



Internship Programs in the United States

In 2007, the Department of State created an internship category within the Exchange Visitor Program. The Department's goal in creating the program was to provide a 'true learning experience' for international students that will 'reinforce their academic study', that is 'an integral part of [their] ongoing education', and that will enhance their skills 'through exposure to American techniques, methodologies, and expertise.' The program, like all exchanges, is intended to provide participants with broad exposure to U.S. culture and society, and to foster greater appreciation among Americans of the participant's home country.

Key features of the internship program:

- Participants must be currently enrolled in and pursuing studies at a foreign degree- or certificate-granting post-secondary academic institution outside the United States; **or**
- Participants must have graduated from such an institution no more than 12 months prior to his or her exchange visitor program start date. Maximum duration of internship program: 12 months.
- All participants must have sufficient English ability to participate effectively in their internship.

All internship participants must secure a J-1 (Exchange Visitor) visa and must have an internship before applying for the visa. To secure the visa, participants need:

- A U.S. sponsor organization (see list below).
- A DS-2019 form, provided and completed by the U.S. sponsor. This form is required for all J-1 visas.
- A DS-7002 form (Training/Internship Program Plan), which describes the content of the internship program. This form is completed by the sponsor and the U.S. employer and signed by the sponsor, employer, and participant.
- Standard U.S. visa application forms, a valid passport, and required photographs. All participants must pay the standard visa application and SEVIS fees and secure receipts. Participants should consult the website of the closest U.S. embassy or consulate for details.

How do I pick a U.S. sponsor?

A number of U.S. organizations offer internship programs for international students and recent graduates. All such organizations have been approved to run the program by the Department of State and must abide by the State Department's program regulations. All sponsors will provide the necessary program application form and other paperwork, assist with placements or give guidance on how to locate an internship in the U.S., ensure that participants have U.S. health insurance, and provide support for interns as needed during their program. Participants pay sponsors a program fee for these services. The Alliance recommends that students visit the websites of several sponsors to compare costs and services. Many sponsors work with local representatives overseas, giving students access to information and support services in their native language.

How do I find an internship?

Most internships are found by students themselves. Students who have studied or had a previous exchange experience in the United States often have developed contacts that will lead to an internship. In addition, U.S. companies working in your country may have interest in hosting interns in the United States. Some sponsors post on their websites lists of available internships for which students can apply, and most give tips on how students can find their own placements, e.g., how to create a U.S.-style resume and cover letter, and where to look online for open positions. **Interested students should begin the process of finding an internship at least 6 months in advance.**

The following Alliance member organizations sponsor internship programs:

AIIESEC United States www.aiesec.org	Council on International Educational Exchange www.ciee.org
Alliance Abroad Group www.allianceabroad.com	Council on International Programs www.cip.org
American-Scandinavian Foundation www.asf.org	Cultural Homestay International www.chinet.org
AMIDEAST www.amideast.org	French-American Chamber of Commerce www.faccnyc.org
American Council on International Personnel www.acip.com	Geovisions www.geovisions.org
ASSE International Student Exchange Programs www.asse.com	GermanAmerican Chamber of Commerce www.gaccny.com
Association for International Practical Training www.aipt.org	InterExchange www.interexchange.org
American Immigration Law Foundation www.aifl.org	Intrax www.intraxinc.com
CDS International www.cdsintl.org	MAST International http://mast.cfans.umn.edu
Cultural Exchange Network www.cenet.us	The Ohio Program www.ohioprogram.org
Communicating for Agriculture www.caep.org	YMCA International Programs www.internationalymca.org

A list of all intern sponsors designated by the Department of State can be found on the Department's website: <http://eca.state.gov/jexchanges/index.cfm?fuseaction=record.list&cat=17>

Included on the State Department list are a number of U.S. universities which administer 'student internships' – a very similar program – under the State Department's authority. These universities serve as sponsors in the student intern program.