The Global Innovation Exchange (GIX) is a new model that is changing the game in innovation education and practice. It is a collaboration between universities and industry partners from around the world focused on developing leaders in innovation. The first two academic partners are the University of Washington and Tsinghua University, with foundational support from Microsoft. This new model combines learning and practice focused on solving pressing global challenges.

**Collaboration Across Boundaries**

To find solutions to global challenges, we must cooperate across traditional boundaries. GIX brings top faculty and learners from across disciplines and around the world to work in close collaboration with professionals and entrepreneurs from diverse industries. Through project-based learning, students, researchers and industry professionals create solutions to pressing global challenges such as health, sustainability and social equity.

Our goal is to have GIX be top of mind for innovators, entrepreneurs and dreamers looking for a place to bring their drive, creativity and desire to make an impact on the world.

The result will be an influx of talent, expansion and re-location of innovation businesses to this region, and the “digital transformation” of legacy companies from brick-and-mortar platforms to virtual ones.

Here’s how we will accomplish this:

- Recruiting a mixture of students and an extensive network of entrepreneurs from the U.S., China and around the world. This melting pot of ideas will attract the best and brightest innovators from our region as well as globally.
- Attracting students who are “gritty,” who are doers, future thinkers, and who want to make the world a better place with their innovations.
- Drawing in students who have innovations they are looking to refine and bring to market or to develop within an existing company.

“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking that we used when we created them.”

Albert Einstein
How GIX is Different

GIX's interdisciplinary curriculum and project-based coursework train students to take an innovation from concept to development and on to launch. Emphasis on the interplay between design thinking, technology development, and entrepreneurship prepares students to contribute solutions to a range of global challenges and business needs. Industry and nonprofit partners help identify global challenges and provide ongoing mentoring and support to a global student cohort, driving solutions from idea to impact.

Design thinking courses will teach students how to define a clear user need and take a user-centered approach to the design process. Technology courses cover topics such as managing data, signal processing, and hardware prototyping. Entrepreneurship courses focus on startup basics, team building, marketing, and intellectual property law.

GIX Vision

Discussions between Microsoft and UW led to the vision that took form as the Global Innovation Exchange (GIX), starting with a master's degree program developed by the University of Washington and Tsinghua University, the leading technology and innovation university in China.

GIX is designed to attract innovators to our region with a cross-cultural platform and access to leaders in the innovation field, and which is responsive to the needs of the global tech/innovation marketplace. The first cohort of students enrolled at Tsinghua in the fall of 2016. In the fall of 2017, students begin classes at a new, custom-built facility located in the Spring District of Bellevue, Washington.

Microsoft has been a key partner in the launch of this program, making an initial investment of $40 million. Other companies have expressed interest in joining GIX, and additional agreements are being developed. GIX is also adding new academic partners from North America, Europe and Asia.

“21st century innovation that truly meets human needs requires skills such as teamwork, creativity, and cultural awareness. We envision GIX as a place where all of this can be brought together to foster the kind of innovation and progress that will both grow the innovation economy in the Puget Sound region while truly benefiting humankind.”

Vikram Jandhyala
Co-Executive Director, Global Innovation Exchange (GIX)
Vice President for Innovation Strategy, University of Washington
**GIX Focus**

The initial focus of GIX will be on Connected Devices for sustainability, health and social equity. Future phases will include:

- Healthcare innovation (mobile health, social determinants of health)
- Clean energy (renewables, smart buildings)
- Sustainable cities (environmental, economic and social equity)

**GIX Outcomes**

Graduates will have the technical and design thinking skills and business confidence to launch their own startup, join a new venture team at a leading company or nonprofit, or advance their academic pursuits. Outcomes of GIX will include acqui-hires (combined technology and talent acquisitions), in-house innovation teams, new markets and industries as well as new startups, products and prototypes.

**Degrees Offered**

GIX offers a 15-month Master of Science in Technology Innovation (MSTI) degree from the University of Washington. Students may expand their global perspective by studying for an additional six months at Tsinghua University for the dual degree which combines the MSTI with a Master of Engineering in Data Science and Information Technology from Tsinghua University. New degree options, certificate programs, and fields of study will be added.

**Inaugural GIX Innovation Competition Winners**

Examples of the types of projects students will be working on can be seen in the winners of the recent GIX Innovation Competition last fall. GIX created the annual competition to spur solutions to global challenges. This year’s theme was “Connected Devices, Innovation and Change.” The top three winners invented solutions in molecular science, healthcare, and virtual reality.

**KOMRA** – developed a portable multi-physical analyzer, a molecular sensor that gives a unique fingerprint for any material that is scanned (i.e. calories or allergens inside food, characteristics of soil, quality of fabrics and other materials, etc.), by Abed Bukhari and Leen Abu Bakr, BlindSense Ltd and An-Najah National University, Palestine.

**The Next Generation** – created a mobile air filtration system for air pollution which provides adjustable assisted inhalation. “AirEx” is a self-contained breathing apparatus which is an effective solution for breathing pure air without wearing a mask, by Nicholas Becker, WANG Zetai, YANG Yu, WANG Ruolin, Tsinghua University and University of Washington.

**PCG-1** – invented MagicGlove, an easy-to-use and low-cost hand-tracking device which will serve as a wearable user input device for 3D manipulation in virtual reality, by YAN Yukang, YANG Zhican, GU Yizheng, Tsinghua University.
The GIX Building

A state-of-the-art new facility in the Spring District of Bellevue, Washington, supports GIX's world-class students and faculty. The building is located in a new urban development east of Seattle built around planned light rail. Just 10 miles from the UW campus, the location offers proximity to multiple technology corridors and is part of a 36-acre mixed-use development.

At the heart of the three-story building is the makerspace which facilitates the making of prototypes and new products. The building was specifically designed around the GIX program and features design studios, an incubation space, electronics prototyping labs, and spaces for collaboration and presentations.

About GIX

The Global Innovation Exchange is a global partnership between major research universities and innovative corporations to develop leaders in innovation. The first two academic partners are the University of Washington and Tsinghua University, with foundational support from Microsoft. More universities and companies are joining and in a decade more than 3,000 learners will enroll. GIX pioneers new forms of teaching and learning by connecting world-class learners and faculty with research-led companies and nonprofits to collaborate on solutions to global challenges.

Meet Carrie Grey

Incoming student Carrie Grey has been a web developer, designer, curriculum planner, and usability tester in a variety of Seattle area organizations. In these roles she has created digital experiences for the Gates Foundation, Rick Steves Travel, Stryker, and more. She was voted Teacher of the Year for her work at the Art Institute of Seattle. She joins GIX with the goal of creating new products that leverage emerging technologies and environmental experiences.

For more information:

gix.uw.edu
techinnovationdegree.uw.edu
gix@uw.edu
msti@uw.edu

For engagement opportunities:
Kerry Godes, Chief Advancement Officer, GIX and CoMotion
kgodes@uw.edu | 206.616.5481