

A photograph of three hikers standing on a rocky mountain peak at sunset. The hikers are wearing colorful gear and have their arms raised in celebration. The sky is filled with soft, golden light and scattered clouds. The foreground is a rugged, rocky slope.

**Careers and Employability Service**  
**STUDENT INNOVATION  
PROJECTS**

**Client Guide**  
**2021/22**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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Our Student Innovation Projects enable 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.

One to two 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 a number of 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 we will do for you:**

- Select one to two 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
- Use 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 good work experience, clients will enhance a student's CV and help support their long-term career goals.

## 2 HOW STUDENT INNOVATION PROJECTS WORK

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### 2.1 What defines our Semester Student Innovation Projects?

- Each Student Innovation Project lasts 4 weeks
- The programme is coordinated by the Careers and Employability Service
- The project should provide the student with the opportunity to develop or work on a project of importance to the client
- The project should be a 'research and recommendation' project. Students will research the business issue/need and deliver 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 team
- Students will be grouped into teams of 4 or 5 from a range of subjects. They will not necessarily be aligned to a specific project because of their degree discipline
- We advise students that they will typically spend between 4-6 hours per week each on the project over the 4 weeks
- Student Innovation Projects are available to all undergraduate and postgraduate students

### 2.2 COVID-19

We would like Student Innovation Projects to be as interactive as possible for participants and would welcome the opportunity to encourage students into your workplace for the client meeting and/or final presentation. Please send the students all relevant policies and/or risk assessments that your organisation have in place for COVID-19 ahead of any physical meetings.

If, for any reason, it will not be possible to hold any physical activity for the students in your workplace, we would like to welcome you to campus to hold your client meeting and/or final presentation. If you can visit the campus, please follow the COVID-19 guidance you are sent for the building you are visiting. The risk assessment may request some or all of the following measures:

- Social distancing
- Mask wearing
- Regular hand washing
- Adherence to a one-way system, which will be clearly signposted

Please let us know when submitting your project brief form if you would like all contact with the students and the University of Southampton staff to stay virtual throughout the project.

### 2.3 Client & Project Eligibility

- ✓ Employers must ensure 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 suitable for a virtual setting throughout\*

\*Although we are hoping that all Student Innovation Project meetings and presentations can be held in person this academic year, we will remain prepared for the possibility that remote-working may be necessary at short notice.

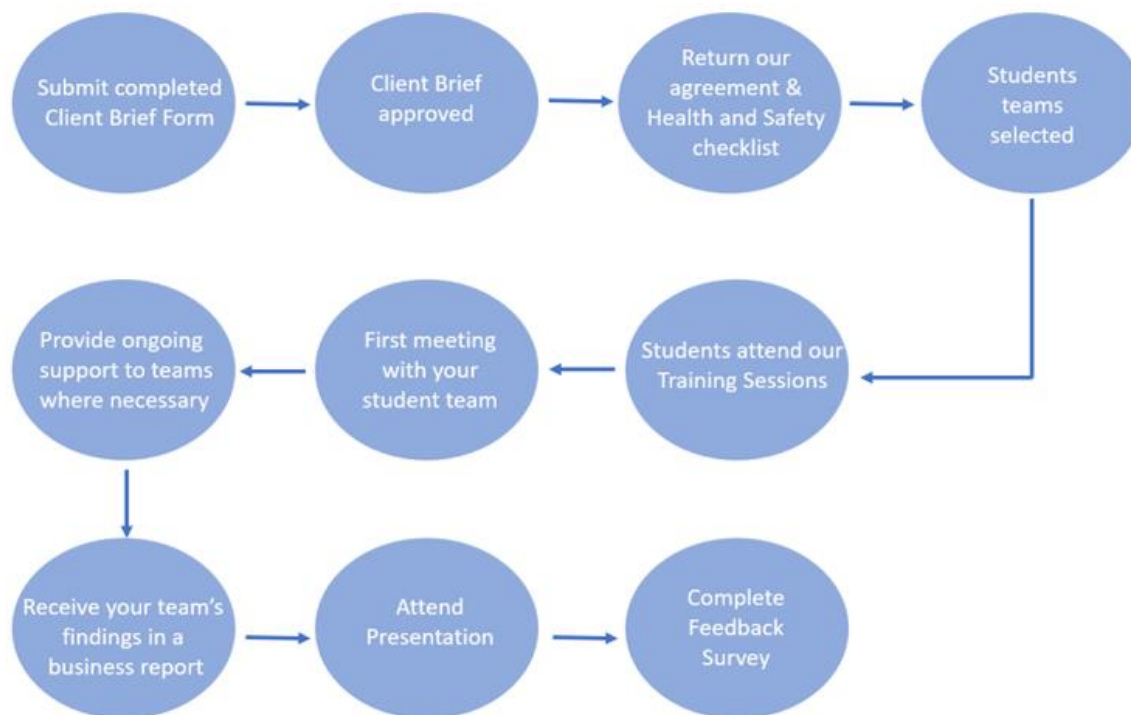
### 2.4 Duration and Process of Programme

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

1. Brief to be submitted two weeks prior to being advertised.
2. The application period will last two weeks.
3. The Careers and Employability Service will shortlist and appoint student teams in the following two weeks, then send out initial information and training content to the students.
4. 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.
5. The Careers and Employability Service 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.

6. The students will contact you to arrange an initial client meeting in week one. Please have some days and times you are available for 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 two or beginning of week three.

## 2.5 Timeline of Programme



## 2.6 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 have a high level of project briefs submitted and only have four spaces per project commencement date.

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

Submission Deadline	Project Commencement	Project Conclusion
10 September 2021	18 October 2021	12 November 2021
24 September 2021	01 November 2021	26 November 2021
08 October 2021	15 November 2021	10 December 2021
10 December 2021	31 January 2022	25 February 2022
07 January 2021	14 February 2022	11 March 2022
21 January 2021	28 February 2022	25 March 2022

### Step 1

Email [employ@southampton.ac.uk](mailto:employ@southampton.ac.uk) to discuss 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' to us for approval to [employ@southampton.ac.uk](mailto:employ@southampton.ac.uk)

### Step 3

If selected the Careers and Employability team will recruit one to two student teams to work on your project

Within the client brief, clients should:

- Give the project a suitable title
- Outline the business need or issue, contextualizing 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, we require separate briefs for different projects. Therefore, if clients wish to bid 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 they are submitted, and we encourage project submissions as early as possible.

## 2.7 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, and suitable students will be selected.

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

## 2.8 Training Session

Students who have accepted a place on the Student Innovation Projects are expected to attend a mandatory training session, held by the Careers and Employability Service, 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

## 2.9 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.

## 3 Our Agreement

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

### 3.1 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 contact and we will be more than happy to help.

## 4 FUNDING

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### 4.1 Student Contribution

If students attend your place of work for either a client meeting, final presentation, or both, the University of Southampton will cover any travel expenses incurred.

## 5 FEEDBACK

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### 5.1 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.

## 6 NEXT STEPS

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At the end of your Student Innovation Project, you will have received recommendations of 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](mailto:employ@southampton.ac.uk) to inquire about recruiting an intern. Alternatively, you can find more information about UoS internships on [our website](#).

