



CAPSTONE PROGRAM



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RECRUITING YOUR OWN CAPSTONE CLIENT

Presented by Elizabeth Larsen, Capstone Co-director

Panelists



Audrey Campbell

MPA-PNP-Management, 2018

Senior Associate Director, Major Gifts, Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University



Noelle Meyers-Powell

MUP, 2020

Program Manager, Community Service Society of New York
Urban Planning Consultant, Community Solutions-The Brownsville Partnership



Diana Kichler

MPA-PNP- Advocacy, 2021

Public Policy Intern, Barbara Poppe & Associates

Understanding Capstone



- Capstone is a full year project and 3-credit course
- Students work with clients to solve a problem or challenge unique to the organization
- Client recruitment happens in the SPRING preceding the Capstone year
- Students who don't recruit their own client will rank projects from a slate offered in their respective sections

Advantages of Recruiting a Client



- Provides the opportunity to form your own student team
- Gives you practice performing client outreach
- Enables you to pursue an issue area, specific topic, and/or client of personal interest
- Provides certainty around team and client before the start of the course

2020-2021 Student-Recruited Clients

- Citizens Housing and Planning Council - *MUP*
- Innovative Resources for Independence - *HPAM*
- IMPACCT Brooklyn (Pratt Area Community Council) - *PNP-Advocacy*
- Banco Popular Costa Rica - *PNP-Finance*
- Broadway's Babies - *PNP-Management*
- Futures and Options - *PNP-Management*



Before Reaching Out to a Client (~Jan-Feb)

- Make sure you're Capstone Eligible
- Gather likeminded people within your program/specialization
- Discuss the type of client you want to work with
- Identify organizations of interest and think about the types of problems you may want to suggest
- Familiarize yourself with the Capstone Employer web pages to gain an understanding of what being a client entails.

Creating a Team (~Feb-March)

- Teams comprise 3-5 students
- Make sure you share interest areas
- Understand each other's work styles before committing
- Ways to find team members:
 - Post on the Wagnerds Facebook page
 - Connect through student associations
 - Speak with professors in your program/specialization



Program/Specialization Considerations

- Capstone sections are based on specialization, so it is preferred for team members to share a specialization
- Cross-program teams are not allowed (e.g., MUP and HPAM students may not form a team)
- Ideally, no more than two specializations are represented on a team (e.g., PNP Public Policy + PNP Finance), but the nature of the project may allow for more flexibility.

Best Practices in Client Recruitment

- Choose your team's top client(s) to reach out to
- Research NYU Wagner connections with/at the organization using LinkedIn and alumni networks
- Work with team members to generate an outreach strategy
- In reaching out to prospective clients, frame the project as “What critical challenge does your organization face that you haven’t had time to tackle?”

Sample Email to Prospective Client

We are happy that [your organization] is interested in potentially becoming a client in the 2021-22 NYU Wagner Capstone Program. The challenge that we discussed appears to be the seed of a great Capstone project! I encourage you, in further scoping the project, to explore our Capstone Program page, Capstone Client FAQs, and 2019-2020 Capstone Booklet (in particular, please refer to projects in [Management, Finance, and Policy], which begin on page [8]).

Outreach to Prospects (~March-April)

Make sure the clients understand the following:

- The client needs to write and submit a proposal through the online portal by the end-June deadline
- The client needs to commit to working with you for a year
- This is not an internship
- There is a *suggested* engagement fee, but clients will not be turned down because of an inability to pay—*all client questions about the fee should be directed to Elizabeth Larsen at elizabeth.larsen@nyu.edu*

Meeting with Capstone Co-director

Prior to your prospective client's proposal submission, your team must discuss the incoming project proposal with Capstone Co-Director Elizabeth Larsen (elizabeth.larsen@nyu.edu)



Proposal Submission (~May-June)

- Clients need to read and agree to the Capstone Client FAQs
- Clients must submit a Capstone Client Application by the Request for Proposal (RFP) deadline at the end of June
- Clients must indicate that the proposal was created with your team in mind, and must list your names (note, there is a field for stating this under the Special Considerations section of the form)

Application Review

- Congratulations, your recruitment work is done!
- Your project will be reviewed by the Capstone Directors over the summer—alongside all received proposals—for specialization and instructor fit
- Projects are assigned to a Capstone section and instructor
- If your assigned instructor has any concerns about your client, they may reach out to the client prior to the start of classes

Section Assignment Notification

- Your team will be notified approximately mid-summer of your section assignment and whether your recruited client project has been accepted!
- If not accepted, you will, alongside your classmates, rank projects from a slate of client projects assigned to your section.

If you have any questions about this process, please email Elizabeth Larsen at elizabeth.larsen@nyu.edu.

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Success Story: National Audubon Society

STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE THE FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

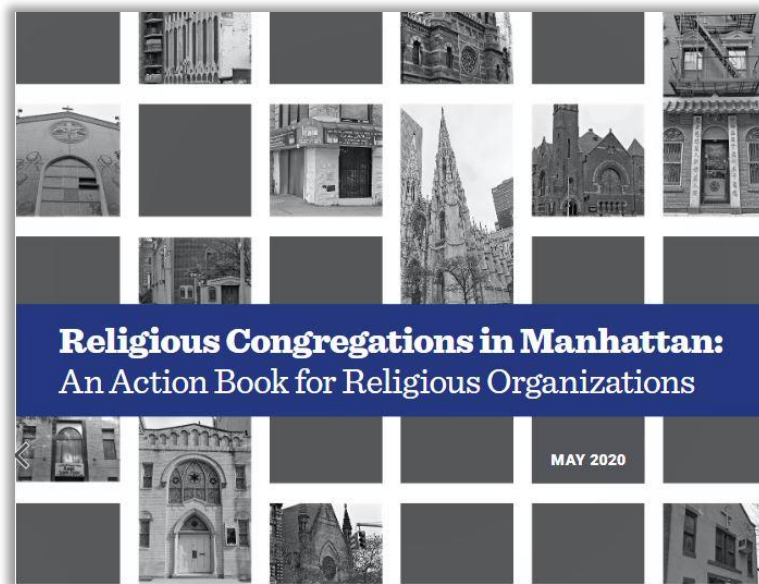
2017-2018, PNP-Finance



Success Story: Manhattan Borough President's Office

DESIGNING AN ACTION BOOK FOR RELIGIOUS FACILITIES

2019-2020, MUP



Success Story: IMPACCT Brooklyn (Pratt Area Community Council)

HOUSING RIGHTS AND TENANT ENGAGEMENT
AWARENESS 2020-2021, PNP-Advocacy & Political Action



THANK YOU



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<https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone>