

WELCOME TO OUR FIRST PUBLICATION: IDW 2021 REFLECTION SERIES

# Welcome to Ignio

WRITTEN BY

***The members of Ignio's  
inaugural Student Steering  
Committee (SSC)***

When it comes to students interested in international development, international relations, and social justice, many strive to get as involved in their field as possible. Nonetheless, students and young professionals are facing a growing disconnect between a desire to be involved and listened to in their future career sector, and a colonized space of academia, professionalism, and bureaucracy. Rich and critical discussions in development often feel fleeting - quick to be ignited, but difficult to tangibly action as a student starting out in the field.

## **WHY A COMMUNITY PLATFORM?**

I am incredibly excited to play a role in fostering development conversations for all those interested in the subject. This community platform will allow unique perspectives to be displayed in ways which are accessible to all and remove the barriers which often prevent many from taking part in these vital discussions on development. Those outside the professional realm of development have important points of view on relevant topics, however often lack the space to present them and connect with others to further develop ideas. This platform

will allow these individuals to come together and bring these discussions to a new height through a variety of written and creative pieces. I am looking forward to seeing the important discussions which will happen in this space and will work towards a wholly accessible and inclusive platform.

***Madeleine Wesley, SSC Founding Member***

I am thrilled to be a part of the launch of an inviting space for igniting connections and conversations within the IDS community. Now more than ever before, youth bring valuable perspectives to how development should be practiced so that it can become sustainable, decolonial, and amplify local movements. Ignio inherently seeks to decolonize and make more accessible the space for sharing ideas and fostering discussions in a creative and equitable manner. It is my hope that students will use this platform to create, connect, and continue the conversation.

***Yasmin Rajwani, SSC Founding Member***

All too often, those with unique research to share and stories to tell lack the opportunities to make their voices heard. This seems backwards, given the plethora of academic journals and outlets that we familiarize ourselves with as development practitioners. But in creating Ignio, we create new opportunities. The pressure to have a history of publications is removed, the lived experiences of our communities are

celebrated and steps are taken towards an equitable future. What excites me most about Ignio is the validation of creative expression in development circles. This allows thinkers to communicate in ways that make sense to them, contributing innovative ideas to important discussions that may otherwise discriminate based on approach. Building this community has enabled us to include all those interested in the subject matter of international development, and to fuel the idea that everyone has something to say.

***Rebecca Judd, SSC Founding Member***

The conversations surrounding globalization and the international systems are ever-changing. Thus, a platform that facilitates and encourages necessary dialogue between development professionals, students, researchers, and those with a budding interest in the subjects, is incredibly valuable. As an International Development student, I cannot overstate the value of discussion, and it is our intention that IDS can inspire the community to share a diverse myriad of perspectives and opinions. At the same time, IDS strives to be an outlet for rethinking conventional, often colonial theories of international development, and similar fields. As a result, IDS promotes the inclusion of a variety of mediums to express opinions and perspectives: from poetry and prose, to visual art forms. I look forward to observing the interactions between various opinions, all passionate about the subject and progressing towards increasingly inclusive discussions. Working to create IDS with such a dedicated team has been a great experience, and I anticipate the great strides the platform will continue to take.

***Cameron McKay, SSC Founding Member***

The art of storytelling plays an integral role in the way we perceive and participate in the world around us. The narratives that we, as individuals (or as academics and practitioners!) hold plays a fundamental role in creating a clearer and more well rounded frame of understanding. As such, there are SO many stories to be told in International Development studies as an interdisciplinary field. Diverse identities, backgrounds, and experiences are uniquely interacting with the very concept of International Development, and these narratives should be considered powerful tools for widening its understanding.

My hope for this platform is to be able to provide youth (and the young at heart!) with the opportunity to contribute to IDS discourse while challenging traditional structural barriers that may otherwise prevent important stories from being shared.

***Natasha Cortes, SSC Founding Member***

I am so excited to be part of Ignio and able to support a platform that presents diverse academic voices. I am proud that my peers recognized the lack of student voices in academic literature, and honoured to be part of a team that is working towards filling it through an inclusive and accessible platform. Being able to exercise voices and engaging with, instead of simply consuming dialogue is crucial to students building a strong International Development community. I hope that Ignio will create a platform for students to be heard, make connections, and grow as scholars.

***Jordan Egan, SSC Founding Member***

To read more about the SSC please [consult our website](#).