



Guide for Professionally Managed Talent Development Experiences

Overview

Internship And Work-Based Learning Summary



What Is An Internship?

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) defines an internship as “a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valu-

able applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.”

Focus On Quality

A quality internship or work-based learning program challenges organizations to develop these opportunities as genuine learning experiences; and challenges students to apply their classroom knowledge to work-based tasks. Ideally, the organization benefits from the intern’s work and the ability to identify talent, while the student benefits from professional development and/or compensation and class credit.

According to NACE, the following key features must be met to ensure the intern experience is educational:

- The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
- The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
- The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
- Learning objectives/goals are clearly defined and related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework.
- Supervision is provided by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
- Routine feedback is provided by the experienced supervisor.
- Resources, equipment, and facilities are provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

Successful Internship Characteristics



Designate a well-qualified program manager who is skilled in human relations, can champion the program, has a good knowledge of organizational processes and personnel and has enough time and interest to promote the program both internally and externally.



Develop integrated work assignments that mesh academic program requirements with the goals of the organization.



Seek top-level commitment to provide full financial and human resource support to adequately sustain the program.



Establish a separate and adequate salary and benefit budget for a student internship program. Pay competitive salaries and consider limited benefits to attract more highly qualified candidates.

Establish relationships with regional industry or target higher education institutions from which to screen candidates for internship programs. College and university faculty and staff members are valuable partners for the intern sourcing process.

Designate critical KPIs for internship success and measurement strategies for development of related skills and competencies.

Develop a series of planned experiences for student interns in work areas that are the most conducive to learning, and that integrate long-range objectives of both student interns and the employer.

Demonstrate a strong and ongoing interest in integrating student interns as valuable team members. Good supervision will be critical and requires site supervisors who see their roles as trainers and teachers, in addition to regular supervision.



Experiential Learning

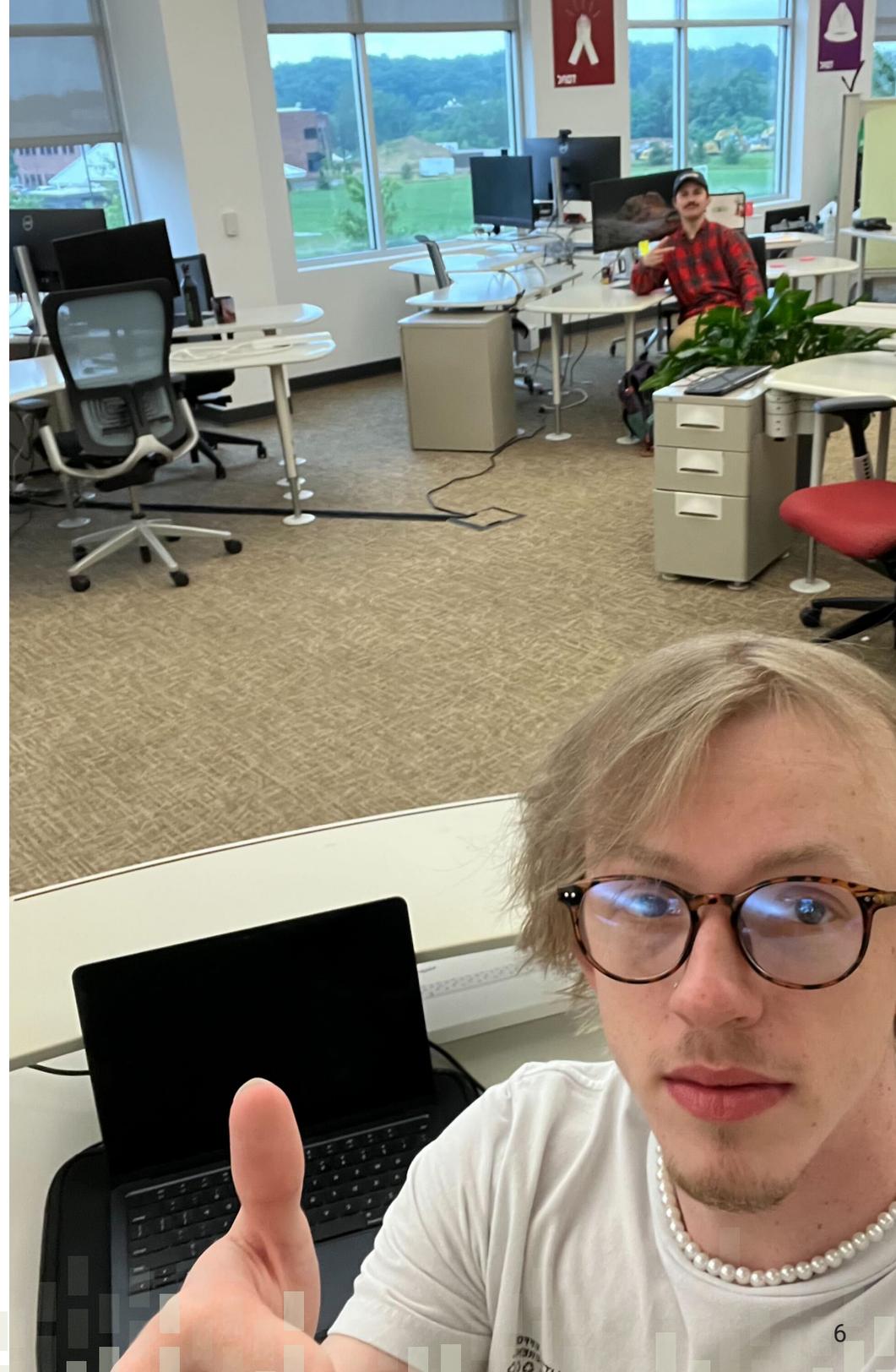
“Experiential Learning” is a term commonly used to broadly describe learning opportunities presented through experiences. NACE defines experiential learning as, “a crucial component of a college education. Experiential learning encompasses a wide variety of enriching opportunities for students, including service-learning, volunteering, student organization leadership and campus involvement, faculty-led research and projects, experiential study-abroad, student employment/work-study, cooperative education, and internships.”

More recently, entrepreneurship has become a viable experiential learning option to promote student growth and development in business creation and innovation. Due to the broad nature of the term experiential learning, this toolkit instead utilizes the terms “internship” and “work-based learning” throughout.

Types Of Internship And Work-Based Learning Opportunities

During the early stages of exploring how to build a program, a review of the variety of internship and work-based learning structures is vital in order to select the type of program(s) that will best fit the organization. The types of internship and work-based learning opportunities are:

- Traditional Opportunities
- Flexible Opportunities
- Project-Based Opportunities
- Remote Opportunities
- Cooperative Experiences
- Professional Development Opportunities



Give us real work! It can't be said too many times that interns want to work and learn. An internship can help you get a job done that you couldn't otherwise, right? If you've brought on an intern as a recruitment tool, then how will you be able to assess their abilities? It just makes sense to utilize your interns well.

1

Do what you say, and say what you do! Be honest with your interns about what they can expect during their internship. If the job will require stuffing some envelopes, then make that clear. But if you tell interns they will be researching a project, and they spend 90% of their time doing "grunt work," then bad feelings will develop. Honesty doesn't cost you anything, and it will make the interns feel that much more respected.

2

A minute of your time please. The best mentor in the world is useless if he or she can't or won't spend the necessary time mentoring. As newcomers, interns may not speak up if they're feeling ignored, so the burden of making sure they're okay is on the mentor. If the busiest person in the office wants to be the designated mentor, he or she should schedule regular times to meet with the intern.

7

Be prepared! That wonderful day has arrived and the intern starts their internship only to learn that no one knew they were coming, and there is no place for them to work.

8

3

We like feedback! Remember that interns are students, and they may not have the business skills and experiences that you take for granted. If your interns make an oversight, just pull them aside and explain how the situation(s) should be handled in the future.

We want to be included too! Is there a staff meeting that they can attend? Can they quietly tag along to that next project meeting? Headed to lunch with a couple of people in the office? Please include them in the daily life of your workplace. After all, if you provide a little more perspective on the intern's work, the product will be much better.

4

Keep In Mind:

The best programs mutually benefit the student, employer, and educational institution.

5

Please explain. When you assign work, make sure you give a detailed explanation. While the work may seem trivial and obvious to you, it may not be obvious to someone who's never done it before. Patience and a few extra minutes at the beginning will pay off later when your intern can produce good work independently.

6

I want a mentor! Make sure that interns have a mentor or supervisor to provide guidance. Make it someone who truly likes to teach, and the experience will be even better.

Um... I need a chair. It is amazing how many employers hire an intern and don't think about the fact that they will need a desk, chair, phone and a computer in order to do the task assigned. It is no fun, and not efficient to move an intern from desk to desk as people are out one day to the next. If you want to get the job done, you need to supply the intern with the tools to do the job.

9

Show me the money (as best you can). While each internship is different, and each industry has its own personality, remember that interns have expenses. Your organization may not be in a position to pay much, but anything can help. Maybe you can help pay for their parking, take them to lunch every so often, or develop some other creative way to assist them.

10

Traditional Opportunities

- Allow students to work for an employer through a formalized program or embedded in a specific organization or department.
- Typically follow a 12-16-week timeframe and coincide with an academic semester:
 - Late August to early December for fall
 - Mid-December to mid-January for winter
 - Late January to late April for spring, and
 - Mid-to-late May to early or mid-August for summer.
- Can be part-time or full-time, depending on employer and student's needs.
- May qualify for academic credit and, if so, a faculty advisor will be involved.

Flexible Opportunities

- Can be offered year-round, based on employer need, and allow for students to work through a formalized program or embedded with an organization or department.
- Typically follow a 5-10 week modular timeframe.
- Colleges on a modular term calendar can provide prospective candidates when the employer has a need or can fit an intern in their schedule.
- Can be either part-time or full-time, depending on the employer and student's needs.

Contact the Career Centers for additional information and to confirm exact dates.

Project-Based Opportunities



- Focused on a specific goal or research project that the student completes over the duration of the experience.
- Timeframe varies widely, depending on the size and scope of the project and whether the project is linked to academic coursework or is part of a capstone or thesis.
- Provides the student with a tangible outcome or work product to add to the portfolio at completion and the employer with direct support for a more focused objective.
- Also referred to as micro-internships, and may involve a team of students with the ability to include students from multiple disciplines.
- In addition to the traditional route to promote project-based learning, there are organizations explicitly dedicated to connecting employers and institutions for project-based opportunities. Examples of these type of organizations include:
 - Parker Dewey - <https://www.parkerdewey.com/>
 - MindSumo - <https://www.mindsumo.com/challenges/all>
 - ExelARATION - <https://exelARATION.com/>

Remote/Hybrid Opportunities



- Allow students and employers the flexibility to work together across geographic boundaries.
- Flexibility is the main strength to this approach and can help employers attract students from a wide variety of locations, backgrounds, and experiences.
- Ideal for organizations that have limited office space.
- Employers should consider the technology needed and whether they can provide it.
- Strong support networks and virtual connection opportunities are important to interns who will miss out on the personal touch and cultural insight of an in-person opportunity.
- Networking with other students and employees can be more difficult remotely and they do not get to see or experience the place of work (unless your organization is fully remote).
- Under this type of opportunity, employers should craft a strategy to maximize remote engagement. Virtual coffee meetings, informal social gatherings conducted virtually, and access to optional educational opportunities are just a few examples of remote engagement.

Cooperative Experiences

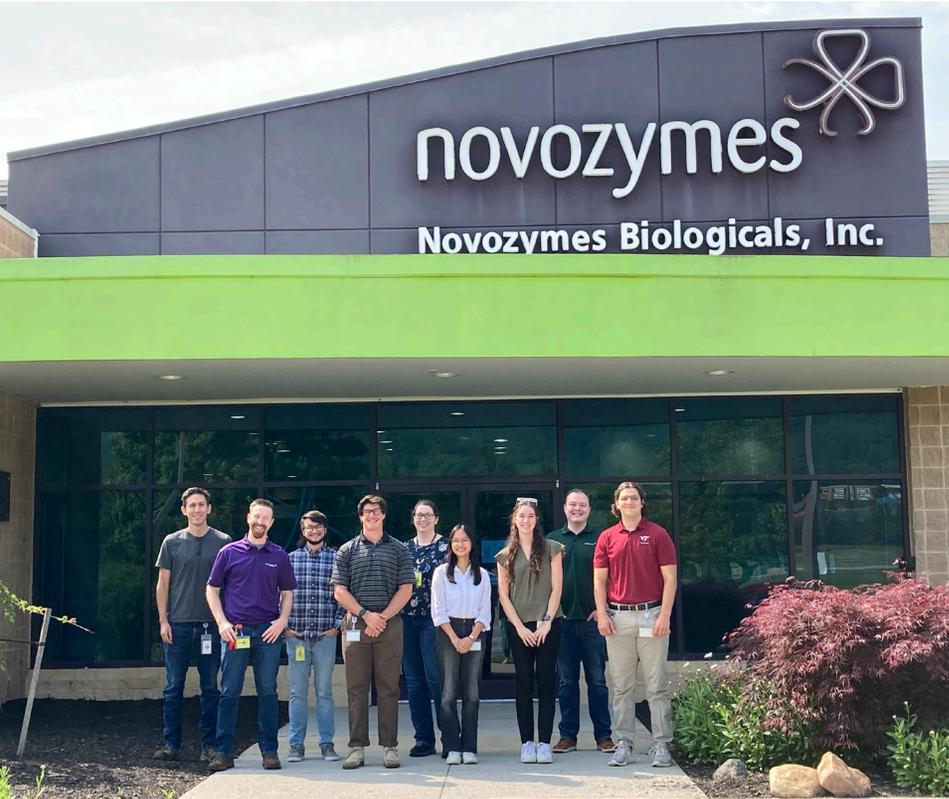
- Typically applies to majors such as engineering, architecture, computing, information sciences, etc.
- The Cooperative Education and Internship Association (CEIA) notes that “co-op experiences are either full-time (40 hours per week) alternating periods (semester, quarter) of work and school or part-time (20 hours per week) combining work and school during the same time period.”
- NACE relates that “the typical program plan is for students to alternate terms of full-time classroom study with terms of full-time, discipline-related employment. Since the program participation involves multiple work terms, the typical participant will work three or four work terms, thus gaining a year or more of career-related work experience before graduation.”

Professional Development Opportunities

- Holistic learning opportunities that allow students to not only support the employer’s mission and vision, but also allow younger students to have exposure to areas critical to their career path.
- An example is shadowing an executive for a project or client facing meeting.
- Help students hone their critical thinking skills, oral and written communication skills, and other professional development-based exposure.
- Professional development can lead to future internship or work-based learning opportunities with an employer and provide exposure to see if a student is interested in pursuing that career.

Responsibilities

Benefits And Expectations For Employers



- Provide a forum for interns to discuss their competencies in the beginning of the internship and schedule regular check-ins to review progress and strategies for improvement.
- Develop an onboarding survey for students to describe their expectations and provide the student with an opportunity to review their responses upon the conclusion of their internship to evaluate progress.
- Schedule an exit interview to collect feedback before the internship concludes.
- Consider developing a survey to ask questions covering all aspects of the internship, including office space, project or scope of work, supervisor and mentor involvement, and likelihood student will return for another opportunity.
- Be sure to include specific questions like “After completing this internship, do you feel that you know more about your chosen area of interest and/or feel more confident about your major/ career choice?”
- Analyze the information from exit interviews and discuss how it can be integrated to improve the student experience.

[*Appendix for Intern Evaluation and Employer Evaluation*](#)

Evaluation And Assessment Of Interns & Employers

- Throughout the internship program, it is essential to continually monitor the student’s progress and assess how well they are learning and applying their coursework to their role and responsibilities.
- During the orientation process, discuss how your organization will measure the outcomes to ensure connectivity between the intern’s coursework and work responsibilities.

Access And Equity In Opportunity

Throughout the internship, employers are encouraged to review the “Access and Equity in Opportunity” section under “Developing a Clear and Concise Internship Posting” to ensure the opportunity is equitable for all interns. To learn more visit: <https://viriniatop.org/toolkit/>

Additional considerations to promote greater equity in opportunity can be found below.

- Take steps to combat implicit bias toward the Limited English Population (LEP).
- Implement diversity and inclusion training that actively includes dialogue on multicultural workforce issues for all employees through internal employee resource groups, which often offer comforting mental-health support for its workers.
- Expand access to – and consumption of – internship opportunities among multicultural students and workforce by providing international language translation

Industry Collaboration

Through the internship and work-based learning pathways defined above, employers are encouraged to collaborate with other employers within their industry to share best practices and discuss the possibility of rotating interns between organizations when possible. Industry collaboration allows students to be exposed to additional experiences within their field of interest and will enable employers to collaboratively recruit, train, and gain valuable assistance from the talent pool.

What Is A Professional Internship Organization (PIO)?

The PIO concept was invented to address many of the shortcomings of the traditional internship model. It can bring the benefits of a world-class internship program formerly enjoyed only by global employers like Microsoft, Google, and Capital One to small and mid-sized companies whose need for technology talent is most critical.

Within a PIO, interns support multiple clients from a centralized internship center. The PIO model shifts internships from an afterthought to full experiential learning. This benefits all four participants: the student, the client needing services, the potential future employer, and the university. Most of all, it benefits the regional community ecosystem by creating job-ready early career professionals on day one. Source: GO Virginia

Continuing Engagement Post-Internship

- Host networking opportunities for past interns to provide continued engagement opportunities for students throughout their collegiate experience.
- Offer past interns the opportunity to mentor future interns.
- Continue to connect with past interns about their career aspirations and share information on post-graduation career opportunities.
- Engage with past interns to provide a testimonial about their experience for future marketing and promotional materials.

Getting Started

Internship Offices For Colleges/ Universities In Region 2

In general, internship requests may be submitted to a school's Career Center throughout the year. Following the suggested deadlines increases your ability to secure a student for the time of interest to you, especially if the student wishes to (or must) receive academic credit. Most academic calendars are posted on college or university websites. Contact the Career Centers if you need more information.

Next Steps: Getting started with your own internship program.

- Enroll in the Virginia Talent Opportunity Partnership's (VTOP) program which assists employers in developing a successful and sustainable internship program at no charge.
[Visit: https://virginiatop.org/course-catalog/](https://virginiatop.org/course-catalog/)
- Utilize various employer toolkits for strong work-based learning opportunities
- Build relationships with higher education partners and institutions to access talent:
- Share internship opportunities with entities like the Regional Internship Collaborative, Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council, Onward NRV, Roanoke Regional Partnership, regional workforce partners including Greater Roanoke Workforce Development Board, New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board and others.

Contact the Career Centers for additional information and to confirm exact dates.

Greater Lynchburg Region

(Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford and Campbell counties, city of Lynchburg)

Higher Education Institution:	Deadline for Employers to submit internship positions – contact the school for the most accurate information	Career Services fall events
Central Virginia Community College centralvirginia.edu/programs-classes		
Career Services Email: jarretts@centralvirginia.edu Phone Number: 434-832-7689		CVCC College Central Network
Liberty University www.liberty.edu/academics/bachelors/		
Career Services, Employer Relations Email: employerrelations@liberty.edu Phone Number: 434-592-4109	Fall term: July 31 Winter term (Jan.): N/A Spring term: December 15 Summer term: N/A <i>*Employers can post internships on Handshake and offer students internships at any time on a rolling basis. Dates provided are deadlines for students to have all required information submitted to our Registrar's Office in order to receive course credit for a For-Credit Internship.</i>	Careers Events Schedule Fall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting Meet the Firm • Nursing Career Fair • All Majors Career Fair • Engineering Career Fair • Camp Career Fair • Ministry Career Fair • Virtual All Majors Career Fair Spring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursing Career Fair • All Majors Career Fair • Education Career Fair • Virtual All Majors Career Fair
Randolph College www.randolphcollege.edu/academics/majors/		
Career Development Center Email: cdcinfo@randolph-college.edu Phone Number: 434-947-8116	Fall term: Enrolled by August 15th Winter term: Enrolled by December 1st Spring term: Enrolled by December 1st Spring term: Enrolled by May 1st	Employers can participate in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mock Networking Reception • Business and Breakfast • Hosting a table on campus for recruitment Please contact the office to learn more about dates.

Greater Lynchburg Region Cont.

(Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford and Campbell counties, city of Lynchburg)

Higher Education Institution:	Deadline for Employers to submit internship positions – contact the school for the most accurate information	Career Services fall events
University of Lynchburg www.lynchburg.edu/academics/majors-and-minors/es		
Career & Professionalism Center Email: careers@lynchburg.edu Phone Number: 434-544-8459	Fall term: September Winter term (Jan.): December Spring term: February Summer term: June	Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to do an Internship for Credit • Pop-Up Career Shop • Internship Fair • Health Sciences Fair • Hornet-to-Hornet at Homecoming • Pop-Up Career Shop • Law School Fair • Fall Etiquette Dinner • Handshake 101
Sweet Briar College sbc.edu/academics/programs-of-study/		
Career Services Email: CareerServices@sbc.edu Phone Number: 434-381-6465	Fall term: August Winter term (Jan.): December Spring term: January Summer term: May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Premiere Fair (consortium of colleges) • Host the Federal Career Expo. • Employers can host an information table in our dining hall. • Our engineering program hosts weekly lunch and learns for employers to meet students.

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Highlands

(Alleghany, Craig, Botetourt, Roanoke, and Franklin counties; cities of Roanoke and Salem)

Higher Education Institution:	Deadline for Employers to submit internship positions:	Career Services fall events
Ferrum College www.ferrum.edu/academic-affairs/majorsminors/		
Career Services Email: lholden@ferrum.edu Phone Number: 540-365-4460		Career Services Events Calendar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internship & Employment Fair • Fall Job and Internship Fair • Federal Career Expo Fair

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Highlands Cont.

(Alleghany, Craig, Botetourt, Roanoke, and Franklin counties; cities of Roanoke and Salem)

Higher Education Institution:	Deadline for Employers to submit internship positions:	Career Services fall events
Hollins University www.hollins.edu/academics/majors-minors/		
Center for Career Development and Life Design (CDLD) Email: career@hollins.edu Phone Number: 540-362-6364	Fall term: June 15 Winter term (Jan.): Oct 15 Spring term: Nov 15 Summer term: March 15	Employer page <i>The CDLD welcomes employers to contact us directly about campus recruiting visits and talent acquisition.</i>
Mountain Gateway Community College www.mgcc.edu/programs-careers		
Workforce Solutions & Community Educations Email: rjennings@mgcc.edu Phone Number: 540-863-2899		
Roanoke College www.roanoke.edu/academics/majors		
Purpose, Life And Career Exploration (PLACE) Email: place@roanoke.edu Phone Number: 540-375-2084	Fall term: August 1 Winter term (Jan.): N/A Spring term: December 1 Summer term: May 1	Events, Workshops & Special Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall Internship Fair • Power Hours throughout semester - students and alumni register for these and are sent a link a week prior to event
Virginia Western Community College www.viriniawestern.edu/academics/		
Hall Associates Career Center Email: careercenter@viriniawestern.edu Phone Number: 540-857-7298	Fall term: August 1 Winter term (Jan.): N/A Spring term: December 1 Summer term: May 1	Employers: register with us to access our online job board and participate in recruiting events!

New River Valley

(Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski counties; city of Radford)

Higher Education Institution:	Deadline for Employers to submit internship positions:	Career Services fall events
New River Community College www.nr.edu/degrees/		
Workforce Development Email: wfdtraining@nr.edu Phone Number: 540-674-3613	Fall term: June 15 Winter term (Jan.): Oct 15 Spring term: Nov 15 Summer term: March 15	Employer page <i>The CDLD welcomes employers to contact us directly about campus recruiting visits and talent acquisition.</i>
Radford University www.radford.edu/content/radfordcore/home/academics/colleges-and-departments.html		
Center for Career and Talent Development Email: csc@radford.edu Phone Number: 540-831-5373		• The CCTD welcomes employers to contact us directly about campus recruiting and talent acquisition partnerships.
Virginia Tech vt.edu/academics/majors.html		
Career and Professional Development, Employer Relations Email: jim.henderson@vt.edu Phone Number: 540-231-8079		Virginia Tech Career Fairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Horizons • Real Estate • Engineering Expo • Aerospace, Defense, and Intelligence • Construction Industry • Fall Connections (all) • CareerScope Hospitality and Tourism Management • Mining & Minerals Engineering • Natural Resources and Environment • Civil Engineering • Agricultural and Applied Economics

Other Colleges and Universities in GO Virginia Region 2: Virginia University of Lynchburg: www.vul.edu/

Regional Internship Collaborative Directory:

cece.vt.edu/R2InternCollab/directory

Connect with education and workforce development organizations that support work-based learning in GO Virginia Region 2. This directory includes key contact information and the opportunities for engagement that each organization offers for employers and students. We gathered this data through interviews and surveys in October and November 2021 and will update it on an ongoing basis.





ROANOKE - BLACKSBURG
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