department overall. In addition, the added production space will allow us to extend our CSA program and offer additional workshops to generate additional income that funds student scholarships and some of our basic materials needs.</p> |
| <p>10. What activities will be proposed in the project?</p> | <p>#4 above describes the activities. They include comparative winter production research, additional curriculum, and expanded XHOR workshop opportunities. There are additional opportunities for activities involving other Horticulture Department programs, the CCC Science Department, and community partners.</p> |
| <p>11. Identify stakeholders who will likely be involved in the project planning or delivery.</p> | <p>Planning and execution will primarily be from the Organic Farming Program and the Horticulture Department. Additional input from Campus Use and Development Committee, Campus Services, and the CCC Science Department will also be solicited.</p> |
| <p>12. How do you think success could be measured for this project?</p> | <p>Measures of success for this project include student feedback surveys, additional CSA shares available, additional weeks of CSA shares available, additional XHOR workshops offered and of course, changes in enrollment, retention, and completion within the Organic Farming Certificate Program.</p> |
| <p>13. Describe the investment (time, funds, etc.) that would probably be needed to get this project off the ground.</p> | <p>The initial investment includes the cost of the structure and installation, utilities (gas, water, electricity) to the site, heat, and lighting. Based on estimates from Willamette Valley greenhouse companies and CCC Campus Services, this would be about \$35,000. The time investment includes the assembly (offered as an XHOR workshop).</p> |
| <p>14. Have you identified a grant or other funding source to help cover related expenses?</p> | <p>No</p> |
| <p>15. If yes to 14, please provide more information about the grant or other funding source.</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>16. Beyond the start-up costs, is additional or ongoing funding required to maintain this project in the future? If so, please describe the costs (amounts, frequency, etc.) as well as if you have identified sources for ongoing funding.</p> | <p>No additional ongoing costs are expected for this project. Ongoing upkeep of the structure will be completed through the existing Horticulture Department budget and labor time from myself, Farm Assistant, and Department Lab Assistant positions.</p> |

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| 17. What level of urgency best fits your idea? | Immediate, needs to be explored within next 1-3 months |
| 18. If you answered "other" in question 17, please describe. | N/A |
| 19. Please include additional information you would like to share: | The site for this project has been selected and provisionally approved. We are already successfully growing 3 seasons of crops in this area. The utilities required (water, gas, electric) are located very close to the site, reducing the costs of setting up services. Campus Services Dean Bob Cochran has been contacted to confirm the suitability of the site and advise on other campus land use considerations. |
| 20. Please share any questions you have for the Innovation Team: | None at this time. |

Survey for this Innovation Fund request: <https://forms.gle/ezLvLu3GKcuz4XTHA>