

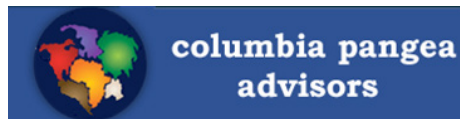
International Development

Pro Bono Consulting Projects



www.gsb.columbia.edu/socialenterprise/experientiallearning/projects

Pangea Advisors (www.pangeaadvisors.org), a part of the International Development Club, works with the Tamer Center for Social Enterprise at Columbia Business School each semester to manage pro bono consulting teams of three to five MBA students.



These student teams work on consulting projects with organizations focused on international development and emerging markets. Nonprofits, Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs), Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), private equity organizations and companies with relevant social and environmental projects are invited to participate as clients.

These consulting projects provide numerous benefits to client organizations and to students. MBA students have on average four years of work experience in fields including: finance, consulting, strategy, marketing, business development, operations, nonprofit management and performance evaluation. This experience, coupled with their MBA training and interest in international development, enables them to deliver high-impact results for client organizations. Client organizations are often able to gain expertise and to develop initiatives they may not otherwise have the resources to pursue. Projects also offer clients an opportunity to develop relationships with students who may be interested in summer internships and/or are planning to pursue careers in the international development field.

Students worked with Frogtek, a social venture that creates cell phone software for micro-entrepreneurs in emerging markets.



Project Management Process

- Projects are tightly scoped to allow students to complete deliverables within a reasonable time frame. Projects typically run for one semester:
 - Fall projects commence in September, with travel for one to two weeks during winter break (end of December to mid-January). Final deliverables are typically completed by February.
 - Spring projects commence in February with travel for one week during spring break in March. Final deliverables are completed at the beginning of May.
- Projects descriptions are circulated and students apply to work on these projects. Students are matched based on experience, skill sets (including languages) and interests.
- Consulting teams develop a “statement of work” with the client, and participate in Pangea Advisors information and training sessions, offered in partnership with consulting firms and relevant faculty.
- While students are on campus, they are in contact with the client by phone and email, and use the resources of the university (faculty advisors, Columbia Business School mentor network, libraries, local organizations etc) to do background work and analysis.
- Students travel during intersession periods; clients and students are asked to cover on the ground costs; airfares are partially subsidized by the Tamer Center for Social Enterprise’s International Development Consulting Project Travel Fund.
- Consulting teams submit final deliverables and reports to Pangea Advisors’ portfolio management team and can then be partially reimbursed for their airfare.

Past clients include:



endeavor



Client Impact and Student Experiences

A team of MBA students worked with **Cambodian Business Integrated in Rural Development (CBIRD)**, a microcredit institution that aims to provide an alternative to high risk urban migration by generating opportunity in rural areas. The project identified gaps and provided recommendations to improve CBIRD's operational efficiency in areas including: underwriting, loan tracking and accounting.

"This project was a great opportunity to work with practitioners in the field and see the direct impact that microfinance has in developing countries. It also highlighted the intricacies of running a growing MFI [Microfinance Institution], while using our financial and accounting skills to make a significant contribution to CBIRD. We were also able to tap into Microlumbia's network [a student-run microfinance fund], to access investors that assisted in benchmarking the different areas of CBIRD."

— Molly Bennard '10

Other team members: Pavel Konin '10, Rodrigo Larrimbe '10 and Sakura Takano '09

Students worked for **Give to Colombia**, a nonprofit organization that aims to foster philanthropic awareness among members of the Colombian diaspora living in the U.S. and encouraging them to participate in Colombia's social and economic development. The organization has portfolios of grantees in education, health and nutrition, and social and economic development. The team developed an evaluation methodology and metrics to assess the projects and organizations it funds. Students detailed a new methodology, with processes and procedures for implementation, as well as provided case studies applying the methodology to existing projects.

"The organization now has a much more effective evaluation method to use in monitoring their investments, which in turn will allow them to further develop their fundraising efforts... Working with Give to Colombia highlighted for us how analytical skills, business concepts and business practices could be applied to nonprofits to solve real world problems."

— Chad Di Stefano '10

Other team members: Hernando Forero '09, Omari Jinaki '10, Kevin Rehak '10 and Sachit Shah '10

Ashoka, a global nonprofit that promotes positive change by investing in social entrepreneurs with innovative, sustainable and replicable solutions, asked an MBA consulting team in Brazil to investigate how organizations in the Ashoka fellows network have built leaders inside their organizations and dealt with succession issues, and how it could develop and share best practices within its network. The consulting team developed a framework to teach and enable peer education among entrepreneurs, including a guide to encourage the founder-entrepreneur to define tasks, make decisions about how to structure departments and delegate responsibility, and take steps to select and train chosen successors to take on larger managerial roles.

"Not only was it a new cultural context [working in Latin America], but it was our first time dealing with social entrepreneurs—a breed of people who value their social mission above any type of profit-making or self-image. We were rewarded not with money or the prospect of promotion, but rather with appreciation from the Ashoka social entrepreneur fellows, and their feedback that we made a significant impact on how they think about their leadership and development of their people."

— Greg Bateman '10

Other team members: Selena Hsu '10, Andrew Macken '10, Vivek Lakhi '10 and Carlos Medeiros '10