omprakash

We facilitate relationships, dialogue & learning between social change agents around the world.

**SPOILER:** not a flashy solution, not a widget to end poverty, not a buzzwordy facade, not a neocolonial impulse, not a voluntourist trap.
He is Omprakash.

In 2004, he inspired us to believe that positive social change begins with simple human relationships.

Since 2004, we have been dedicated to building mutually beneficial & educational relationships between grassroots social impact organizations—a.k.a. our Partners—and volunteers, donors & classrooms around the world who can learn from & support their work.

Our network by the numbers: 36 COUNTRIES | 167 INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS | 16,972 PEOPLE | $6,566,891.83 DISTRIBUTED SINCE 2005
The Challenge:

'Voluntourism' is a multi-billion dollar industry, but it is ethically- and pedagogically-bankrupt, shaped by distorted incentives, ethnocentric assumptions, and limited emphasis on substantive learning, reflection, and dialogue.
Annually, **voluntourism** is 1.6 million people spending $2 billion USD

NPR 2014

Analogous activities often not factored into those numbers:

- Gap Years
- Service-Learning
- Volunteering Abroad
- Int'l Service Trips
A Broken Industry

In the dominant paradigm, **middlemen sell expensive 'placements'** or chaperoned tours — an inefficient & disempowering way of matching needs with assets. An overemphasis is placed on 'making a difference' & 'changing the world.'

Misaligned Stakeholders

Students, universities, and parents struggle to gain or enable 'global experiences' in a way that is ethical, affordable & academically robust. And **social change organizations** in the 'Global South' struggle to retain their autonomy and mission coherence.
Omprakash redefines this industry through a variety of channels that engage all of those stakeholders:

Our network of curated Partners in 30+ countries are real social change orgs doing real social change work in their communities.

Omprakash EdGE is our state-of-the-art, mobile-ready online learning platform for custom curricula, mentorship & critical dialogue.

Global Dialogue is a professional forum for global dev and social change stakeholders. The Blog is an open mic for voices across the network.

Crowdfunding via Omprakash allows our Partners and EdGE volunteers to raise money and raise consciousness among a global donor base.
Our vetted Partners maintain their own profiles on our site, and anybody can apply for their positions. We do not 'place' people. Partners autonomously decide which applicants to accept. The result = healthy relationships grounded in real dialogue rather than in a middleman's quest to sell 'placements.'
“Prayasam strongly believes that success is ultimately about connection, not perfection. Omprakash has helped us to connect and amplify our VOICES to various friends and supporters.”

— Amlan

Profile of an Omprakash Partner:

Prayasam
Kolkata, India

Founded: 1996
Joined Omprakash: 2012
Average Daily Cost: $22.50
Raised through Omprakash: $105,138
EdGE volunteers hosted since 2013: 4

Mission:
To organise and develop the children of slum areas as empowered change agents by forming groups and sustainable advocacy on health education, environment and livelihood within their community.

Amlan Ganguly
Prayasam Founder & Director
The EdGE (Education through Global Engagement) online platform supports student learning before, during, and after their international experiences. Universities and other providers can customize EdGE for their own student cohorts, or individuals can enroll directly in a public Omprakash EdGE cohort.
EdGE students choose a mentor from within the Omprakash team to receive ongoing feedback and support before, during and after their field position. Our mentorship team is comprised of a diverse group of young professionals with a vast array of experience in fields related to int'l development.
The EdGE Logistics section provides a customizable list of tasks for students to complete before departing for field positions. Common tasks in the list include uploading a copy of one's passport and visa, entering flight and preventative health information, completing surveys, and more.

**Passports**

Upload a scan/photocopy/photo of your passport. We need to see the photo AND signature pages. We should see something like this:

![Passport Image]
An EdGE classroom provides rich content and space for dialogue between students, mentors, and admins. Our standard pre-departure curriculum is a twelve-week introduction to the history, ethics, and economics of international 'development,' and we offer custom content for different cohorts.

The Great Convergence, The Great Divergence

In an effort to reconcile notions of 'progress' with the stark inequalities that persist in our world, it may be helpful to think about the historical context of modern inequality. Has it always existed? Is it inevitable? To help us with these questions, we'll first read an excerpt from the introduction of economist Angus Deaton's 2013 book, 'The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality.'

Inequality is often a consequence of progress. Not everyone gets rich at the same time, and not everyone gets immediate access to the latest life-saving measures, whether access to clean water, to vaccines, or to new drugs for preventing heart disease. Inequalities in turn affect progress.[...]

Many of the great episodes of human progress, including those that are usually described as being entirely good, have left behind them a legacy of inequality. The Industrial Revolution, beginning in Britain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, initiated the economic growth that has been responsible for hundreds of millions of people escaping from material deprivation. The other side of the
The EdGE Roundtable is the classroom's forum, providing a space for students and mentors to browse and engage with each other's end-of-unit responses. Unlike most online-learning platforms, EdGE is purpose-built to facilitate authentic user-to-user exchange, rather than uni-directional content delivery.

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The EdGE Mentee Manager allows program mentors and admins to track student participation, logistics, field position planning, performance evaluations, and more.
About Me
My name is Caitlin Dunn, I am 27 years old, and my passion is working with and advocating for people who need support. I have worked in many different fields such as being the head coach of the Tallahassee Synchronized Swimming team (non-profit), I have been a cook for 9 years specializing in sushi and vegan cuisine, and I have volunteered with WWOOF in 2009. I hope to master the Spanish language to help communities here in the United States. I am now currently a student at Florida State University majoring in Spanish and minoring in social work, and plan to apply for the Peace Corps when I graduate. I am committed, hard-working.

An EdGE student's profile showcases their work for friends, family, and the general public. Omprakash offers state-of-the-art blogging and crowdfunding tools to all EdGE students, and student profiles aggregate all blog posts and active crowdfunding campaigns.
Donate to Christina Armes's Campaign

Empowering Women and Strengthening the Community in Ollantaytambo, Peru

Campaign Goal
$2,000.00
$1,113.00
Raised by 14 people in 48 days

5 days left

Share this campaign on

Donation history

$50.00
April 19, 2017
Sharon Mora
Lakeland, United States
Excited for this opportunity for you Tina! :)

$5.00
April 18, 2017
Anonymous

This is a Personal Campaign | 95% of the money raised will be earmarked for Christina Armes for approved expenses related to their EdGE participation. 5% of the money raised will be earmarked for Awamaki.

Hello, and thank you for stopping by my funding page! I’m deeply honored to be serving with Awamaki in Ollantaytambo this summer as a tour guide practicing and promoting sustainable tourism in addition to empowering women in their local communities. Awamaki provides skills training in knitting, sewing, weaving, and other creative skills, as well as technical and administrative training. In addition, Awamaki promotes sustainable tourism by facilitating valuable cultural experiences for tourists and promoting appreciation for Andean way of life.

So much of what Awamaki does is near and dear to me. As a history and Spanish major, I

EdGE students are able to crowdfund via 'Partner campaigns' in which 100% of the money is earmarked for their host; or 'Personal Campaigns' in which 5% is earmarked for their host and 95% for the student’s approved trip-related expenses. Omprakash Partners are also able to crowdfund for themselves.
Namaste. Maa tapaiharu ko laaghi sappai ramro chaan mon parcha. Maa yo blog post mo qualitative ra quantitative data mo lekhnechhu. Himserve ko yatraharu gari sakyo, tara yo hapta kari kari data compilation kaam gardaichau. Hello. I hope that all is going well for you. In this blog post I will be writing about qualitative and quantitative data. Himserve’s evaluation visits are now finished, but again and again we are working on data compilation this week.
Case Study: EdGE @ Florida State University

Fall: FSU chooses their "Global Scholars" cohort. Many low-income and first-generation college students are able to take part due to our low-cost model and financial aid.

Winter: The cohort gets enrolled in EdGE. Students independently research our Partners and apply to their favorites. Over the course of several weeks, they dialogue with our Partners and confirm field positions in the network.

Spring: Students engage in our one-of-a-kind EdGE online classroom, learning from each other and their EdGE Mentors. Students begin developing ideas for their Capstone Projects.

Summer: Students spend at least 2 months at their field position. They use the Omprakash platform to blog and post Capstone Project updates.

Fall: Students return to campus and join a post-trip EdGE classroom to reflect and workshop Capstones before final submission and dissemination of Capstone Projects.

“The insights EdGE offered, but more importantly, the questions it asked, for so many of us, opened life-altering doors of reflection, dialogue, and action. To me, these doors represent just how formative and transformative the experience has been from the very first week of EdGE to now.

Inam Sakinah
FSU ’18

Inam was a 2014-15 EdGE Global Scholar who worked with Arajuno Road Project in Puyo, Ecuador
Some of the **Universities & Organizations** running **EdGE-based programs** with us:

- Claremont McKenna College
- University of Washington
- University of Michigan
- Center for Civic Leadership, Rice University
- Seattle University
- Global Citizens Initiative
- Child Family Health International
- Mao Kenya
- Florida State University
We also host conferences for our Partners, on their turf.

From December 4-6, 2015, Omprakash hosted a Partner Conference in New Delhi, India.

In this photo, conference participants celebrate the conclusion of a very successful meeting of minds from all over the world.
Omprakash in Press

The New York Times

INSIDE HIGHER ED

PBS NEWSHOUR

Slate

the guardian

“...It's such an incredible resource for organizations and for individual volunteers. Firstly, Omprakash is about fostering educational experiences.

- College Uncensored, 2015
Contact:

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