

RGD Guidelines for



REAL PROJECTS *for* REAL CLIENTS

in an academic setting

RGD is pleased to offer basic guidelines for student participation in real design projects for real clients. Our aim is to provide clarity on best practices for students, educators and clients alike, whether it be towards the refinement of existing programs or the development of new collaborative initiatives.

STUDENTS

Benefits

- This is an opportunity to interact with real clients on a real project.
- This is also an opportunity to learn about a business challenge within a particular sector.
- You may receive an honorarium or recognition.

Best Practices

- Take the time to understand the expectations and rules of the assignment. Ask questions.
- Declare in advance if you choose to share your concepts with the client (understanding that should you choose to opt out you will not be eligible for any honorariums being offered).
- If your design is chosen, work with your professor and the client to understand what the deliverables are, and when they are required. You may want to negotiate the timelines if you have a demanding school schedule. Be sure to put it all in writing!

Student Opt-Out Considerations

Group Projects

- These projects are often assigned to groups rather than an individual student. If this is the case, and you want to opt-out of sharing your work with the client, speak with your educator early in the process, work out a mutually agreeable accommodation and let your group know the plan in advance.

EDUCATORS

Benefits

- The initiative can result in enhanced school and program awareness.
- These are opportunities to expose students to real world projects.
- These are opportunities to facilitate collaboration between students and clients.

Best Practices

- Define clear project parameters and expectations for students. Do the same for the client (class time required, the number of rounds of edits they will be entitled to, the final deliverables, etc).
- Set the intellectual property rules and promotional rules for all work produced (chosen and rejected concepts). For helpful guidelines, consult *The RGD Professional Handbook* Chapter 4, 'A Designer's Guide to Intellectual Property'.
- Offer students the option to opt out of sharing their concepts with the client and explain the consequences.

Student Opt-Out Considerations

Educator-Initiated Projects

- When an educator approaches an organization to initiate a project, they will have made clear to students that this is a school project and they will be participating in the process for a mark. However, a student may declare, in advance, to opt out of sharing their final creative with the client.

> RGD strongly encourages educators be mindful of the real clients they chose to work with. Every effort should be made to avoid the exploitation of students and the potential of taking work away from professional designers. Ideal clients are organizations such as nonprofits and charities who would not otherwise have the resources to hire professionals.

ORGANIZATIONS

Benefits

- You will be offering students real world experience.
- If new to working with designers, you will gain insight into the creative process.
- There is an opportunity to receive good student work for a modest cost. The main investment is your time.

Best Practices

- Work with professor to establish project parameters in advance.
- Understand time and input will be required to brief the class and provide market insight.
- Offer constructive feedback at different intervals.
- Provide an honorarium (recommended) and/or significant recognition for the chosen student(s).
- Respect the creative process and the students' time and efforts.

Student Opt-Out Considerations

Client-Initiated Projects

- When an organization approaches a school to work on a project, they will be made aware that, should an educator agree to have their class participate, some individual students may choose to opt out from sharing their final creative.