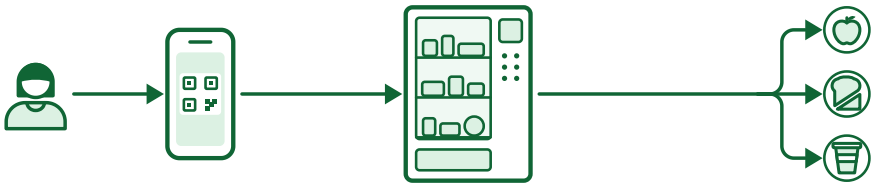
A whole pantry, in a vending machine.

Pantry Point turns vending machines a university already has into automated food pantries, open around the clock. It came out of two years of interviews, and was piloted on campus as the Smart Pantry.

To anyone nearby, it's just a vending machine.
A staffed food pantry asks a student to walk through a door that announces why they are there. Pantry Point looks like every other vending machine on campus. A student scans their phone, chooses, and walks away, and nothing about it looks any different from grabbing a snack between classes.

How it works



Maya answers a short survey on her phone, and credits land in her account.

Between classes she walks to the vending machine in her building, scans her phone, and uses her credits to pick what she wants.

Out comes a ready-to-eat sandwich, an apple or a banana, oatmeal packets, granola bars, or a bag of rice. To anyone walking past, she has just grabbed a snack.

Two points of contact

The survey and the scan are also the two readings a campus gets back: what students say they need, and then what they actually take, when, and where.

Why the model works on a campus

It fits where a food pantry cannot

A machine needs less than ten square feet. Even a small staffed pantry needs a room of its own, plus storage and somewhere to wait — which is why this fits in a building that has no room for a pantry at all.

It runs without a volunteer roster

Restocking is the job, and it is one you can train someone to do in an afternoon. A staffed pantry needs volunteers, a rota, and someone to train them — and it closes on the days nobody signs up.

Open at two in the morning

It runs around the clock, so a night shift or a gap between classes is not a reason to miss it. Cheap enough to put in several buildings, so it need not mean a walk across campus.

It works with standard vending machines

Snack, beverage, and cold food machines are all compatible, so a university can choose the kind that best fits how it wants to serve its students.

Fresh food, not only what keeps

Prepackaged fresh meals, dry goods, shelf-stable items, and fruit and vegetables — a wider range than most people expect, and stock that was chosen rather than donated.

Bring Pantry Point to your campus.

Tell us how your vending contracts and your dining program are set up, and we will tell you what running this would take.

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