

Alternative Trade Network: Make trade work for people!

GreeceAthens, Greece



Elena Tzamouranou

TO OUR
ALTERNATIVE
TRADE MODEL!



WELCOME
TO OUR
ALTERNATIVE
TRADE MODEL!



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Year Founded:
2013

Organization type:

hybrid

Project Stage:

Start-Up

Budget:

\$250,000 - \$500,000

Website:

<http://www.alternative-trade.com/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/AlternativeTrade>



- [Conscious consumerism](#)
- [Economic development](#)
- [Fair trade](#)

- Sustainability

Project Summary

Elevator Pitch

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

Trade is not working in our country, neither for producers nor for consumers! Our aim is to change the focus of the commercial process and shift it from the product to the person who produces in Greece & the person who consumes it anywhere!

WHAT IF - Inspiration: Write one sentence that describes a way that your project dares to ask, "WHAT IF?"

"What if free trade became extinct? :)"

About Project

Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?

Almost 94% of the producers in Greece are small scaled and without substantial assistance at their daily business. They are not given any real chance to enter the markets or to scale up, mostly due to lack of time, money and knowledge. On the other hand consumers have no way of finding who is producing the products, where and under which conditions. Whereas in many cases prices are not fair – neither for the producer nor for the consumer.

Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!

Our trade model enables producers to grow and be independent while following the alternative trade rules and at the same time brings them closer to consumers by opening channels for information exchange and recognition between them. We operate in 4 divisions: R&D (trade model, new businesses & new products). PROJECTS (Alternative Trade Network, Social Economy & Fair Trade). NETWORK is the model in practice. Producers entering the network are getting support regarding promoting & running their business. The Network addresses existing businesses, start-ups & individuals. SALES is our fourth division, giving the producers a chance for more income, giving us permanent points of interaction with consumers and making us more self-sustained.

Impact: How does it Work

Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.

Melantho consists of 7 women in Nafplion who decided to create a small production unit for traditional products. None of them has relevant background so they are facing problems. The necessary costs exceed their budget. They lack knowledge in peripheral activities of production (marketing, budgeting, licencing etc.) They cannot reach competitive prices, and they are not able to afford advertising or building an adequate sales network. They became a member of our network and they can concentrate more on their production. We help take care of peripherals at an affordable sliding scale fee, targeting their self-sustainability, through the alternative trade model. Also they have received an idea for a completely new product from our R&D.

Impact: What is the impact of the work to date? Also describe the projected future impact for the coming years.

Producers feel safe that the problems they are facing will be resolved in an efficient and affordable way. They don't depend solely on big distribution companies that made them unfair deals. Through the sales network that is being created, they will be able to distribute products to a fairer price. They are moving towards full compliance to the model, having understood the importance of doing things right, that doing so is not always too expensive and that it pays back. We have been allowed to advise on organization and production procedures. We have introduced the model to the consumers in three events the past year. The consumers feel safer when they know the face behind the product, and that rules are being followed. The communication between them increased the understanding of their needs and problems, which directly reflected on prices and the understanding of fair price for both.

Spread Strategies: Moving forward, what are the main strategies for scaling impact?

Everything can be alternative trade. The first expansion is pilot implementation of the model to a local community producing through a coop and to individuals that do not have the means to start a production unit by providing a space where they can test-produce, gain knowledge on building a business and find others to form cooperative productions. We aim to bring alternative trade products where consumers do their everyday shopping and create 'interaction points' with them all over. Create alternative trade model applicable on services. Hoping that conventional trade will come a step closer.

Sustainability

Financial Sustainability Plan: What is this solution's plan to ensure financial sustainability?

At the time being the project is financed by the members of the social cooperative enterprise. The main revenue is planned to come from services provided to the producers and by the sales division activity and has already returned its first results. Alternative funding will be needed either for specific projects and/or to speed up procedures.

Marketplace: Who else is addressing the problem outlined here? How does the proposed project differ from these approaches?

Currently there is no similar project in Greece. As far as the existing ecosystem is concerned, the ATN model is open and collaborative towards any business or structure. Our model addresses anyone who produces and anyone who consumes. Our niche: Balance between consumer and producer needs. Working with producers and considering consumers needs, while narrowing the gap between them through information. Alternative trade is not a marketing tool. It intervenes throughout the stages of a product's circle, aiming at self-sustained producers and conscious consumers.

Team

Founding Story

Alternative Trade Network (ATN) is the realization of almost two years research and design of the alternative trade model made by Elena since spring of 2011. At the beginning of 2013 Elena decided to take part with the idea of ATN in a competition ran by Eurobank Greece. That's where she teamed up with Lina. Although ATN was the only participant that wasn't an established company and also not-for profit, the idea made it to the final stage and gained the place 54 out of 2000 participants. The very good feedback taken from that competition was the trigger of actually turning the idea into an enterprise. Pantelis, Thanasis & Thomas joined the team and in June 2013 ATN started it's business as an social cooperative enterprise.

Team

The team comprises 5 equal members. Elena & Lina run the daily business full time. Pantelis is in charge of organizing our entry to the German market, Thanasis is in charge of logistics, while Thomas is our accountant (all part-time). We count over 100 years! cumulative experience, We have worked in companies of every size, all departments and in most positions that make up a business. We are proud to have worked with people around the world.

About You

Organization:

Alternative Trade Network sce

About You

First Name

Elena

Last Name

Tzamouranou

Email

elenatz@alternative-trade.com

Twitter URL

Facebook URL

About Your Project

Organization Name

Alternative Trade Network sce

How long has your organization been operating?

Project

Organization Country

, AT, Athens

Country where this project is creating social impact

What awards or honors has the project received?

Funding: How is your project financial supported?

Businesses, Customers.

Supplemental

Partnerships: Tell us about your partnerships.

180° (Greece): We joined forces with 180° on a community development portal around social entrepreneurship in Greece as we share a common vision around the significance of information around key issues. The partnership is based on knowledge exchange and community building. The website is under development.

Trade Now (Greece): A for-profit company that has created and implemented a successful barter economy model. TradeNow is our first for-profit partner.

FairTrade Hellas (Greece): Sharing the common vision of fair trading, we have partnered on common actions addressing consumer awareness and social economy. We have already participated in the 'Challenging the Crisis' seminars organized by FairTrade Hellas.

Alternative Trade Mandate Alliance (EU): 50 civil society organizations joined forces towards making trade work for the people and the planet. A mandate comprising 10 key issues regarding European Trade Policies was agreed upon. The Members of the European Parliament are called to pledge their support to this Mandate. ATN is the Alliance's counterpart in Greece.

We are currently discussing more partnerships towards common action with civil society organizations, the public sector and for profit businesses that will be announced in due time.

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