

REMOTE INTERNSHIPS

Tips for Success

Remote internships can provide meaningful learning opportunities and support students in developing their *Core Competencies*, especially Information and Visual Literacy, Critical Thinking, and Communication while adding value to your organization.

BENEFITS OF OFFERING REMOTE INTERNSHIPS

- Broader applicant pool allowing for a greater diversity of candidates and expanded geographical access.
- Competitive hiring advantage and talent pipeline.
- Flexibility in length of internship and potential cost savings.
- Increased capacity to advance your organization's mission and goals through creative solutions.
- Tap new ideas from Gen Z.

TIPS FOR REMOTE INTERNSHIPS

Workspace & Technology

Since the remote intern will not be physically present in the office, it's important to set them up with necessary equipment, virtual workspace and access such as a VPN log-in to complete work. Examples of software could include: GSuite, MS Office Teams, Google Drive, DropBox, Zoom, Go to Meeting, Google Hangouts, Join.me, Skype & Canva, etc.

Communication

Maintaining regular communication with remote interns is critical for success. Set regular times — at least once a week — to synchronously connect. These check-ins provide an opportunity to build rapport with interns, answer questions, check on work progress and offer feedback. Additionally, identify tools such as Trello or Slack that work best for your organization to manage projects, and communicate quick questions, updates, and daily work goals.

Training

Incorporate training on the software and tools you are using as a part of orientation.

Asynchronous Work

It's okay and even likely that dedicated time spent on work projects will not align for the remote intern and their supervisor. It is a good idea in this environment to ask interns to share a schedule of when they will complete their hours. This sets up structure, encourages accountability and lets supervisors know when they can reach out to the intern.

Learning Goals & Detailed Work Plan

The use of the Learning Agreement is even more critical in a remote internship to establish clear goals, track the action plan to achieve those goals and identify how to measure progress. When discussing learning goals, contextualize projects interns are working on so they understand how their contributions fit into the larger goals or efforts of your organization. Finally, a learning agreement can serve as the basis for a weekly work plan and provide structure for remote work for both you and your intern.

Intern Engagement

Establishing a professional network is a key advantage of internship participation and although more challenging is still achievable in a remote setting. Intentionally support your intern in connecting with colleagues across departments or in your field about specific project needs or for informational interviews. When possible, facilitate interns connecting with one another through virtual lunch meetings, virtual coffee hours or a Slack channel just for interns.

Feedback

Providing clear and regular feedback about work projects is even more essential in a remote environment. Consider ways to deliver real-time feedback about work progress to ensure the intern is clear about where they are doing well and areas for improvement. Additionally, encourage the intern to share how the process of working remotely is going. Ask what is working well and what is challenging for them in a virtual environment.

Regardless of whether the experience is in person or remote, the cornerstones of a quality internship experience still hold true. Review our [*Internship Toolkit for Employers*](#) for strategies on creating a quality internship experience.

Sources: [*CCWT Report_Covid-19_Internships*](#), Yale [*Office of Career Strategy & Virtual Internships*](#)