



**WPI**

# Promoting Sustainable Partnerships for Global Projects at the Lyon Project Center



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Promoting Sustainable Partnerships for Global Projects at the Lyon Project Center



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Report by Ren Vitellaro, Sydney Breen, Ana Dykeman, and Rajesh Ganguli, on July 12, 2023, and submitted to advisors Curtis Abel and Farley  
Chery under project sponsor Fabienne Miller

**This report represents the work of WPI undergraduate students submitted to the faculty as evidence of a degree requirement. WPI routinely publishes these reports on its website without editorial or peer review. For more information about the projects program at WPI, see <http://www.wpi.edu/Academics/Projects>.**

## Abstract

Our team developed recommendations and methods for establishing new partnerships between Lyon universities and other organizations with WPI to create more sustainable IQP projects at the Lyon Project Center. These recommendations were developed based on data from interviews of WPI faculty involved with the global school and who had experience directing project centers, in addition to data from on-site visits to universities that will help inform future Project Center Directors on potential Lyon partnerships and center sustainability.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Professors Curtis Abel and Farley Chery for advising our project and holding consistent guidance and meetings that were imperative to our project work's success. Their feedback helped us to stay on track and efficiently

produce high-quality work, and their on-site involvement was extremely beneficial for attending various Lyon events and holding in-person meetings. We are so grateful for their dedication and involvement in our group and project work.

Next, we would like to thank our sponsor, Prof. Fabienne Miller, for her consistent feedback and rich knowledge about the Lyon Project Center. We were able to establish a solid foundation for entering ID2050 and on-site IQP work through her teaching and insight during pre-PQP, which helped our students with navigating the city and living in France. Our group was grateful for her availability for online meetings and responsiveness to

changes in project direction, and we wish her well in the next chapter of her life after WPI.

Special thanks to the new Lyon Project Center director Prof. Drew Brodeur for his interest in our project work and his involvement in checking in and providing feedback on our project. Our group is confident in his expertise and vision, and we look forward to seeing what direction he will take the Lyon Project Center in.

We would like to thank the many WPI faculty for their responsiveness to interviews with our group, as their insight was the most helpful and pragmatic approach to our data collection. Prof. Esther Boucher-Yip of the Bangkok Project Center, Prof. Nancy Burnham of the Zurich Project Center, Prof. Ingrid Shockey of the Mandi Project Center, Prof. Richard Vaz

of the Global School, Prof. Courtney Kurlanska of the Global School and involvement with the Cuenca Project Center, Prof. Joseph Dorion of the Windhoek/Rabat Project Centers, Prof. Kent Rissmiller, Associate Dean of the Global School, and others. We are extremely grateful for the time we had to discuss our project work with them and help us make stronger recommendations for the future of the Lyon Project Center.

Additionally, we would like to thank Julie De Bry D’Arcy with SINGA, one of our current sponsors, whom we had the opportunity to talk with during our time in Lyon. Her insight into working with WPI students helped us make further recommendations for future sponsors. We would also like to thank Aurelie Marion, establishment director at Game Sup, for organizing an on-site visit at their institution. Our group was able to gain an in-depth sense of the work done at their

university which was crucial for moving forward with our results for university partnership.

Extended thanks to the front desk staff at our housing, Estudines Garibaldi, for ensuring that we had the best stay possible throughout our project term. Being able to use common spaces for group meetings and other related work was extremely convenient and helped us work more efficiently in this safe space.

## Executive Summary

Maintaining international programs between universities or organizations is no easy task, especially after experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Instances such as professors changing roles or jobs, or dwindling lack of

communication became deciding factors for the integrity of student-based international programs. Since WPI is not a globally well-known university outside of New England or the U.S (United States)., the project center has struggled to create new partnerships in tandem with difficulty maintaining existing international relationships that unfortunately jeopardize the future of the Lyon Project Center at WPI.

As of 2023, Prof. Fabienne Miller will not be the project center director but worked closely with our IQP cohort to ensure that the future of the project center would be easily passed on the next director. Professor Drew Brodeur within the Chemistry & Biochemistry department will be stepping in to fill this role and was involved with our project work and making sure he is on track to continue to build the Lyon project center. The purpose of our project work was to gather enough information and contacts to create a sustainable Project Center site in Lyon,

France, by focusing on local university partnerships. This collection of data will act as a starting point for the new Project Center Director to fully develop new partnerships and projects through local university and/or non-government organizational involvement.

Our team first identified four research topics during ID2050: IQP from the perspective of WPI faculty, Lyon universities, other Lyon organizations, and marketing strategies for IQP centers (Figure 1). We then simplified these topics into three objectives for our IQP project:

1. Determine strategies for IQP Partnerships.
2. Research and Create Sample Marketing Materials.
3. Discover opportunities in Lyon for future WPI Global Projects.

For objective 1, our team assessed successful strategies for Lyon-WPI partnerships by interviewing the Global School,

DIGS, and GEO faculty with the goal of understanding what WPI wants students to get out of the IQP curriculum and how a project center addresses these learning objectives. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore methods used by other project centers to expand their project network and ensure a sustainable project center. This research method provided broad qualitative data that directed our focus to include research on non-university partners in later objectives.

For objective 2, we noted that WPI as a university is not well known in the city of Lyon, and the students of WPI do not have the clearest idea of what occurs at the Lyon Project Center. As a result, the project center can expand through marketing materials. To overview what should be done, we looked at the marketing materials of other project centers and reviewed the transcripts of the interviews we had had with the directors of other project sites. We scored other project center

websites using a rubric based off a previous Japan center project, then used the high scoring examples as references for a draft Lyon center website.

Finally, for objective 3, our project group evaluated numerous different universities in the city and provided insight into the types of current educational and project work they carry out, and how WPI students can get involved. We then visited universities in person and scored a rubric about their campus and then attended networking events to meet university faculty. In supplement with our research on local universities, we provided a brief overview of other groups and organizations that could benefit and work well with the WPI IQP program. Finally, we emailed contacts we had made through research and through the networking events.

From the structured interviews with WPI faculty, we were able to pull 6 general themes that aided us when coding

our data: university partnerships, finding and maintaining sponsors, student team models, MQPs and HUAs, local coordinator, website, and marketing materials. When discussing MQPs, they were often brought up regarding helping University partnerships in terms of sponsoring, but it was also advised that establishing an MQP should wait until there are strong sponsors and a well-established project center. A local coordinator was mentioned as being extremely beneficial for international project centers to help with maintaining relationships, and other aspects that are hard to manage overseas. Mixed student team models were seen as successful in certain centers but were extremely difficult to coordinate and have only been successful after multiple years of developing relationships. Regarding university partnerships, one of the main takeaways was without faculty connections, creating university partnerships takes a lot of time. Faculty

connections were one of the main ways directors were able to meet with other universities heads. It was also advised to look at universities partnerships in terms of providing resources. Multiple directors mentioned their project centers having university partnerships to allow for the students to have access to housing, meals, and language classes. A substantial portion of interviewees have found international universities have differing views on IQP students. Creating in person interviews or meetings for sponsors proved to be beneficial for many center directors as they seem to build a stronger relationship as well as creating diverse and large portfolio of sponsors to choose from to allow for a stronger project center. Interviewees stressed the important having multiple marketing materials such as brochures and a website to show potential sponsors and to understand the targeted market.

While a website is not the crux of marketing, it is helpful to have one and thus, we created a draft website. The draft website has a home page; a section for contacting; an about section which describes WPI, the IQP, the MQP, and an about for our advisors; for students' section that has info about Lyon and the project center; and finally, a section for projects, which has past IQP project examples. When creating the draft, we tried to adhere to our grading rubric as best as possible.

To start locating potential university partners in Lyon, our team created a database including information about each university's specialization, general information about them, pros and cons, and a “who to contact”. In total we identified 12 universities, 8 NGOs or NPOs, and 11 businesses or foundations that would be good potential partners for WPI. Of 6 emails sent, we received 1 email back from contacts we had not been in contact with through a mutual acquaintance. Additionally, our



advisors told us they reached out to contacts (not just universities) over both email and LinkedIn messages without success. In terms of networking events, we were invited to the LIRIS Graphics Demonstration thanks to those in the LABEX IMU group. The LABEX event allowed our advisors to connect with faculty at Lumiere 2. The opening of le faitout (the restaurant below SINGA) allowed us to better get to know one of our past partners Julie De Bry. SINGA also informed us of the game developers of Lyon event where one of our team members met students of the École Supérieure Game Sup. We visited 6 universities in person which we used to fill out a rubric scoring the universities on factors like how easy it was to commute, and campus amenities. Because many schools are on break, most offices were closed but we were able to walk around some campuses. Additionally, others were closed and could only be accessed by student ID, but it still gave us data on how easy the

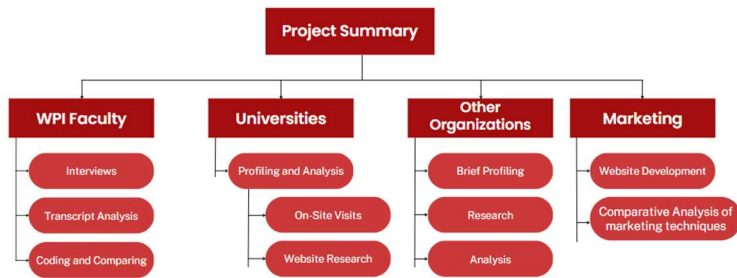
university was to access. We visited the Ecole Game Sup after having been connected to faculty by the students we met at the networking event. We went in person with our advisors, and they were extremely interested in developing a partnership, especially when they heard about WPI's summer programs open to international students.

Finally we compiled recommendations based on the data we had collected for each objective. For our first objective, we recommend looking into university partnerships for their resources along with sponsored projects, as they could be beneficial for other aspects of student life while in Lyon. Furthermore, we believe that contacting Universities during September to May would be beneficial due to the French school year ending in May. Along with this, focusing on establishing long lasting sponsor relationships for IQPs before focusing on MQP opportunity development is important for the project

center's success. Next, we believe that contacting NGOs, NPOs, and other organizations would allow the project center to potentially have a diverse sponsor pool that would benefit the city of Lyon and the students. We also recommend that there should be a plethora of marketing materials. There should be a brochure for potential sponsors, along with a website that can appeal to both potential sponsors, WPI students, and a social media presence. When creating the website, for ease of upkeep and ease when hosting, we recommend using google sites and creating a website like the draft, and that when choosing custom domain options to choose google domains. The most important of these recommendations is that of acquiring a local coordinator. Based on our database of local universities, university visitation rubrics, and results from emailing and speaking with potential sponsors, we recommended 5 universities as potential partners: Game Sup, École Centrale de

Lyon, Université Lumière Lyon 2, emLyon, Jean Moulin University Lyon 3. Furthermore, we learned that meeting with potential partners face to face rather than email is most likely to build long lasting relationships. In meetings with sponsors, we found we got more interest in a partnership proposal when we noted the benefits that their organization, employees, or students would gain from a partnership with WPI. This helped us make our case to Game Sup when meeting with them about a potential partnership. As a result of WPI's lack of a French program, the term in which this IQP takes place, recommendations from other project centers who have had trouble finding sponsors, and our collective experiences networking, we believe that a local coordinator will be the most beneficial to the sustainability of the Lyon project center.

**Figure 1:**



**Note:** Flow Chart of Executive Summary and Broad Project Overview

## Authorship

Sydney Breen, Ren Vitellaro, Raj Ganguli, and Ana Dykeman all contributed to the research and writing of this report. Sydney was the main editor and outliner, and primarily focused on writing the Background, editing all proposal writing, and formatting of the final paper. During project work, she was mainly responsible for sending all Outlook invites for sponsor and advisor meetings and actively participating and co-leading interviews, in addition to general scheduling and project

management. Ren worked mainly on drafting, editing, and emailing potential sponsor contacts. Additionally, he identified, researched, wrote the questions for interviewees, and edited the questions for sponsors. He co-led interviews, converted the audio interviews to transcript, and developed the coding method for the transcript data. He worked with Ana to code and find common themes and quotes from the interviews. He outlined and edited the final presentation and wrote content related to objective 3 including the university scan. He filled out the university scan rubrics and compiled the data for the final report. Raj dedicated most of his work to developing a website framework that could be used in the future as supplemental sponsor outreach materials. He was a crucial part of our website grading and evaluated thirteen different WPI project center websites. He also attended networking events creating contacts that could lead to potential partnerships. Ana joined

our group halfway through our project work but was an essential part of our analysis and final results. She helped write and edit sections of the background and methods, as well as pull results found in the data and add them into the final proposal. She also provided a list of NGOs and NPOs from her prior group to implement into the potential sponsor list that has been created through this project. During project work, Ana went through all the interview transcripts and pulled out major themes that were used for our targeted recommendations for the future of the project center, and helped organize group work through codes that made it easier to decipher.

*For a more detailed breakdown of authorship for our final report, please reference the Table of Authors.*

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## Introduction

One of the most crucial aspects of an undergraduate education is being able to apply classroom education to real-world applications that can create a lasting impact on the community around them. Studies have shown that universities that provide their students internationally abroad study programs contribute to a better set of cultural and interpersonal skills (Anderson et al.), in tandem with creating a mutual rapport with an international partner that benefits everyone involved. International academic collaborations have been a method of connecting with a community for decades. Prioritizing international opportunities for university makes for more in-depth and impactful project work that directly benefits communities, faculty, organization leaders, sponsors, and

students involved. As a result of this, many research publications become stronger and university programs are expanded. A 2013 survey of universities in the United Kingdom found over half of all outgoing publications were co-authored by an international project partner which contributes to this observed increase in international research publications. Overall, creating partnerships between universities and other international institutions, local community organizations or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) by creating opportunities for student-based programs is substantial and rewarding for all involved.

## Current Considerations for WPI International Learning Programs

Maintaining international programs between universities or organizations is no easy task. After experiencing



the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, instances such as professors changing roles or jobs, or dwindling lack of communication became deciding factors for the integrity of student-based international programs. This has been the case for Worcester Polytechnic's (WPI) Lyon, France project site, first started in 2019, where it was difficult to engage in international project-work due to outreach and pandemic-related challenges. Since WPI is not a globally well-known university outside of New England or the U.S., the project center has struggled to create and maintain international relationships to the detriment of the program.

The Lyon IQP center has provided great opportunities in its first year for substantial community development projects but is currently facing challenges with sustaining the program due to lack of international communication with partners during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to this,

there will be imminent changes to the role of project center director here at WPI, and with a change in leadership, future directors will need a clear summary that provides context about Lyon, WPI's core learning values, and past project center accomplishments and challenges.

Without university study-abroad programs, undergraduate students miss rich opportunities for interpersonal and cultural skills improvement. Working to keep these programs like these alive at WPI is crucial for staying true to our core learning values that strive for our students to have global and project-based learning experiences that best prepare them for solving larger problems in other real-life scenarios. The Lyon Project Center at WPI requires structural attention to continue providing students with strong opportunities to further their education while experiencing another culture first-hand. By expanding our initial research

scope and learning more from other project center directors, community leaders, and other relevant sources, our team can pinpoint feasible ways to form innovative programs and marketing materials that would best address the values and needs of WPI and an international university, organization, NGO (nongovernmental organizations), or other sponsors.

## Background

Why are Study Abroad Programs Important in an Undergraduate Student Experience?

Every study abroad experiences a student sign up for will be unique. The friendships they make, the projects they tackle, and the places they choose to spend their time will be subtly different, rewarding them with memories they get to take back and share with their classmates and families. But

beyond memories and experiences, what do students gain by studying abroad and why should more opportunities be made available for student travel?

Intercultural awareness, which refers to “the recognition and understanding of differences between cultures”. Multiple studies use survey tests before and after study abroad experiences and found increased culture awareness proportional to the length of the program. (Fairchild, 2006) (Kehl & Morris, 2007). Intercultural sensitivity refers to “the ability of individuals to accommodate cultural differences into their reality” something a student requires in diverse classrooms and workplaces (Medina-Lopez-Portillo 2004). A study by Anderson et. al. (2006) found an increase in cross-cultural sensitivity in a short-term project lasting only 4 weeks by testing Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) which is used as a benchmark. Another study using IDI in conjunction

with coded semi-structured interviews, journals, and student surveys found students had increased cultural sensitivity and a positively changed perception of “Mexican culture and its people” after a short-term homestay (Medina-Lopez-Portillo 2004).

There are many other professional benefits beyond culture sensitivity a student gains during a study abroad experience: These include higher rates of employment post college, being more likely to move abroad, and better soft skills such as communication, adaptability, and empathy (Brandenburg et al. 2014) Students who study abroad are scored higher in an Entry Level Interprofessional Questionnaire (ELIQ) on interprofessional communication and teamwork when compared with students from the same class. Student journals and interviews also confirmed that students came to these conclusions when reflecting on their experiences. (Meaux et al.

2021). In addition to stronger soft skills, students are more likely to work abroad. A 50-year longitudinal study completed by the non-profit Institute for the International Education of Students (IES) surveyed 17,000 alumni and found a variety of positive professional outcomes. Results highlighted that students formed relationships that had developed into future career contacts and that the study abroad experience was “the key that opens the global career door to a third of participants” (Mohajeri Norris et al. 2008) Participants also had overall higher rates of employment, higher acceptance into graduate schools, and larger starting salaries. (Mohajeri Norris et al. 2008)

**Table 1**

*International Education of Students (IES) Career Development Outcomes*

Career Development Outcomes		
	Global-Career Alumni (%)	Nonglobal-Career Alumni (%)
Ignited my interest in a career direction that I pursued.	74	48
Enhanced my ability to speak a language other than English that I have used in a workplace setting.	77	50
Provided an internship experience that shaped my career choices.	57	41
Allowed me to acquire a skill set that influenced my career path.	84	69
Established relationships that became professional contacts.	6	3
Changed my career plans.	18	7

*Note.* The table shows the survey results from 17,000 alumni of the International Education of Students (IES) study abroad programs. (Mohajeri Norris et al. 2008)

Students gain many professional benefits from a study abroad experience, but they also gain personal skills such as adaptability, patience, and a global perspective. Personality measures of openness and agreeableness associated with positive outcomes are shown to improve over the course of

long-term (greater than 1 year) of studying in a foreign country and may also contribute to maturity. (Zimmermann & Neyer, 2013) Students also tend to improve academically although Luo et al. (2015) noted that this is partially impacted by some programs requiring a certain GPA to participate in a study abroad program. Other studies generally find academic improvement over the course of a student’s time abroad. (Houser et al. 2011)

When spending a significant amount of time immersed in a foreign language, it is expected that students will gain their language of study faster. This is confirmed in a study by Allen et al. (2003) that compared language learners studying abroad versus students not traveling and only using classroom experience to learn the same languages. They found both better linguistic ability but also much lower levels of anxiety when speaking the language. Another study found that study

abroad participants had better oral skills even when following the same learning program that students used on their home campus classes. (Hernández 2010). The IES survey also shows this effect long term where 48% of their survey participants who had worked in an international capacity confirmed that they used another language other than English more than once a month. (Mohajeri Norris et al. 2008)

These benefits to students aren't all equal across all programs. Consider that a student attending a short 4-week experience will not come back with the same experience as an undergraduate who travels for an entire year to complete a research project. It becomes important to classify different types of study abroad programs so discussions about opportunities can become more precise.

Generally, programs are divided into three categories:

The first is "direct enrollment" in which students enroll in classes from a foreign university, taught by foreign professors and course work if completed in the target language. This usually requires high language competency from the outset and may be difficult for some students to organize credit transfers. This program also tends to be the most rigorous and achieve long lasting connections for student participants. (Sally 2016)

The second is "island program" where courses in a student's 1st language are provided at a host university and are designed specifically for students from the source institution. This program tends to require less language competency or integrate a language learning program as part of the curriculum. It also generally readily transfers credits to the home university. The program tends to be less rigorous in terms of language or timeframe. (Sally 2016)

The final category is “hybrid programs” which are any combination of the island program and direct enrollment. This could look like a short stay with a host family and attending classes with a host sibling completely in the target language. Often time hybrids bridge the pros and cons of the other categories. (Medina-Lopez-Portillo 2004)

Another method of classification is by rigor: Engle et. al. (2003) came up with 5 levels corresponding to the program length and language ability required. Displayed in Table 2 is the first two levels with associated criteria. A short term study, for example, would contain an on-site location for foreign students, some form of language classes but course work would remain in the students primary language. Students are provided with orientation which may contain cultural do’s and don’ts but larger trips or long term experiential learning are not as feasible given time and language constraints. This

classification method is useful for research and effective communicating the goals of a program across universities. Additionally, the classifications are useful for students looking to determine if a program is the right fit for them. The researchers cite this reason as their main concern for creating this distinction.

**Table 2**

*Engle Study Abroad Program Classification Levels One and Two*

<i>Program Components</i>	<i>Level One: Study Tour</i>	<i>Level Two: Short-Term Study</i>
<i>Duration</i>	Several days to a few weeks	3 to 8 weeks, summer programs
<i>Entry target-language competence</i>	Elementary to intermediate	Elementary to intermediate
<i>Language used in course work</i>	English	English and target-language
<i>Academic work context</i>	Home institution faculty	In-house or institute for foreign students
<i>Housing</i>	Collective	Collective and/or home stay
<i>Provisions for cultural interaction, experiential learning</i>	None	None
<i>Guided reflection on cultural experience</i>	None	Orientation program

*Note.* The table shows the program components used to distinguish between levels of study abroad program. Only the first two levels are shown in this table. (Engle et al. 2003)

Although students gain many benefits during an international project partnership, there are barriers both locally and abroad that may prevent student participation. The following section addresses some of these challenges. Of which there can be seen economic barriers, racial or gender discrimination, as well as language barriers.

### Student Barriers to Studying Abroad

Economic barriers to project participation can involve factors related to students themselves, their friends, or family. Also, students may be dealing with multiple barriers at the same time, such as college expenses, travel costs, food and housing costs, or activities other students are participating in while abroad. According to a study by Mitic et.al. (2022), paying for the costs of college remains the most significant barrier to participation in a study abroad experience. This is because international projects add a direct additional expense and

several indirect costs accumulated during travel on top of lost work opportunity from on or off campus employment. (Brux 2010)

Different demographics have different opportunities to go abroad, does discrimination affect the positives of their experience? What are the differences in levels of discrimination in domestic vs. international settings? A study done by Federica Goldoni would imply that yes, students going abroad have a high chance of being underrepresented and stereotypes and general xenophobia is present in countries abroad (Goldoni, 2017). The study followed students from America that spent time in Valencia, Spain found that racial stereotypes against those of African descent were still very prevalent in Spain.

When traveling abroad it is important that one has a background in the language and customs of the area they are

traveling to. However, not all schools can provide programs that would better equip students for these experiences. In an observational study done on several students in UK universities that went abroad to Germany, there was evidence that showed that students who prior to going abroad that had a German language program, would outperform students did not have such a program in every regard. This would be present in both studies and communicative skills. The loss of these programs can be attributed to socioeconomic factors, such as how much money the university can use to upkeep these language programs and if the individual can afford the lessons. From this, a direct challenge to going abroad will arise from language, social, and financial barriers.

When projects are conducted primarily in English, non-native speakers may feel at a disadvantage, and thoughts or ideas will be lost to more outspoken English speakers.



International projects will suffer when communication and activities like brainstorming are only conducted in one language of a multilingual group. One study finds that English speaking groups tend to prefer writing purely through quantitative means and thus the qualitative data will fall behind. (Mortensen 2014). In a multilingual group it is imperative that all ideas in any language can be brought up so that the paper can become well rounded in terms of both quality and quantity.

#### University Benefits from Study Abroad Programs

In addition to the student benefits there are definitive benefits to the university as well. In universities with foreign abroad programs that there is an internationalization of the campus culture. Internationalization of a campus is beneficial to a university as it can establish strong connections between countries, bolstering the reputation and reach of the university. (Jibeen 2015) We even see benefits to costs as well. While

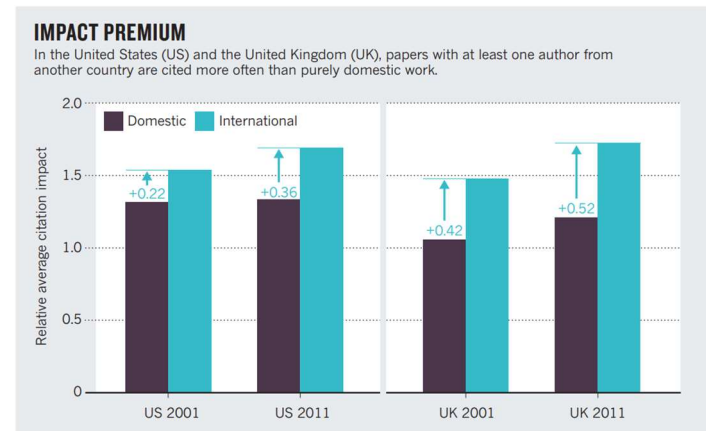
abroad programs may be thought of to be more expensive than projects done on the domestic front, this is not necessarily the case. In a study done by Smith and Mitry (2014) there was evidence showing that there are benefits that universities get from long term domestic projects. However, these benefits took a lot of cost to upkeep, and so it was shown that the shorter term abroad projects provided the same benefits, but at a reduced cost in the long run.

It also benefits the universities in that it leads to the retention of students. “Colleges are more likely to retain study abroad participants after their participation in these programs in addition to increasing the likelihood that students complete their degrees”. (Metzger et al., 2006) Student retention is a benefit to universities as students provide the source of revenue and improvement of reputation.

Finally, we see improvement in the areas of research themselves. A study by Adams et. al. (2013), found that over the last 30 years, papers that cite only domestic authors have flatlined in terms of growth whereas papers reporting authors and coauthors from multiple countries are rapidly increasing. The meta-analysis also found that both U.S. and UK papers with at least one international author showed significantly higher average citation impact (a metric including number of citations). Additionally, as seen in figure 1, this increased international impact has grown between 2001 and 2011 indicating that international research is becoming more important for university research. This international research has a direct correlation with projects abroad, and thus the more the international coauthors sign on to projects the more the university can hold projects that bolster its reputation.

**Figure 1**

*Citation Impact from Domestic and International Papers Vs. Year in the U.S. and U.K.*



*Note.* U.S. and UK papers with at least one international author showed significantly higher average citation impact. (Adams et. al. 2013)

But what causes this increase in apparent quality of research as measured by citation impact? Inter-university projects often include complexities and cross discipline requirements that make collaboration a necessity. Depending on the field or research, a complexity might require a

contextual experience only provided by researchers from a diversity of backgrounds. An auto-ethnographical study by Dusdal et. al. (2021) found that discrepancies in work styles, culture, disciplines, and communication methods forced their team to pay more attention to sharing and mediating these topics, thereby creating a better team outcome for having discussed their differences.

### Challenges Associated with International Partnerships

If there are such clear quantitative and qualitative benefits to international partnerships, why are global student experiences not the norm? There exist many challenges to international university partnerships that may prevent a program from beginning or ending a program when it is no longer sustainable. For the scope of the paper, four main

challenges are addressed: poor mission matching, issues with funding, issues with sustainability, and program autonomy.

A key component of successful international university partnerships is creating projects that match both institutions' missions and goals. Improper matching can prevent a project from even beginning. Take a well-known university like Harvard, which gets hundreds of requests for joint projects a year. A school with less notoriety is unlikely to be selected and may fall through the cracks even though their project goals may better align to Harvard's than a larger, more well-known university. (Antony & Nicola, 2019)

Funding is a fundamental aspect of most international project partnerships, and issues can arise from several reasons regarding this. Less-than projected enrollments can shut down a project center indirectly by causing funding to be cut. Funding

can be displaced by changes in sponsorship or other unexpected hardships such as COVID-19. Changes in government expenditure for research in the host country may also change year over year. Any of these factors may cause preemptive issues in beginning or maintaining a program abroad. Sustainability is directly interwoven with consistent funding. Depending on the structure of a partnership, who takes responsibility for academic standards and learning goals can be difficult to determine. Discrepancies between these can lead to a breakdown of the international partnership if key members of the team, such as faculty or directors, leave the program. (Lane 2011)

Finally, threats to program autonomy can also shut down a project. According to Antony et. al. (2019), U.S. researchers take for granted the kind of autonomy of being able to complete research when and using what methods they

prefer. They note that depending on the location of the project center, faculty could be lost due to research limitations imposed by partner government programs, universities, or legislation. International projects can also be impacted by contrasting cultural or work norms. This can create inter-team miscommunication that can escalate to offense. (Antony & Nicola, 2019) According to *The Bonjour Effect* (Barlow & Nadeau, 2017), it is considered rude to ask about personal finances or one's family in the setting of a work environment, whereas in many places in the U.S., such topics are considered small talk that employees may use to get to know one another. Being aware of specific cultural differences that may arise in casual conversation is important for cohesive teamwork and minimizing conflict.

## How Students Abroad Benefit the Communities through Project Based Learning Programs

For many studies abroad programs, students relate to local communities to provide a positive impact through various types of improvement initiatives or projects. By interacting with local members of a community by working together to achieve a goal, these interpersonal skills are tested and improved, in addition to creating life-long connections. The most common way to create change in a community is primarily doing physical activity to improve infrastructure or directly interacting with people, but more insight into project-based learning and organizational/research-based projects can have a dramatic impact on the structure and function of community spaces from that point onwards.

Project-based learning models have been used in integrative education models as early as the 1980s by

implementing student-centered teaching principles that focused on real world applications of course curriculum. Since then, this model has been developed for many different disciplines such as language learning or science and technology-based projects. As defined by Fried-Booth (2002), “project [based] work is student-centered and driven by the need to create an end-product. However, it is the route to achieving this end-product that brings opportunities for students to develop their confidence and independence and to work together in a real-world environment.” (Mohammed, 2021). This method of teaching is considered a type of inquiry-based learning that is based off three constructivist principles: (1) learning is context-specific, (2) learners are involved actively in the learning process and (3) learners achieve their goals through social interactions and the sharing of knowledge and understanding. (Cocco, 2006)

Project-based learning is extremely teamwork-oriented, and success is highly reliant on communication and organizational skills. Overall, most PBL group members showed positive interdependence, individual accountability, equal participation, and social skills while successfully completing their projects. (Kokotsaki et al., 2016) These skills acquired through project-based learning methods are important for students moving on from undergraduate settings to workplace environments. Students with unique traits acquired by project-based learning methods set them ahead of others without that set of experiences.

Studies of effective project-based learning models in higher education are mostly seen within engineering disciplines but can be applied to many varied kinds of international programs. As seen through Worcester Polytechnic Institute's current model of international project-based learning

programs, there are many facets of the institution's core learning values that are successfully applied through the Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP). The IQP program aims to provide each student with the "experience of working with interdisciplinary teams to solve a problem or need that lies at the intersection of science and society" in accordance with the WPI Plan.

#### Project Based Learning as Applied to WPIs Current Model

Studies of effective project-based learning models in higher education are mostly seen within engineering disciplines but can be applied to many varied kinds of international programs. As seen through Worcester Polytechnic Institute's current model of international project-based learning programs, there are many facets of the institution's core learning values that are successfully applied through the

Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP). The IQP program aims to provide each student with the “experience of working with interdisciplinary teams to solve a problem or need that lies at the intersection of science and society” in accordance with the WPI Plan.

Our main project goal is to expand the Lyon WPI program, and there are a lot of options in terms of how our team can successfully increase WPI’s impact on Lyon universities. Prioritizing the formation of a prolonged academic partnership that maintains WPI’s core values based around project and global learning can create long lasting impact and consistent learning opportunities for everyone involved.

According to Fabienne Miller, the Lyon IQP center’s current director, the project center has faced numerous challenges. Although the student interest in the Lyon project

center has grown, it has been difficult to maintain sponsors and many contacts were lost during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, program visibility, lack of marketing materials, and timing have proven barriers to establishing new partners to expand the project center. This project seeks to offerings and of these challenges and create a sustainable program for future projects to start from.

### Introduction to the Lyon Project Center

The Lyon Project Center site at WPI was founded in 2019 by Professor Fabienne Miller, an Associate Professor at the Business School. With her roots in Lyon, she was able to establish the project center with a small variety of sponsors that provided a rich and immersive experience for students during its debut year. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, international travel and projects were put on hold and as a result, some sponsors were harder to contact in the returning

year 2021 and onwards. Maintaining international programs between universities or organizations is no easy task, especially after experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Instances such as professors changing roles or jobs, or dwindling lack of communication became deciding factors for the integrity of student-based international programs. Since WPI is not a globally well-known university outside of New England or the U.S., the project center has struggled to create new partnerships in tandem with difficulty maintaining existing international relationships that unfortunately jeopardize the future of the Lyon Project Center at WPI.

As of 2023, Prof. Fabienne Miller will not be the project center director but worked closely with our IQP cohort to ensure that the future of the project center would be well cared for. Professor Drew Brodeur within the Chemistry & Biochemistry department will be stepping in to fill this role and

was involved with our project work and making sure he is on track to continue to build the Lyon project center.

Through our group's extensive research and interview processes, we realize that the Lyon Project Center requires structural attention to continue providing students with strong opportunities to further their education while experiencing another culture first-hand. By expanding our research scope and learning more from other project center directors, researching, and visiting local universities and other related organizations, our team was able to pinpoint feasible avenues for new, innovative programs that will help to strengthen the project center. In addition to this, our team will outline our recommendations for these new programs and future work to be done (i.e., updating marketing materials and current strategies for international partnerships) that will best address



the values and needs of WPI and a potential international partner.

With growing student populations and respective project site interests, our group aimed to build upon previously established connections and create new ones primarily focused on partnerships with local universities as directed by our sponsor, Prof. Miller. Our goal was to find universities similar to WPI that show interest in hosting programs for international students that are not necessarily reliant on using the French language and centered around the intersection of science and society for research projects that would support the IQP experience.

Through university study-abroad programs, undergraduate students can experience rich opportunities for interpersonal and cultural skills improvement. Working to keep programs like the Lyon Project Center alive at WPI is crucial for

staying true to our core learning values that strive for our students to have global and project-based learning experiences that best prepare them to be well-rounded global citizens.

Why is Lyon so unique?

Lyon is the capital city of France's Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, and it offers a rich and diverse experience for both student life and learning. Lyon was first founded by the Romans in 43 BC, and many of the architectural pieces from that time are still standing in the city today. As one of the oldest cities in France, Lyon possesses a diverse cultural background that is woven into everyday life and provides citizens and visitors with opportunities to gain an in-depth understanding of the city's history. The Fourvière part of Lyon holds the majority of Roman relics, such as the Basilica of Fourvière which overlooks the city from the hilltop, and the Lugdunum Theatre within these Roman remains pictured below, which are testament to the

importance of the city and its roots of origin (Découver Lyon, 2013).

**Figure 2:** Image of Roman Remain in Lyon



Note: Lugdunum Theatre and Roman Remains (*Ministire De La Culture*, <https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/museo/M1036>)

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<sup>1</sup> Traboules: passageways between two streets through courtyards of buildings originally made for ease of silk workers; primarily used during World War II and the Revolution des Canuts for secret passage of people and information.

Across the Saône river leaving the Roman section of the city, Vieux Lyon section provides visitors with a look into the Renaissance period. Vieux Lyon, or Old Lyon in English, displays the Western European history of the city ranging from beautiful architecture to delicious food (Découver Lyon, 2013). This part of Lyon has retained all its original charms from the 16th century, complete with secret passages (traboules<sup>1</sup>), fountains, and secluded inner courtyards that define the unique architecture within the nine *arrondissements*<sup>2</sup> of the city. Blended through years of migrants coming to open shops, Old Lyon offers a rich mix of cultures that date back to the days of Gaul (Visite Lyon, 2013). Aside from the charming features of the architectural landscape within the city streets, the Saint-

<sup>2</sup> French term for district; Lyon is split up into nine districts, another example is the 20 arrondissements of Paris.

Jean Cathedral stands as one of the oldest Gothic cathedrals in the region in the Vieux Lyon city central, which hosts numerous events and markets in the courtyard square just outside its entrance (Visite Lyon, 2013).

Besides the architectural wonders that truly proclaim Lyon as its own French landmark, the natural landscape of the city leaves nothing to be desired. With the Saône and Rhône rivers running directly through the center, meeting at *La Confluence*, a variety of green spaces and parks can be visited and provide places for picnics, walks with friends, and many gorgeous views (Visite Lyon, 2013). In these parks, visitors can find botanical gardens, beautiful architecture, and even a small zoo. Lyon also is home to many museums and attractions that create an engaging and fun experience for both tourists and locals.

Coupled with these unique sites are amazing restaurants throughout Lyon, making it the gastro capital of France and a must stop for food enjoyers everywhere. Lyon offers Michelin-starred restaurants only a few blocks away from each other, giving visitors a taste of authentic high-end French cuisine. Additionally, there is a wide variety of more wallet-friendly restaurants where visitors can experience not only amazing French cuisine, but also authentic Lyonnaise cuisine found nowhere else in the country (Découver Lyon, 2013). There are several notable seafood restaurants that offer endless raw bar options giving people different food experiences and ambiances that are incomparable to one another. Quaint cafes found throughout the city make for great spots to do group work, have a cup of coffee with a friend, or to get a pastry while people watch and take a moment to enjoy life in its simplest form in true French fashion. Due to its diverse

cultural background, Lyon offers food from all over the world without losing the authenticity of the origin country (Visite Lyon, 2013). The food scene lives up to the title as the best across France and gives visitors a wide array of options for scene, type, and price that would please almost anyone.

Also known as the City of Lights, Lyon remains vibrant and fun throughout the night, contributing to its charm and vivacity that make it a great city to study abroad in. Gastropubs that offer live jazz, various bars and clubs for chatting and dancing, and various other places draw crowds both young and old for fun, wherever the night takes them (Découvrir Lyon, 2013). Lyon has a great metro system that makes getting around easy and accessible for visitors. Clearly labeled and color-coded, the metro system provides fast transportation to every end of the city. Even if one were to miss the train, the city is extremely easy to navigate by a possible rental bike, scooter,

or even just walking. This system is extremely valuable to students, since many universities are spread out throughout Lyon, and are open late to ensure that everyone can return home safely (Découvrir Lyon, 2013).

Lyon has over 30 universities, and each school has multifaceted programs that attract students of all backgrounds and interests that positively contribute to Lyon's diverse culture. The different schools provide students with options for a wide variety of majors and make it possible for them to pursue their individual interests at the same time. With a heavy emphasis on students getting the most out of their time at university, the schools also give students opportunities to explore their non-major related interests which contributes to their success later in life (Découvrir Lyon, 2013). The schools attempt to develop partnerships with each other so that students can experience other classes at different universities

and expand their knowledge. These schools not only provide students with rich learning experiences but allow for students to develop partnerships with others throughout the city, making their experience in higher education even more valuable (Découvrir Lyon, 2013). Through and through, Lyon is an exceptional city to visit and live in and provides WPI students with a taste of French culture in a safe, vibrant, and culturally rich place.

### Higher Education in France

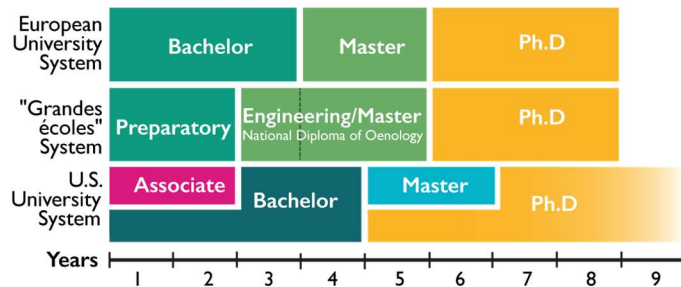
To fully grasp the scope of university partnerships that can be fostered between WPI and Lyon universities, there must be a preliminary understanding of the “système d'enseignement supérieur français.” Understanding the significant structural differences between American and French

universities is vital for the success of the project and for building a solid foundation going into data collection.

At the end of a French student’s high school (“le lycée”) career, passing the final qualifying exam, le Baccalauréat, is needed in order to become admitted to a university to pursue the standard higher-education program (ranging from Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate degrees (also known as the BMD system; similar to the U.S.). Le Bac opens doors to be able to pursue a vocational or academic diploma after graduation (French higher education system, 2016). Students possessing their Bac certification can apply to many degree programs, although some disciplines require students to have completed specific courses in high school or before pursuing higher education. The next steps also depend on what university program a student applies for (Alom, M, 2020). Academic post-bac programs are split into universities and Grandes écoles;

universities can be public or private institutions that offer education in the arts, sciences, or professional fields whereas Grandes écoles are more advanced industry-focused and engineering or business-heavy programs (most comparable to WPI coursework).

**Figure 3**



*Note:* Breakdown of U.S. University System vs. Universities and Grandes écoles, as denoted by the Bordeaux Institute of Agricultural Sciences

French public universities function analogously to universities in other parts of Europe and use the European

standardized ECTS credit system for (French higher education system, 2016). Each university is named after the city they are closest to and then numbered. There are also informal names given to them based on famous alumni from their schools. A “Parcoursup” allows students to choose several degrees they might wish to study and, depending on the availability of the program and the student's past courses, they are placed into one of the degree programs based on an algorithm (French higher education system, 2016). In this case, a student’s Bac scores do not impact where they will be placed. Students applying to public universities will not have to take the preparatory classes (CPGEs) that are offered to students looking at admission into Grandes écoles, since there is not a specific specialization that public university students are aiming at going into (French higher education system, 2016).

With public universities, students will spend their first 3 years devoting their time to earning their license (bachelor's degree) in their specific major. They then will have to spend 2 years focusing on their master's if they want to explore higher education, and then if they want to go further, their PhD will be given to them 3 years after the completion of their masters (Alom, M, 2020). Much like U.S. universities, these public universities focus on end of the semester examinations, but unlike U.S. universities students will have a more difficult time changing their major due to the ECTS credit system (Alom, M, 2020). These universities have lower tuition when compared to Grande écoles, and with high school coursework being considered, students can often find a public university that allows for the degree they want to pursue without having to take extensive preparatory classes to be considered admittance into them (French higher education system, 2016). Without

having to worry about submitting Bac scores or attending preparatory classes, students have an easier time getting admitted into public universities and finding an expansive degree program to allow for their future success in higher education.

Figure 4



Note: Clear Graphic of the French Degree System from Université Paris-Saclay

Grandes Écoles in France are comparable to public universities in the sense that they also follow the European

standardized ECTS credit system but are smaller institutions that receive more funding for more specialized work and research. Grandes écoles allow for students to be placed based on a student's past courses as well as Bac scores (Watkins, R., & Tse, E., 2020). Typically, a student will be admitted based on their prior course work, program availability, and Bac scores indicating their ability for success in their desired field. Along with this, students are made to take preparatory classes (CPGEs) to cement their knowledge in a specific field and better prepare them when applying to Grandes écoles, since the work done at Grandes écoles is often unlike anything these students applying have experienced before. Grandes écoles are notoriously rigorous and academically challenging, and generally offer only professional education (What is a Grande Ecole exactly?, 2019). In contrast, universities offer high



education in the arts and sciences, as well as other professional fields.

Grandes écoles are highly selective with smaller class sizes, and their rigorous curriculum focuses on degrees in either business or engineering (Watkins, R., & Tse, E., 2020). This traditionally lands their graduates in jobs in the political sector, business administration, or the engineering field. Both Grande écoles that focus on engineering and business require students to take at least one of two years of CPGEs before they can be admitted into the school. For students admitted to Grandes écoles d'ingénieur (engineering school), 3 years will be spent focusing on general engineering subjects that will result in the degree and title of Diplôme d'Ingénieur (Diploma of Engineer) that will lack a specific discipline of engineering (Watkins, R., & Tse, E., 2020). After this degree, students will go on to their post-Bac studies for 5 years focusing on their engineering

concentration and eventually getting their Grade de Master (master's level) in a specific engineering field. When students enter Grandes écoles de commerce et de gestion (business and administration), they will likely be studying at a private institution that has been created by local chambers of commerce to directly address the industry in the region (Watkins, R., & Tse, E., 2020). If these specific business schools do not meet a certain criterion, students will not be given their Grade de Master and will have to apply elsewhere to receive it. Grandes écoles de commerce et de gestion follow the same system as Grandes écoles d'Ingénieur, leaving students with a total of 9 years spent studying to gain their Masters (What is a Grande Ecole exactly?, 2019, October 22). After these students successfully complete their masters, they are welcome to apply for a 3-year PhD program which remains either engineering or business focused.

Within both of these schools, students have to meet and pass evaluations given throughout the years by different offices within the higher education system to remain in the schools or move forward with their studies. For Grandes écoles, organizations such as Conférence des Présidents d'Université, Conférence des Directeurs des Écoles Françaises d'Ingénieurs, and Conférence des Grandes Écoles play a significant role in representing the interests of higher education institutions in France, and each manage their respective schools of study (Watkins, R., & Tse, E., 2020). These organizations are responsible for the evaluations given throughout the years of studying and manage the specific exams that students must take to move forward. Since Grande écoles are known for their rigor and difficulty, it is no surprise that these evaluations and exams take place over a student's time in school to make sure that they are more than prepared for the corporate workforce

(Watkins, R., & Tse, E., 2020). Totaling 4 years of work to receive their equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's, their selective process and rigorous coursework parallels that of a U.S. university.

Lyon has public universities that offer a specialized education in the arts, sciences or select professional fields (Claude Bernard University Lyon 1, Lumiere University Lyon 2, Jean Moulin University Lyon 3). Les Grandes écoles are either public or private and offer strictly professional education in Lyon (Ecole Centrale d'électronique, ECAM Lyon, INSA Lyon, Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon, etc.).

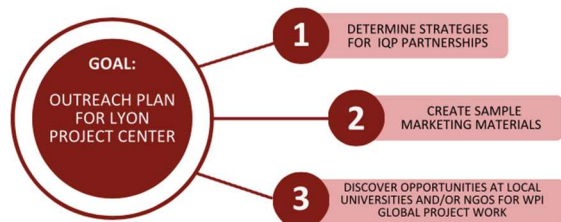
## Methods

The goal of this project is to assist our sponsor in exploring methods that will strengthen the Lyon project center by identifying successful strategies for university and

community partnerships. To best reach our goal, we have three main objectives:

1. Determine strategies for IQP Partnerships.
2. Research and Create Sample Marketing Materials.
3. Discover opportunities in Lyon for future WPI Global Projects

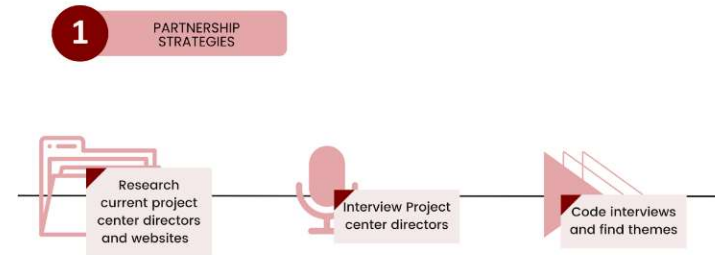
Figure 5



**Note:** Map of 3 Objectives for Exploring Methods for IQP Partnership

## Objective 1: Determining Strategies for IQP Partnerships

Figure 6



**Note:** Timeline Graphic of Objective 1 Methods (Description: Research current project center directors and websites, Interview Project Center Directors, Code Interviews and Find Themes)

To assess successful strategies for Lyon-WPI partnerships, we first began by trying to better understand the scope of the IQP project at WPI. We started by interviewing the Dean of the Global School and GEO faculty, asking questions

such as “What are key components to a good IQP problem?” Additionally, we asked more about the scope of an IQP and how the learning objectives play a role in project selection. We also wanted to understand what WPI intends for students to get out of the IQP curriculum and how a project center addresses these learning objectives.

Semi-structured interviews were used to explore methods used by other project centers to expand their project network and ensure a sustainable project center. This research method provided broad qualitative data that gave us more specific direction for later portions of the project. The interviews followed a standard format shown in Table 2 (Wilson 2014):

**Table 3**

*Outline for Semi-Structured Interviews*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Time</b>
Introductions	Introduce team and project, sign consent form, begin recording	10 minutes
Semi-Structured Questions	See Appendix (Appendix A)	30-40 minutes
Unstructured Discussion	For questions from interviewee/room for additional topics	10 minutes
Thanks, goodbye, establish follow-up if need be	If follow-up necessary, schedule within 1 week if possible	10 minutes

**Note:** Adapted from Wilson 2014

The interviews were recorded with permission and took place over Zoom. The first sample population was WPI project center directors determined using expert sampling. An expert was defined as a project center director who has held their position for three or more years. Each sample population had a

set list of questions but the general format for the semi-structured interview remained the same.

When talking with center directors, questions were centered around both partnership strategies and techniques for sourcing new partnerships in the center's community. An example question from our semi-structured interview guide is: "How do you explain the IQP program to potential sponsors?" which helped us with our work in Lyon. We also asked, "Do you have any contacts for long-term IQP sponsors who you believe would be willing to participate in a semi-structured interview like this one?" This allowed for our snowball sampling method for the second set of interviews in this objective. (See Appendix A for a full list of questions.)

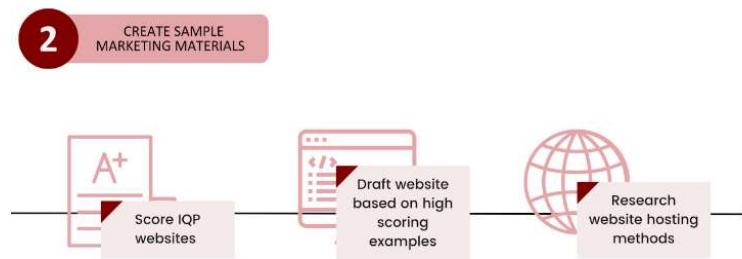
The transcript and logs from the interview with project centers were coded based on common themes that emerge in the discussion. Coders used the Free Coding Approach as

described by Campbell, J. et. al. (2013) where researchers begin by reading the qualitative data multiple times, then write a set of codes with brief descriptions of what content would fall under each code. The next step was to code the qualitative data, then look for regions that were either unaddressed by the established codes, or where there exists overlap between codes. After this, we adjusted the set of codes to better reflect the themes of the data. From here, the data was analyzed using a qualitative approach. Intercoder reliability (how similar each researcher codes the same section of data) was ensured by having a team discussion about both the original set of codes and the updated set of codes. We also ensured we agreed on how each section of data is coded. This method worked due to the small size of our research team and our sample size (Campbell, J., 2013). To qualitatively analyze our coded data, we read over sections coded the same and drew inferences

about successful methods project directors used to find new partnerships based both on similarities and those described as most successful by the directors.

## Objective 2: Creation of Sample Market Materials

Figure 7



**Note:** Timeline Graphic of Objective 2 Methods (Description: Score IQP Websites, Draft website based on high scoring examples, Research website hosting methods)

WPI as a university is not well known in the city of Lyon, and the students of WPI do not have the clearest idea of what occurs at the Lyon Project Center. As a result of this, it is clear that the project center can expand through the use of

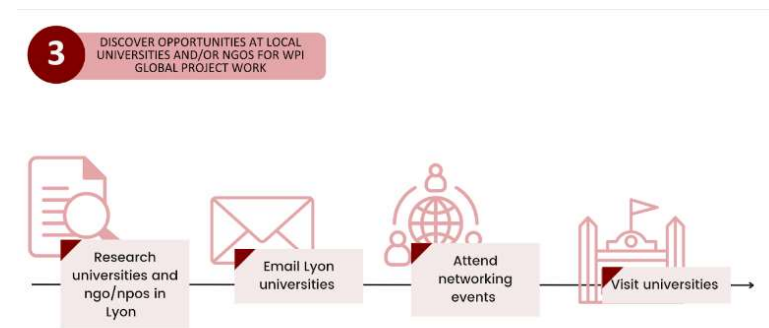
marketing materials. The avenue for marketing became clear when after a networking event, which will be described later, after explaining the project center, we were asked, “is there a website for it”? It became clear that the best avenue for marketing was in fact a website. But what would make a successful website? To figure this out, we first graded websites against a rubric, like how an IQP in Japan had done before (Barber et al). The sites were graded qualitatively on ease of navigation, readability, how informative it was, how well the images fit, and ease of contact information. This was then followed up with checking if key pages were present. These pages were a home page, a projects page, a contact page, a page for students, a page for sponsors, an about page, a page explaining WPI, and an image gallery. We performed this grading on 13 of the available project center websites. To see these gradings more in depth, go to Appendix B. We then

created a draft website based on some of the high scoring examples from the rubric. But how should we go about creating this in a timely manner? Following the advice from an IQP done at the Prague Project Center, we used Google Sites to create the draft (Ingram et al). A link to the preview of the draft website can also be found in Appendix C. We also followed the advice of a project done at the Melbourne project center and created a user maintenance guide for the draft website that includes details of how the draft website functions (Day et al). This maintenance guide can be found at Appendix D. After this, it is important to consider the domain and hosting options as that would be a purchase for either the global projects center or the Lyon Project Center itself. When considering hosting options, it is important to keep in mind the price, as well as the ease of integrating it with the website itself.

To overview what should be done, we looked at the marketing materials of other project centers and reviewed the transcripts of the interviews we had had with the directors of other project sites.

Objective 3: Discover Opportunities at Local Universities and/or NGOs for WPI Global Project Work.

**Figure 8**



**Note:** Timeline Graphic of Objective 3 Methods (Description: Research universities and NGOs/NPOs in Lyon, Email Lyon Universities, Attend Networking Events, Visit Universities)

To discover opportunities at local universities and/or NGOs for WPI Project work, a rubric that was developed based off a previous IQP done at the Japan project center was created to assist in the assessment of local universities around Lyon (Barber, A., Chao, D., Enyedy, A., & Alvarez, D. F., 2018). Once completed, we began researching local universities online, assessing them using the created rubric and separating them based on their offered degrees, locations, and other factors deemed appropriate through the rubric. This rubric can be found in appendix E. After the initial university list has been created, we attempted to contact these universities via an email (found in appendix F) in hopes to get a scheduled visit

with the school and a faculty member. While waiting for responses, we began to begin our work to visit the universities in person. We explored campuses and attempted to enter as many buildings as possible to take detailed notes that we could later use when assessing the universities with our rubric. After we had our notes, we were about to utilize our rubric to categorize desirable features from these universities to assess the opportunities present. Combining both our in-person data along with the data found on university websites, we were then able to better determine the potential partnership opportunities available between a university and WPI. After we were able to do this, we were able to put together summaries about the universities that we were able to get the most information from both in person and online.

Furthermore, after a meeting with our past sponsor, Julie De Bry D’Arcy at SINGA Lyon, we were offered to attend a



networking event at the organization. This was not the first sponsor who invited us to networking events, as the first networking event attended was on behalf of Lab X IMU at INSA University. These networking events with past sponsors made it possible for us to better understand how networking in Lyon works and connected us with different events around the city. This led to us being able to get in touch with students and faculty at other universities, and to learn more about the work being done at them. These events gave us better insight into university life in Lyon, networking in Lyon, and the community in which our sponsors are a part of. By participating in these events, we were also able to form a greater relationship with our past sponsors.

## Results

### WPI Faculty Interviews and Findings

For this portion of our research, we began by interviewing 7 different WPI faculty members that either were project center directors or that had experience working in the Global Projects School. From these structured interviews, we were able to pull 6 general themes that aided us when coding our data.

### University Partnerships

#### *Faculty Connections and Length of Time for University Partnerships*

The first theme pulled was university partnerships and gave the team better insight to the complexity of developing partnerships with international universities. It was often mentioned that many university partnerships take an extremely long time to develop and cement without a faculty member already having a previous connection. When

interviewing the India project center director, it was shared to us that the connection to the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) was made due to the president's connection to WPI. The IIT's president had started his teaching career at WPI, and had come to WPI to propose an IQP project center to be opened in India: "I was just minding my own business in my office, and some man strolls in, and he says very calmly, I heard you're interested in opening a center in India, so I think we should do that... He saw this IQP concept, and he was like, this is amazing. If I ever have an opportunity to bring this program to a university in India, I would like to do it... He was at WPI and heard about me. So, we wrote a grant together and got it." (Shockey, 2023)

The president of IIT that had previously worked at WPI and made the connection through this prior job which allowed for the center to get off the ground faster than it may have

without that connection. Furthermore, the center director of the Namibia project center stated that,

"In order to have a good university partnership specifically for projects, you really have to have a faculty member who's really motivated to maintain the relationship and work with WPI students. It doesn't function unless you have someone who is in their best interest to have this continue." (Dorion, 2023)

With these sentiments being shared across multiple project center directors and Global Project School faculty, it became clear that without a prior connection or interest in WPI's IQP program, it would be extremely difficult to develop a sustainable, project centered, international university partnership in a brief period of time. Many interviewees stated that the length of time it takes may be well over a decade, which can become problematic for newer project centers.

These faculty connections were seen as one of the most crucial factors to establishing university partnerships and were almost always the first point of contact to getting in touch with international universities. That is not to say that it is not possible but given the length of time it takes to establish university partnerships that are project centered it can be trying and sometimes unsuccessful in the end. Factors such as contacts, center directors, and communication strategies can play a huge role in this establishment. If a contact leaves the university, or a center director change before the partnership is cemented, it could lead to the breakdown of the relationship between WPI and the partnered university. Communication also plays a crucial role, and if one member loses touch with the partner there is a chance that getting back in touch with the partner might be more difficult than it originally was.

### *International University Views on IQP Students*

Furthermore, the time it takes to develop a partnership with an international university, and even with a faculty connection can lead to difficult team dynamics. This is in part because many universities do not share the same structure as WPI and lack a project program that mirrors that of the IQP program. However, it is also caused by the scope of the IQP project, “The failure of IQPs is that if partnering with a university, if it's not directly aligned with the faculties interest and all of that, then it's a burden.” (Dorion, 2023) Not only are students sometimes seen as burdens to a professor's research, but students are also seen as an extra workload by professors as shared by center directors in India, Japan, Costa Rica, and faculty of the GSP who had previously advised projects, “The relationship between university and visiting students is usually one in which universities see visiting students as extra work.

They see them as a burden.” (Vaz R, 2023) When dealing with IQP partnerships, many universities or department heads do not want to partner with WPI students as they do not view them as assets to their mission, “In the case of the university, if the project sponsor is a faculty member, usually it's going to have to align with their research.” (Dorion, 2023) They often view WPI students as more students to teach if the project is not related to their research, which becomes difficult especially considering that these professors likely have large classes to manage to begin with.

In terms of sponsored projects, university partnerships tend to work better for MQPs, as WPI students can assist on major related research that mutually benefits WPI and the partnering university. The emphasis on the mutual benefit of the partnership is incredibly important, with many center directors stating that there needed to be something that the

other university can gain from a partnership with WPI. With a successful partnership, there needed to be opportunities for the students and faculty at the partnered university, with the Cuenca center director stating:

“They need to provide opportunities for their own students. Why do they also provide them for American students? How can the university benefit from partnerships with us as opposed to us just benefitting from them? How do they benefit or how can they benefit?” (Kurlanska, 2023)

With this information being corroborated by almost every interviewee, the importance of a mutual benefit became clear. Without a mutual benefit, the partnering university has no drive to partner with WPI, and without those prior connections they likely will have trouble seeing why they should if there is nothing in return. With university partnerships as sponsored IQP projects, it becomes difficult to establish with

international universities who do not see the mutual benefit or have a prior connection to the school.

#### *University Partnerships as Resources*

However, for IQPs, many center directors establish university partnerships as a means to get resources for their students, “In most places, we don’t have a close university partner, and if we do, it’s very often just for housing.” (Vaz, 2023) With university partnerships being made for resources, this often includes housing, amenities, language exchange, and other experiences that are unique to the university life in the hosting country. While this may not lead to sponsored projects at an international university, it ensures that students have access to safe housing, meals, and other aspects of student life that are essential to a productive and successful IQP experience. In the Cuenca project center, the University of Cuenca provides a language exchange for students, does an

orientation to help the students learn the area, and allows students to utilize other amenities at the university. With project centers in Acadia, Japan and India, the local universities provide housing or meal plans for the students. This allows for students to not have to worry about cooking, shopping, or food insecurity and provides safe, secure housing to make sure that students do not feel threatened in their living space. Centers in Thailand, China, and other countries provide students with access to classroom spaces, libraries, internet, and other amenities such as gyms or common rooms. Many interviewees believed that these partnerships are incredibly useful for WPI but also the students, “We’ve benefitted from university partnerships, especially, when it gave opportunities for our students to really interact closely with students from another country, another university. So, there’s some real value in those.” (Rissmiller, 2023)

By utilizing a university for its assets and resources, it allows WPI students to get the unique experience of living abroad but also to make connections with other students while there. It gives WPI students security in food, housing, and meeting spaces, all of which allows for a more productive and beneficial project experience. These connections are beneficial for IQP projects, and have proven to be sustainable throughout the years, whereas without connections few universities-sponsored projects have prevailed. These reasons make the case for a shift of focus from university partnerships as project sponsors to university partnerships as resources.

## Finding and Maintaining Sponsors

### *Building Relationships*

Along with university partnerships, finding and maintaining sponsors often requires a prior connection. In the

case of sponsors, faculty connections do not play as large of a role, however. While helpful, faculty connections can be a starting point in networking to find a larger pool of potential sponsors, “It's all about connections . . . the things that work are always like, who knows somebody? Is there some kind of connection? Is there a champion? Is there somebody who's really dedicated to this thing?” (Shockey, 2023) With this statement from the India center, it cements the idea that networking is vital to find sponsors. Along with faculty connections, sponsor connections can also help bridge the gap between WPI and their potential sponsors, “And once we do a project with an organization, other organizations see the work, and they're like, oh, can we get students to come help us with this or work on this?” (Kurlanska, 2023) By maintaining sponsor relationships, finding new sponsors can be made easier through the previous sponsors' help. Previous sponsors are often leaned

on by project center directors to help find new sponsors as well. With their connections to the community, they have those contacts readily available and can vouch on WPI's behalf to initiate the conversation surrounding why the partnership may be beneficial. Community word of mouth plays a key part in connecting WPI with new sponsors, "I think that one of the ways this works best is a word-of-mouth communication between people in the community, especially the nonprofit world." (Rissmiller, 2023) As mentioned by a faculty member of the GSP, these community connections really help build WPI's reputation and allow for center directors to meet with potential sponsors more easily.

However, maintaining sponsors is not always that simple, and keeping in touch with organizations can be challenging without visiting multiple times a year or having a local coordinator. When looking at how to find and maintain

sponsors, the form of communication after the initial connection is vital in the success of establishing a partnership. While connections may be the first step, if the desire to work with a sponsor is not effectively communicated it can lead to unformed partnerships and loss of contact. The main way that center directors found success in finding and then maintaining sponsors was through in person interaction, "People get bombarded with emails and websites to look at, and it doesn't really mean as much as doing it the old-fashioned way." (Shockey, 2023) With centers in India, Cuenca, Bangkok, Japan, and even a previous Lyon advisor agreeing that the best way to build these long-lasting relationships was through sitting down and getting a coffee or lunch with a sponsor, in person meetings seem to be the most beneficial for finding success in partnerships. While emails and cold calls sometimes work, faculty members of the GPS cemented the idea that in person

meetings are favored amongst sponsors and that without multiple visits a year or a local coordinator that can do the work of maintaining these relationships throughout the year, it is possible that the connection to sponsors will be lost.

#### *Diverse and Large Sponsor Portfolios*

After these connections are made, diverse sponsor pools proved to be key to a center's sustainability and longevity. By having a mix of new and old sponsors, it allows for the project center to have options on the type of projects they will make available that year. Not only does this benefit the center, but it allows for students to have a plethora of options to choose from which can directly impact their motivation to produce a well written and strongly researched project. This can also lead to students' interests in a specific center, with more options obtainable to them they can get a better understanding of what kind of work they could be doing while

abroad. This can also be beneficial for a cohort as a whole, “we have like 15 projects that we can potentially work with, and then we talk about which project would be good for this cohort, and then we narrow it down to six.” (Shockey, 2023) and through this process, it allows different projects to be produced throughout the years. Since cohorts and project teams can change, this was stressed by almost every interviewee as being extremely helpful for when issues arise. A large pool of sponsors allows for more flexibility within the center as well, with the importance of having more than enough sponsors stressed. This is because if multiple must pull out of the project, there are always others to choose from without having to scramble. This builds the project center's reputation and gives students a better understanding of the potential projects they could work on at said center. The variety of projects is also believed to strengthen the portfolio of the project center and



can be used as a tool to show potential sponsors what WPI's involvement can offer. With every project center director and faculty member of the GPS agreeing that a variety of projects in a large sponsor pool makes for a stronger center, it is evident that there can never be enough potential sponsors to help grow the center and its reputation. Along with this, having multiple sponsors to choose from eliminates the possibility of having repeat projects, something that is favorable to the GPS and the IQP project, "when you use the same sponsor over and over, they kind of do the same project over and over. And that's not something we want." (Kurlanska, 2023) By rotating sponsors and projects throughout the years, these centers have found success not only in growing the relationships with sponsors but expanding the program. Through having a diverse and large pool to choose from, these partnerships benefit the center, students, and the community by giving resources and help to

different organizations over the years. This helps build the reputation of WPI and can be linked to the success and sustainability at all of the centers where large sponsor pools have proven to be successful. It can also help to grow interest in the program both internationally and locally, giving potential sponsors material to review and students' projects to become interested in for when it's their time to choose their IQP project center.

## Student Team Models

### *Mixed Project Teams*

Student team models have proven to foster learning and growth between students, partners, and sponsors. These mixed teams provide WPI students with a chance to immerse themselves in the culture, as well as get more experience with learning the native language of the hosting country. In the

Cuenca project center, there is a specific program that pairs a WPI student with a student from the University of Cuenca for a language exchange. The center director believes that this interaction helps both sides of the students not only engage in learning a new language, but also engage with the community and immerse themselves in the experience. The mixed project teams can be beneficial for both sides of students and allow for a richer learning experience during IQP. However, mixed project teams come with their own challenges despite enhancing the IQP learning experience, with center directors saying, “When you can get it to work, it can be really interesting. It’s not easy. It’s very hard to have those cross-cultural teams, but it’s wonderful.” (Kurlanska, 2023) The successes with mixed team models also bring challenges. While Cuenca provides a language exchange between students, this is not the case for every project center. This can create an unfair

team dynamic that surrounds the language capabilities of the students and can lead to one part of the team dominating the conversation over the other. In terms of sponsors, this also becomes an issue when a local team can meet with their sponsor before WPI students are. For example, the Thailand project center ran into this problem a few years ago when the partnered students had already been meeting with their sponsors, allowing them to get a clearer understanding of the project and build rapport with the sponsors (Boucher-Yip, 2023). This can be frustrating for WPI students, as they feel behind and less connected to the sponsor, but also leads to having an unfair team dynamic once again. Furthermore, with two student teams being mixed, that also leads to two sets of advisors, two program requirements, and at the end two project reports. This can create a confusing and difficult team dynamic which can prohibit the productivity of these teams.

With language exchange not being available to advisors, the language barrier can become a problem at a greater level during these mixed teams if there is no way for teams or even advisors to effectively communicate. Along with these issues, student team models take years to establish since these are local university students. Without a connection to the local university, it would be difficult to establish mixed student teams, much like establishing a university partnership. These partnerships struggle to work for mixed student teams even with an established partnership due to the structure of the WPI IQP curriculum and term schedule, “Unless the other university is willing to completely change their curriculum so that their students are working full time during those seven weeks and have some sort of preparation for it, it doesn't work out well.” (Vaz, 2023) Since university partnerships have already been said to be difficult to establish, mixed student team models

would be equally as difficult due to these factors surrounding the university's structure. Without having almost identical structures like Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok does, the mixed team will likely not be able to succeed due to lack of time and benefit to their degrees. Unfortunately, while mixed student teams have proven to be successful and beneficial to enhancing the IQP learning experience, they are difficult to implement, manage, and find success in without years of partnership.

MQPs and HUAs

#### *MQPs and University Partnerships*

MQP projects have had the most success in partnering with international universities. This is likely due to the fact that MQP projects are major specific, which allows students to be paired with a research professor whose research directly correlates to the WPI students' MQP research. Since MQPs are

major based, international universities are more likely to want MQP students since they mutually benefit from their research. Furthermore, MQPs are easier to establish with partners at universities since the scope can be better understood, “It’s easier at some level with MQPs, because when we’re talking about senior research stuff, everybody in their discipline understands what it is.” (Rissemiller, 2023) Because of this, universities are more willing to partner with MQP projects for sponsored work since it is disciplinary specific. This also makes it easier for MQP students to have a clear mission in terms of project work, whereas with IQPs if the scope of the project is not clearly explained to a sponsor it can lead to problems where the work the sponsor is requesting does not align with the requirements set by WPI. One of the struggles with international MQP projects is the need for a faculty champion to support the MQP center and project. Without this faculty

champion, the MQP project cannot be sustained and leads to the project breaking down, preventing it from running again the next year.

#### *Establishing MQP Opportunities*

When looking at how to establish MQP opportunities, factors such as a faculty champion, budget, and project availability and sustainability need to be considered. Again, without a faculty champion it becomes difficult to sustain the MQP partnership and project. These faculty champions need to really want to continue to support the MQP projects and be available to do so since it is unlikely that another faculty member will be readily available to take on that role without prior knowledge or interest in these projects. Along with a faculty champion, the budget and funding for international MQPs becomes a problem when attempting to establish an international MQP project. Since MQPs are often funded by the

sponsors, many centers lack funding from WPI itself and MQP center directors describe their MQP projects as “an act of love” for them. Funding for these MQP centers is not coming from WPI so “Any MQP is coming out of a faculty member’s pockets. They are completely underfunded.” leading to the establishment of these projects is difficult without partners that are willing to pay for WPI students' work or a center director willing to fund the project center (DeWinter, 2023). There is also a lack of funding for amenities included in the IQP budget such as housing and meals leading many center directors having to make these arrangements for MQP center students. On top of this, it was advised by almost every interviewee to not focus on creating MQP opportunities before having a well-established and sustainable IQP center with interviewees saying, “But would I recommend going into the MQP land before your IQP is fully settled? No.” and “So I can

bring in our MQP projects in the future and the humanities capstone project or a humanities course. But IQP is our main mission.” (DeWinter., Boucher-Yip., 2023) With the Japan center being the only center to have mentioned running a Humanities and Arts center, MQP centers have only been established in a few of the centers that were interviewed. Since funding is an issue with international MQPs, it would only complicate the process of establishing a young project center by trying to juggle establishing both at the same time. This could likely cause both centers to fail or take away from the IQP center if there are not a sufficient number of sponsors for project work. It is a trying process to attempt both at the same time, and while an MQP center would strengthen university partnerships it could also hurt the project center as a whole.

## Local Coordinator

### *The Benefits of Having a Local Coordinator for International Project Centers*

During the interviews, a local coordinator was brought up multiple times as a beneficial addition to an international project center for many reasons. Since it has been shared that without multiple in person visits a year will lead to a loss of sponsors, traveling to international project centers throughout the year becomes vital to the center's sustainability. However, traveling internationally multiple times a year is not always possible for center directors, especially if they have families or classes during the year. A local coordinator would help negate the issue of having to make multiple trips across the world by being able to maintain these relationships throughout the year. Many interviewees stated that the addition of a local coordinator was “a really positive development. It’s [the

center] too far away to really maintain these things on a regular basis.” (Dorion, 2023) Not only can a local coordinator help maintain relationships with sponsors while faculty and students are not in the country, but they can also help find sponsors and identify their benefits. Since word of mouth through a community was one of the biggest helps when finding new sponsors, this allows the local coordinator to approach potential sponsors on behalf of the university but likely already have the organizations trust since they are a part of the same community. Local coordinators have also proven to be beneficial when looking for housing, often helping WPI locate housing and complete the contracts to secure the housing. Local coordinators have been said to also help organize meetings for WPI faculty, help with the language barrier and translations, and even in certain circumstances take students to receive medical care. A local coordinator does not exist in every

project center and was not a part of the original IQP plan, but centers that have implemented the role have found it to be a powerful addition to the program. With every interviewee corroborating these beliefs, a local coordinator has proven to be beneficial for international project centers and if done right could change the trajectory of a project center for the better.

#### *Screenings for Local Coordinators*

While local coordinators have shown how beneficial their services are to international project centers, there is a specific process that is believed to have to happen for their implementation. Since a local coordinator is a role that is paid by WPI, the local coordinator needs to be a trusted individual with availability to maintain these relationships throughout the year and aid the program. Not every project center has a local coordinator, and the process to acquire one starts with identifying a trusted individual and then pitching the budget for

them, and their assets to the GSP, mainly explaining why the center would benefit from their help. According to a faculty member of the GSP, if a center director makes a concrete case as to why they need a local coordinator, it is more than likely it will be provided, “When directors come and ask for that support, we’re pretty likely to say, if we know if we can identify somebody really is a good asset and understands the program and can open some of these door for us, then I’m likely to approve that request.” (Rissmiller, 2023) This can make it possible for international project centers to acquire a local coordinator, but one of the most key factors when determining who that will be is credibility and trust. Since local coordinators are paid by WPI, they are working on behalf of WPI. With the local coordinator often being a friend or a colleague of a director, this problem is usually taken care of. However, that does not necessarily mean the chances of an issue occurring are

gone. There have been project centers in the past that have had to deal with firing local coordinators, and since WPI has given them power and authority as well as an attachment to the institution, it can become problematic. Since local coordinators play a huge role in establishing sponsor relationships, if a local coordinator is not a trusted and credible individual, firing them could result in WPI's reputation being on the line, "They could ruin a project center for you if they decide to badmouth you in these places that are really reputationally driven. So there needs to be caution when selecting... There has to be a lot of trust because there's a lot of damage, potential reputational damage that could be done in the local context." (Dorion, 2023) Members of the GSP as well as center directors with local coordinators all agreed that proper vetting of the local coordinator is vital to the successful implementation of one at a center. The local coordinator not only plays a role within the

WPI project center, but likely plays a huge role within the community to be able to establish these connections, so they must be a trusted individual that will not attempt to ruin the reputation of the center if something goes wrong for their addition to be successful.

## Website and Marketing Materials

### *Knowing the Market*

Face-to-face meetings have led to remarkable success for many of the interviewees when attempting to find new sponsors, whether that be the center director or the local coordinator sitting down with the potential partner. This is mainly because face to face interaction helps build relationships and shows how motivated WPI is to work with



potential sponsors. But what happens when this strategy is not available? Well, knowing the market is key to establishing potential sponsors according to center directors and faculty members of the GSP, “I actually think this is where the context of the country determines how you do outreach.” (Dorion, 2023) While face to face interaction works in almost every country, not all marketing tools do. Centers in India, Thailand, and Cuenca have the established university partnership, which allows for them to be more easily marketed and recognized in the community. This makes it possible for these center directors to reach out throughout the community through emails or social media and get responses, whereas in places where WPI is not well known this would not work. In Japan, emails and online communication have worked to get and stay in touch with potential sponsors. In other centers however, it has been difficult to maintain relationships through emails and

social media, leading to connections to lose touch with one another. Without knowing the market, it can be difficult to assess which method of communication should be used when attempting to establish a partnership and can lead to progress in finding new sponsors to be stunted.

#### *Benefits of Multiple Marketing Materials*

As previously mentioned, in-person meetings have proven to be the best way of marketing projects to new sponsors. Sometimes though, it is difficult to set up these in person meetings, or after a meeting a potential sponsor wants to learn more about WPI. With emails and social media, it makes it easier for sponsors to get a better understanding of what WPI can offer at the click of a button. But emails and social media messages do not work in every community, and sometimes will not get any response at all. Due to this, it was advised to have a plethora of marketing materials to give

potential sponsors both over email and in person, “If you can get a message in front of an organization, we can use things like a lot of the communications that are available on our web pages about our students and about the projects program and about the kinds of projects students do in various places.” (Rissemiller, 2023) Many center directors mentioned having a brochure to give to potential sponsors that provides information about the IQP and examples of past projects to allow for a better understanding of the project before sending any links or websites over email. After the initial connection is established, project center directors stated that they would often send a link to the project centers website, the GSP website, and other links to past projects to allow for the sponsor to really understand what an IQP partnership entails. Center directors also emphasized the importance of having multiple marketing materials, such as brochures, websites, and

other materials since they have found the most success using a combination of materials. No one marketing strategy is vital to a project center's success, and without having multiple resources to show sponsors the ability to establish new relationships becomes more difficult.

## Creation of Marketing Materials

### Marketing Data

When deciding how to proceed with the creation of the marketing data we decided that one of the first steps for getting the data was to look back at the marketing of other project centers and to ask questions about the marketing to other center directors for guidance. From this data there were 5 main key takeaways. The first of which is that marketing will depend on the region you are currently in. While cold calls and email may work at some centers, it is not guaranteed to work at

others. The next takeaway is that a promotional website is not the end-all-be-all of the marketing. This leads to the next key takeaway, which is to diversify the kinds of marketing materials present. Many of the centers we talked to mentioned having a pamphlet or a brochure as additional material to be used. Some even use social media to show off how great the experience can be for students. But the next key takeaway indicates that the best way for marketing is face-to-face interaction. It seems that what has worked best when meeting future partners has been meeting in person, and using websites as supplemental information in case something needs to be explained in more detail. The final key takeaway is that the easiest partnerships are made based on prior connections. A prior connection allows for greater ease when talking with a potential partner and provides an easier entry when trying to establish a partnership.

## Website

While a website is not the crux of marketing, it is vital to have one and thus, we created a draft website. The draft website has a home page; a section for contacting; an about section which describes WPI, the IQP, the MQP, and an about for our advisors; for students' section that has info about Lyon and the project center; and finally, a section for projects, which has past IQP projects. When creating the draft, we tried to adhere to our grading rubric as best as possible. While we do not have a page explicitly stated to be 'for sponsors', the information that would be on a 'for sponsors' page is scattered about.

After creating the draft website, it is important to consider the domain hosting option. Some of the notable domain hosting options were Hostinger, WordPress, Wix, Squarespace, and Google Domains. Of these, we believe that

the best option for domain hosting is Google Domains and Squarespace. We chose google domains as it has the lowest cost of the available options as well as being easy to integrate into the draft website. It is possible to use third party domains for a Google Site, but it is easier to use Google Domains. Squarespace was included with this recommendation since as of June 15th, Google Domains was sold to Squarespace. This should change nothing for the year 2023, but afterwards, any domains purchased on Google Domains would be migrated to Squarespace.

#### Brochure

From what we found in the interviews with other site directors, we also noticed that in addition to having a website available as something for both students and sponsors, there was also a brochure that contained information only for

potential sponsors. After interviewing the director of the Zurich site in particular, Nancy Burnham, we were able to see what is in the brochure. The key parts of the brochure are an introduction of WPI, a slight blurb about the country and what parts of the country WPI is interested in partnering with, the concept of what the partnership can do, possible avenues on how the partnership can go, examples of work done in the past, and an explanation of the project center. This brochure was available as a pdf download. It is important to note that this brochure was only shown when meeting with the potential partner in person.

We believe that the creation of a brochure similar to this would serve greatly as an avenue of marketing. This is because the brochure is a small amount of information that can be heavily expanded upon when meeting with a potential partner.

It also has a narrower target audience and thus can be made in such a way that it does not have to appeal broadly.

Local University Scans and Profiles

Game Sup

Specialization: Game Development

Classification: Ecole Normale Supérieure

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Game Sup is an École that prepares its students for a career in the game development industry by structuring its classwork to both educate and simulate the work pipeline. The school has a large number of alumni that return to teach specific classes and it has additional connections throughout the field in France and even into other focuses like animation and design. Students first apply to a prepa (preparatory) year and then apply for the school where they complete 3 years and the college completing various yearly projects through specific design or technical focused programs. After our team met some of their students at a networking event, their faculty arranged a meeting where we toured their campus and went to see examples of student project work. The campus was clean, had lots of workspaces and was located in an easily accessible office building near the confluence in Lyon. The team and our advisors explained the IQP and MQP opportunities, and some WPI programs their students may be able to participate in.

Project ideas:

- MQP: Would take place during their students last semester project in year 3 where WPI students would work remotely for the first term then travel and be onsite for the last 7 weeks.
- IQP: Collecting data on how target audiences receive a specific game or determining French populations lacking in game media representation.

Table 4: Rubric Score and Notes

Topic	Score 1-5	Notes
English availability	4	Some faculty have English ability but all classes and work in French. Director only spoke French.
Interest in working with WPI	5	Faculty were interested in a partnership with WPI, seemed more on the side of MQP work, and were also interested in opportunities for their students.
Contact Responsiveness	5	Very responsive once we had been introduced through student connection
Ease of access from estudines garibaldi	5	Very easy through tram and metro
Campus as a workspace	5	A lot of space for meetings, but it is a small campus and is probably not open during the school year.
Total/25	24	

## École Centrale de Lyon

Specialization: Applied sciences, Engineering

Classification: Grande école

Contact Information	
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École centrale de Lyon is a research university which is part of a network of other universities in other cities like Paris and Beijing. The école has 13 masters programs in science technology and health, and 7 master programs that can be completed in English. The school's homepage notes: "Our students will excel in the sciences. They will put them into practice through an open education approach (directed study in labs, practical work, study projects, skills-based approach, internships) and through the teaching of human and social sciences, which are essential for personal development and workplace life." Which mirrors WPI's project-based learning basis. Our team was unable to get into contact with this university although the previous project center director had positive exchanges with faculty in the past. Our team visited the campus in the city of Ecully which was easy to access by metro and bus. The campus was similar to the size of WPI and had on campus student housing, a large field and dining hall we were able to view. Additionally we found good workspaces in the housing and library. While we were unable to get any responses over email, we believe an email during the school year coming from a WPI faculty member might be more likely to get a response. It would also be helpful to see if the past sponsor for the LABEX IMU project has any faculty connections with this university.



Potential Projects:

- IQP: Analyzing schools impact on local environment
- IQP: working with graduate students to collect data on the social science side of project/research.

Table 5: Rubric Score and Notes

Topic	Score 1-5	Notes
English availability	5	University had master's programs available in English. Website has an English option
Interest in working with WPI	3	Interested in past
Contact Responsiveness	2	No response to email but contact in past
Ease of access from estudines garibaldi	3	~30-40 min commute due to metro and bus
Campus as a workspace	5	Workspaces in student housing, library, and main dining hall
Total/25	18	

## Université Lumière Lyon 2

Specialization: Social Sciences

Classification: Public University

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Email	<a href="mailto:livia.zotovicimartins@univ-lyon2.fr">livia.zotovicimartins@univ-lyon2.fr</a>
Other	Note unsure of first name

With “disciplines in the Human and Social Sciences, the Université Lumière Lyon 2 is developing cutting-edge research in each of its fields. Sensitive to the concerns and issues of society such as gender, education, work, the city, disability, it participates fully in social progress through its research programs and numerous actions to disseminate knowledge.” The school also runs a chapter of The International Centre of French Studies (CIEF) that teaches French to foreign students from partner universities. Students that are part of the CIEF get access to the library, study spaces, and various cultural and language activities run by the school. The school has both bachelors and masters programs. The campus was easy to access by taking the metro for about 20 minutes. The campus was somewhat clean, had multiple large green spaces between buildings, and was next to a waterfront. While we found some workspaces, there were mostly small classrooms on the inside of the building. That said, we were unable to visit the library, but it would likely also serve as a good workspace.

Potential projects:

- IQP: Maximizing impact of cultural experiences on foreign French language learners.

Table 6: Rubric Score and Notes

Topic	Score 1-5	Notes
English availability	4	English language programs, website translates
Interest in working with WPI	1	N/A
Contact Responsiveness	0	No email reply
Ease of access from estudines garibaldi	5	20 min commute via metro
Campus as a workspace	5	A lot of outdoor and indoor space
Total/25	15	

EmLyon

Specialization: Business, Management, Data Science

Classification: Grande École

Contact Information	
Name	N/A: Contact for summer school program
Email	incoming.master@em-lyon.com
Other	

EmLyon is part of a network of 6 campuses that provide Master’s in business, management, and other fields, bachelors, MBA, and DBA programs. It is a globally ranked school and is well known around France. According to their website’s description of the program, “EmLyon has set out to train responsible managers capable of taking up the challenges of today and tomorrow. This general-interest calling lies at the heart of the school's identity and has been written into its articles of association since July 2021 when it transitioned to the status of a benefit corporation.” The school has a summer school program designed for graduate students set into 2 modules for ECTS credits. The program is entirely taught in English. According to the program brochure “Module 1 will focus on Advanced Strategy and Module 2 on Wine Marketing and Wine Culture.” The program also notes several cultural activities that students may join during the program. During our campus visit, we noticed there were plenty of spaces indoors and outdoors for work comparable to WPI’s unity style workspaces. The campus was clean, generally open, and easy to access by about a 30-40 minute commute via metro and bus. This campus is across the road from Centrale if a partnership was made with one

school, there could be faculty connections across universities. Although this university did not respond to a direct email, our previous project center director was a graduate of this school and had contacts within the university.

Project ideas:

- IQP: Analyzing schools' impact on local environment.
- IQP: working with graduate students to collect data on the social science side of project/research.

Table 7: Rubric Score and Notes

Topic	Score 1-5	Notes
English availability	5	Has post-grad programs all in English, several international summer programs in English, website translates to English
Interest in working with WPI	3	Past project center director was EmLyon graduate and faculty showed interest in past
Contact Responsiveness	2	No response to email and was pretty shut down on day we visited
Ease of access from estudines garibaldi	3	Very easy to access, 30-40 min metro and bus commute
Campus as a workspace	5	Lots of spaces outside and inside to work, large school
Total/25	18	

## Jean Moulin University Lyon 3

Specialization: Law, Politics, Philosophy, Management, and Languages

Classification: Public University

Contact Information	
Name	Chantal Ortillez
Email	
Other	Tel + 33 4 78 78 08

Organized into 4 main faculties, one of which is a school of technology. According to the universities about page, “The University offers career-oriented programs in Law, Political Science & International Relations, Francophone studies, Administration, Management, Accounting, Philosophy, Languages, Arts, History, Geography & Planning, and Information & Communication with qualifications ranging from two-year foundation degrees (Bac +2) to PhDs (Bac +8) in six faculties and institute.” The university offers a bachelors and master’s in business and management completely in English. The school runs a summer program with “The aim is to provide a six-week comprehensive program including 35 hours of French Language and 35 hours of French Culture Classes and excursions, a two-day trip to the Mediterranean.” Their website mentions several graduate student research programs that involve community projects, some with partnerships to universities around Lyon. The campus was very clean, had a green space in the center of the buildings, and was a short 5-10 minute walk from Estudines Garibaldi. The campus was very small and consisted of 2-3 connected buildings, but it had a whole line of cafes and small restaurants along one side of the campus. While we were unable

to get any responses from our emails, our advisors made contact with some faculty during one of the network events the team attended.

Project ideas:

- IQP: Maximizing impact of cultural experiences on foreign French language learners.
- IQP: working with graduate students to collect data on the social science side of project work or research.

Table 8: Rubric Score and Notes

Topic	Score 1-5	Notes
English availability	4	Degrees offered completely in English, website had English version
Interest in working with WPI	0	Unknown
Contact Responsiveness	0	Office was closed and no response to email
Ease of access from estudines garibaldi	5	5-10 minute walk from Estudines Garibaldis
Campus as a workspace	4	Green space and library
Total/25	13	

## Emailing Universities

In order to reach new universities WPI has either not had contact with or lost contact with, our team drafted an email and sent it to either previous contacts, or international relations departments. The email draft was vetted by both our previous project center director and advisors before it was sent. Additionally, due to the customs in France, we made sure to both introduce and include contact information for advisors and directors. The full email is included in appendix F. The draft included brief information about both WPI and the IQP program, including links to past projects. Of 6 emails sent, we received 1 email back from contacts we had not been in contact with through a mutual acquaintance. Additionally, our advisors told us they reached out to contacts (not just universities) over both email and LinkedIn messages without success. Research in our background notes that Facebook is the main social media

platform used in France (Khoa and Huynh, 2023). However, it is unclear if it would be considered unprofessional to reach out over Facebook for a business inquiry. Overall, this method was largely ineffective.

## Networking Events

The team attended four networking events during IQP. The first was a networking event we were invited to thanks to those in the LABEX IMU group. The LABEX event allowed our advisors to connect with faculty at Lumiere 2. The next event was the grand opening of le faitout (the restaurant below SINGA) allowed us to better get to know one of our past partners and meet with some of the entrepreneurs they work with. While our team didn't get any specific contact information, we wanted to note that SINGA is very well connected with the community and could be used as a resource to find small business and other



non-university partners. SINGA also informed us of the game developers of Lyon event where one of our team members met students of the École supérieure Games Sup, who later connected us with the school's faculty. This connection with the faculty is what allowed for a more personal visitation at which it seemed that the faculty became more interested in WPI and a partnership than they most likely would have if we had just emailed them without prior contact. The final networking event we went to was again the game developers of Lyon meetup, this is possible as the meetup occurs on the first Thursday of every month. At this meeting we met students of Bellecour Ecole, which specializes in design, media, and entertainment. After talking to the students, we were given their emails, and they promised to contact the professors and put them in our contact. However, they did note that as it is the

summer, there will be difficulty in getting a response. As of the time of writing, we have not received an update.

### University Visitation

Upon the request and recommendation of our sponsor, we focused on universities being the main avenue for possible partnerships in Lyon. As such, in order to get a feel for what universities are like in person we attempted to go in person to universities. However, as it is Summer, not all schools were open. While some schools were closed, others we were not able to get into, as they would require an ID card to swipe oneself into the building. However, from the universities that we did visit, we were able to glean quite a bit of info. The first university we visited was Jean Moulin Lyon University 3, and as we walked around, we were able to glean that for the public universities, there is not really a campus structure, as much as

it is a couple of connected buildings and an area on the inside for relaxing. The University had several different departments, each for a different area of study. The next university we visited was Lumiere Lyon University 2. The building structure was quite similar to Lyon 3, however in the case of Lyon 2 there was a reception desk, however as we went to the university quite late in the day, no one was there. We also found some departments that were noteworthy such as the social science department and the department of foreign relations. There were several other universities in that area, but all of which were closed. The next two universities we were able to visit were Centrale and EMLyon. Centrale is one of the Grandes Ecoles, so the structure of it is slightly different to that of the public universities. It had a campus with housing and other facilities not found in the other universities. EMLyon was mostly closed for summer, but had 2 buildings that were open, one of which was the reception

building and the other seemed to be a dining hall and an auditorium. From these visits, we can determine that while our research term is the Summer, this is a vacation time in France and as such, not the best time period to contact universities, as it does not give the clearest idea of student life, or now available the university is to partner. The final school we visited was the Ecole Normale Supérieure Game Sup. This visit was accomplished due in part to having prior contact through a student of Game Sup. During the visit we received a personalized tour that showed off every aspect of the building floor and all the rooms that are used. We then sat down in the front office and were shown the previous works of the other students. It was clear from the enthusiasm of the faculty we were talking to, that they would look forward to a partnership with WPI in the future. It is clear from this pattern of in person

visitation, that a more successful visit is formed by having prior contact and talking in person, rather than over email.

## Discussion and Recommendations

From the data that we have collected there are several recommendations we can make to help build partnerships for the Lyon project center that can last for 1-2 years. First, we recommend looking into university partnerships for their resources along with sponsored projects, as they could be beneficial for other aspects of student life while in Lyon. Again, when talking about resources, it means having potential access to student housing, amenities, language courses, and unique cultural experiences. These partnerships have shown to be beneficial as well as long lasting in project centers where they have been implemented. Furthermore, we believe that

contacting Universities during September to May would be beneficial due to the French school year ending in May. This would allow for stronger relationships to be built between WPI and other universities as well as a greater chance of getting responses since many university members are not actively responding to emails or messages over the summer. We also recommend focusing on establishing long lasting sponsor relationships for IQPs before exploring MQP opportunities is important for the project center's success. While opening an MQP project center would be helpful for university partnerships, cementing sponsor relationships with IQPs should come first. This is due to both funding and sponsor availability that needs to be considered when developing a young project center, especially considering the fact that many international MQPs are underfunded. Next, we recommend contacting NGOs, NPOs, and other organizations that would

allow for the project center to potentially have a diverse sponsor pool that would benefit both the city of Lyon as well as the students. This will negate any issues with scrambling for sponsors if certain partnerships have to be cut off during the project term, or if extenuating circumstances arise where a sponsor is unable to provide work for students. This would allow for the portfolio of projects provided by the Lyon project center to both grow and be diverse, stimulating interest for sponsors and students applying to IQPs. It has also been linked to a student's motivation to complete a project when they have options that they are excited about, having solid project work to be put out as a result. We also recommend that there should be a plethora of marketing materials. There should be a brochure for potential sponsors, along with a website that can be used to appeal to both potential sponsors as well as WPI students, and possibly a social media presence. When creating

the website, for ease of upkeep and ease when hosting, we recommend using google sites and creating a website similar to the draft, and that when choosing custom domain options to choose google domains. Based on our database of local universities, university visitation rubrics, and results from emailing and speaking with potential sponsors, we recommended 5 universities as potential partners: Game Sup, École Centrale de Lyon, Université Lumière Lyon 2, emLyon, Jean Moulin University Lyon 3. We believe that meeting with these potential partners face to face rather than email to build long lasting relationships would be beneficial to the sustainability of the Lyon project center. Since our team and advisors struggled to get into contact with universities throughout our time here when using internet entities such as emails and LinkedIn as a means of communication, we believe that if given the opportunity to meet with potential sponsors in

person would be the most practical way of developing these partnerships. After the initial contact with a sponsor, an in-person meeting would go further than sending emails back and forth, showing the drive to want to work with them as well as a great interest in their work. In-person meetings have been proven to develop stronger partnerships with sponsors, leading to the sustainability of the center. In these meetings, we recommend noting the benefits that their organization, employees, or students would gain from a partnership with WPI. This helped us make our case to Game Sup when meeting with them about a potential partnership and can also demonstrate how both groups can benefit from a potential partnership. By doing this, it becomes more likely for potential sponsors to be interested in WPI partnering with their

organization or university and allows for them to get a better understanding of the IQP project as well. The most important of these recommendations is that of acquiring a local coordinator. As a result of WPI's lack of a French program, the term in which this IQP takes place, recommendations from other project centers who have had trouble finding sponsors, and our collective experiences networking, we believe that a local coordinator will be the most beneficial to the sustainability of the Lyon project center. This local coordinator must be properly vetted and trusted by related WPI faculty and will assist in maintaining contact with sponsors in Lyon while students and advisors are not on site for IQP during the academic year.

## Table of Authors:

Section Title	Author(s)	Editor(s)
Abstract	Sydney Breen, Ren Vitellaro	Sydney Breen, Ana Dykeman, Ren Vitellaro
Acknowledgments	Sydney Breen	Ren Vitellaro
Executive Summary	Sydney Breen, Ren Vitellaro, Ana Dykeman	Ana Dykeman, Sydney Breen, Ren Vitellaro
Background: University and Student Challenges and Benefits	Ren Vitellaro, Raj Ganguli, Sydney Breen	Ren Vitellaro
Background: Introduction to the Lyon Project Center	Sydney Breen, Raj Ganguli, Ren Vitellaro	Sydney Breen
Background: Why is Lyon so unique?	Ana Dykeman	Sydney Breen
Background: Higher Education in France	Ana Dykeman, Sydney Breen	Ana Dykeman
Methods: Objective 1	Ren Vitellaro, Ana Dykeman	Ana Dykeman

Methods: Objective 2	Raj Ganguli	Ren Vitellaro
Methods: Objective 3	Ana Dykeman, Ren Vitellaro	Ren Vitellaro
Results: WPI Faculty Interviews...	Ana Dykeman	Sydney Breen
Results: A Closer Look at Marketing....	Raj Ganguli	Sydney Breen
Results: Local University Scan...	Ren Vitellaro, Raj Ganguli	Raj Ganguli
Discussion and Recommendations	Sydney Breen, Ana Dykeman, Ren Vitellaro, Raj Ganguli	Sydney Breen, Ana Dykeman, Ren Vitellaro, Raj Ganguli
References	Ren Vitellaro, Sydney Breen, Raj Ganguli	Raj Ganguli, Ren Vitellaro
Appendix	Raj Ganguli, Sydney Breen	Ren Vitellaro

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# Appendices

Appendix A: General guiding questions for Project Center Director/WPI Faculty Interviews:

1. How did you decide to become a project center director?
2. Have you had to find new project sponsors for the project center?
  - a. How did you determine potential sponsors?
  - b. How did you market the project center to sponsors who did not know about WPI?
  - c. How did you reach out to potential sponsors?
  - d. How do you negotiate what project a student team will address? Is it mostly the sponsors job to produce these projects?
3. Are there any sponsors that return every year?
  - a. How do you remain in contact with these sponsors?
4. How did COVID impact the project center, and did you have to do anything different after the pandemic?
5. Do you have any past or current plans for expanding the projects offered at the center to non-IQP subjects like MQP or graduate student work?
6. Do student housing locations impact which projects or sponsors you consider?

7. Do you have any advice/questions for us?

Appendix B: List of Project Center Websites from Evaluations and Blank Rubric for Website Evaluation

- Iceland: <https://wp.wpi.edu/iceland/>
  - Scored 19.5/25 for quality and 4/8 for the included pages.
- New Zealand: <https://wp.wpi.edu/newzealand/>
  - Scored 16/25 for quality and 6/8 for the included pages.
- Ghana: <https://wp.wpi.edu/developmentdesignlab/>
  - Scored 18/25 for quality and 4/8 for the included pages.
- Panama City: <https://wp.wpi.edu/panamacity/>
  - Scored 19/25 for quality and 5/8 for the included pages.
- Copenhagen:  
[https://wpicpc.org/?\\_gl=1\\*1od2mjn\\*\\_ga\\*MTEwNDE4Njg0Ny4xNjg4NTU5MTQ0\\*\\_ga\\_RE35PKQB7J\\*MTY4ODczNDkxMi40Mi4xLjE2ODg3MzUzMDAuNTUuMC4w](https://wpicpc.org/?_gl=1*1od2mjn*_ga*MTEwNDE4Njg0Ny4xNjg4NTU5MTQ0*_ga_RE35PKQB7J*MTY4ODczNDkxMi40Mi4xLjE2ODg3MzUzMDAuNTUuMC4w)
  - Scored 14/25 for quality and 4/8 for the included pages.
- Morocco: <https://wp.wpi.edu/morocco/>
  - Scored 16/25 for quality and 6/8 for the included pages.

- Puerto Rico: <https://wp.wpi.edu/puertorico/>
  - Scored 20/25 for quality and 6/8 for the included pages.
- London: <https://wp.wpi.edu/london/>
  - Scored 15/25 for quality and 6/8 for the included pages.
- Bucharest: <https://rneamtu.wixsite.com/bucharestiqpcenter>
  - Scored 15.7/25 for quality and 5/8 for the included pages.
- Zurich: <https://www.facebook.com/people/WPIs-Switzerland-Project-Center/100057627431238/>
  - Scored 14/25 for quality and 4/8 for the included pages.
- Prague: <https://pragueprojectcenter.org/>
  - Scored 20.5/25 for quality and 6/8 for the included pages.
- Melbourne: <https://wp.wpi.edu/melbourne/>
  - Scored 25/25 for quality and 7/8 for the included pages.
- Berlin: <https://wp.wpi.edu/berlin/>
  - Scored 21/25 for quality and 5/8 for the included pages.



<b>Category</b>	<b>Points out of 5</b>
Navigation	5
Readability	5
Informative	5
Images	5
Contact	5
<b>Total/25</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Pages Included</b>	<b>0 or 1</b>
Home page	1
Projects	1
Contact Us	1
For Students	1
For Sponsors	1
About	1

WPI Program	1
Gallery	0
<b>Total/8</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Text Notes</b>	<b>Brief desc:</b> had a nice project by year, sponsor, and name section for different ways to look up projects. FAQ is also nice and should be included on our website. From the project report, it seems that it started out as something completely different, but was able to change
Pros	
Cons	

## Appendix C: Lyon Website Draft

Draft: [https://sites.google.com/d/1vJ6wUe4YVBjNp8JKJ4Qny6eS9h-Lu8l1/p/146ieDWdCUq-sEG1\\_9tdgpui4-0hw8ins/preview](https://sites.google.com/d/1vJ6wUe4YVBjNp8JKJ4Qny6eS9h-Lu8l1/p/146ieDWdCUq-sEG1_9tdgpui4-0hw8ins/preview)

# Worcester Polytechnic Institute



## Home

The Lyon Project Center is part of the Global Projects Program at [Worcester Polytechnic Institute](#) (WPI). Students Complete their [Interactive Qualifying Project](#) (IQP) as part of university work. These projects aim to aid the community of Lyon while allowing our students to develop to develop teamwork, project management, and leadership skills for the future.

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[Learn More>>](#)



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## About WPI

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Worcester Polytechnic Institute(WPI) is a private research university in Worcester, Massachusetts. Founded in 1865 in Worcester, WPI was one of the United States' first engineering and technology universities and now has 14 academic departments with over 50 undergraduate and graduate degree programs in science, engineering, technology, management, the social sciences, and the humanities and arts, leading to bachelor's, master's and PhD degrees. WPI's faculty works with students in a number of research areas, including biotechnology, fuel cells, information security, surface metrology, materials processing, and nanotechnology. It is classified among "R2: Doctoral Universities – High research activity".

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## About The Global Office

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### 2019 & 2020

[Bel Air Camp's Accompagnement Program](#)

[Investigating the Development of a Mobile Application for the ONLYLYON Ambassador Network](#)

[Investigating the Patrimoine of Lyon](#)

[Lyon, A Tattooed City](#)

[COVID-19 Recovery through Mutualism](#)

### 2021

### 2022

### 2023

○

Appendix D: Website Maintenance Guide

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tIHnEd-SHH-Pg7ww9hO4rRmHwFUZOWkOEDxfFbKjxA/edit?usp=sharing>

Appendix E: Blank Rubric for University Visits

University Name:	
Date:	
Evaluator Name:	
Scale questions	Score 1-5
English availability	
Interest in working with WPI	
Contact Responsiveness	
Ease of access from estudines garibaldi	
Campus as a workspace	
Total/25	0
Check questions	Score Y/N

Is there a main contact we have received a reply from?	
Size of campus	
Prior work with international students?	
In person evaluation:	
Size of sponsor (SML) (how many student/faculty)	
Is the campus clean?	
is the area around the campus safe?	
Methods of transportation (tram, metro, bus)	
Method of transportation from estudines garibaldis	
Food nearby (Cafe, grocery store, Convenience store, restaurant)	
Is there workspace available	
is there a library	

Is there Wi-Fi	
are there public bathrooms	
are people generally willing to help English speakers?	
other notes	

## Appendix F: Sample Email Template to Lyon Universities:

**University:**

**Contact:**

**Email:**

**Subject Line:** Partnership opportunity with Worcester Polytechnic Institute

To whom it may concern,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is x, and I am reaching out on behalf of a student-led group representing our university, Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) from the United States in Massachusetts. We are reaching out to local universities in Lyon to discuss a partnership with WPI's international program to address a local project. **[Talk more abt specific university here]**

For more information on the WPI IQP and examples of previous projects and the benefits they provide:

[WPI Global Projects](#)

[Venice, Italy IQP](#)

[Melbourne, Australia IQP](#)

In fact, one of our teams is working with LABEX IMU (University of Lyon INSA) this year, on a three-dimensional LEGO model supplemented with numerical projections of various data to help in the discussion and creation of new urban spaces in Lyon.

We are staying in Lyon to meet with universities until the end of June. We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with and discuss the possibility of partnering with **[insert name of college here]**.

The WPI faculty members whom we are working with are Fabienne Miller, Drew Brodeur, Curtis Abel, and Farley Chery. They would also be happy to answer questions and are CC'd in this email.

Thank you for your time, we look forward to hearing back from you.



## Appendix G: Sample Email Template to WPI Faculty Members

**Location: A**

**Director: B**

**Email: C**

**Subject Line: [INSERT LOCATION] Project Center Structure Inquiry**

Hello Professor B,

My name is Y and I am a rising [INSERT YEAR] at WPI currently completing my IQP in Lyon, France. Our group is researching methods of connecting with new community partnerships to help strengthen the Lyon Project Center and create a more diverse selection of projects.

We wanted to reach out to see if you would be available within the next month (before the end of June) to answer questions about how the [INSERT LOCATION] project center established and maintains partnership with sponsors. We would also like to learn about any marketing materials (like social media accounts) used to market the center to non WPI audiences. [INSERT REFERENCE] recommended we reach out to you!

Attached is our current list of interview questions for reference. If there is not a convenient time for you to meet over Zoom with us, typed out responses would be appreciated, although we would prefer to have a more in-depth discussion if possible. Our schedules are extremely flexible, so let us know a few dates/times that work for you, and we can go from there. We look forward to hearing from you!

Best,

Lyon Universities IQP Group 2023

Appendix H: List of WPI Faculty Interviewees

<u>Name of Interviewee</u>	<u>Relevant Role/Project Center at WPI</u>	<u>Date of Interview</u>
Prof. Esther Boucher-Yip	- Director of Bangkok, Thailand Project Center -Director of London Humanities and Arts Center	June 1st, 2023
Prof. Jennifer DeWinter	-Director of Kyoto, Japan Project Center	June 2nd, 2023
Prof. Nancy Burnham	-Director of Zurich, Switzerland Project Center	June 6th, 2023
Prof. Ingrid K. Shockey	-Director of Mandi, India Project Center	June 9th, 2023
Prof. Rick Vaz	-Affiliate Professor within the department of Integrative & Global Studies -Director of the Center for Project-Based Learning	June 13th, 2023

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Former Dean of Interdisciplinary and Global Studies</li> <li>-Advisee of hundreds of IQP Projects</li> </ul>	
Prof. Courtney Kurlanska	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Co-Director of Cuenca, Ecuador Project Center</li> </ul>	June 14th, 2023
Prof. Joseph Doiron	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Co-Director of Windhoek, Namibia Project Center</li> <li>-Assistant Teaching Professor within the Department of Integrative &amp; Global Studies (DIGS)</li> </ul>	June 15th, 2023
Prof. Kent Rissmiller	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Associate Dean of the Global School</li> <li>-Director of Washington Project Center</li> <li>-Advisee of many IQP Projects</li> </ul>	June 21st, 2023