



**BUSINESS SCHOOL**

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

# **Invitation to Sponsors**

## **INFOSYS 345: Business Project**

**Edition 2018**

## Business Project: Executive Summary

The overall goal of this course is to solve a business problem related to operations management and/or to an information system, which at the end of the development process meets the needs of the organisation that sponsored the project. Also, we would like our students:

- To learn to work in a team with a minimum of outside supervision.
- To interact with end-users and successfully identify and satisfy their requirements.
- To integrate coursework from several disciplines.

The sponsoring organisation can expect genuine business benefits in return for a nominal cost which should include the offer of a course sponsorship at the end of successful project completion determined by their 'customer satisfaction' with the Business Project deliverables. Current course sponsorship levels are:

- Bronze sponsorship (\$ 4K donation)
- Silver sponsorship (\$ 6K donation)
- Gold sponsorship (\$ 10K donation)
- Diamond sponsorship (\$ 20K donation)

It is important for potential sponsors to read this document to appreciate the scope of benefits, associated commitments, obligations and expectations of the sponsoring organisation.

Additionally, it is important that the Sponsor provides a working space (desks with Internet access for students), and project manager to the student team for the entire duration of the project.

## Business Project: 2017 Sponsors

Many organisations have been involved with the Business Project programme since it was established in the mid 1980's. These include hardware and software vendors, consulting firms, IT companies and big corporations. The following companies participated as Sponsors during 2018:

- **ASB Bank** (IS project): Project MyDay
- **Douglas Pharmaceutical** (OM project): Production Cycle Time and Scheduling Efficiency
- **Foodstuffs North Island** (IS project): The challenges of launching a new project
- **HansenCX** (IS project): Holistic Data Visualisation
- **United Steel** (OM project): Growing market share under lumpy demands

## Business Project: Some of the past Sponsors and their projects (since 2010)

- ASB Bank (Staff Training Recommendation system)
- ASB Bank (Online Customer Referral system)
- AsureQuality (Inventory Management process improvement)
- Beca (Asset Management Expert system)

- Computer Fanatics Ltd (vetlink<sup>SQL</sup> Stock Management system)
- Datacom (Redevelopment of the Managed Asset Reconciliation system)
- DB Breweries (Reduction of packaging material losses in production process)
- Deloitte (CallPlus Public Data Explorer)
- Fonterra (Increasing warehouse efficiency)
- Hansen Technologies (Enterprise System data mining)
- Hansen Technologies (Social Media system development)
- Health Benefits Limited HBL (Developing decision criteria for non-critical clinical consumables inventory management)
- KPMG (Data Analytic Engine refinement)
- LSG Sky Chefs Auckland (Optimisation of warehouse processes)
- Mainfreight (Optimisation of inwards to outwards consignments process)
- OneNet (Measurement of Client Profitability)
- OneNet (Partnership Relationship Management system )
- OneNet (LiveVault Management and Business Intelligence tool)
- Orion Health (Synthetic Health Data Generator)
- PwC (Visualisation & CAATs Efficiency set)
- Ports of Auckland (Storeroom and Inventory Management process improvements)
- Tru-Test (Developing segmentation criteria to improve the Order Fulfilment process)
- Vista (Development of the Vista Usher Point system)
- Vista (Mobile Cinema Manager)

## Business Project: Sponsors about the Business Project course

### Project sponsors' opinions about the Business Project course:

*The INFOSYS 345 Business Project course provides a unique opportunity for students and the corporate sector to work together and deliver meaningful value to customers and clients. For the sponsoring organisations, 345 projects provide a great, practical opportunity to really test internal culture and processes for agility, flexibility and innovation.*

**James Bergin**, Chief Architect, ASB Bank

*OneNet's continued sponsorship of such products is due to the tangible benefits such a course offers to a commercial enterprise. Fundamentally, a student project provides OneNet with a low-risk way to experiment, often with new technologies and processes and to build a working proof-of-concept without requiring large investments of time from existing staff. A number of larger-scale commercial projects have evolved from work that was started as a student project. OneNet also views such projects as a long-form job interview.*

**Michael Snowden**, Managing Director, OneNet Limited

*We were impressed by the team of students working on our project. The team were outstanding in the way they came to understand our business overall, the current processes, the issues and our objectives. Their report and findings were thorough, including insights we had not observed. We thoroughly recommend sponsoring a group of students for your project.*

**Kevin Drinkwater**, Chief Information Officer, Mainfreight

Following is detailed information about the INFOSYS 345 Business Project framework: benefits and duties of all involved parties, course activities, contacts, dates, etc.

### **Business Project: Why you may wish to become a sponsor**

Do you have a project you'd like to have done by a Business Project student team? Perhaps the ones you keep putting off because there are too many others with higher priority.

Perhaps an **internal** project, which would be useful to staff, but because it doesn't generate any direct revenue, keeps getting gazumped by client work? Or perhaps an idea you'd like to **prototype**, but it's hard to justify spending staff time and company money on, when there are so many other things to be done?

Or does your company have a **corporate citizenship** program, and you see this as a good way of participating in the community and getting something in return? Perhaps you've noticed that many students leave university still not equipped for employment and you spend the first 6-12 months (expensively) **retraining** them?

If any of these are true, Business Project may be for you. It's an opportunity to:

- Complete a project that you want done,
- Exercise your corporate citizenship and gain favourable exposure,
- Train and evaluate students, with a view to hiring them ready to start work.

The Business Project programme consistently delivers a quality result to the Sponsor for a nominal cost, typically takes **at least 1500 hours** of effort from the Business Project team of 3, (sometimes 4) and that team enjoys the double benefit of being managed by the Sponsor and by a University ISOM Supervisor within a proven framework that has been developed by the University of Auckland over the years.

Business Project projects are sponsored by organisations of almost any kind in terms of size and business interests.

#### **Successful Project 345 Sponsors provide:**

- A serious but achievable project that addresses a real business requirement and delivers genuine business benefits to the target user community,
- A positive and supportive management framework in which the project can thrive and the necessary executives focus to guide and support the student team during the project. This Sponsor support framework includes a Sponsor Project Manager to provide the necessary resources and day-to-day management and support of the student team during the project. The Sponsor Project Manager represents the Sponsor for the project and liaises with the ISOM Business Project Supervisor as required,
- Access to the Sponsor's target user community and project influencers for the student team,
- The IT and other resources necessary for the student team to perform the project successfully, including:
  - An adequate and OSH-compliant work space for the student team at the company premises within reasonable travelling distance of the University of Auckland,

- Appropriate resources to support the project. Usually, this will include:
  - Appropriately managed access to the company's IT network resources,
  - An adequate, mainstream software development environment, or committed budget to fund the development environment when agreed (for software development projects),
- Provision for any support for the project deliverables that may be required after the formal handover of the project by the student team at the end of the project year (in October).

## **Business Project: Other Participants**

### **Student Teams**

We select Business Project students from applicants who meet the demanding pre-requisites for this course that is recognised as the most demanding and rewarding undergraduate paper offered by the ISOM Department. As the result of a Group Dynamics Workshop with the students early in the year, the accepted Business Project students form into teams, usually consisting of three students (sometimes four).

The successful Business Project students usually have an average of B+ or better for their courses to date, demonstrate a serious commitment to the Business Project course and are either Stage 3 Bachelor of Commerce, or conjoint Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Science students, specialising in the computer science/information systems (IT) or operations management (OM) areas.

The IT students are in their last year of study before graduation and have a sound theoretical knowledge of business IT including:

- At least one programming language,
- Database management systems,
- System analysis and design techniques, and
- Practical knowledge of PC operating systems.

The OM students are in their last year of study before graduation and have a sound theoretical knowledge of:

- The basic principles of operations management,
- The basic principles of supply chain management,
- Process mapping techniques, and
- Techniques for process improvement.

### **ISOM Supervisors**

An ISOM staff member, supported by the ISOM Technical Advisor, supervises each project. The Business Project Supervisor acts as a mentor to guide the Business Project student team through the challenges of the project to meet the objectives of the Sponsor, the student team and the University.

The ISOM Supervisor is the primary point of contact with the University for the Business Project Sponsor and typically works closely with the Sponsor Project Manager to address any concerns or opportunities that arise during the Business Project.

## Business Project: Project Content

### IT – based projects:

Preferred Business Project proposals from potential Sponsors involve specifying briefly an IT systems development solution to address a real business requirement or opportunity of a user community within, or associated with, the Sponsor. Although a Business Project can be reasonably significant in terms of scope and address a real or anticipated situation for a Sponsor, prudence dictates that it should not be, initially, ‘mission critical’.

ISOM has a strong preference that projects use an appropriate Systems Development Life Cycle (SDLC) that, while ranging from a modern agile approach to the more classic waterfall methodology, will include all of the following phases:

- Initial discovery, research, documentation and project planning that result in a Project Schedule that is progressively updated and used as the Project Plan by the Business Project Student Team,
- Progressive user requirements gathering, clarification and prototyping that results in a formally agreed Project Specification,
- Software development, testing and system documentation,
- System implementation and user training,
- User acceptance leading to high Sponsor customer satisfaction.

Some projects emphasise different parts of the SDLC more than others. While there is no restriction on the hardware or software environment to be used for the project, ISOM prefers projects that will provide students with current ‘mainstream’ systems development experience.

### OM – based projects:

Preferred Business Project proposals from potential Sponsors involve specifying briefly a process improvement solution to address a real business requirement or opportunity of a user community within, or associated with, the Sponsor. Although a Business Project can be reasonably significant in terms of scope and address a real or anticipated situation for a Sponsor, prudence dictates that it should not be, initially, ‘mission critical’.

ISOM does not have a strong preference as to whether the desired project methodology is “lean”, “six sigma”, or simply utilises basic operations techniques in domains such as inventory or logistics planning. However, the project needs to result in an implementable outcome and simple scoping projects are not appropriate for this course. Projects will ideally include all of the following phases:

- Initial discovery, research, documentation and project planning that result in a Project Schedule that is progressively updated and used as the Project Plan by the Business Project Student Team,
- Progressive user requirements gathering, clarification and prototyping that results in a formally agreed Project Specification,
- Process improvement recommendations, testing and documentation,
- Recommendations implementation and user training,
- User acceptance leading to high Sponsor customer satisfaction.

It is possible that full implementation of the process improvement may be beyond the scope of the project but implementation of at least a serious trial of the improvement should be part of the scope.

While there is no restriction on the hardware or software environment to be used for the project, ISOM students (taking OM stream projects) will typically only be familiar with 'mainstream' environments such as Microsoft Office.

### **Business Project: Timetable**

The projects run from March to October, and each student is expected to contribute a minimum of 500 hours of their time. This means that the maximum project size, for three students, should not exceed 1500 person hours, or approximately two days per week per student.

To satisfy the ISOM academic requirements of the course, students must formally comply with the following Business Project course milestones during the year:

- Project Schedule presentation & documentation Early April
- Project Detailed Outline presentation & documentation Mid May
- Project Progress presentation Early August
- Final Project presentation Mid September
- Student Project Exhibition Late September
- Formal Handover of all deliverables to Sponsor Mid October

### **Business Project: The Exhibition**

Before the formal handover of the project deliverables to the Sponsors, all projects are presented to the public in a one day exhibition at the University of Auckland. With the active support of their sponsor, each Business Project Team demonstrates their project deliverables at an exhibition stand that includes their sponsor's logo and business related publications. The Business Project Exhibition is widely advertised within the University community and Sponsors may invite interested internal and external people to attend. The University holds a reception for all participants at the end of the exhibition.

While the Business Project Exhibition is organised on a non-profit basis, the University appreciates sponsor support in providing material for their team's exhibition stands and thereafter, inviting and hosting sponsor guests.

A number of magazines and newspapers are reporting on this event.

### **Business Project: Intellectual Property Rights**

To provide for the commercial protection of both parties, each member of the Business Project student team will sign a reasonable Confidentiality Agreement with their Sponsor. Unless otherwise agreed, the intellectual and other property rights associated with the Business Project system developed by the student team are, and shall remain, the property of the Sponsor.

ISOM gives the undertaking that, unless specifically approved by the Sponsor, the University of Auckland will not distribute project documentation resulting from a Business Project. However, for educational or reference purposes the Business Project student team and ISOM reserve the right to use general information about the project. Sponsors should coordinate with their team on what material is appropriate for public release at the exhibition.

### **Business Project: Sponsor Obligations**

In summary, the key obligations for a Sponsor to participate in the Business Project programme are to:

- Provide an appropriate Business Project opportunity,
- Provide a resourced workspace for 3-4 students (company access, desks, computer hardware and software, etc.),
- Provide a nominated person as the Sponsor's 'Project Manager / Advisor' for the students and organisational contact with ISOM,
- Participate in the project class presentations (four times per year).

### **Business Project: Funding and Sponsor's Financial Contribution**

The Business Project course is part of the Information Systems/Operations Management program towards a Bachelor of Commerce in the ISOM Department and is intended to provide a reality-based opportunity to develop a solution in a real world situation. However, ISOM is not a commercial operation and as such, no direct payments may be made to the members of either the student team or ISOM staff.

Given the increasing demands on the modern educational \$ and the special nature of this course, ISOM appreciates a financial acknowledgement of the benefits that a Business Project delivers to the Sponsor. Accordingly, the University asks participating Sponsors to support the Business Project course with a financial contribution to the ISOM Department Foundation on completion of the project. We use this money towards covering ISOM's direct costs associated with providing the additional supervision and administrative support required for this intensive course, the Business Project events and associated services that students receive throughout the year and the Business Project Exhibition.

We suggest that the contribution would be between \$4K and \$20K and should be determined by the Sponsor's 'customer satisfaction' with the Business Project deliverables.

Each Sponsor will receive a commemorative plaque from the University of Auckland listing their project name and year:



- Bronze sponsorship (\$4K donation)
- Silver sponsorship (\$6K donation)
- Gold sponsorship (\$10K donation)
- Diamond sponsorship (\$20K donation))

At its discretion, the University is also happy to partake in appropriate publicity associated with the successful completion of the project for the Sponsor.

## **Business Project: Your Next Step ...**

To register your interest in being a Business Project Sponsor, please contact the relevant Business Project Projects Coordinator for an initial discussion. If you elect to proceed after this initial discussion, you will be invited to provide a brief written overview of your organisation as well as an overview of your proposed Business Project for formal consideration.

During early March, prospective sponsors who meet the Business Project requirements are invited to make a 15-minute presentation (including Q&A) about their organisation and their proposed project to the Business Project students, and thereafter, participate in a Sponsor Forum evening to further explore your proposed project with interested students. Details of these activities will be sent to interested potential sponsors on request. The final Business Project projects and successful Sponsors are then determined by the Business Project Supervisors after due consideration of student preferences and capabilities.

For further information or discussion about participating in this program please contact the Business Project Course Coordinator Dr Lech Janczewski (for IT projects), or Dr Valery Pavlov (for OM projects) or the other persons involved in the course, listed below:

### ***Project 345 Course Coordinator and IT Projects Coordinator:***

- **Dr Lech Janczewski**, Tel: 923 7538, Email: lech@auckland.ac.nz

### ***Project 345 OM Projects Coordinator:***

- **Dr Valery Pavlov**, Tel: 923 8726, Email: v.pavlov@auckland.ac.nz

### ***Project 345 IT Supervisors:***

- **Mr Koro Tawa**, Tel: 923 7459, Email: k.tawa@auckland.ac.nz
- **Mr David White**, Tel: 923 2894, Email: d.white@auckland.ac.nz

### ***Project 345 OM Supervisor:***

- **Mrs Ursula Dantin**, Tel: 923 4235, Email: u.dantin@auckland.ac.nz