

Employers' Guide to CLA Internships

CLA students...



Explore



Experience



Excel

CLA's Commitment to Career Readiness

The College of Liberal Arts (CLA) at the University of Minnesota is dedicated to preparing and educating our students and future leaders for the needs of a global and changing workforce. Through academic courses and experiential learning opportunities, CLA students develop competencies that prepare them for career success.

What makes an internship?

CLA uses the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) definition of an internship. According to NACE, an internship:

1. Must be a learning experience that applies knowledge gained in the classroom.
2. Teaches skills or knowledge that can be transferred to other employment settings.
3. Has a defined beginning and end and a job description with desired qualifications.
4. Has clearly defined learning goals related to the professional goals of the student's academic coursework.
5. Provides supervision by and routine feedback from a professional with expertise in the field.
6. Includes resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer to support learning goals.

Internship best practices

Hiring an intern can be a great way to support the work of an organization, and it also requires a commitment of time and energy. To ensure a successful experience:

1. **Create a detailed position title and description.** Help students understand if the opportunity is a fit before they apply. Ensure job descriptions are written with inclusive language.
2. **Make the internship accessible.** Help eliminate barriers for students (such as finances, scheduling, transportation, etc.) by providing different options when possible and getting creative with benefits (e.g. including a stipend, parking or bus passes, scholarship, etc.).
3. **Connect the student to the office.** Provide orientation to the organization, such as the office expectations and culture. Invite interns to meetings and office gatherings. Connect interns with other interns in the organization and encourage coworkers to get to know them.
4. **Provide support and structure.** Make sure the intern has an appropriate amount of work and projects that can be completed independently. Identify a supervisor who has the time and resources to manage an intern and provide regular feedback.
5. **Provide closure.** At the end of the internship, ask the intern to reflect on their experience through a presentation. Hold an exit interview to gather suggestions for improving the internship program, and plan a celebration for their contributions.

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Offering academic credit

Most students participate in internships outside of an academic course. It is the student's responsibility to seek possible academic credit for an internship. Students must pay tuition dollars for those credits.

Offering payment

CLA encourages paid internships. Internships require time and commitment, and compensation is a fair expectation. Paying an intern can increase commitment and attract more diverse and qualified candidates. Organizations considering unpaid internships need to carefully evaluate their program to ensure interns have a valuable learning experience aligned with the U.S. Department of Labor's Test for Unpaid Internships.

Internship wages vary by industry and job responsibility. NACE maintains the most up-to-date wage information at naceweb.org. Compensation can include discounted parking, free lunch, subsidized housing, and other benefits. If you cannot offer an hourly wage, consider a stipend.

Considerations for hiring diverse students

Hiring an intern is a great way to bring new perspectives to a workplace. **When seeking diverse candidates, consider ways an intern can use their skills, experiences, and backgrounds to help support the organization's diversity and inclusion goals.** Develop clear and inclusive job descriptions that reflect these goals and identify the specific ways an intern will support inclusion efforts.

Consider hiring international students; the process is easy! International students bring a unique perspective to an organization, and require no additional cost or paperwork for an employer than domestic students. An employer need only present the student with an offer letter for the internship. As you're considering international students for your opportunities, encourage them to meet with the International Student and Scholar Services office on campus early on in the application process.

Contact a CLA Employer Relations representative for questions about sourcing diverse candidates and writing effective and inclusive internship position descriptions.

The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer. Disability accommodations available upon request, please call 612-624-7577.

CLA Internship Resources

- Writing effective position descriptions
- CLA Core Career Competencies
- Expectations vs. best practices
- Sourcing candidates through CLA

Contact us!

CLA Employer Relations | hirecla@umn.edu | 612-626-6574