

Employer Guide: Hosting an Intern

What is an internship?

- An internship is a short-term work experience emphasizing hands-on learning.
- Pre-professional experience in which the student or recent graduate will begin to apply their academic preparation toward their career goals.
- An opportunity for an employer to explore a special or short-term project, build capacity for current employees so they may focus on higher-level tasks and try out potential employees in a low-risk environment.
- An internship should be a “shared value” experience: The employer provides a learning laboratory where an intern can experience the real working world. Interns contribute to the employer by performing meaningful projects and assignments that are of continuing value to both parties.

Why do you want an intern?

- Do you have meaningful work to be done? Or do you just need “help”?
- Can you?
 - Assign projects that will have a meaningful outcome for the intern?
 - Break a large project into smaller components?
 - Show the intern how to start and complete assigned tasks?
 - Deliberately seek opportunities for interns to learn?
 - Talk through successes and failures with the intern?

Is your staff/office ready for an intern?

- Who can provide good training and supervision for the intern?
- How is the intern going to interact with other staff? (e.g. in-person, remotely etc.)
- Can you commit to paying them? (The Vermont Intern Program requires interns be paid.)
- Do you have workspace and resources?
- Do you have staff who can supervise the intern?

What to include in an Intern Job Description:

The Vermont Intern Program [New Internship Form](#) captures the following information:

- Position Title (this should summarize the purpose of the position)
- Start/End dates, hours
- Compensation
- Location & travel requirements (if any)
- Top Three Qualifications
- Position Description (Job Duties)
- Skills, Attributes and Knowledge Desired

The Intern Interview:

- Provide mission & philosophy of business/organization
- Explain how intern fits into business/organization
- Explain responsibilities and expectations of intern
- Be as specific as possible about what the intern will do
- Describe available training or other professional opportunities available to intern
- Explain office hours, location, parking and dress codes, as appropriate
- Explain compensation (include any benefits and perks)
- Ask applicant about their interests and what they hope to get out of their internship

Once you have hired an intern:

- Notify Vermont Intern Program of the hire, and include hiree's name and email address
- Complete any required paperwork (academic paperwork, internal HR paperwork etc.)
- Employee orientation and training (modify as necessary)
- Provide overview of responsibilities and expectations, including priorities for first weeks
- Schedule regular and focused contact time with Supervisor (i.e. 30 minutes/week)
- Include opportunities to attend meetings and participate in group activities
- Offer regular feedback, as well as a formal exit interview at the end of the internship