

The School of Sustainability welcomes community partners who help our students connect with professional development experiences. Internships allow students to apply classroom theories to real life, professional situations.

### **Benefits to Internship Providers**

Employers benefit from interns in many ways. While the employer is involved in the on-going training and mentoring of interns, the benefits are many and include:

- A year round source of highly motivated pre-professionals
- The opportunity to have new perspectives on various processes, procedures and programs
- The increased visibility of your organization on the college campus
- The freedom for professional staff to pursue important projects and tasks
- The opportunity to influence the education of future professionals in your field
- A flexible, cost-effective work force that does not require a long-term employment commitment
- Prepared and trained new employees hired from your intern pool
- A proven, cost-effect way to recruit and evaluate potential employees

(Adapted from Notre Dame's *An Employer's Guide to Developing an Internship Program* [http://careercenter.nd.edu/assets/15270/employer\\_internship\\_development\\_guide.pdf](http://careercenter.nd.edu/assets/15270/employer_internship_development_guide.pdf))

### **Are you ready for an intern?**

Our students tell us that a major factor in their overall satisfaction with their internship is whether or not the internship provider is prepared to host an internship. Points to consider:

- What will the intern learn? Please see below – this must be, first and foremost, a learning experience.
- How much can you pay an intern?
- Who will train and supervise the intern?
- How many hours will you expect the intern to work?
- Do you have the resources, such as computers, desks, or phones, to comfortably host an intern?
- Is this an experience best suited for an undergraduate or graduate student?

While developing internship responsibilities and projects, please consider that the purpose of the internship experience is to provide the student with the opportunity to:

- Apply classroom knowledge to the “laboratory” of the work world in order to test theories, concepts, and philosophies.
- Develop valuable contacts in the field by networking with professionals.
- Analyze his or her commitment to the field while it is still relatively easy to change.
- Demonstrate an understanding of sustainability competencies.
- Identify technical and/or theoretical competencies that need further development.
- Develop motivation and self-confidence.
- Observe and develop the values/ethics of professionals in the field.
- Assume professional responsibilities and substantive tasks.

### **Components of a successful internship at the School of Sustainability**

- A planned learning experience with a direct connection to sustainability issues.

- Regular access to a supervisor or a mentor who can give the intern feedback.
- A professional and meaningful experience with minimal, if any, routine clerical work.
- Minimal or at most less than 5% of overall internship responsibilities related to sales, cold-calling, or generating business for the internship organization.
- Exposure to opportunities that will allow them to build on their academic learning, gain relevant work experience, enhance their communication and interpersonal skills, and meet key people.
- The opportunity to learn skills that can be applied in a variety of work settings.

### **Paying an intern**

Payment and stipends are not a specific requirement for School of Sustainability internships, although it should be noted that offering credit is not an exchange for paying an intern. Students must pay tuition for internships that they do for credit. The expectation is that for-profit or private companies will be able to provide financial compensation for an intern, based on the criteria outlined by the Department of Labor's Fair Labor Standards Act pertaining to internships. Organizations may review criteria here: <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>.

Government and non-profit agencies are not held to FLSA requirements, but are still expected by the School of Sustainability to provide a learning experience that primarily benefits the intern.

### **Internships for credit**

- Graduate students rarely seek internships for credit, which gives them more flexibility in when they can start an internship because they are not as concerned with the academic calendar.
- Undergraduate students often seek internships for credit. If they do, they must also enroll in a class which requires that they complete assignments showing that they are able to critically reflect on the work they are doing at their internship.
- Undergraduates typically look for an internship for credit one semester in advance. They must work a minimum number of hours in the semester to get credit (the number of work hours depends on the credit hours). An undergraduate who wants three credit hours must work at least 135 hours at the internship. Someone at your company will be required to verify the number of hours the intern works.
- Someone at your organization will be asked to complete mid-term and final evaluations of the intern's work, designed to give the student feedback on strengths and areas of improvement. They are not graded on the evaluations, but they are an important piece of the internship.

### **Intern request process**

Step 1: Complete the Internship Description online and return it to the internship coordinator. An internship description is required for each unique internship opportunity that has separate and distinct tasks.

Step 2: The internship coordinator will review the internship description and advise you if the internship has been approved or suggest changes. After the internship is approved, your internship will be posted for School of Sustainability students to review.

Step 3: Students will apply directly to you, following the procedure you specify. Respond to the students who contact you and follow your company's process for hiring an intern.

Step 4: Please contact the internship coordinator to report if/when your internship has been filled for the semester.

Step 5: Please have someone at your company sign the ASU Student Placement Agreement and the Internship Contract. Students at ASU cannot enroll in the internship course without these documents.

### **Questions?**

Please contact Sada Gilbert, Internship Coordinator at 480-965-5487 or [sada.gilbert@asu.edu](mailto:sada.gilbert@asu.edu).