

SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITIES: OVERCOMING SUSTAINABILITY OBSTACLES TOGETHER

Session: In-Person

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Businesses are a significant contributor to climate change and must play an essential role in environmental protection. Numerous large corporations are launching sustainability efforts, but small businesses need assistance to join the mission. Unfortunately, these small businesses often face significant challenges when incorporating sustainability into their everyday operations. I have had the opportunity to work as the Business Development Intern at Enweave - The Marketplace on a Mission where I identified expansion areas for the e-commerce startup and realized the sheer lack of research for small organizations. This study aims to identify the main barriers to sustainable business management for Seattle small businesses and propose potential recommendations that solve the identified barriers. I answered my research questions by surveying small business owners, interviewing sustainability experts and professionals, and conducting online library research. The main barriers identified are a lack of time, knowledge, and financial resources. One recommendation is to develop an eco-centered, small business community where like-minded individuals can share resources, collaborate on projects, and learn from each other. This community is the first step to reducing the identified barriers. Through collaboration, we can increase the accessibility of vital resources for small business owners to expand their organization's environmental impact. By giving small businesses the tools they need, we will see the increased innovation and collaboration necessary to solve climate change, one of the biggest problems known to humankind.