

Action research planning for the Global Social Benefit Fellowship

*Sponsored by the Center for Science, Technology, and Society (CSTS) at Santa Clara University
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Types of action research we offer to GSBI social enterprises

1. Social impact assessment, and the development of monitoring tools
2. Customer satisfaction surveys, including social science surveys
3. Knowledge formalization, such as sales training manuals or operation manuals
4. Social documentation, beneficiary profiles, promotional materials, photography, and videography
5. Market assessment, marketing campaign planning, and business plan development
6. Mobile app and IT systems development
7. Technology evaluation

All action research is conducted by inter-disciplinary teams of students of 2 or 3, depending upon the scope of work and number of deliverables. CSTS only sends qualified students to work with social enterprises in the developing world.

Support from social enterprises necessary for a successful project

1. A vision for action research
 - a. Is the CEO able to describe what the enterprise would like as a deliverable?
 - b. Can the CEO and staff select and customize an appropriate type of action research project (per above)?
 - c. Is the CEO comfortable with a version of the final product being posted on the Santa Clara University webpage to share with other social enterprises?
 - d. Can the CEO or staff designate meet twice by skype in May with the fellows to prepare them for their field work?
2. An experience of direct contact with those who benefit from the social enterprise
 - a. Is the enterprise able to structure a sustained student experience of direct contact with the poor in the developing world?
3. Logistical research support by a designated enterprise employee
 - a. Can the enterprise commit to making an employee available onsite at the beginning of the research to provide an orientation for the students?
 - b. Can the enterprise help students access safe local transportation?
 - c. Can the enterprise commit to helping the students access competent translation? (if needed; CSTS pays)
 - d. Can the enterprise help the students access the communities served?
 - e. Can the enterprise commit to assigning an employee to meeting weekly with the students to troubleshoot during the field research? (in person, or skype)
4. Operational support for students in the field
 - a. Can the enterprise help to organize safe and affordable housing in advance?
 - b. Can the enterprise help the students devise a strategy for accessing safe food?
 - c. Can the enterprise help the students access health care? (if needed)

Timeline for social enterprise engagement with the fellowship

September-November. With the social enterprise, CSTS negotiates the scope of work for the action research proposal, and the necessary student skills.

October-November. CSTS drafts initial action research proposal collaboratively with the enterprise, and posts this on the CSTS webpage to recruit appropriate students.

January. CSTS recruits applicants/application deadline. If needed, the enterprise provides an update on the scope of work.

February. CSTS interviews qualified applicants. If, in negotiation with the enterprise, a team of qualified students are recruited and awarded the fellowship, and the students accept the fellowship, the research proposal is confirmed as an Action Research Plan. If a team of qualified students cannot be found, CSTS will inform the enterprise that the project is a no-go.

March. CSTS formally welcomes teams of students at an event. CSTS initiates travel planning. The enterprise confirms in-country arrival/departure dates. Budget planning for each project begins. Social enterprises share 10-20 high resolution photographs with CSTS to use for promotional material.

April 1. Student fellows begin intensive spring course. This course will prepare the students by: orienting them to the field of social entrepreneurship, training them in the GSBI method and its impact on their host enterprise, and preparing them for action research. Students write a short essay to introduce themselves to the enterprise.

May 1. Student teams meet with one or more of the GSBI mentors who mentored the host social enterprise to learn about the business model.

May 1. Student teams analyze the business plan of their host enterprise, and arrange for their first skype call with the enterprise.

May 25. Student teams prepare complete full action research plan, share it with their host enterprise in the second skype call. The enterprise now has chance to provide a course correction in light of student arrival in 20 days.

June 1. First budget transfer to enterprise, if needed.

June 15. Fellows depart Santa Clara University any time after this date.

August 10. Fellows return to campus.

August 13-23. Fellows in residence at GSBI-Accelerator. Fellows provide a general plan for completing the project to the enterprise.

August 23-September 20. Fellows on vacation.

September 20. Fellows begin fall course, and provide monthly updates to the enterprise on the completion of project.

October 21. Projects complete, and passed off to enterprise for review.

November 1. Enterprise approves elements of the project for the Center to post on the CSTS webpage.

This fellowship is fully funded thanks to a generous benefactor. However, in our experience, the social entrepreneurs who invest time in providing guidance to our student fellows receive much more valuable research products.