



American
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Research
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BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Employer Resource Guide

AFE Business Internship Program

funded by the Del Demaree Family Fund



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WELCOME!

Join us as we invest in the future and bring top talent to the floral industry.

Partner with AFE to build Business Internships: meaningful learning experiences that will create a pipeline of fresh talent for your organization.

Our Employer Resource Guide helps ensure the internship program benefits you, your company and your intern.

endowment.org/biz



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ASK YOURSELF

“Would your company benefit from the work of an intern to support existing staff and increase overall productivity?”



ASK YOURSELF

“Would having interns benefit current employees by providing managerial or supervisory experience?”



ASK YOURSELF

“Would a formal internship program help your organization reduce staffing costs, including part-time and temporary employee needs?”



INTRODUCTION

The American Floral Endowment (AFE) Business Internship Program was created to attract top talent and future leaders to the global floral and horticulture industries.

It provides manufacturers, wholesalers/suppliers, importers, retail floral shops and growing operations with aspiring young business leaders. Internships are full-time (35 to 40 hours per week) for 10 to 12 weeks and are typically performed during the summer.

You're Invited

We invite you to partner with AFE in our effort to expand the creation and use of internships as a key strategy to attract fresh talent to the floral industry. The Resource Guide helps ensure the internship experience benefits you, your company and your intern.



THIS GUIDE IS YOUR RESOURCE
to deliver a meaningful
internship experience and
to cultivate the next generation of
business professionals

**Contact AFE at (703) 838-5211,
or visit *endowment.org/biz* for
more information.**



Why interns?

What's in it for you? Interns bring fresh, innovative perspectives to your company in addition to increasing your organization's productivity and reducing hiring costs. Hiring an intern is a richly rewarding experience! It is a great way to give back as your company contributes to an intern's personal and professional development.

Hiring an intern allows you to:

- ✓ Gain short-term talent
- ✓ Get a fresh perspective
- ✓ Find future employees
- ✓ Begin training and development of potential full-time employees
- ✓ Mentor and cultivate future industry leaders
- ✓ Increase diversity within your organization
- ✓ Tackle projects that have been on the backburner
- ✓ Provide full-time employees with more time to focus on critical work
- ✓ Offer management experience to current employees who may supervise an intern
- ✓ Provide students with a rich learning experience
- ✓ Market your company via word of mouth



What is an internship?

An internship is a structured and supervised learning experience that offers students practical, relevant work experience. Students gain knowledge, skills and abilities while employers gain creativity, energy, enthusiasm and assistance with projects. The emphasis is on learning.



Paid or unpaid internships?

AFE internships are paid positions. While there is no mandated hourly wage for interns, AFE requires interns be paid no less than minimum wage and that employers will consider the roles and responsibilities of the position, the company's location (cost of living) and their budget to determine appropriate compensation.

Internship programs are subject to applicable federal and state labor regulations. It is important to be aware of these regulations to ensure compliance.



**PAID INTERNSHIPS
DEMONSTRATE YOUR
INVESTMENT IN YOUR INTERN**



DEVELOP THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Internships are learning experiences

The primary characteristic of an internship program is a focus on learning. Interns want to learn, grow, gain skills, and enhance their education with real-world, hands-on work that will deepen their understanding of their field of study and prepare them for the workplace. Additional benefit comes from the intangibles, such as networking opportunities, mentoring and access to senior leaders.

While an intern can give your organization an extra pair of hands and a lot of energy, figuring out the right way to put them to work for your business while providing them a positive learning experience can be tricky. You will want to develop your intern through real work experiences and genuine projects.



ASK YOURSELF

“What types of projects (research, writing, marketing support, sales support, etc.) need to be completed?”

Identify meaningful work

If you're not supposed to saddle your intern with all-day data entry or endless proofreading assignments, what types of projects should you assign to them? Or, in what types of activities might you invite intern participation, or even invite an intern to come along and learn?



There are a number of tasks and projects that fall somewhere between making copies and critical decision making. When brainstorming your list of potential intern projects or responsibilities, use the recommendations that begin on page 12 as a jumping-off point to identify intern tasks and develop a job description that you can share with your intern during the interview process. Critical to the success of the internship is a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.

When assigning an intern tasks, strike a balance between those activities that will provide a meaningful learning experience and those activities that will increase productivity in your organization.

“We
never give
interns anything we
wouldn’t do ourselves.”

--*Nickelodeon’s Recruiters*



Running the Internship Program

Generally there are two roles involved in running an internship program. However, in a small business it's entirely possible that one person assumes both the Coordinator and Supervisor roles.

- 1. Internship Program Coordinator** – generally works in Human Resources and is seen as the overall manager of the program. The Coordinator is responsible for the development and implementation of the program, oversight and coordination of the program, assigning interns to various departments and managing site supervisors. The Coordinator also acts as the liaison between the host company and AFE.
- 2. Supervisor** – directly supervises and interacts with the intern. (If an employer hosts multiple interns there could be multiple Supervisors.) In order to provide guidance and support, it is recommended that the Supervisor be familiar with the work the intern will perform. Supervisors assign and manage the day-to-day intern activities, provide feedback, evaluate performance and provide progress reports to the Internship Program Coordinator. Ideally the Supervisor takes on more of a coaching role, providing guidance, support and training as needed.

Supervisor responsibilities may include:

- ☐ Developing and monitoring the intern's assignments
- ☐ Participating in the interview process
- ☐ Conducting onboarding and orientation
- ☐ Assigning more challenging tasks, as appropriate
- ☐ Providing frequent feedback
- ☐ Touching base with the intern daily or weekly to assess progress
- ☐ Encouraging the intern to ask questions
- ☐ Serving as the go-to person for questions
- ☐ Encouraging the intern to take ownership of their work



POTENTIAL INTERN ASSIGNMENTS

Marketing/Communications

- ☐ Research the viability of a new campaign
- ☐ Plan and coordinate an event or meeting
- ☐ Generate a marketing plan, or other report
- ☐ Play a role on a campaign or promotion
- ☐ Create promotional materials for an event
- ☐ Copywriting, editing, proofreading
- ☐ Produce a PowerPoint presentation or video
- ☐ Write press releases and articles
- ☐ Write internal communications
- ☐ Create and author a blog
- ☐ Monitor and respond to blog entry comments
- ☐ Assist in the creation of signage, circulars, mock-ups, email campaigns, online promotion, etc.
- ☐ Assist in the distribution or delivery of marketing materials
- ☐ Assist with fulfillment of marketing offers
- ☐ Assist with execution of trade shows

Human Resources

- ☐ Contribute to onboarding with new hire materials
- ☐ Manage logistics for workshops or training sessions
- ☐ Assist with the preparation and delivery of training materials
- ☐ Compile employee manuals
- ☐ Develop process directions for tasks with high employee turnover
- ☐ Aid in the modification or enhancement of your internship program
- ☐ Create a welcome video for future interns
- ☐ Help screen and train a replacement intern prior to departure
- ☐ Develop YouTube videos for essential skills

Logistics

- ☐ Source goods
- ☐ Search for lower-cost sources for high-volume materials
- ☐ Support distributors/vendor partners



Accounting & Finance

- ☐ Post journal entries
- ☐ Assist with month-end financial reports
- ☐ Help with accounts receivable, payable and bank statement reconciliation
- ☐ Assist with audits
- ☐ Balance sheet reconciliation
- ☐ Work with the finance team on yearly forecasting efforts
- ☐ Generate a financial forecast, or other report
- ☐ Prepare a budget
- ☐ Prepare financial reports
- ☐ File financial reports
- ☐ Manage the monthly tracking of physical inventory
- ☐ Support the payment processing team
- ☐ Credit checks
- ☐ Research new methods for costing or pricing
- ☐ Competitive analysis/product comparison
- ☐ Compile and present statistics

Digital Marketing

- ☐ Website and social media optimization
- ☐ Monitor and post on blogs, forums, and social networks
- ☐ Research and identify the most influential blogs in the industry. Follow them and provide weekly reports or updates
- ☐ Online outreach and promotion using Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram and more
- ☐ Suggest ways in which your current social media strategy can be enhanced
- ☐ Evaluate various social media platforms
- ☐ Create a proposal on a potential social media strategy
- ☐ Critique company website from the user perspective; brainstorm ideas for boosting the user experience
- ☐ Keyword analysis
- ☐ Cost/benefit analysis



Graphic Design/Creative

- ☐ Provide creative input
- ☐ Contribute to website design project
- ☐ Work with Photoshop to create and edit content
- ☐ Create support materials such as charts, graphs, posters or other visuals
- ☐ Assist with logistics, layout, design, photography for print ads, TV, outdoor, direct mail, collateral, digital (content and ads) and social executions
- ☐ Help organize storage libraries

Sales

- ☐ Build a company sales database
- ☐ Enter contact information into contact management systems
- ☐ Perform analysis of marketing and sales data
- ☐ Seek and analyze competitor marketing and sales materials both on and offline
- ☐ Scan industry media for news items; provide regularly scheduled updates
- ☐ Accompany employees to client, sales, or other outside meetings
- ☐ Serve as a liaison between the company and clients or vendors
- ☐ Schedule presentation locations and dates
- ☐ Conduct follow-up phone calls to confirm RSVPs
- ☐ Conduct follow-up phone calls with prospects to determine interest

Data Analytics

- ☐ Assist in writing sections of reports
- ☐ Research the viability of a new program, campaign, or initiative; compile and present statistics
- ☐ Perform a study or survey; analyze and present results
- ☐ Perform laboratory tests

Information Technology

- ☐ Evaluate some area of IT functionality to improve efficiency, streamline programs, or cut costs
- ☐ Clean up existing database(s)
- ☐ Perform hardware and software modifications



Daily/Weekly Responsibilities & Tasks

- ☐ Check voicemail and email
- ☐ Reply to messages
- ☐ File
- ☐ Schedule meetings
- ☐ Follow up with potential clients
- ☐ Scan industry blogs and report on competitor activities

Operations

- ☐ Take inventory
- ☐ Place supply orders
- ☐ Materials inspection
- ☐ Quality control
- ☐ Assist in performing ergonomic evaluations, time studies, simulation, and line balancing to improve productivity
- ☐ Study and make suggestions to improve plant safety
- ☐ Cost analysis
- ☐ Process documentation
- ☐ Capacity utilization analysis
- ☐ Optimize assembly flow and process to minimize people per machine per day
- ☐ Generate cost-cutting suggestions

Office Productivity

- ☐ Search for lower-cost sources for high-volume materials
- ☐ Complete a backburner project that has been bogging down permanent staff
- ☐ Propose solutions for a mid-level problem that no one has had time to address
- ☐ Take responsibility for some regularly scheduled task. For example, placing the weekly office supply order
- ☐ Initiate/lead a lean approach to improve office productivity



INTERVIEW AND SELECT AN INTERN

AFE provides a robust intern sourcing and screening process. Prior to contacting you, AFE prescreens the applicants and scores the application package. A fully vetted candidate is presented for your review and consideration.

The AFE Application Package

AFE provides a comprehensive application package prior to your interview with the applicant. This allows you to get to know the candidate and determine whether they will be a good fit for your organization.

The Application Package (application, personal statement, letters of recommendation and college transcript record) describes what the applicant accomplished in past positions or school projects, their grades and personal references.

You may want to consider the following when evaluating a candidate's application package:

- ❑ **Coursework and Technical Skills**

Is the applicant's major or minor course of study relevant to your internship?

- ❑ **Work Experience**

Because students may not have had the opportunity to work in their field, look at their work experience for transferrable skills: work ethic, dedication, maturity, time management, and organization and prioritization skills. School projects, volunteer work and extracurricular activities also offer insight into a candidate's skills and abilities.



❑ **Extracurricular Activities and Volunteer Experience**

These help students develop much desired soft skills: communication, teamwork, collaboration, and leadership. An applicant's participation in extracurricular activities may help you to assess a candidate prior to an interview.

❑ **Personal Statement**

Applicants use the personal statement to describe their reasons for applying for the AFE internship, their career goals and why they are a good fit for your organization.

❑ **Letters of Recommendation**

Whether academic or professional, these letters can provide great insight into a candidate's demeanor and work ethic. You might ask the candidate's references to assess how successful they think the candidate will be in your environment.

The Interview

Use the in-person, Skype or phone interview to explore why and how the student achieved the results described in their application. Request the candidate provide descriptive details: why they did something, how they did it, and what the results were. Develop interview questions that require a three-part response: the situation, the applicant's action and the result.

Sample Interview Questions:



"Give me a specific example of a time when you . . ."



"Describe a situation in which you were able to. . ."



"Tell me about a recent challenge that you. . ."

Questions like these require an in-depth description to support statements made in the interview or on the resume. And the answers offer insight into the best fit (project, assignment, or task) for the candidate and the host. See pages 39-40 for additional behavior-based interview questions.



Make an Offer

After you complete the interview, please contact AFE to discuss whether or not you will extend an offer to the candidate. You can then contact the student to make an offer. Be sure to establish a firm start and end date, determine a work schedule, agree to compensation and complete the appropriate paperwork for human resources.



MANAGE YOUR INTERN

Meet the Millennials

Today's workplace includes multiple generations and while interns are not exclusively college students, many will be members of the Millennial or Gen Y generation (born 1980 – 1999). The Millennials come to work with different expectations, assumptions, preferences and attitudes, and different approaches to communication, culture and career.

** Influences and Attitudes*

Growing up during the most “child-centric” time in our history, Millennials were raised by parents who showered them with attention and hovering helicopter moms. Typically team oriented, they prefer group work to individual endeavors. Millennials are the first Internet generation.

** Workplace Characteristics of Millennials*

☒ **Technically Literate Like No One Else**

Technology isn't “new” — it's how it is. This generation grew up with cell phones, personal computers, IMing, text messaging, blogging and iPods.

☒ **Multi-Tasking is How You Live**

It might be misinterpreted as a short attention span in the future, but for Millennials, juggling is how life is lived: work, school, sports and a social life — they do it all.

☒ **Collectivism Holds Power**

Different than Gen Xers, Millennials have a propensity for banding together and working and socializing in groups. They believe in the benefits of collaboration, and know how to work in groups and teams.

☒ **Diversity Makes Sense**

They're the most diverse and least Caucasian generation to join the workforce. Twenty percent of Millennials have at least one immigrant parent.

☒ **Educated**

At every socioeconomic level, this is the nation's best educated generation. Give them challenging work.



HOW TO LEVERAGE MILLENNIAL STRENGTHS

STRENGTHS MILLENNIALS BRING TO THE WORKPLACE:

Tech savvy

- ☐ Provide access to technology
- ☐ Reverse mentoring of your employees
- ☐ Keep your business up-to-date with social, entertainment, and other market trends
- ☐ Explore the business application of their social media savvy

Multi-taskers

- ☐ Set clear goals and articulate expectations
- ☐ Hold intern accountable
- ☐ Guide prioritizing, organizing, and decision-making skills
- ☐ Assign a variety of tasks

Want challenging work

- ☐ Ensure challenging, stimulating work
- ☐ Provide variety by assigning two projects at a time to increase productivity and minimize boredom
- ☐ As interns progress consider assigning stretch assignments

Prefer frequent feedback

- ☐ Provide fast, frequent, on-the-spot feedback
- ☐ Express appreciation
- ☐ Provide recognition

Work/life balance and flexibility

- ☐ More motivating than compensation
- ☐ Look for work schedule and work location flexibility
- ☐ Respect their time for outside commitments

Team oriented

- ☐ Include them in meetings, group and team activities
- ☐ Provide time for mentoring
- ☐ Look for opportunities that require collaboration

Socially conscience

- ☐ Engage in volunteer or community give-back activities



Onboarding

Onboarding begins as soon as you make an offer to your intern. You really want to stay connected between hire date and start date. There are a number of things you can do to help your intern feel welcome and appreciated. A smooth start accelerates learning. Keep in mind you may already have an onboard process for your full-time new hires.

1 *Send your intern a welcome package*

The purpose of the package is to confirm start date and communicate essential first-day information. The package might also include:

- ☐ A letter or email welcoming the intern to your organization that confirms start date and time, location, and key contact information. A brief paragraph that explains your dress code and the level of formality in the office would be very helpful particularly if your intern is new to the workplace.
- ☐ Links to your company website and social media platforms so the intern can learn more about your organization. You may want to include a copy of your Annual Report or company newsletter.
- ☐ Intern Job Description that describes the intern's roles and responsibilities. See page 37 for a sample job description.
- ☐ A copy of your Internship Agreement with the host information completed. See page 43 (and the AFE website) for an agreement in PDF format that is ready to use.
- ☐ Calendar with key events including start date, orientation schedule, first check-in. See pages 44-45 for a sample calendar.
- ☐ Any documents human resources needs signed in advance.



2 *Touch base with your Intern Coordinator and Supervisor*

Copy your Coordinator and Supervisor on the email you send to the intern. Make sure they feel prepared, organized and in control:

- ☐ Clearly articulated intern job description
- ☐ Location for the intern to work
- ☐ Technology necessary to do the work
- ☐ Plan to make the first day great

3 *Notify your employees*

Send a company-wide email alerting employees to the arrival of your intern. Provide a brief biography about the intern – their school and/or major, and perhaps something personal like interesting hobbies, athletic talents, or travel. Ask employees to make the intern feel welcome by initiating introductions and answering questions when possible.

See page 46 for an Onboarding Checklist



Day One! Make the First Day Great

You've interviewed, hired, prepped and planned . . . and now your intern has arrived. Hold an orientation or welcome session to introduce your intern to their supervisor and make sure everyone is acquainted and on the same page. Include as appropriate the intern coordinator, supervisor, manager, mentor, or learning buddy.



Day one is your opportunity to begin to introduce your intern to your corporate culture.

- ☐ Give interns an overview of your organization – the company's history, vision and service.
- ☐ Be inclusive. Share your company org chart and explain who does what.
- ☐ Clarify any unfamiliar language or acronyms that may be specific to your company or your industry.
- ☐ Show company video. Provide a copy of your company newsletter if you have one.
- ☐ Establish expectations – clearly communicate your goals and expectations and describe what the intern is going to do.
- ☐ Describe the process of checking in and giving feedback.
- ☐ Assign a buddy (ideally a former intern or someone close in age).
- ☐ Allocate time to tour the facility (workspace, break room, restrooms, cafeteria, office equipment, etc.). Include where to park and options for lunch.
- ☐ Include self-assessments: learning styles, communication styles, time management tips.
- ☐ Conclude with breakfast or lunch.



Goal Setting and Expectations

Goal setting should be accomplished on day one. The intern and Supervisor should plan time to review the job description, roles and responsibilities. Discussing the following topics will allow them to define and agree to expectations.

- ☐ How performance will be evaluated.
- ☐ Learning Objectives – what the intern expects to learn during the internship.
- ☐ Intern Projects – assignments that will enable the intern to achieve their learning objectives.

“Companies should look at their internship programs and determine if all the elements are there: real-world learning, mentoring, networking, training and challenge.”

--Carolyn Wise,
Vault



Feedback and Evaluation

A focus on learning is the defining characteristic of an internship. Feedback is crucial for learning. Interns need (and expect) frequent feedback to know whether their performance is meeting or exceeding your expectations and where they need to make adjustments.

Feedback can be an informal discussion of strengths and weaknesses over lunch or it can be formal, written and regularly scheduled. Clearly communicated, written feedback provides the intern with a series of progress reports that are easily referenced. However, feedback offered on-the-spot or in-the-moment is invaluable.

Whether feedback is formal or informal, it must be specific, actionable and timely. You want to ensure the intern knows precisely what they did well and/or what they need to improve and how.

In addition to daily or weekly check-ins, the Supervisor should schedule a mid-internship and final internship evaluation. At mid-point invite your intern to discuss their experience and identify opportunities for more exposure or responsibility. The Supervisor should provide feedback on the intern's performance acknowledging and appreciating work well done and noting opportunities for improvement. The Supervisor and intern should discuss whether or not their respective goals are being met.



The final evaluation is more formal with a written evaluation the intern can add to their professional portfolio. See page 47 for a final evaluation template.



Celebrate! Wrap it up right

As the internship comes to a conclusion, take the opportunity to recognize your intern's growth and contributions before they leave. Ask your intern to recap their experiences in a presentation, blog, journal, infographic, video, photos, etc.

Wrap up the internship with the following:



- ☐ Set up a venue to showcase an intern's work or special project and demonstrate their achievement (for example: an intern expo or talent day).
- ☐ Because Millennials care deeply about personal development, schedule an exit interview. Reflect on what the intern has accomplished and discuss strengths and weaknesses.
- ☐ Celebrate your intern with a lunch or social event
- ☐ Write letters of recommendation
- ☐ Give your intern a gift to remember you and your organization
- ☐ If appropriate, make a full-time offer before your intern returns to school
- ☐ Keep in touch!



THE SOFTER SIDE

We have paid attention to the mechanics of setting up an internship program, selecting the best intern and ensuring your intern has meaningful work. Interns need to feel accepted, like they are part of the team and aligned with your company. For the learning experience to be successful, the intern must be able to ask questions, seek clarification and figure out who to turn to. You'll help your intern feel at ease and accepted when you do the following:

- ☐ **Sponsor “get-to-know-you opportunities”**
Arrange for a team lunch or informal "get-acquainted" sessions giving your intern an opportunity to learn about your company and culture from your employees.
- ☐ **Make the first move**
Encourage employees to say hello, make introductions, answer questions, invite an intern to lunch.
- ☐ **Interns need an ally**
Assigning a buddy assures the intern there's at least one person they can turn to.
- ☐ **Two is twice as much fun**
Consider hiring more than one intern. People transition more smoothly into a group when they have someone entering alongside them.
- ☐ **Interns are not here to take your job**
Make it clear to employees that interns are hired to help them do their jobs more efficiently, not turn their jobs into (unpaid) internships.
- ☐ **Steer away from coffee runs and clerical only tasks**
Assign interns meaningful work. Being assigned the tasks no one wants to do leads to unhappy interns. Interns want to contribute to critical projects as do your employees.
- ☐ **Help interns fit in**
Feeling like a part of the team will result in increased effort, engagement and positive peer-to-peer feedback about your company and the floral industry.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

About the Business Internship Program

? *What are the requirements to participate in the AFE Business Internship Program?*

The only requirement is your willingness to host a full-time, paid intern and provide a meaningful learning experience while introducing interns to our beautiful industry.

? *What is the duration and timing of the internship?*

Internships are 10-12 weeks. Most are performed during the summer months, however there may be requests for other times of the year. Student applications are due to AFE by October 1 each year. AFE then vets the applicants, and in early November they will contact host companies to arrange placements.

? *How much time will it take to set up the internship program?*

It depends. If your business already has an internship program, the time will be minimal. If you don't have an internship program, you'll need to take a few steps to get your business and your employees intern-ready. This guide will walk you through the steps to get started and provide templates you can tailor for your organization.

? *If we sign up for the internship program, do we have to accept an intern every year?*

No. AFE realizes that you aren't always going to be able to accept an intern, and some years, AFE may not have a student for you. However, having your organization's name listed on the AFE website as a host is a great way to promote your business, and get an intern when you need one.



? *Can we select the department, function or area where the intern will work?*

Students applying for business internships are looking to gain experience in their particular field (i.e. accounting, IT, or marketing.) Therefore, we require that hosts place interns in the department they request. However, if the intern is open to spending time in multiple departments, we are open to the host providing a broader learning experience.

? *Can departments share an intern?*

If two or more departments are closely related (i.e. communications/marketing) it makes sense to allow the intern to experience all they can. However, AFE doesn't recommend taking a graphic design intern and sharing them with accounting.

? *How many staff members do we need to support an intern?*

In order to provide a successful internship experience, AFE recommends two staff people. One, an Internship Coordinator, who puts together the internship package (see page 11) and works directly with AFE staff to set up the interview, process paperwork and manage the details. Second is the Supervisor who oversees the intern's day-to-day work.

? *Do we have to pay the intern?*

Yes. The AFE business internship is a paid internship. Paid internship programs are subject to applicable federal and state labor regulations, so it is important to ensure compliance.

? *How do we sign up for the AFE Business Internship Program?*

It's easy! Contact AFE at 703-838-5211 or visit endowment.org/biz to complete the application. It's a short form describing your company and your intern preferences. Your organization's name will then be added to our list of potential hosts. When AFE receives an applicant that fits your needs, we'll be in touch with you to start the interview and placement process.



Interviewing and Selecting an Intern

? *Are the interns local students?*

The majority of students who apply for an internship request a local internship. However, there may be students who wish to travel to another part of the U.S. for an internship. In those cases, AFE will work with the student to help them find a host business in their desired location.

? *What grade level are the students?*

Students must be juniors, seniors or graduate-level to apply for the business internship. AFE makes sure that students have enough classroom experience in their field to ensure a successful internship for both the student and the host company.

? *Should we develop an intern job description?*

Absolutely! It's important that you develop an intern job description with real work assignments and defined objectives, prior to the start of the internship. AFE encourages you to share the job description with the applicant during the interview process or before the internship begins. This ensures that both you and the student have clear expectations of the assignment. See page 35 for details on how to create a position description.

? *How involved are we in the interview process?*

Very. To ensure a quality candidate, AFE screens each student – grades, personal recommendations and writing ability – before referring applicants to the host organization. AFE provides the student's application package for your review. And to ensure the best fit, you will be expected to interview the applicant (in person, phone or Skype) prior to making a decision to host them.

? *Do we have a say in selecting the intern?*

Yes. You are the final decision maker! While AFE matches students and organizations based on need and preferences, you always have the final say in whether or not to accept the student.

? *What if after the interview, we determine the candidate is not a good fit?*

If after interviewing the student you don't think it's a good fit, please let AFE staff know. AFE will work with you to find a better-suited student, and work to place the student with another organization.



Managing Your Intern

? *What if after the intern starts, we determine it's not a good fit?*

With a well-written job description, robust screening and interviewing, AFE does not anticipate that will happen. However, if after a few weeks the intern isn't working out, contact AFE and we'll work with you to replace the intern or terminate the internship.

? *How do we evaluate our intern?*

It is critical that you provide your intern with ongoing feedback. Evaluate interns the same way you evaluate full-time employees, keeping in mind that your intern may need more guidance and support as this could be their first work experience. Pay attention to how well your intern handles projects, how and what they contribute, and most of all, how they interact and work with your staff. AFE provides an evaluation form for you to complete at the conclusion of the internship to evaluate both the student's performance and the internship experience. See page 47 for an evaluation template.

Human Resources

? *Where can we find our state or federal requirements for hiring an intern?*

Many of the labor laws that apply to employees, such as workplace discrimination, health and safety, and workers' compensation, also apply to interns. It's important that you know your state's requirements. Each state is different, so we recommend asking human resources to provide this information to ensure you are in compliance.

? *How do we determine what to pay an intern?*

There is no set hourly wage for interns; however AFE requires interns are paid no less than minimum wage and an appropriate wage based on position description and geographical location. Employers are encouraged to review the intern's responsibilities to determine an appropriate wage. Interns in major metropolitan cities might be paid more than those in rural locations, and certain positions may pay more than others. High functioning and technical internships are often competitive and pay well.

? *Should we ask an intern to complete a confidentiality agreement?*

This is something for you to decide. If your employees sign a confidentiality agreement you may want your intern to sign one. We recommend discussing this with human resources. See page 41 to learn more about confidentiality agreements.



? *Are we allowed to make an employment offer to an intern?*

It depends. If your intern has one or two more years of college to complete, it's probably not appropriate to offer them a permanent position. However, if your intern is about to graduate and you would like to offer them a position, then do take advantage of the opportunity! The purpose of the internship is to bring top talent to our industry.

? *Are we obligated to provide transportation for interns?*

No. Host employers are not responsible for their interns' transportation. Employers should identify the need for personal transportation in the internship position description. Interns are responsible for transportation to and from the internship. Students have been informed by AFE that they are responsible for their own transportation.

? *Are we obligated to provide housing for interns?*

No. Interns are required to find and pay for their own housing. If the intern is local, then this will not be an issue. For students moving to a new area for their internship, your support in helping them identify affordable housing in a safe environment would be much appreciated. On occasion we've had host organization employees offer to rent a room to an intern, which we believe is completely acceptable.

Best Practices

? *Can you refer me to someone who has a successful internship program in place?*

Yes. AFE has worked with many organizations placing interns from a variety of programs. We can connect you with one of our host organizations. On the next page is a list of best practice suggestions from organizations who participate in AFE's internship programs.



HOW TO “AMP UP” THE INTERN EXPERIENCE

- Give your intern **"new hire" level work with supervision.**
- Assign your intern **challenging, stimulating work.**
- Engage your intern in a **long-term project** (with milestone meetings).
- Assign your intern an **“extra credit” assignment.**
- Provide **frequent feedback.**
- **Offer training and development opportunities** – including leadership, communication, presentation skills, etc.
- Invite your **company’s executives to share their personal development stories** with your intern.
- Invite a **senior manager “to sponsor”** your intern, meeting with them a few times during their assignment.
- Create opportunities for your intern to **meet current or past interns.**
- **Keep your intern busy** – create a master list of tasks that your intern can do independently, whenever they don’t have anything else to do. See page 15 for Daily/Weekly Responsibilities & Tasks.



TOOLS & RESOURCES

*Items are ready-to-use PDFs

Intern Job Description	35
Learn about what to include in description and view a sample job description	
Interview Questions	39
Discover more about the candidate and their skill set with these sample interview questions	
Non-disclosure Agreement/Confidentiality Agreement	41
Decide whether to ask an intern to sign a Non-disclosure Agreement	
Internship Agreement*	43
Be clear on expectations and requirements of the internship, including logistics and compensation	
AFE Business Internship Calendar	44
Keep these annual highlights on your calendar	
Onboarding Checklist	46
Develop an onboarding strategy to get interns off to a fast—and successful—start	
Evaluation Forms*	47
Reflect on experience and provide structured feedback to your intern and AFE	



HOW TO PREPARE AN INTERN JOB DESCRIPTION

Organization Overview

Provide the applicant with a brief overview of your organization and include links to your company website, blog, social media, etc.

Internship Title

Be specific: “Social Media Marketing Intern,” “Accounting Intern,” “Marketing Communications Intern”

Degree Track

Are you looking for a student currently working toward his/her associate's, bachelor's, or master's degree? Are you looking for a particular area of study (marketing, finance, operations, etc.)?

Timeframe

When would you like the internship to begin and end? Typical internship timeframes are full-time (30 to 40 hours/week) for 10 to 12 weeks, typically during the summer months. State preferred hours – how many hours you want the intern to work per week. Include any flexibility.

Required or Preferred Skills

Are specific skills required for the internships? While internships are all about learning, you may prefer candidates have specific skills in advance. For example, should the candidate be familiar with PowerPoint, Excel spreadsheets, social media platforms or exhibit creativity? Indicate the skills that are required for the internship.



Responsibilities

The intern's responsibilities are the projects, tasks and assignments the student will perform and be expected to complete during the internship. Your goal is to describe a meaningful, hands-on learning experience that is both helpful to you as an employer and educational for the intern. You may find it helpful to prioritize the responsibilities from most to least important. See "Identify Meaningful Work" on page 9.

Other Details

Is travel involved? Is a personal vehicle required? Note: Plan to discuss and negotiate pay during the interview.

"It is a very different experience to be treated like someone who has been brought in to do odd jobs versus someone who is a valuable member of the team."

Bob Ronan, CIO | Advisor



SAMPLE INTERN JOB DESCRIPTION

PAGE 1 OF 2

Organization Overview

The American Floral Endowment (AFE) is an independent, nonprofit organization that funds research and scholarships in floriculture and environmental horticulture for the benefit of growers, wholesalers, retailers, allied industry organizations and the general public. AFE is a charitable organization under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

AFE arranges paid internships for college juniors, seniors and graduate students, to gain practical business experience from the floral industry's leading organizations, develop essential skills and improve future employment opportunities.

For more information about AFE, visit our website at endowment.org or follow us on Twitter, become a fan on Facebook, join our LinkedIn Group, subscribe to our YouTube channel, and follow our Pinterest page.

Marketing and Communications Intern, American Floral Endowment

AFE is offering one paid full-time summer internship opportunity to assist staff with Endowment projects and activities, particularly marketing and communications for AFE's intern programs.

Requirements

- Full-time junior, senior or graduate students enrolled in an Entrepreneur- or Business-related program at a 2- or 4-year college or university in the United States.
- No horticulture background needed.
- 3.0 GPA or equivalent.
- Must be eligible to work in the U.S. or Canada.
- Transportation and housing are the student's responsibility.

Responsibilities

The internship is a 10 to 12 week assignment, June through August at our Alexandria, VA, office. AFE has a fast-paced, collaborative work environment in the exciting Washington, DC area. The assignment offers challenging work, opportunities for professional growth and development, and includes peer-to-peer and traditional mentoring opportunities.



Projects may include: writing organizational materials, blog entries and assist in updating AFE social media platforms. Additional assignments may include developing a short video on the mutual benefit and value of internships and/or PowerPoint presentations for a variety of interested audiences.

Qualifications

Customer (and member) service orientation, ability to collaborate and coordinate with a variety of people, special events planning, excellent time management and prioritization skills, and attention to detail are highly desirable. Social media and Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint and Excel) skills required.

Application Process

Apply for an AFE Business Internship by completing the Business Internship Application at **<http://endowment.org/business-internship-application>**

Submit by email to AFE: afe@endowment.org

- An official transcript from all institutions attended.
- A personal statement explaining reasons for applying and career goals.
- A letter of recommendation.

For more information contact AFE

Phone (703) 838-5211

Email afe@endowment.org

Address American Floral Endowment
1001 North Fairfax St. Suite 201
Alexandria, VA 22314



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

When interviewing an applicant you want to investigate whether or not they have the required skills for the position. You might consider the following questions to learn more about the candidate and their skill set. Keep in mind that behavioral-based interview questions often begin with:

- ❑ “Give me a specific example of a time when you . . .”
- ❑ “Describe a situation in which you were able to”
- ❑ “Tell me about a recent challenge that you . . .”

Asking the following questions will help you to determine if the candidate has the skill set and experience you need.



“Describe the leadership experience you are most proud of.”



“Give me an example of how you leveraged your strengths to accomplish a challenging assignment.”



“Tell me how you manage your time when faced with tight deadlines. How did you accomplish the necessary tasks?”



“Tell me about a goal you have and the steps you are taking to achieve it.”



“Describe a time when you felt uninspired or were suffering from a lack of motivation. How did you work through it?”



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (CONT'D)



“Tell me about a time when you were on a team. What role did you play? What challenges did you encounter? How did you handle them?”



“What experiences have you had that you believe best prepare you for this internship?”



“What knowledge, skills or abilities do you bring to this position that others do not?”

The interview is the appropriate time to discuss pay and to answer any questions the student may have.

THINK ABOUT IT

Applicants who arrive prepared and ask questions are more likely to be interested in your internship opportunity.



NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT/ CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

If you've ever been asked to keep a secret, then you already understand the basic concept behind non-disclosure agreements. The decision to ask an intern to sign a Non-disclosure Agreement is entirely up to the host organization. The following information may help you decide whether an agreement is necessary.

What is a Confidentiality Agreement?

A Confidentiality Agreement, also known as a Non-Disclosure Agreement, is used by individuals or businesses to protect information, ideas, or transaction details from being revealed to an outside source during the course of a business deal, project or employment agreement with another party.

What types of information can be protected using a Confidentiality Agreement?

Customer Information

This includes any information relating to customers or clients of an employer, including client lists, contracts, and business relationships.

Intellectual Property (IP) and Proprietary Information

This refers to any intellectual property owned by an employer, including patents, trade secrets, proprietary software or production methods, copyrights, and other test data collected by the employer and may include computer technology and scientific information used by an employer.

Marketing Information

Any marketing information, campaigns, or projects can be protected using a Confidentiality Agreement.

Business Operations

The personnel data of an employer and its employees, as well as any internal cost information and operational procedures can be kept concealed with a Confidentiality Agreement.

Service Information

This applies to a business or retailer's product and service information, including procedures, packaging, equipment and techniques used to produce the product, or the employees, planning and management involved with providing a service.

Accounting Information

A company's accounting procedures, payroll, software, reports and more can be protected under a Confidentiality Agreement.



When should I use a Confidentiality Agreement?

Common situations where individuals or businesses use a Confidentiality Agreement include:

- When hiring an employee and the employer wishes to keep company information protected.
- When hiring an independent contractor or consultant and the client wishes to keep their company or personal information private.
- During a company acquisition to protect the selling company's information, as well as the details of the purchase agreement.
- When two businesses work together, such as a joint venture, and agree to hold certain information in confidence.

What is the difference between non-solicit and non-compete clauses?

Non-solicitation refers to restricting a party from doing business with your clients or taking business away from you. Non-competition means that a party cannot start a business that is in direct competition with your business or reveal confidential information to a competing enterprise.

In a Confidentiality Agreement, you can state a timeframe for non-solicitation and non-competition. However, in order for it to be enforceable, the time limits should be fair and reasonable to the party. As well, you can list a time period in which they must abide by the duties of confidentiality.

How enforceable is a Confidentiality Agreement?

While the laws vary with each state, Confidentiality Agreements that address specific information are enforceable so long as the terms are not too broad in nature and do not unfairly restrict a party with unnecessary time frames or burdens, and the confidential information is not against the best interests of the public.

Where can I find a Confidentiality Agreement?

The following websites provide free, easy-to-use forms that are specific to the laws of your state. You will need to answer a few questions to personalize your template and then print and download. The process takes about 10 minutes.

- www.legalzoom.com
- www.legalcontract.com/LegalTemplates/Confidentiality
- <https://www.lawdepot.com/contracts/confidentiality-agree>



Internship Agreement

Student Information.....

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

School _____

Emergency Contact _____

Host Organization.....

Company Name _____

Address _____

Intern Supervisor _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Internship Logistics.....

Start Date _____ End Date _____

Title _____

Responsibilities (may attach intern job description) _____

Expectations & Requirements

Hours _____ Wages _____ Overtime _____ Travel _____

Dress Code _____

Other _____

The Intern Agrees to

- ☐ Comply with the host organization's policies, procedures, and practices
- ☐ Follow protocols for appropriate behavior, dress, correspondence, and work space cleanliness
- ☐ Complete any required training
- ☐ Work onsite during scheduled hours/days and notify Supervisor of late arrival or absence prior to start time
- ☐ Perform responsibilities in a timely and satisfactory manner
- ☐ Discuss problems and/or concerns with Supervisor

The Supervisor and Company Agree to

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comply with the U.S. Department of Labor policies on paid internships | <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct necessary (appropriate) training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compensate the intern according to agreed-upon rate | <input type="checkbox"/> Establish a work schedule |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adhere to all state and federal child labor laws | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide the intern with feedback and evaluation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a safe work space | <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the intern's learning goals are met |

We have discussed the topics and understand our roles, expectations and requirements during the term of the internship.

Intern Signature _____ Date _____

Supervisor Signature _____ Date _____

AFE BUSINESS INTERNSHIP CALENDAR

February

- ❑ Student Business Internship Applications due to AFE
- ❑ AFE scores applications and screens applicants



April/May

- ❑ AFE notifies host organizations of potential interns
- ❑ Host Organization
 - Interviews candidate
 - Selects candidate
 - Extends an offer to candidate
- Sends welcome letter
- Begins onboarding

May/June

- ❑ Internships begin (10-12 weeks)



Week 1

- Day one – make it great
- Onboarding continues
- Goals are clearly articulated
- Project work and assignments begin

Weeks 2 - 4

- Project work and assignments continue
- Supervisor continues with weekly check-ins and on-the-spot feedback

Week 5

- Mid-internship evaluation between intern and Supervisor

Weeks 6-9

- Project work and assignments continue
- Supervisor continues with weekly check-ins and on-the-spot feedback

Weeks 10-12

- Internship concludes



At the Conclusion of the Internship

Host Organization:

- Arranges celebration to recognize intern
- Completes final evaluation and reviews with the intern
See page 47 for template Final Intern Evaluation by Supervisor
- Schedules an exit interview with intern to discuss accomplishments
- Writes letter of recommendation

Intern:

- Recaps the intern experience and shares with host organization:
Creative options include presentation, blog, journal, infographic, video, or photos
- Writes Final Report and submits to AFE: The 500 word report summarizes the intern experience and should include a description of work performed, skills learned, impact on education/career plans and any relevant comments about host organization.
- Completes Student Evaluation and submits to AFE
- Creates video (optional) and submits to AFE

September

☐ 30 Days Post Internship

Intern:

- Submits to AFE their Final Report
(500 word report with photos summarizing intern experience.)
- Submits to AFE their Student Evaluation
- Submits to AFE their 2 to 3 minute video sharing the intern experience (optional)

Host Organization:

- Remains in touch with intern



ONBOARDING CHECKLIST

Shortly after the offer letter is signed, send a welcome letter/email to connect with your intern and communicate critical first-day-at-work information. Use this Onboarding Checklist to prepare for the first day/week on the job.

Welcome Package

Individual Responsible: Intern Coordinator

- ☐ Welcome letter/email
- ☐ Internship agreement
- ☐ Links to company website
- ☐ Annual report, newsletter, or blog journal entries

Organization Information

Individual Responsible: Intern Coordinator or Supervisor

- ☐ History, mission, values, goals and objectives
- ☐ Facility tour
- ☐ Organizational chart
- ☐ Brief overview of each department
- ☐ Industry-specific jargon/acronyms
- ☐ Assist with month-end financial reports

Human Resources

Individual Responsible: Intern Coordinator

- ☐ Introduction to staff
- ☐ Policies and procedures
- ☐ Workplace protocol: dress, behavior, correspondence and workspace
- ☐ Security & confidentiality
- ☐ Safety
- ☐ (other) HR paperwork

Intern Assignment Information

Individual Responsible: Intern Supervisor

- ☐ Work schedule
- ☐ Intern job description
- ☐ Touch base with Intern Coordinator and Intern Supervisor
- ☐ Department specific goals & objectives
- ☐ Key contacts: schedule meetings for intern and key individuals with whom they will interact frequently
- ☐ Training schedule

Facility Tour

Individual Responsible: Intern Coordinator or Supervisor

- ☐ Location: restrooms, break room, cafeteria, office equipment and supplies (printers, copiers and mail), auditorium and conference rooms
- ☐ Local options for food
- ☐ Parking locations

Employees

Individual Responsible: Intern Coordinator

- ☐ Send employees an email introducing intern; provide a brief bio, school/major, and outside interests
- ☐ Ask employees to introduce themselves to the intern and make them feel welcome.



Intern Evaluation Form

page 1 of 2

(To be completed by Supervisor)

An internship is a learning opportunity for students. Therefore students should receive feedback on their performance so they can grow professionally and personally. This evaluation is meant to be reviewed with your intern to help them learn what they did well and where they can improve. You may want to attach a letter of recommendation or sample work to support the student's use in seeking future employment. With the intern's permission, please share the final evaluation with AFE.

Intern Name _____

Supervisor Name _____

Host Organization _____

Start Date _____ End Date _____

Skill Assessment

1 –Lacks this Skill 3 – Adequate/average 5 – Above average/exceptional

Communication Skills

- ☐ Writing is clear and concise
- ☐ Speaks up, communicates information and asks questions
- ☐ Asks for and listens to feedback

Problem Solving

- ☐ Analyzes situation and takes appropriate action
- ☐ Offers creative solutions to problems
- ☐ Resolves problems in timely fashion

Teamwork

- ☐ Establishes rapport and credibility
- ☐ Shares information and resources
- ☐ Assumes (appropriate) leadership role

Initiative

- ☐ Seeks opportunities
- ☐ Takes initiative, acts decisively even without direction
- ☐ Resourceful, overcomes obstacles and problems

Self-management

- ☐ Produces high quality, accurate work
- ☐ Organizes, prioritizes and uses time efficiently
- ☐ Demonstrates ethical behavior

Technical skills

- ☐ Willing to learn new skills
- ☐ Uses appropriate technology for the task
- ☐ Uses technology to perform effectively and efficiently



Other skills

If there are any industry specific skills you feel are important to the profession or career field that are not listed please list the skills here and assess accordingly. _____

Where did the student excel? _____

What are the student's opportunities for improvement? _____

Did the student demonstrate continued progress throughout the internship? _____

Note areas where the student gained new skills, insights, values, confidence, etc. _____

What would you recommend the student do to be better prepared for the workplace: coursework, developmental programs, activities, mentoring, etc.? _____

Additional comments: _____



AFE Business Internship Evaluation Form

(To be completed by Supervisor/Intern Coordinator)

Please provide your candid evaluation of the AFE Business Internship Program

Name _____

Role ☐ Supervisor ☐ Intern Coordinator

Host Organization _____

Start Date _____ End Date _____

Intern Name _____

Internship Program

How well did the internship program meet your organization's goals? (Did the internship address your organization's needs?) _____

What were the advantages of the internship program to your organization? _____

What challenges did you encounter? _____

If you could change any aspect of the Business Internship Program what would it be?

Would you recommend the AFE Business Internship Program to other companies? _____

How satisfied are you with the overall internship experience? _____



Intern

How well did the internship meet the goals of the intern? _____

How would you assess the value of the intern to your organization? _____

What challenges did the intern encounter? _____

Additional Comments

What additional thoughts, ideas and/or comments do you have that would be valuable to AFE staff and the Business Internship Program? _____



Student Evaluation Form

page 1 of 2

(To be completed by student)

The Student Evaluation Form offers the student the opportunity to reflect on the learning experience as well as provide feedback to AFE and the host organization. The evaluation will help AFE assess the success of the Business Internship Program. AFE may use student comments as a testimonial for future internships.

Student Name _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

College/University _____

Faculty Advisor _____

Start Date _____ End Date _____

Host Organization _____

Supervisor Name _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Internship Experience.....

Describe your internship experience. _____

What was your most rewarding experience? _____

What was the least satisfactory aspect of your internship? _____

How well prepared were you to successfully complete your assigned projects and responsibilities?

What additional preparation was necessary? _____

What skills were critical to performing well in this internship? _____



How well did your internship placement match your career interest? Have your career goals changed as a result of this internship? _____

How satisfied are you with the overall internship experience? _____

AFE Program Administration

Was the application process easy to understand? Why or why not? _____

Was the AFE staff helpful in finding your internship? What else could AFE have done?

How well did AFE staff respond to your questions about the internship? _____

If you could change any aspect of the internship program what would it be? _____

Would you recommend the AFE internship to other students? Why or why not? _____

Additional Comments

What final thoughts do you have to improve the quality of this internship? Please include any specific recommendations you have that might be useful to your host organization, your Supervisor or AFE.





American
Floral
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Research
Internships
Scholarships
Education

Funding the Future of Floriculture

610 Madison Street, Suite 101, PMB 803
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 838-5211 endowment.org/biz

The **American Floral Endowment** (AFE) is an independent, nonprofit organization that funds research and scholarships in floriculture and environmental horticulture for the benefit of growers, wholesalers, retailers, allied industry organizations and the general public.



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