G-Lab: Global Health Delivery 2009
Note to prospective hosts

We are glad that you are interested in joining MIT Sloan School of Management’s Global Entrepreneurship Lab: Global Health Delivery course (G-Lab GHD) as a project host. Project hosts set the focus for the student team, first by working with us, and then by partnering with students as they prepare for their time on site, conduct their initial work from MIT in the autumn, and then as they work side-by-side with you in January. We wrap up our collaboration in February.

Our focus: your project
We seek projects that address three clusters of issues we consider key to improving global health delivery in resource-limited settings:

- process improvement and supply chain management;
- reaching and serving patients, including via pricing, income generation, and marketing or information dissemination; or
- developing new lines of business or organizational models to increase sustainability.

Please consider if your pressing needs line up with these areas of interest. In looking for projects that cluster along themes, not only can we help build better learning for the students and but also we hope to enable more valuable contributions for the hosts. We also want to make sure that we work with you on the issues that are most critical for your organization: when we work with for-profit firms, we ask them for the problems that keep the CEO awake at night. What operational challenge occupies your organization’s leaders? If your pressing problems fit with our themes, and your location is in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana, Zambia, or South Africa (or possibly Rwanda or Malawi), we want to take the next step! Please start by defining a project and let us know what it is by completing Part One of the application questionnaire.

To complete the application questionnaire, you’ll need to have a project in mind, even if it’s only tentative at this point. To frame your proposal: consider defining your project goal in terms of what a team of four MBA and graduate students could tackle in four months of work, adding up to over 600 person-hours in total. Our students bring to bear the MBA toolkit, as well as considerable skills in getting things done. In their second year of the MBA or related professional engineering master’s degrees, they usually have several years of work experience behind them. Mid-career executive MBAs from our Sloan Fellows program and PhD students from across MIT may also participate.

How hosts work with students
If you are a G-Lab GHD host, your four-student G-Lab team would choose your project in
September and confirm the scope, schedule and deliverables with you in October. The team undertakes significant background research or a related study that makes the most of MIT’s resources while continuing to refine and plan their work, with faculty guidance, on campus from October to December. They then work on-site at your organization in Africa for at least three weeks in January 2010. Your student team will formally present its conclusions to you at the end of this internship, and also provide additional written reports, data, and other materials and resources that you agree upon.

Students are not compensated for their work. This is a learning experience for them. We work to raise funds to cover airfares and as much of the housing costs as we can, but we do ask host organizations to pay for any portion of these expenses that is feasible. (G-Lab GHD is a new version of a decade-old class that has served entrepreneurs in many countries. For most of the several hundred projects to date, host businesses covered airfares, travel and housing expenses.)

We expect host organizations to help arrange local accommodations for the student team and assist with other local arrangements as needed. Apart from what is entailed in the on-site work itself (e.g. local transport to clinics for interviews or translators if needed), here are no additional costs involved for host organizations.

Meet the team

Your point of entry is the application and project scoping process that the G-Lab GHD team works on from May to September. Our team includes a variety of faculty besides the G-Lab GHD instructor, MIT Sloan School of Management Senior Lecturer Anjali Sastry: you may hear from MIT Sloan’s Jonathan Lehrich or Jeff Shames; Laura Gay or Shiba Nemat-Nasser may also follow up. Other collaborators include our colleagues at the Entrepreneurship Center. A linchpin of G-Lab GHD is our partnership with the Global Health Delivery Project, which is headed by Rebecca Weintraub. She and Global Health Delivery Project founders Jim Kim and Paul Farmer, along with G-Lab founders Richard Locke and Simon Johnson, inspired this class. And Global Health Delivery Project colleague Maria May is helping refine the class, find and shape projects, and construct useful products from our learning. Also on our project recruiting team are other GHD experts and along with some current MIT students and several recent MIT graduates.

How we use the questionnaire

We carefully review your responses to the two-part application questionnaire to ensure a good fit between your needs and interests and the course learning goals. Eventually, your completed questionnaire will be posted, along with others, on an MIT website restricted to G-Lab students. Students use this information to select their preferred projects and faculty draw on it to generate the best matches among teams and host organizations.

More organizations apply to participate in G-Lab GHD than are eventually selected by students. This means, alas, that every year there are projects that do not get taken up. Please take the time to thoughtfully describe your organization and the specific project, so that students can fully appreciate the opportunity.
Timeline

We suggest you complete and submit Part One of the application questionnaire as soon as is feasible so that we can start working with you as needed to address open questions. We expect many host organizations to complete Part One in June 2009.

If you provide Part One applications to us by 24 July, we will give you feedback by the end of July that may be helpful in your completion of Part Two.

The entire application, including Part Two, is due by 21 August. By early September, we will let you know if your proposal is being seen by students, and by the end of September expect to match teams and projects.

You may submit both Parts One and Two by 21 August without submitting Part One first, but our experience shows that the refining process between initial and final applications improves the chance that student teams are appropriately matched to the project.

An online version of the application is expected to be available in early June via http://g-lab.mit.edu. You can also download the form from http://globalhealth.mit.edu/glab-ghd/. We prefer online submissions, but if online entry is unavailable, you may send us a document containing your questionnaire answers.

If you have any questions or need clarifications, please contact us by email at glab.ghd@gmail.com. You may also find more information at the G-Lab website – http://g-lab.mit.edu – which we expect to be updated by early June. To learn more about G-Lab GHD’s experience last year, please visit http://globalhealth.mit.edu/glab-ghd/.

Many thanks for your interest. We look forward to hearing from you and are very glad to have the opportunity to work in this important area.

Sincerely,

Anjali Sastry
Jonathan Lehrich
Jeff Shames

Rebecca Weintraub
Maria May

Global Health Delivery Project,
Harvard Medical School

P.S. Some of us, including several volunteers, expect to travel this summer. Please drop us a line if you’re in any of these locations—we’d love to work together in person. The July and August dates are still tentative.

Cape Town, June 7-10 and June 13-16
Windhoek, June 10-13
Nairobi, June 9-14
Dar es Salaam, June 15-22
Kampala, June 22-26

Accra/elsewhere in Ghana, July
Kigali, July
Lusaka, July or August
Durban, July