

Published based on [Technology And Online Education: The Quickest Route](#)

Technology And Online Education: The Quickest Route

The Bill and Melinda Gates foundation have structured a multilayer grant program that will donate millions of dollars in grants for ideas on ways to use technology in order to improve online courses and [online education](#).

The for-profit sector of online education is in the hot seat. Stocks have fallen for the for-profits and they have received serious criticism for the manner in which they've handled their admissions. They have admitted students who may not have been qualified, who do poorly; drop out of school and the taxpayers end up with the loans. It has attracted the attention of the government who want the schools to re-do their business model and lower the number of students who walk away from their school loans.

For-profit executives want to create a new strategy for admitting student. The new plan would have its greatest concentration on the student that has the best chance at academic success and graduate with qualifications to secure a job.

As a result, this change has caused a dramatic drop in the number of student that enrolls in the non-for profit schools. The non-for profits and target the mid-career employee that are looking to improve on their skill-set and their productivity. The employers might even have or create a tuition re-imburement program that results in no student loans.

Gates really seems to believe that technology can jump start American post secondary education. He says that it's not enough just to get the [classes online](#), colleges and universities need to get those classes as part of their degree program of offerings at non-for profit schools as well.

Gates has been thinking for a long time about ways in which schools can offer a combination of recorded lectures from the best professors all combined with locally held discussions and labs. Bill and Melinda Gates are putting up 20 million for postsecondary grants. The Gates' clearly state that they want to record the professors that give the best lectures from the best universities. When those lectures are recorded, and you can answer the question, "where have I made this concept interesting?" The Gates' want all of the interactive solutions like videos online and then get a bunch of colleges to work together and measure the quality.

Gates believes if you have these universities perusing this great interactive material that's part of the official curriculum, you can go in and measure which ones are doing well. He also takes into consideration the bigger picture and hopes to spur new a learning techniques category. He's excited by RFPs (Requests for Proposals) because you get to meet a lot of new people and listen to ideas you might never have been in contact with.

Furthermore, Gates believes that if you have a lot of colleges and universities investigating really good interactive technologies for online education's degree programs, you'll be able to measure the ones that are a success. He wants these new learning methods a separate piece and be established as a "techniques" category. The folks that put together the technology piece should be working together with the people who test it. If the technology piece is of excellent quality and can be directly linked to students passing the course and ultimately getting the job that they want, Gates feels that it might be enough to shift the cost structure. He is also interested in RFPs (requests for proposals) because it is a way to meet with a lot of new people and hear about a lot of new ideas from folks that you might not have had a chance to be in contact with.

The Gates foundation is fired-up to be shown something different, something cool and they say they'll fund it. Some grants are already in place at a few schools and are being measured and getting some valuable feedback. Granted, measuring technology is his background, but he stresses that the most important part of the equation is having the most effective teachers. Gates feels that we need to leverage the instructors time so that the students are watching and trying new technology pieces online.

The new technology piece is just in its beginning stages and is being measured. The tool is important but is useless without a lot of useful content. The more they have the bigger the impact it's going to have.

Gates recently visited the Chinese school systems. At the moment they aren't ahead of us in technology for online education distribution like they are in math, science and non-fiction literature. However, if we don't adopt this technology, it might be one more educational area they could take the lead in.

About the author: Natalie Raven can assist you in choosing an online degree. For [help choosing online degrees](#)

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