University of Southampton

Careers, Employability and Student Enterprise

STUDENT INNOVATION PROJECTS

Client Guide
2023/2024

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION

Our Student Innovation Projects enable local businesses and not-for-profit organisations to task ambitious students with a business issue and receive inspiring solutions. For students, it offers an opportunity to gain invaluable experience of working on a real-life business problem. We work with organisations of various sizes and across all sectors.

1 or 2 student teams, from a range of subjects and year groups, will work in teams of 4 or 5 to deliver innovative solutions to your business challenge.
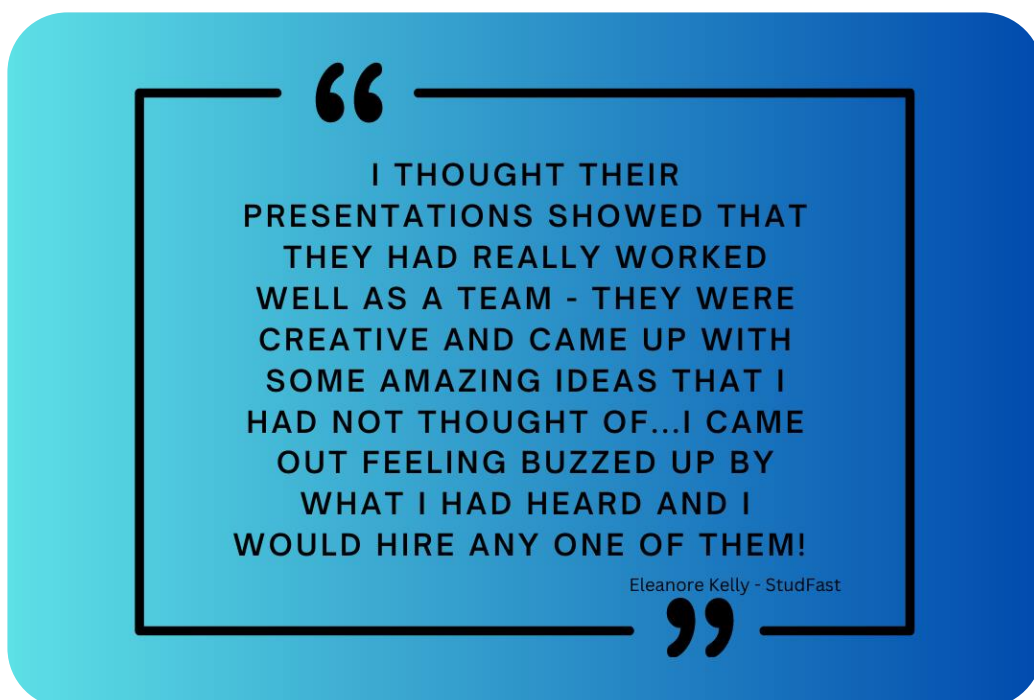
Hosting a Student Innovation Project provides you with several benefits, including:

- Access to high-calibre students at a university ranked among the top 100 globally
- Receiving insightful recommendations from students through a final presentation and report
- Exploring fresh approaches to organisational needs through enthusiastic students
- Capitalising on theoretical knowledge from a range of disciplines
- Enjoying an additional resource to provide dedicated consulting skills to a business issue

What the Careers, Employability and Student Enterprise team will do for you:

- Select 1 or 2 teams of students to work on the project
- Arrange training for the students before the project commences
- Support you and the students throughout the project
- Make all reasonable endeavours to ensure that the students complete the project

At the University of Southampton, we recognise that enhancing our students' employability is key to their success as graduates. By providing a worthwhile project that offers valuable work experience, clients will enhance a student's CV and help support their long-term career goals.

> "
> I THOUGHT THEIR PRESENTATIONS SHOWED THAT THEY HAD REALLY WORKED WELL AS A TEAM - THEY WERE CREATIVE AND CAME UP WITH SOME AMAZING IDEAS THAT I HAD NOT THOUGHT OF...I CAME OUT FEELING BUZZED UP BY WHAT I HAD HEARD AND I WOULD HIRE ANY ONE OF THEM!
>
> Eleanore Kelly - StudFast

2 HOW STUDENT INNOVATION PROJECTS WORK

2.a What defines our Student Innovation Projects?

- Each Student Innovation Project lasts 4 weeks
- The project is co-ordinated by the Careers, Employability and Student Enterprise team
- The project should provide the students with the opportunity to develop or work on an area of importance to the client
- Student collaboration on a 'research and recommendations' project. Students will research the business issue/need and provide proposals for possible solutions
- Students will apply for projects based on a broad description of the brief; they will be shortlisted and appointed by the Careers and Employability and Student Enterprise team
- Students will be grouped into teams of 4 or 5 from a range of subjects and year groups
- We advise students that they will each typically spend between 4-6 hours per week on the project over the 4 weeks
- Student Innovation Projects are available to all undergraduate and postgraduate students

2.b Client & Project Eligibility

- ✓ Employers must ensure that students work on a project of importance to the organisation. For examples of previous projects, please see our website
- ✓ Projects must be exclusive to University of Southampton students
- ✓ Projects must be local to Southampton to allow for students to meet with their client and present back to them at their business premises
- ✓ Employers must have Public Liability insurance

2.c Duration and Process of Programme

Students will work part-time (around 4-6 hours per week) on a project for 4 weeks. The process will be as follows:

- The Project Brief, Health and Safety Form, and Client Agreement Form need to be submitted to the Employer Relations Team employ@southampton.ac.uk 2 weeks prior to being advertised.
- The student application period will last 2 weeks.
- The Careers, Employability and Student Enterprise team will shortlist and appoint student teams in the following 2 weeks, then send out initial information and training content to the students.
- The Employer Relations team will contact you the week before your project commences to inform you how many teams will be working on your project.
- The Careers, Employability and Student Enterprise team will facilitate a training session for all students that have been successful in securing a place on the programme. This will occur in the week prior to the project commencing.
- The students will contact you to arrange an initial client meeting in week 1 of the project. Please have ready some dates and times that you are available in week 4 so that the final presentation details can be confirmed in this first meeting.
- The students may request a second client meeting towards the end of week 2 or the beginning of week 3.
- The final presentation must be held during week 4 of the project.

2.d Timeline of Programme
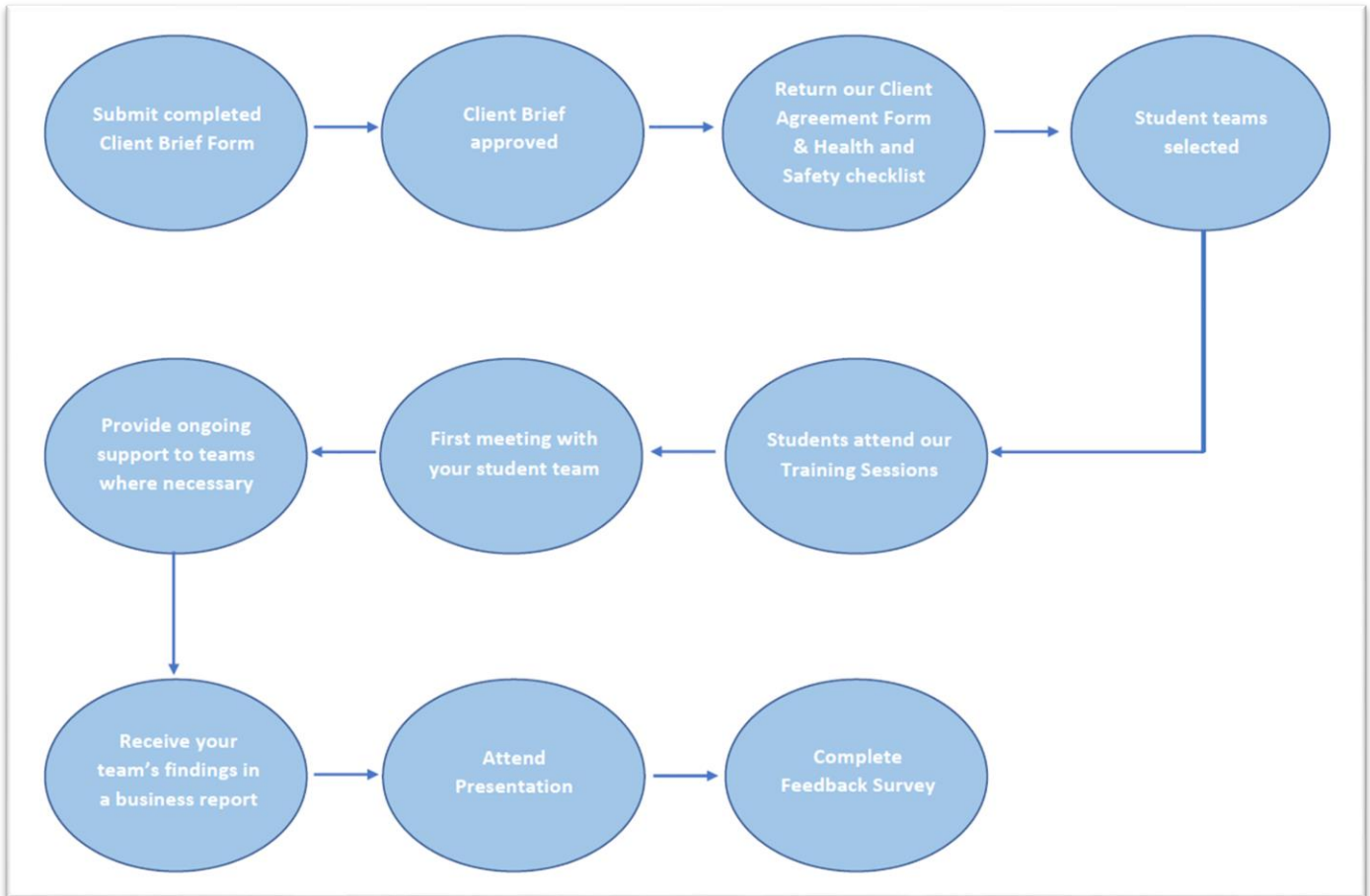
2.e How to participate in our Student Innovation Projects

We welcome submissions from a wide variety of businesses and not-for-profit organisations. All clients wishing to participate must send a completed brief to us for approval. We receive a high volume of project briefs and only have 5 spaces per round.

The Careers and Employability and Student Enterprise team will review the project briefs after each submission deadline and confirm if your brief has been successful within 1 week of the deadline. Please see the table below stating the deadlines for each round of Student Innovation Projects for this academic year. In week 1, you must be available for an initial meeting with the students and in week 4, you must be available to attend the student presentation.

Submission Deadline	Project Commencement	Project Conclusion
05 September 2023	16 October 2023	10 November 2023
19 September 2023	30 October 2023	24 November 2023
03 October 2023	13 November 2023	08 December 2023
28 November 2023	05 February 2024	01 March 2024
05 December 2023	19 February 2024	15 March 2024

Step 1

Email employ@southampton.ac.uk to discuss your project ideas and which project dates are available and would work well for your organisation. Once a date has been agreed we will send you a Client Brief Form and Client Agreement Form to complete

Step 2

Email the completed Client Brief Form, signed Client Agreement Form, and Health and Safety Form, to us for approval at employ@southampton.ac.uk

Step 3

If selected, the Careers and Employability and Student Enterprise team will recruit 1 or 2 student teams to work on your project

Within the project brief, clients should:

- Give the project a suitable title
- Outline the business need or issue, contextualising where appropriate
- Highlight the project aims and what you hope to achieve from it
- State which skills you think would be useful to complete the project

The information provided in the client brief will be conveyed to students ahead of the initial client meeting. Please ensure the content of your brief is clear and outlines the project in detail. The students will be able to ask further questions about the project when they have their initial meeting with you in week 1.

Please note, that we require separate briefs for different projects. Therefore, if clients wish to apply for multiple projects, different briefs must be submitted.

Due to the necessity to provide students with a wide range of opportunities, we cannot guarantee that each completed application form will be approved as a Student Innovation Project. Projects are approved as and when they are submitted, and we encourage project submissions as early as possible.

2.f   Recruitment Process for Students

Students will apply to participate in a Student Innovation Project through 'MyCareer', our online careers platform. Student applications consist of a CV and application form asking them the following questions:
- Why do you wish to be part of the Student Innovation Projects?
- What skills and experience can you bring?

After the closing date, applications will be shortlisted by the Careers, Employability and Student Enterprise team, and suitable students will be selected.

Students will be put into teams of 4 or 5 and will come from a range of subjects. They may not be aligned to a specific project because of their degree discipline.

2.g Student Training Session

Students who have accepted a place on the Student Innovation Projects are expected to attend a mandatory training session, held by Careers, Employability and Student Enterprise, ahead of their project commencing.

This will be an opportunity for the students to gain information on a variety of topics before the project commences.

These include:
- Building a relationship with a client
- Being innovative and creative towards solutions for the client
- Working effectively as a team
- Project management principles

2.h Student Reflection Activity

After the projects have been completed, students are required to complete a Reflection Module. This is extremely important for helping students identify the work-based skills they have acquired during the programme.

2.i Our Agreement

A Client Agreement will need to be completed and signed upon approval of your client brief. This outlines what is expected from you as a client as well as what the University will provide. Students will also sign an agreement before commencing the project.

2.j Any changes to a project

If for any reason a student team is unable to complete the project, or if there are any changes to the project or business, we must be informed immediately. If there are any other issues or queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch and we will be more than happy to help.

3 COST

Student Contribution

We strongly encourage our clients to invite their student teams to their premises for client meetings and the final presentation. The University of Southampton will cover any travel expenses incurred.

4 FEEDBACK

Feedback

Every year, we look to improve our processes and service to both students and clients. To help us achieve this, we send out feedback emails to all students and clients who have engaged with the programme, to gauge areas that we can improve. It is crucial that we receive this feedback to allow us to provide the best service possible, so please spare time to help our decision-making and the programme.

5 NEXT STEPS

At the end of your Student Innovation Project, you will have received recommended solutions to the challenge you are facing. If you would like further assistance to implement some of the solutions suggested, please contact employ@southampton.ac.uk to enquire about recruiting an intern. Alternatively, you can find more information about UoS internships on our website.

> " THE STUDENTS GRASPED EVERY ASPECT OF THE BRIEF AND THE LEVEL OF DETAIL IN BOTH THE REPORT AND THE PRESENTATION WERE EXCEPTIONAL "
>
> Carla Yarrow - Lucy Air Ambulance