



BLOOM Instructor Onboarding & Activities Guide

Welcome to BLOOM

As an instructor in the BLOOM program, you play a vital role in creating an empowering, inclusive, and educational experience for young adults with special needs. This guide is designed to help you get started, walk you through the microgreens cultivation process, and provide engaging activities for days when tasks are lighter.

1. Overview of the BLOOM Program

BLOOM is a hands-on vocational initiative that teaches participants how to grow, harvest, and optionally sell microgreens—a nutritious and fast-growing food source. The program develops soft skills like communication, responsibility, and teamwork, while fostering independence and confidence.

Core Program Pillars include:

- Sustainability: Urban farming in a compact indoor setup.
- Inclusion: Designed specifically for young adults with special needs.
- Skill Building: Agriculture, packaging, entrepreneurship, and more.

2. Instructor Setup & Responsibilities

Before the program begins:

- Review this guide and the provided curriculum.
- Ensure all equipment is set up, including trays, soil, seeds, lighting, and the workspace.
- Familiarize yourself with safety protocols, hygiene standards, and daily procedures.
- Assign roles to participants to build routine and a sense of ownership.



Your role as instructor includes:

- Structuring the day with visual aids and consistent routines.
- Giving clear, simple instructions with visual or physical demonstrations.
- Monitoring watering, lighting, temperature, and humidity.
- Encouraging engagement and celebrating small successes.

3. The Microgreens Growing Process

The program typically follows a 9 to 10-day cycle:

Day 1: Begin with soil mixing, planting seeds, and stacking trays for germination.

Days 2 to 4: Continue daily misting and re-stacking trays during the germination phase (in darkness).

Day 5: Transition to the growth phase by unstacking trays and preparing them for light exposure.

Days 6 to 8: Maintain light exposure (approximately 16 hours per day) and bottom-water the trays. Monitor plant growth, temperature, and humidity.

Day 9 to 10: Guide participants through the harvesting, drying, weighing, and packaging process. Clean and disinfect all materials afterward.

4. BLOOM Activities for Light Work Days

On days with minimal farming tasks (typically Days 2 to 4), instructors can use the following Bloom Activities to maintain engagement and learning.

Sales Role-Play Walkthrough: Teach participants basic customer interaction by simulating microgreens sales. They take turns being sellers and buyers, practicing greetings, explaining product benefits, and handling money.

Microgreens Trivia Game: Create simple, fun questions about plant care, health benefits of microgreens, and sustainability facts. Use visuals to support understanding.



Matching Game: Participants match types of microgreens to their uses or benefits, or match seed images to mature plant pictures. This reinforces plant recognition and memory.

Microgreens Math: Use real or hypothetical data for math exercises. This can include calculating the weight of harvests, pricing clamshells, or making change from sales.

Team Relay Challenge: Organize farm-themed relay games such as tray setup, seed counting, or label application. This encourages teamwork, movement, and fun.

5. Optional Enhancements

Journal Reflections: Allow participants to document their experience through drawings or writing.

Growth Chart: Create a large visual tracking system for plant growth stages.

Skill Badges: Provide stickers or certificates for completed tasks or soft skill achievements, such as teamwork or problem-solving.

6. Support & Resources

BLOOM provides ongoing assistance including:

- Troubleshooting for equipment or crop issues.
- Visual aids, editable worksheets, and label templates.
- Access to training videos or staff consultation as needed.

Remember, your energy, encouragement, and organization help transform a simple indoor farm into a place of growth, pride, and possibility for every participant.