**OVERVIEW – GETTING STARTED**

**Getting started: Admission Process**
Companies seeking admission into the Tuscarawas County Business Factory will usually follow this process:

* Interview - Business Factory’s director and other persons chosen by the director, to ascertain whether or not the firm meets admission.
* If the application meets those guidelines, the applicant's business plan\* will be forwarded to the Business Factory’s Tenant Review Committee for further consideration.
* After review, the Review Committee will invite the applicant to make a direct presentation of the business plan to the committee
* Following the presentation, a decision on admission will be determined.

\**NOTE: The Tuscarawas County Business Factory understands that not all applicants will have completed a business plan by the time they seek admission. The Business Factory also appreciates the fact that many applicants are seeking the help of the Business Factory in developing an investment-grade business plan. In such cases, a written business overview may be submitted to the Review Committee in lieu of a complete business plan. All business reviews, however, must meet guidelines already established by the Incubator. These guidelines are available from the Business Factory director, or are available elsewhere on this site.*

When submitting either a business plan or a business overview, applicants must also include the resumes or biographies of the company's expected management team.

**Non-discrimination policy**
The Tuscarawas County Business Factory is committed to the principle of equal opportunity. The Business Factory does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, veteran status, ancestry or national or ethnic origin on the administration of its policies and programs.

The Tuscarawas County Business Factory’s director is designated as the organization's equal opportunity officer. As such, all inquiries concerning the organizations, policies; compliance with applicable laws, statutes and regulations; and complaints should be submitted to the director.

**Maximizing your opportunities when you’re with us**

*What will you do for me?*

Our consulting services are provided by our board of directors which are all working professionals. They can offer you support and consulting free-of-charge in key disciplines including: Legal, financial, strategic business development, technical, marketing and advertising.

*Maximizing what we offer while you’re with us*

For you to fully benefit from the outstanding services available to you as a tenant, it is advisable that you: 1) Schedule regular, informal touch-point meetings with the board officers and the director: 2) Actively pursue help from the board for key services that are available for you through them such as:

* Financial advising
* Legal advising (FICA, employee hiring and requirements, OSHA, etc)
* Business development advising
* Marketing and sales advising
* General questions, brainstorming, support and mentoring

*Expectations*

*Your expectations*

We know that as an entrepreneur and start-up company owner, you want to be successful. We want that for you. You can fully expect the Business Factory to be a group of supportive, friendly and accommodating individuals doing everything in their power to help you win. The following sections provide a framework of expectations but by all means – is not all-inclusive. We realize that every tenant is different and often have needs outside of the “norm”. To that end, we encourage open communication and foster an environment between you and your advisors that is nurturing and free from fear-of-failure.

When following the Business Factory model, you can expect:

* An environment that fosters sales and employment growth
* Sharing of ideas, information and resources you need
* Inclusion in all Incubator-sponsored tenant programs
* Access to a full-range of support services at little-to-no cost

*Our Expectations*

As with anything, not all opportunities work out the way we might expect. Some tenants are simply not suited to the Business Factory environment. In those limited instances, the best course of action was for the business to leave the Business Factory. Therefore, The Business Factory reserves the right to terminate its services to any tenant company failing to meet the Business Factory’s expectations and rights. They include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

* A continual increase in sales and employment growth
* Working cooperatively with all other tenant companies including, where and when feasible, the sharing of ideas, information and resources
* Providing timely responses to Business Factory requests
* Participation in all Incubator-sponsored programs
* A prohibition from offering employment to an employee of another Business Factory tenant company unless the affected company provides express permission in advance
* Upon request, providing the Business Factory with financial documents including, but not limited to, balance sheets, profit and loss statements and payroll reports

*Our responsibilities*

Business Factory review process is designed to encourage growth. Upon admission to the Tuscarawas County Business Incubator, it will be the responsibility of the Review Committee and the director to work with each tenant company to do the following:

* Establish a mutually agreeable set of performance benchmarks.
* The Review Committee will initiate review meetings to discuss progress toward these benchmarks.

*Your responsibilities*

As a Business Factory Tenant, you have many opportunities provided for you that will ensure successful business development and growth. You will be expected to initiate meetings – through the director – that allow you to take advantage of those services. These meetings will be a key factor in your ultimate success.

Part of that includes meeting with key individuals from the Review Committee to discuss your progression toward graduation from the Business Factory. What you are responsible for include:

* At least one week prior to these review meetings, all tenant companies will provide the Review Committee with financial statements for the preceding quarter;
* At least one week prior to these review meetings, all tenant companies will provide the Review Committee with a detailed summary of goals and objectives for the upcoming quarter, including pro forma financial statements;
* At least one week prior to these review meetings, all tenant companies will provide the Review Committee with a summary of any changes to the company's business plan; and any other information that may be requested by the Review Committee.

*Typical time of stay at the Business Factory*

Typically, we hope this process can be completed within three to four years, allowing the firm to "graduate" from the program. The Tuscarawas County Business Factory development program is designed to quickly launch new business ventures while helping them to rapidly achieve a level of sustained profitability.

Companies may stay for longer or shorter periods of time if recommended by the Tuscarawas County Business Factory Review Committee. Such recommendations may be based upon the extent to which the company continues to meet Business Factory admission guidelines, employment growth, sales growth, financial condition, adherence to Business Factory rules and regulations, cooperation and resource-sharing with other Business Factory companies, and the company's participation in Tuscarawas County Business Incubator-sponsored programs.

It should be clearly understood by all applicants for admission that there is no guarantee of any particular length of tenancy. Both the Business Factory director and the Review Committee will be responsible for providing each tenant company with long-range graduation planning.

*Leaving the business Factory*

*Graduation policy*

*Post-Graduation Expectations*

We are proud of our graduates. They offer the next generation of entrepreneurs a bright vision and a realistic picture of success. During your application process, you are informed that there are some expectations of graduating businesses. They are designed to be minimally intrusive to you and help the Business Factory and its new tenants remain viable. Some of those include:

* Support for the ongoing efforts of the Business Factory through donations or time, resources and/or financial contributions
* Scheduled reporting of financial information so that the Tuscarawas County Business Factory can responsibly deliver required information to its funding source as a 501C-3. *NOTE: Such information will be reported only as aggregate totals and held strictly confidential.*
* Possible relocation in Tuscarawas County

It’s assumed that all companies admitted to the Tuscarawas County Business Factory have agreed to these expectations upon their graduation.