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## IGGY Social Network Hopes To Serve Smart Teens

The Huffington Post | By Rebecca Klein  
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Is this the social networking site for the next Bill Gates or Steve Jobs?

Its creators hope so.

The International Gateway for Gifted Youth (IGGY), a social network that is designed for brainy teens between the ages of 13 and 18 has recently reached more than 2,500 members, according to The Independent. The site, which was created by the University of Warwick, is designed to give a select group of gifted students the opportunity to play thought-provoking games, engage in debates and network with other talented teens.

The purpose of Iggy, which was created in 2011, is to “help gifted young people ... [realize] their full potential,” according to a university news release. The site’s creators believe that gifted students greatly benefit from collaboration with like-minded students, and the site encourages members “to work with top academics, student mentors and other gifted young people around the world to exchange ideas.”

Unlike Facebook, not every teen is eligible to make a profile on IGGY.

Students must be recommended by their teachers in order to gain a spot on the social networking site. The site explains that they “believe that teachers who work with students on a daily basis are best placed to judge whether they have the potential to perform in the top 5%.”

United Kingdom-based IGGY members pay an annual fee of 90 euros (about \$116), while non-U.K. members pay an annual fee of 200 euros (about \$259). Students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds are eligible for aid, according to the site.

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Dr. Adam Boddison, the academic director of IGGY, told The Independent that he hopes the site will embolden students to go for top universities.

“It’s a bit like building the Olympiads of education,” Boddison told the outlet. “It’s acceptable to strive for excellence in sports but it doesn’t seem acceptable in education. Watch this space. We want to change that.”

IGGY Member Sathyam Patel told BBC radio that while he is on Facebook and IGGY, he does not prefer one to the other, noting that they are very “different.” At the same time, he says he greatly enjoys using the brainy social network.

“I thought it would be a good opportunity to challenge myself and meet new people, so I took up the opportunity and I’ve liked it ever since, never looked back,” Patel said on BBC World Service.

