

ProjectED - Original Post (December 6, 2015)

There are 89 million millennials in the USA. They comprise 25% of the total population. Can millennials crowd fund and use their collective power to engage corporate partners to make college affordable for all students, particularly first generation students?

We have seen the power of crowd funding of small donations, to raise large amounts of funds, within recent presidential campaigns. Millennials are mission driven. They often choose to purchase from brands whose values align with their own. Can a project which targets millennials to become the "crowd" in a crowd funding campaign, combined with corporate partnerships leveraged by their power as a group, become a pathway to make higher education accessible and affordable to all who aspire to it, particularly first generation students?

ProjectED might consist of the following:

Crowdfunding - Small donations from a very large pool of donors has been shown to be a successful way to raise large amounts of money. As noted in a recent presidential campaign this can be a very powerful fundraising tool. For those who can afford to, and are motivated to, they can make larger contributions.

Grassroots Efforts - Outreach and education to create awareness of the enormity of the problem and need. Outreach to bring more folk from the greater community to the campaign as donors to the crowd fund, or as consumers purchasing branded products that will support ProjectED. (see below)

Corporate Partners - *"Corporate social responsibility is millennials' new religion."* [Crain's](#)

"4 in 5 said they'd be more likely to purchase from a company that supports a cause they care about (if price and quality were equal) and 3 in 4 would think more highly of a company that supports a social cause."

"A stunning 3 in 4 believe that corporations should create economic value for society by addressing its needs."

"Millennials want to be part of a movement. Give them one they can make their own and they will be passionate and, yes, evangelical about it."

How can this group leverage their power, to engage corporations to join them on this mission? Which brands and corporations will support ProjectED? Might this be an opportunity for corporations to highlight what they value to a group of consumers and potential employees that they want to engage? What might this look like in a ProjectED campaign?

Corporate matching of crowd funded donations?

Special Events - Raising awareness and funds at particular times of the year. Corporate contributions in the form of a per cent of the purchase price for a product popular with millennials.

Corporate support in the form of - Consumer Products - that when purchased a part of the profit goes to support ProjectED. When used and visible the products can raise awareness of the project's mission. (The **RED Campaign** is the basis of this idea. RED is a **campaign** "To Deliver an AIDS Free Generation". It was built on the premiss that *"We have incredible power and what we choose to do, or even buy, can change someone's life on the other side of the world."*

What might ProjectED funds be targeted for?

Financial Aid Fund For Public Universities- The majority of youth in the US attend public higher education institutions. As is pointed out in this OI [blog post](#) States have cut back significantly on financial support to public universities and this decreases the availability of financial aid.

Support of the Pre College Process - Low income students may not be able to afford application fees, college prep test courses, travel to interview and tour schools.

Support for Books and Travel Expenses - Some students cannot attend college because they cannot afford basic transportation fees and books. Without financial resources for basic needs some students choose not to attend at all, and others may drop out.

How will funds be connected to students in need?

Who will administer a ProjectED fund?

References:

<http://www.millennialmarketing.com/who-are-millennials/>

<https://challenges.openideo.com/challenge/youth-mentor/research/what-motivates-millennials>