SELCO FOUNDATION

UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Many of the world’s problems today, whether social unrest or environmental degradation, are linked to poverty. Solutions developed towards improving the environment while maintaining focus on social and financial sustainability can transform communities. SELCO believes that without innovation and user centric approaches these solutions will remain short term and inefficient. For innovation to thrive there is a constant need for fresh thought processes, new energies and passionate minds. The potential for students to engage, grow and learn by partnering with communities and working on global issues is immense and can be harnessed through SELCO’s university engagement program.

Workshops
Internships
Fellowships
Program goals

Orient students to the ground realities and challenges of climate change and poverty alleviation.

Inspire and introduce students to the plethora of mainstream (innovation and entrepreneurial) opportunities in the development sector.

Trigger creative thought process, alternative thinking and solution-oriented mindsets.

Integrate students into the sector by offering substantial project opportunities.

WORKSHOPS

SELCO Foundation is a grassroots level initiative that was set up by SELCO in 2008 to evaluate and address the energy access problems of the poor. The Research and Development Labs piggyback on 20 years of SELCO’s rural experience coming up with numerous pragmatic solutions (technology, financial, business models etc). The Labs emphasize on solutions that are poor-centric and replicable. Solutions that come out of the labs (or even endorsed by it) directly or indirectly uplift the quality of life or/and improve the livelihoods.

The philosophy of SELCO is not only based upon developing high quality customized products and creating sustainable services and systems around it but also proving that social ventures can be run as for profit entities. SELCO does this while encouraging alternate technologies and empowering local communities.

The engagement with universities expands to students from varied backgrounds. Each program is focused on understanding, implementing and practicing sustainability from a development perspective.

Key features of the programs include:

- Making students aware of ground realities of the rural and urban poor (in villages and slums)
- Emphasizing on the importance of socio-cultural, economic and environmental solutions (Holistic thinking)
- Inculcating the importance of working in multi-disciplinary teams (technology + business + process)
- Social innovation and its relevance
- Practical design thinking processes and tools while working with under-served communities
- Understanding barriers and challenges that need to be addressed

SELCO has designed flexible innovation workshops to engage with students at different levels. The stages within the workshops can include the ‘experience level’ of students varying from exposure, dabbling to hands-on practicing. Workshops provide an opportunity for students to apply themselves at solving real-world issues.

Each workshop can be chosen depending on institutional requirements and preferences.

Workshops are of three types: Look, Peak and Enter, based on student exposure and learning level. Within each program the course content signifies what type of engagement the student experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>Exposure Workshop (Studio based, with optional field visit)</th>
<th>Experience Workshop (Studio &amp; Field based, 50/50)</th>
<th>Hands on program (Studio &amp; Field based, 30/70)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DURATION</td>
<td>½ day – 2 days</td>
<td>1 - 2 weeks</td>
<td>3 - 6 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>GROUP SIZE</td>
<td>20-200 participants</td>
<td>Upto 15 participants</td>
<td>Upto 3 participants or academia integrated</td>
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OUTCOMES (for the student)

- Awareness of innovation in the social development sector.
- Active interaction and debates on sustainability issues (macro and micro).
- Exposure to the approach & methodology adopted for identifying issues and developing innovative solutions.
- Understanding the need and potential of their own involvement.

- Learning and experiencing inclusive development.
- Exposure to effective tools and techniques used while approaching under-served communities.
- Interaction and application of learning within communities.
- Development and analysis of holistic (technical, financial, environmental) solutions.
- Understanding challenges at the grassroots level.

- Application of design thinking to real-world issues.
- Innovation and taking forward solutions conceptualized by them.
- Engagement in iterative loop of coming up with a solution (experiences challenges first hand).

COURSE CONTENT

- Social Innovation
- Community Engagement & Participatory Design
- Ideaion tools

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT

(1) Listen closely: Knowledge & experience sharing
(2) Speak up: Studio based discussion and dialogue combined with time-bound design exercises and group activity
(3) Get your hands dirty: Field based and hands-on work which includes community engagement, prototyping, field work etc.
All university engagement programs are designed for highly self-motivated, passionate and hard-working individuals. Every student gets an opportunity to work with and get guided by relevant mentors in the social development sector. SELCO aims to foster and incubate social sector leaders of the future by creating an environment that allows students to closely experience and analyze issues.

**INTERNSHIPS**

SELCO offers internship opportunities to students (from different backgrounds) with a keen interest in developmental and environmental challenges. As a part of SELCO Foundation's six lab project, students can work across urban, rural and tribal locations on issues specific to sustainability and energy access. Departments of the foundation that focus on technology, design, policy and entrepreneur incubation attract a wide variety of volunteers and interns from across the globe. Education, livelihoods and vulnerability are some of the focus areas of work across the labs.

SELCO accepts interns and volunteers through the year starting for a minimum period of 8 weeks.

The fellowship program brings together talented people from the technology/design, business, and social sectors. Fellows are able to learn, grow and innovate to positively impact the planet. SELCO Fellows are skilled professionals who work closely with social entrepreneurs and designers who are building solutions and businesses for the poor. The Fellowship allows you to immerse yourself in existing SELCO Lab projects/ SELCO Incubatee enterprises or take on self-initiated innovative projects that add value to the society. Resources and support are provided on a case by case basis to promote the fellows professional and personal growth.

**FELLOWSHIPS**

**GLOSSARY**

**Social Innovation:**
We define social innovation as the new ideas (products, services and models) that resolve the challenges faced by society. The course provides an overview of the innovations that have impacted communities as well as emphasizes on the need to adopt an inter-sectoral approach, across the fields of health, education, livelihoods, environment, economy and culture in order to work towards a sustainable society.

**Community Engagement & Participatory Design:**
Working collaboratively with end users and project stakeholders is key for successful dissemination of solutions. This course gives insight into the various methods & techniques of community & stakeholder engagement as well as the relevance of the same in solution finding and implementation.

**Ideation tools:**
There are a number of tools, methods and worksheets that can be used to facilitate group brainstorm sessions, build on ideas and resolve complex issues in a dynamic manner. This course outlines and demonstrates the use of these tools for real-time issues and as well as their applicability in a number of scenarios.

**Pilots & Prototyping:**
From actual implementation to scale and study models, prototyping is a key for testing the feasibility of solutions (programmatic and physical). The course stresses on the importance of learning through actualization, which in turn helps in finding a solution that fits in the lenses of desirability, feasibility and viability.
My internship with the SELCO Foundation was well-rounded and incredible. Selco Foundation puts great emphasis on the importance of knowing the communities we work with. The experience of engaging first-hand with users was enriching!
Naiach/ Faulimmel – London School of Economics and Political Science
July-September 2015 (Intern)

Time flew by at SELCO with a lot of learning for me in it. I could definitely say that I came with inquisitiveness and enthusiasm for my field of interest and left with more knowledge and an open outlook towards problems.
Pranit Iyengar, IIT Bombay
May - July 2015 (Intern)

As an individual I was forced to spread beyond the safe house of architecture, to look beyond the role of a designer. Collaboration, holistic design, multi-pronged approach... were not terms anymore- but practice mantras.
Noorain Ahmed – B. Arch, Manipal Institute of Technology
October - December 2013 (Fellow)

TESTIMONIALS

For complete testimonials log on to www.selcofoundation.org/contact/opportunities/testimonials
Universities worked with
Indian Institute of Technology (Kanpur), Indian Institute of Science, SDM Institute of Technology, Indian Institute of Technology (Kharagpur), Vellore Institute of Technology, TA Pai Management Institute Manipal, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Harvard University, The Yale School of Management, Christ University, London School of Economics, Western University of Ontario, Srishti School of Art Design and Technology, Arizona State, University of Cambridge, MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology, BMS College of Engineering, Kristu Jayanti College of Social Work, INCH Studio 2014, St Josephs, Indian Institute of Human Settlements, Savannah College of Art and Design, University of Minnesota (ACARA), Symbiosis Institute of Design etc..