**THE CGI UNIVERSITY NETWORK**

The CGI University (CGI U) Network is a consortium of colleges and universities that support, mentor, and provide seed funding to leading student innovators and entrepreneurs on their respective campuses. To join the CGI University Network, a university must provide a minimum of $10,000 in total funding to CGI U student commitment-makers from its campus.

Students and university representatives come together at the CGI U meeting to hear from experts in various fields, brainstorm ideas, share best practices, and form effective partnerships. Students then return to their campuses and communities to turn their ideas into action, with the support of seed funding and mentorship from their universities. Members of the University Network have access to high-quality featuring opportunities, including publicity in CGI U materials and the possibility of coverage from a wide variety of media outlets. CGI U is a growing network of young leaders who are developing innovative solutions to some of the world’s most pressing challenges. In order to attend the CGI U meeting, students are required to develop a Commitment to Action: a new, specific, and measurable plan that addresses an issue on their campus, in their local community, or around the world. Each year CGI U brings together more than 1,000 students from schools and countries around the world to make Commitments to Action in CGI U’s five focus areas: Education, Environment and Climate Change, Peace and Human Rights, Poverty Alleviation, and Public Health.
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THE BENEFITS

The CGI University Network is a powerful platform for colleges and universities to connect with student leaders, support emerging social innovators, and capitalize on the broad range of publicity and networking opportunities available to CGI U participants.

FEATURING OPPORTUNITIES

As part of the CGI University Network, the university and its students are eligible for a wide range of publicity and featuring opportunities including: press features, newsletter announcements, online features, and recognition at the CGI U meeting.

UNIVERSITY REPRESENTATIVES

The university may send one representative from its administration or faculty to the CGI U meeting. This opportunity enables university representatives to engage in networking opportunities with other members, gain a more thorough understanding of the CGI U model, and learn about other innovative efforts taking place in the higher education sector.

SHOWCASING STUDENT LEADERS

The university is able to showcase its CGI U students through its own external communications efforts. The university is encouraged to work with its contacts in the local media and CGI’s press team to garner greater publicity for CGI U commitment-makers from its campus.

YEAR-ROUND NETWORK BUILDING

University Network members are able to connect and collaborate throughout the academic year via monthly conference calls. Each University Network school is also invited to send one staff member to New York City for an orientation and kick-off event. During this event, the CGI U team will discuss the University Network timeline, explain the overall process, and share best practices.

CGI UNIVERSITY NETWORK SEAL

The university receives a CGI University Network seal recognizing its participation in the network for use in online materials.

WEB HIGHLIGHTS

The university and its student commitment-makers will be highlighted on the CGI U website at cgiu.org.
THE PROCESS

1. Members of the university communicate with CGI U to learn more about the University Network, and the university administration formally joins the University Network via an online form.

2. The university assigns a key CGI U liaison to serve as the point of contact for CGI U throughout the process, along with at least one staff or faculty member who can serve as the on-campus mentor(s) for student commitment-makers.

3. The university's liaison and mentor(s) receive a resource guide with information on how to encourage students to apply for CGI U's meeting, assist students in preparing their CGI U applications, and support students as they develop and carry out their Commitments to Action. One university liaison or mentor is also encouraged to attend an orientation in New York City.

4. CGI University Network members encourage their students to apply to attend the CGI U meeting. Each year, this meeting brings together more than 1,000 college students to make Commitments to Action in five focus areas: Education, Environment and Climate Change, Peace and Human Rights, Poverty Alleviation, and Public Health. All currently enrolled students (undergraduate or graduate) 18 years of age and older are eligible to apply to attend CGI U.

5. Students develop Commitments to Action with support from the university liaison and mentor, and apply online (cgiu.org) to attend the meeting. Commitments to Action, a unique feature of the CGI U model, are new, specific, and measurable student initiatives that address some of the world’s most pressing challenges.

6. At CGI U’s discretion, students are invited to attend the CGI U meeting. These decisions are made by CGI U staff in collaboration with the University Network on the strength of each student’s application and the quality of the commitment. Please note that if a member institution has a question regarding an application decision, CGI U will revisit that student’s application with the university on a case-by-case basis.

7. CGI U provides each member university with a list of all students who have been selected to attend the CGI U meeting from their respective school, and provides details on their Commitments to Action. The list of accepted students is sent out in the weeks following both the early decision deadline and final application deadline. Additionally, CGI U provides all member institutions with a copy of basic commitment information for all students who applied to attend CGI U from their school.

8. At the university’s discretion, the university provides at least $10,000 in total funding to a select group of accepted CGI U attendees. All funds are allocated by and through the university. At least 50 percent of the funds should be allocated as seed funding for student commitments, while the university may choose to reserve up to 50 percent of the funds for student travel to the CGI U meeting.

9. CGI U students and one university representative attend the CGI U meeting. Students may be featured on-stage, online, or in other media and press opportunities.

10. A final report must be submitted to CGI U highlighting the final commitment and travel funding amounts. Additionally, CGI U solicits progress reports from all student commitment-makers in the six months after the CGI U meeting.

UNIVERSITY NETWORK TIMELINE

PRE-MEETING
1. Join the University Network
2. Assign a CGI U liaison and on-campus mentor
3. Attend the CGI University Network orientation
4. Recruit CGI U applicants and help them develop their CGI U applications
5. Students submit CGI U applications by the respective Early Decision and Regular Decision deadlines
6. Students are invited to attend the CGI U meeting
7. Receive summary of accepted students from your university by the respective Early Decision and Regular Decision deadlines
8. University allocates CGI U Network funding to accepted students
9. Students and one university representative attend CGI U meeting

POST-MEETING
10. Online report submitted to CGI U confirming funding allocations and renewing membership for the next CGI U cycle
COMMITMENTS TO ACTION

CGI U is a growing community of young leaders who are forging innovative solutions to pressing global challenges through their Commitments to Action. Below are examples of several CGI U commitments that are already making a measurable difference around the world.

EDUCATION

Shining Hope for Communities (SHOFCO) is a girls’ education initiative and community development program founded by Kennedy Odede in the Kibera slum outside of Nairobi, Kenya. Since launching this commitment as a student at Wesleyan University, Kennedy has turned his initiative into a unique model that provides education, health care, and water and sanitation services to thousands of Kibera residents. This holistic approach reached nearly 100,000 people last year and provided more than 300 girls with an elementary school education. Additionally, strong student performance on government exams has led SHOFCO’s schools to rank among the top three in the country.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Donnel Baird’s BlocPower is a social enterprise and online marketplace that connects investors to networks of energy efficiency projects in small businesses, houses of worship, and nonprofits in underserved communities in New York. Using a predictive model which quickly determines the appropriate energy efficiency retrofit for a given building, Donnel’s team has provided retrofit analysis for 400 buildings in New York along with financing for 50. He is currently partnering with Con Edison and the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition to target neighborhoods with high rates of asthma and retrofit buildings in these districts with safer, greener energy alternatives. BlocPower has a full-time staff of 18 people along with an additional 20 summer fellows.

PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Hafsah Lak founded Violence Against Women Centers in an effort to protect and support victims of gender-based violence in Pakistan. These 24 hour full-service facilities, run entirely by women, provide a comprehensive suite of services including first-response medical exams, lodging, crime reporting, forensic recovery, and legal aid. Hafsah has partnered with the Punjab Chief Minister’s Special Monitoring Unit while co-authoring the Protection of Women Against Violence Act. This unique piece of legislation, protects women against all forms of wrongful treatment – from sexual assault to cyber crimes to psychological and economic abuse. It also provides additional public sector investment to Hafsah’s centers and other shelter homes for women.
COMMITMENTS TO ACTION

POVERTY ALLEVIATION

As a student at the University of California, Berkeley, Anurag Sridharan created a mobile text messaging service that provides accurate water delivery information to urban communities in India. Before Anurag’s text messaging system, many urban residents had to wait by their taps for hours at a time, unsure of when water would be available. Anurag’s solution, NextDrop, provides water monitoring, and leakage tracking services to all of Bangalore. To date, more than 50,000 customers have signed up for NextDrop’s services. Anurag and her team of 30 are beginning to use sensor technology and a corresponding app to address community-wide water security by assessing water supply, distribution, consumption, treatment, and recycling.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Founded by Gavin Armstrong, the Lucky Iron Fish is a safe and effective solution for reducing iron deficiency around the world. When used in the cooking process, this reusable small iron ingot releases 75 percent of one’s daily recommended iron intake into meals. After nine months of using the Lucky Iron Fish every day, families in Cambodia have experienced a 50 percent reduction in the incidence of clinical iron deficiency anemia. Since this initial launch in Cambodia, Gavin and the Lucky Iron Fish team have gone on to work with NGO partners in India, Kenya, Myanmar, and Rwanda, and have distributed about 70,000 units to date. For every Lucky Iron Fish purchased online, one is donated to communities with high rates of iron deficiency. Lucky Iron Fish has been rated in the top one percent of all B Corporations and credited for its innovative social value proposition throughout its supply chain, production model, employee practices, and environmental policies.
FAQ

GENERAL

What types of universities can join the network?
The CGI University Network is open to accredited universities and colleges, both in the United States and around the world.

What is the typical time commitment?
The two biggest responsibilities for the university staff member who is coordinating these efforts are the following: 1) outreach to students; and 2) coordinating the process of selecting which CGI U attendees from their respective campuses will receive funding, which takes place in advance of the CGI U meeting.

BENEFITS OF THE UNIVERSITY NETWORK

We already run a similar program. How does this contribute to or differ from our existing efforts in this field?
Participation in the CGI University Network has many unique benefits. At the CGI U meeting, attendees have access to both experts in their respective fields and other CGI U commitment-makers. Both students and the university representatives participate in valuable networking opportunities at the meeting, where they can brainstorm ideas, share best practices, and form effective partnerships. Throughout the year, CGI U participants can also access a host of dynamic opportunities, including CGI U Commitment Mentors, CGI U meet-ups, and the CGI U alumni network. Members also gain access to high-quality featuring opportunities, including publicity in CGI U materials and the possibility of coverage from a wide range of media outlets.

What types of featuring and publicity opportunities are available to students and universities?
CGI U students and universities are considered for a wide range of external publicity opportunities. CGI U and student commitment-makers have been featured in outlets including The TODAY Show, The Wall Street Journal, PARADE Magazine, The Colbert Report, MSNBC, and TIME.com. In addition to external press features, students may be featured at the CGI U meeting through on-stage commitment announcements, progress report videos, student keynote addresses, or participation in the CGI U Commitments Challenge. Members of the University Network are also highlighted online at cgiu.org.

UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY

Who at the university should coordinate this effort?
Upon formally joining the CGI University Network, the university must assign a CGI U liaison, who will work closely with both university staff and CGI U staff throughout the year. The liaison could work in student affairs or the dean of students’ office, the immediate president or chancellor’s office, or a relevant center for innovation or entrepreneurship on campus.

What is the best way to find an effective campus mentor for students?
Some of the best mentors are experts or practitioners in the fields most relevant to student commitments. Faculty members or administrators involved in social entrepreneurship, design, or public service might serve as good mentors for student commitment-makers. A campus mentor should have time to dedicate to guiding the students as they move from idea to action, as well as a working knowledge of many of CGI U’s five focus areas: Education, Environment and Climate Change, Peace and Human Rights, Poverty Alleviation, and Public Health.

Can the university’s liaison also serve as the campus mentor?
Yes, these roles may be combined. However, this person needs to ensure that students have adequate support in developing their commitments and that CGI U’s reporting requirements are met.

Do any university staff members attend the CGI U Annual Meeting?
Members of the University Network are invited to send one staff or faculty member to the CGI U meeting to engage in networking opportunities with other members and gain a more thorough understanding of the CGI U model. We recommend that this one representative be either a CGI U campus mentor or CGI U liaison at the university.
FAQ

STUDENT SELECTION PROCESS

How are applicants selected to attend CGI U?
To be considered for admission, all applicants are required to make Commitments to Action through an online application. A Commitment to Action is a concrete plan that addresses a pressing challenge in one of CGI U’s five focus areas. CGI U seeks students with new and innovative project ideas and detailed and specific plans of action that will produce measurable results. Additionally, CGI U seeks a diverse group of students from a varied range of disciplines with the common goal of taking action to make an impact.

Does the university select its students who will attend CGI U?
Students are invited to attend the meeting at CGI U’s discretion. These decisions are made by CGI U staff based on the strength of each student’s application and the quality of his or her commitment.

Can the university give feedback on the application decisions?
Based on input from University Network liaisons, CGI U can reconsider student applications. Only accepted and credentialed student participants will be allowed to participate in the CGI U meeting.

Does participation in the University Network preclude student applicants from receiving travel assistance from CGI U?
All students are eligible for travel assistance if they qualify. CGI U funds a small percentage of student attendees with some form of travel and/or hotel assistance.

FUNDING FOR STUDENTS

How does the university determine the breakdown between funding student commitments and student travel?
In order to qualify as a member of the University Network, a university must allocate at least 50 percent of its funding (minimum $10,000 total) to support student commitments. The remaining funding may be – but is not required to be – reserved for student travel to CGI U. The meeting is free to attend, and meals are provided throughout the event. Travel and lodging costs typically range from $300 to $700 per student, depending on the distance from the host campus and the average cost of lodging in the host campus city.

As part of the CGI U application, each student is asked to provide a detailed plan that outlines the scope of the commitment and how it will be implemented. CGI U strongly encourages students to draft their commitments offline before applying, and to keep a record of them in case there are any technical difficulties when applying online. Universities can use this information to determine funding allocations, and can also ask their students to submit supplemental information, such as budgets or detailed timelines.

What is the average amount of seed funding provided for each student initiative?
Most seed funding for student commitments ranges from $1,000 to $3,000 per commitment, although it has been as large as $10,000 in the past. It is at the discretion of the university to determine the amount of funding it provides to individual commitment-makers as well as the number of students who receive funding, as long as the total amount of funding (commitment seed grants and student travel stipends) meets the $10,000 minimum per academic year requirement for joining the University Network.

Do student commitments have to take place on campus?
No. CGI U encourages students to make Commitments to Action that devise innovative solutions to challenges on their campuses, in their local communities, or around the world.
**FAQ**

**How are the funds and accounting managed? Are there any restrictions on student commitment funding?**

All funds are allocated by and through the university. University Network funds are not given to or distributed by CGI U. The accounting for these funds is managed by the university, and all funds are allocated at its discretion. The university will report to CGI U regarding commitment and travel funding allocated to student commitment-makers.

**What if a university has funding specifically allocated for graduate students and is only able to support students within a specific graduate program?**

CGI U will review this situation on a case-by-case basis, but encourages any graduate program or school to speak with the broader campus leadership before joining the University Network. The larger university may also have interest in joining the network, thereby opening up additional sources of student funding and expanding the opportunity for students campus-wide.

**What happens if the university does not fulfill its pledge to allocate at least $10,000 to CGI U students in the time allotted?**

Member institutions are asked to determine all funding allocations based on the given reporting timeline. If funding allocations change after the submission of reports, CGI U can include an addendum in its records. Please note that it is a requirement that all universities fund at least $10,000 to maintain membership in the CGI University Network.

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**COMMUNICATION**

**What communication does a member of the University Network have with CGI U and vice versa?**

CGI U staff members are available throughout the year to communicate with and support University Network members. When a university joins the network, the CGI U team can work with the university’s CGI U liaison as needed to support outreach efforts and answer any questions that the liaison may have. The university also works with the CGI U staff as desired to receive guidance on allocating funding and mentoring student commitment-makers. In addition, each University Network member is required to submit a formal report to CGI U. The CGI U staff will solicit this report via an online form. After the meeting, the university shares its overall feedback on the University Network program, reports on how it allocated funding for student commitments and student travel, and has the opportunity to renew its membership in the network for the next year.