What is the Community Engagement Program?

The Community Engagement Program (CEP) provides students studying courses within the Faculty Business, Economics and Law (BEL) at The University of Queensland with the opportunity to work on real projects with organisations in the non-profit and community sector. Students are able to engage in an active learning environment as a member of a project team, taking on a role similar to that of a consultant and working with the organisation to create tailored solutions in response to a project brief.

The program is co-curricular (not for credit), highly structured and offers professional, academic and industry support. Project topics and briefs are formulated and agreed upon before the commencement of each semester, when students have the opportunity to apply for a position on a project team with the organisation of their choice.

The program is overseen by a team of specialists in business strategy, innovation, community engagement and social change. It is managed by a full-time coordinator and each project is assigned a Project Advisor from our Business School MBA cohort, who provides regular guidance and feedback. Students are also required to complete a series of workshops with industry professionals in preparation for their CEP journey.

Why get involved?

Many non-profit and community organisations find it difficult to allocate resources and/or time to work on business projects. The CEP program links your organisation to motivated and passionate students who are willing to offer their education, ideas and fresh perspectives. This is an opportunity for you to harness their experience and unique insights through a supervised, structured program at no cost. The program also offers opportunities for you to network and get to know other organisations and stakeholders in the sector and the wider UQ social engagement community.

Community Project Award

In 2015, CEP became a competition amongst students with a prize for the winning team and acknowledgement awards for outstanding achievement. The project outcomes are assessed by professional staff, academics and stakeholders of the organisations, considering criteria such as the understanding of the social outcome, social innovation, integrity of the research and overall professionalism displayed. In order for a project team to be eligible for consideration, students must attend all workshops, organised activities and meet the deadlines for their project milestones.
What will my organisation need to provide?

Resources
You will be required to provide a detailed brief on your proposed project. The program coordinator will work with you to ensure the project brief is set up to deliver the desired outcome, taking into consideration the timeframe for delivery, capability of the students and resources available. The students may require access to annual reports, marketing materials, existing business plans, or other organisational materials relevant to their project.

Time commitment
As a minimum, the key stakeholders involved in the project will be required to give their time to meet the following:

- 2 meetings with project coordinator prior to commencement to confirm project brief
- 1 x 2-3 hour initial meeting with the selected students (preferably at your workplace)
- Review and feedback of the proposed scope of work
- Fortnightly meetings with your student team
- Review and feedback on the final report
- Attend the final presentation (ideally hosted at your offices)
- Complete the Program Evaluation Survey

How are students selected?
For students to be eligible to apply for CEP, they must be:

- studying a postgraduate program in business, economics or law OR
- have completed at least one year of full time study in an undergraduate program in business, economics or law

Students are selected for each project via an online individual survey application, where they can select project preferences, outline previous work/volunteer experience and detail their passion for the cause or connection to the organisation they wish to work with. Groups of between four and six students will be assigned to each project.

Our Partners

Where to from here?
If your organisation is interested in proposing a project for CEP please contact:

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