Youth Skills and Innovation Initiative

Closing the gap between business, youth and the workforce of tomorrow

Global Business Coalition For Education
Recent trends show that by 2030, over half of the world’s young people — 825 million — will lack the basic skills needed for employment, according to a 2016 report by the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity.1 With the current pace of change, the rapid development rate of new technology and constant innovation of the goods and services in the global economy, the business community must proactively work with young people to support its future workforce needs to keep up with the growth opportunities and industries of the future. Yet surveys show2 that the ways in which business engage in workforce development — and the ambitions and aspirations of young people — are mismatched. We can harness the potential of young people and the workforce of the future if business leaders come together today to foster their innovation, entrepreneurial and technology skills.

Access to gainful employment is vital to a community, and having meaningful work can substantially improve the lives of everyone in it. Regrettably, across the globe, half of the jobs on offer for young people are likely to be obsolete before those people have had the chance to graduate and enter the workforce.3 The acceleration of new innovations has reached a rate of unpredictability and uncertainty, leading to two main consequences:

— The downside: it’s expected that by the year 2030, nearly two billion jobs4 will be at risk of becoming obsolete, as automation and technological advancements continue to soar in the coming decades.

— On the up side, this brings with it many exciting employment and entrepreneurship opportunities as young people are able to foster new types of unimagined industries, and innovations that have not yet been dreamt up.
This collaboration, created by the Global Business Coalition for Education (GBC-Education) and Intel Corporation (Intel), has two main goals:

1. Identify new models to rapidly enhance the skills and innovation readiness of young people, and
2. Inspire collective action among the business community, civil society, government leaders and youth in order to bolster the skills of our next generation of innovators.

As co-chair Sarah Brown puts it, “Only by working together to support the ‘next generation’ of thinking, partnership and youth will we collectively overcome the obstacles facing today’s young people. Through this commission we are bringing in and connecting individuals, companies and institutions; bridging the private and public sectors; matchmaking for global education and future skills.”
Objectives

1 Come together
First and foremost, the initiative will convene a Commission of diverse partners from the business community, government officials and youth representatives. This commission will look for the most effective ways to improve youth and innovation skills, with a special emphasis on marginalized populations most likely to be left behind.

2 Take action
Next up, it will identify action-oriented recommendations for industry and governments—for instance, how to develop and scale essential training, content and technology resources—all vital skills that will be needed to succeed in the future.

3 Spread the word
Lastly, the initiative will look to raise global awareness, drive advocacy, and mobilize industry partners, government, and youth around innovative partnerships and initiatives.

Background

The fourth industrial revolution (4IR) is made up of emerging technological breakthroughs in a number of fields. They include robotics, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, biotechnology, the Internet of Things, 3D printing, and autonomous vehicles. But this is the tip of the iceberg. These exciting innovations have led to many new jobs and service requirements, while at the same time drastically altering the landscape for additional entrepreneurship opportunities, innovations, and the way in which urban cities function.

Today, the global economy depends on ‘new basic skills’ such as digital, creativity and presentation. Since 2013 the demand for these skills have increased all over the world. In Australia for example digital skills have increased by more than 200 percent, critical thinking by 150 percent, creativity by more than 60 percent, and presentation skills by 25 percent.

In 2015, the global community created the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Chief among them, Goal 4: “to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. Another is Goal 8, which aims to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. If we are to accomplish these goals and meet the ever-growing global demand for skills, this will require a combination of macro and micro initiatives, to ensure the populations most at risk are given priority. This is especially true in urban cities where more than half of the world’s population resides. It is also expected that the population in these areas will increase to three-fourths by 2050—adding an additional 2.5 billion people. As a result, these cities will begin to feel even more pressure of the disconnect between skills, innovation, and employment.

Rosalind Hudnell, Co-Chair has said that, to move forward we need, “to commit to new, proven and disruptive approaches to address the youth skills gap. It is our collective responsibility to ensure the current and next generation of young people can be active participants in the changing workforce will result in an increase in everyone’s bottom line, improving the lives of individuals, families, communities, cities, and countries.”

With this in mind, the Initiative sets out to identity promising models, foster new innovations, partnerships, and solutions across youth and industry leaders. From here, it will seek to ensure the next generation of workers, innovators, and makers has the necessary innovation capabilities. The Initiative will also share action-oriented recommendations for industry and governments on how to develop and scale essential training, content and technology resources to develop the skills needed to succeed in the future.

Only then will the next generation be ready to participate in and drive forward the 4IR in a way that can improve the lives of our communities.
In order to help close the global youth skills gap, it is important to get as many people as possible talking about the importance of this issue.

Guided by dialogue from a range of decision makers — comprising a diverse range of experts across industry, government, NGOs, youth, and academia — the Initiative will be informed by and supported by a network of youth, a circle of city mayors, research partners, and public outreach. It will also draw on the following resources:

1. Expertise, programs and prototypes, from companies engaged in youth empowerment initiatives;
2. Existing and newly funded research and best practices in learning and implementation models, and
3. Direct input and recommendations from youth themselves.

**Youth Network**

A network of leading youth organizations will support the initiative’s work and outcomes. Each will appoint a young leader to a Youth Council which will support the Initiative’s work. It will do this by informing and helping to shape the research agenda, providing feedback to the Commission, supporting the recommendations, and encouraging business, governments, and youth to take action.

**Research and Analysis**

Working with partners, the Initiative will scan the current state of research, trends, trajectories and business models, and identify potential opportunities for business and youth. It will put forward recommendations for the Commission to consider. The research component will involve youth surveys, case studies and periodic briefs on important issues, to help create and sustain momentum for the Commission.

**Awareness Raising, Media and Events**

A series of outreach activities, including media, social media, and PR events will drive awareness of the challenge and opportunities, with the aim of inspiring further commitments to action. The Initiative will engage with local government officials to help accelerate promotion in a targeted capacity and encourage the business sector, governments, and youth organizations to take action — all with the aim to build new partnerships, and encourage growth, development, and opportunity for young people.
Closing the Gap — a Timeline for the Initiative

2017
Launch Commission and establish Youth Network

2018
Engage in Research and Analysis with Partners

Sept 2018 & Beyond
Release Recommendations and Inspire Action

About the Founding Organizations

Intel Corporation (Intel) invents at the boundaries of technology to make amazing experiences possible for business and society, and for every person on Earth. Intel has a long history of investing in education to empower people and improve their lives through technology. Intel is now building on its education experience to tackle one of the most pressing challenges of our time — ensuring that the next generation of innovators is broadly diverse in terms of ethnicity, gender, and geography, and has the skills needed to succeed in our rapidly changing world. Through the Intel® Innovation Generation initiative, Intel is collaborating across sectors, communities, and organizations to implement and scale programs that expand economic opportunities for today’s youth. Programs and prototypes include new technology curricula, employability skills training, and hands-on innovation experiences. Intel believes technology is a force for positive social impact and has the power to be a great equalizer, but only if everyone has access to it.

The Global Business Coalition for Education (GBC-Education) brings the business community together to accelerate progress in delivering quality education for all of the world’s youth. It combines the voice, capabilities, resources, and innovations of over 100 companies and leading brands to address the leading challenges of education for children and youth. Its platform harnesses the influence, core business, social responsibility, strategic investments, thought leadership and philanthropy of all its companies, making bridges with government, nonprofit and international actors as a powerful tool to transform the opportunities of young people.

Conclusion

There is a significant gap between the way the business community and young people approach the workforce of tomorrow. By 2030, the needs will be great if the actions of today to address youth skills do not match the pace and ambition of innovation in the global economy. The Youth Skills and Innovation Initiative aims to bridge the divide and inspire action to support the next generation of innovators and makers with the skills needed in the new global economy.
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