

## School of Sustainability Internship Program Quick Facts

**An internship is** a short-term, hands-on, supervised work experience with a professional organization that is designed to increase a student's knowledge of a professional career field through significant learning objectives.

The goal of an internship is to expose students to multiple aspects of an organization, allowing them to acquire industry knowledge as well as develop employability skillsets that will be critical to advancing their future careers. Internships are unique opportunities that allow students to apply what they have learned in school to a professional work environment.

### Internship Timing

School of Sustainability students generally participate in internships corresponding with regular academic terms: Fall (Aug – Dec), Spring (Jan – May), and Summer (late May – Aug).

Ideally internships for Fall should be in place by May 1, Spring internships by October 1, Summer internships by April 1. This allows time for approval, posting, recruiting, interviewing, and onboarding in time for the student to register for credit and start the internship at the beginning of the academic term.

### Internship Guidelines

Generally, the outlined criteria below must be met to qualify as a professional internship:

- The intern will receive quality training by a supervisor/mentor who possesses expertise directly related to the intern's responsibilities.
- The experience will provide exposure to multiple aspects of a professional career field, internship organization, or industry.
- A job description will be provided that includes a detailed explanation of duties and/or projects, required skills or qualifications, minimum number of hours per week.
- Clerical or nonprofessional tasks will comprise no more than 20% of the intern's responsibilities.
- The intern will be provided with an appropriate work space and resources required to complete assignments.

### Sustainability Internship Criteria

Internships should have a direct connection to sustainability that allows students to connect their coursework to real world application.

Successful internships will provide substantive short and long-term projects that require skills such as: research, analysis, summarizing data, writing, presenting information visually and orally, bench-marking, brainstorming, investigating, planning, organizing, implementing programs and services, event planning, problem solving, thinking critically, influencing and persuading, and decision making. Internship projects should have defined outcomes, and should include minimal routine clerical work or manual labor, and no sales focused responsibilities.

In order to qualify for credit, internships must offer the opportunity to work at least 135 hours at the internship site over the academic term. Interns can work more than 135 hours, upon agreement with internship site.

### **Compensation**

As a general rule, you will be more likely to attract a higher level candidate pool with a paid internship. For-profit/private companies are required to comply with the standards set forth by the Fair Labor Standards Act when it comes to paying interns. The School of Sustainability cannot advertise or approve unpaid internships at private companies. It should be noted that receiving academic credit is not a form of compensation.

### **Expectations of the on-site internship supervisor**

In order for the intern to earn ASU credit and achieve learning outcomes, we request the following participation of our internship supervisors.

- The site supervisor serves as the primary point of contact for both the student intern and the School of Sustainability internship coordinator.
- Supervision should come from an experienced professional with the capacity to interact with the intern on a regular basis, and provide direct and constructive feedback so interns can learn and improve their performance.
- The site supervisor will facilitate the signing of a Student Placement Agreement between the organization and ASU School of Sustainability (if needed).
- Provide training and orientation to the organization, and introductions to the larger team. Interns want to meet key players, as well as learn the structure and culture of the organization.
- The supervisor is expected to bring any concerns about the intern or the intern's performance to the attention of the School of Sustainability internship coordinator.
- We ask that the site supervisor participate in the "site supervisor interview" assignment, complete mid-term and final evaluations of the intern's performance, and verify total number of hours completed (min. 135). Site supervisor interview, mid-term, and final evaluations may take about 30 minutes each.
- We encourage the supervisor to provide career mentorship or professional development opportunities to the intern. Please include the intern in larger office wide meetings, offer training or shadowing opportunities, review their resume, and offer to assist in facilitating professional connections in the industry.

### **Next Steps**

To get started right away please send an internship description to the Internship Coordinator, and complete the [Employer Internship Description Form](#).

Additional resources on starting an internship program, drafting a posting, and hosting and supporting an intern are available in the [ASU Employer Guide to Developing a Quality Internship Program](#).

Contact Caroline Savalle, Internship Coordinator: [Caroline.Savalle@asu.edu](mailto:Caroline.Savalle@asu.edu).