Global Development Initiative (GDI)
GDI Mentor Requirements

Overview:

The Global Development Initiative (GDI) is an Initiative of the Center for Global Business at The University of Texas at Dallas that builds the bridge between Academics and International Business in support of the class “IMS 4350 Global Market Entry Strategies”, a 3-semester credit hour course that has become a core Global business course required for all Bachelor of Science in Global Business students.

The Initiative has 2 main objectives:

1. Provide the students with a hands-on learning opportunity in international business, specifically developing a market research-supported market entry strategy for non-USA companies to enter the USA market, and
2. Provide non-USA small and medium sized entities (SME’s) data and recommendations to support their USA market entry strategy.

The GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE focuses on developing market entry strategies for international companies and aims to equip university students with the necessary skills to succeed and navigate through the complex global business environment. In this semester long course (run each Spring and Fall), students are partnered with non-USA-based companies seeking to expand into international markets (specifically the United States market), learn how to conduct market analysis, apply global skillsets, and prepare recommendations for company consideration. This course utilizes a hands-on approach and provides resume-building learning experiences.

How does the GDI Program Work?

Non-USA Companies applying for the GDI Program (Candidate Companies) submit an "Indication of Interest" (Application) and the company is evaluated for acceptance to the GDI Program based on specific requirements.

Each company that is selected is then assigned a team of 3-5 students with one student assigned as the Team Leader. In addition, an experienced C-level business executive is assigned to the team as a Business Mentor and a senior student who is experienced with the program will be assigned to the team as a Coordinator.

At the beginning of each semester, the students, mentor, and coordinator are introduced to the selected company and its executives and assigned liaison staff. This becomes the GDI Team.

The market research project scope is defined and agreed through a Scope of Work and the GDI Team begins their work together with attending in-class lectures in the IMS 4350 Global Market Entry Strategies class.
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The GOAL for the GDI Team to deliver high value to support the company’s market entry plan into the United States market. The scope will include researching market information related to the company’s goods or services, competitive landscape, project/service localization and introduction to individuals and organizations helpful in supporting the company’s market entry strategy.

Weekly meetings and progress reports are arranged between the Companies and their GDI Teams.

Why does the GDI Program need Mentors:

The work done with the Candidate Companies is not simply for academic purposes. The results of the research and analysis done by the students in working with the Candidate Companies are used by the Companies to make strategic decisions including the entry into a new market – the USA. Therefore, we do not consider this a purely academic exercise but more of a consulting engagement where we develop and present findings and information that is high quality in terms of content and presentation.

Mentors with extensive business experience are needed to guide the student teams in everything from market analysis methodologies to presentations to identification and explanation of influences in the business world that the students may not have yet learned.

The valuable business experience that a Mentor brings to the GDI Program enhances the learning experience of the student while assisting in keeping the research projects focused, providing value to the Candidate Companies.

What makes a good Mentor/What are the Mentor’s Requirements?

There are several factors to consider in choosing mentors for the GDI Program:

1. The individual will be assigned to a student team/candidate company. We need a commitment of at least 14 weeks of approximately 2 hours/week. The Mentorship is unpaid.
2. Generally, there is a pre-scheduled group MS Teams call each week with the GDI Team.
3. It is important that the mentor can commit to this time as the Students will rely on their guidance as they go through the program.
4. Business experience is a must and international business experience, marketing research and planning are definitely a plus.
5. If the Mentor is a service provider, there may be opportunities for follow-on paid engagements with the particular Candidate Company.
6. While not essential, preference will be given to assigning Mentors to Candidate Companies where the particular industry is aligned with the mentor’s experience.
7. The Mentors must be good “teachers” in that the Students will be looking to them for guidance and direction.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor for the GDI Program, please contact _________________.

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