

CRS Report for Congress

Internships, Fellowships, and Other Work Experience Opportunities in the Federal Government

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Summary

This report describes Internet resources on internships, fellowships, and work experience programs within the federal government. It is intended as a selective guide for students of all levels: high school, undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate. This report will be updated annually.

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Internships, Fellowships, and Other Work Experience Opportunities in the Federal Government

Introduction

The federal government offers many opportunities for internships, fellowships, and work experiences. However, there is no single centralized source for finding information on every opportunity. This report describes the major and most popular Internet resources for such opportunities and gives applicants a place to begin their search. The Internet resources provided are not exhaustive.

Applying for an internship or fellowship is similar to applying for admission to a college or university. The application process takes time and effort, often requiring essays and interviews. Applicants should begin their search early and explore what best suits their interests and career goals. Application deadlines and program durations vary from agency to agency. Because competition is stiff in many internship and fellowship programs, with applicants often far exceeding the number of positions available, one should apply to more than one program. Opportunities are generally available in the spring, summer, and fall, with summer positions being the most popular and the most competitive.

The terms “fellowship” and “internship” are sometimes used interchangeably in the names of specific programs. Fellowships are generally intended for persons with advanced degrees or substantial professional experience, and are usually salaried positions lasting nine months to a year or more. Internships, which are either salaried or volunteer short-term arrangements, usually require relatively little experience and are often filled by students. Although they are sometimes confused with interns, congressional pages are high school students who serve the Congress as messengers; for more information on the congressional page system, see CRS Report 98-758, *Pages of the United States Congress: Selection, Duties, and Program Administration*.

The duties, responsibilities, and salaries (if any) of interns and fellows vary from program to program. Most program responsibilities are substantive in nature and often involve challenging projects. They may range from conducting legislative research for a congressional office to biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health. Some programs or universities that offer academic credit may require the intern/fellow to produce a report on the work experience and obtain evaluations from program supervisors. In addition, some programs lead to federal job placement. Recruitment programs like Presidential Management Fellows and the Student Educational Employment Program may offer permanent employment after the successful completion of program requirements. Because program details vary from

agency to agency, it is best to consult the appropriate website or to contact the program office directly.

General Government Resources

USA.gov. The federal government's official Web portal provides an A-Z list of all federal agencies and departments.

[http://www.usa.gov/Agencies/Federal/All_Agencies/index.shtml]

USA.gov also offers a "Federal Government Jobs" website at

[http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Work_for_the_Government.shtml]

Student Jobs/e-Scholar Page. The e-Scholar website, a joint project of the Office of Personnel Management and the Student Financial Assistance Office of the U.S. Department of Education, provides students with information on various educational opportunities available within the federal government, including internships, fellowships, apprenticeships, and cooperative programs.

[<http://www.studentjobs.gov/e-scholar.asp>]

USA Jobs. Although this official U.S. federal government job website is a portal for finding permanent positions within the federal government, it also provides students with links to federal internships, student programs, and volunteer opportunities.

[<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/>]

Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Programs

Federal Career Intern Program. This program's goal is to aid agencies in attracting and recruiting top individuals into various occupations at grade levels GS-5, GS-7, and GS-9. Normally, individuals are appointed to two-year internships. Upon successfully completing their internships, interns may be eligible for permanent positions in an agency. Those interested in this program must contact specific agencies directly.

[<http://www.opm.gov/careerintern/index.htm>]

Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program. The Presidential Management Fellows Program was created to attract outstanding persons from many academic disciplines to the federal government who are interested in, and committed to careers in, the analysis and management of public policies and programs. Students who want to be considered for the PMF Program have to be nominated by their school's nomination official (dean, chairperson, program director, or their designate) of their graduate program. Applicants must finish a graduate degree (master's, law or doctorate), in the academic year that they are applying, from a school accredited by a body recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

[<http://www.pmf.opm.gov/>]

Student Educational Employment Program. This program offers federal job opportunities to students who are enrolled or have been accepted for enrollment as degree candidates taking at least a half-time academic, technical, or vocational course of study in accredited high schools, technical or vocational schools, two or

four-year colleges or universities, or graduate or professional schools. The program has two components: the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) and the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). In the STEP component, the work does not have to be related to the student's academic or career goals. However, the SCEP component is designed to be directly related to the student's career goals. SCEP students may be converted noncompetitively to term, career, or career-conditional positions after finishing their academic and work experience requirements.
[<http://www.opm.gov/employ/students/index.htm>]

Executive Branch Opportunities

White House Fellows Program. Intended for young professionals who have demonstrated academic and professional excellence, this program places recipients in Cabinet-level agencies, the Executive Office of the President, the Vice President's office, or in smaller federal agencies for one year. Fellows make domestic and foreign trips to study U.S. policy and take part in roundtable discussions with leaders from the private and public sectors. Applicants must have finished their undergraduate degrees and be working in their chosen fields.
Tel: (202) 395-4522
[<http://www.whitehouse.gov/fellows>]

White House Internship Program. This program provides unpaid opportunities to learn more about the daily processes of the White House. The competitive program selects about 100 interns every spring, summer, and fall. Each applicant must be a U.S. citizen, enrolled in (or recently graduated from) a college or university, and at least 18 years old on or by the first day of the internship.
[<http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/wh-intern.html>]

Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA provides undergraduate and graduate students with paid internships in several departmental offices, such as the Food and Nutrition Service, the Foreign Agricultural Service, and the Office of Inspector General. Students work as assistants to scientific, professional, administrative, and technical employees.
[<http://www.usda.gov/da/employ/intern.htm>]

Department of Education. The U.S. Department of Education offers internships in several departmental offices such as Elementary and Secondary Education, Civil Rights, and Leadership and Teacher Development. These unpaid internships are available year-round. Students must be enrolled in a high school, trade school, technical or vocational institute, junior college, college, university, or other accredited educational institution.
Tel: (202) 401-5344
[<http://www.ed.gov/students/prep/job/intern/index.html>]

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The department's website provides a portal to student programs available in several offices. "Student Programs" [<http://www.hhs.gov/careers/students.html>] is a listing of internship opportunities and research and training opportunities throughout the department.
The Emerging Leaders Program is described at

[<http://www.hhs.gov/careers/elp.html>] — this is a two-year program designed to let applicants explore fields related to their academic background within HHS. The program involves rotations within departmental agencies during the first year and then a fixed placement the following year. Students must have one or more of the following degrees: bachelor's (with work experience), master's, JD, or Ph.D.

Department of the Interior (DOI). The department operates three career intern programs, all described at [<http://www.doi.gov/hrm/employ5.html>]:

The Office of the Secretary Management Intern Program covers functional areas, such as budget administration, financial management, contracting, information management, human resources management, equal employment opportunity, and policy management.

Tel: (202) 208-3757

The Governmentwide Acquisition Management Intern Program is a two-year internship designed to develop federal contract specialists into procurement professionals and future government business leaders.

Tel: (202) 219-2213

The Financial Management Career Intern Program is a two-year program designed to develop future DOI financial leaders. Interns enter these programs at the GS-5, GS-7, or GS-9 grade levels and are permanently assigned to jobs upon completion of the internships.

Tel: (202) 208-3757

Department of State. The department's website provides a portal to student programs, internships and fellowships available within the U.S. Department of State. Opportunities range from the Summer Clerical Program to the Thomas Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowships. To help students choose the most appropriate program for them, an online questionnaire is available to aid them in matching their interests and career goals. E-mail: Careers@state.gov

[<http://www.careers.state.gov/student>]

Judicial Branch Opportunities

Supreme Court Fellows Program. This program places individuals for a calendar year in the U.S. Supreme Court, the Federal Judicial Center, the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, or the U.S. Sentencing Commission. The paid fellowships are open to individuals from various professions and academic backgrounds. Applicants must have at least one postgraduate degree, two or more years of exceptional professional experience, and multidisciplinary training and experience, including understanding of the judicial process.

Tel: (202) 479-3415

[<http://www.fellows.supremecourtus.gov/index.html>]

Judicial Intern Program. This program is geared toward advanced undergraduates and graduating college seniors interested in law, management, or social sciences. Interns work in the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Chief Justice. Internships are offered in the fall, spring, and summer and are unpaid.

Tel: (202) 476-3415

[<http://www.supremecourtus.gov/jobs/jip/jip.html>]

Legislative Branch Opportunities

U.S. Congress. Internships are available in many Members' offices in Washington, DC, and in their district offices, as well as in congressional committee offices. Internships are generally unpaid and offered year-round. Applications are often found at each individual Member's or committee's website, or candidates may contact the desired office directly. For lists of Member and committee websites and office contact information, see the following Senate and House of Representatives Home Pages.

Senate — [<http://www.senate.gov>]

House of Representatives — [<http://www.house.gov>]

Fellowships in congressional offices are offered by many organizations — such as the American Political Science Association, the American Planning Association, and the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers — which give persons exposure to public policy and the legislative process. Placement for these fellowships is generally not done through the Members' or committee offices but instead through the sponsoring organizations. Because there is no centralized listing of all available congressional fellowships, finding them via the Web is best done by searching on the phrase “congressional fellowship.” Several congressional fellowship programs, such as those sponsored by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and the Women's Research and Education Institute, are described in the “Minority Opportunities” section of this report. Some congressional fellowships are listed on the “Fellowship Programs” page of StudentJobs.gov:

[http://www.studentjobs.gov/d_fellowship.asp]

Congressional Budget Office (CBO). The Congressional Budget Office provides Congress with budget-related information and explains possible budget ramifications of proposed bills reported by congressional committees. College students and recent college graduates can apply for paid 10-week summer internships, in which they work on analyses in CBO's various divisions. CBO also offers paid Economic Policy Fellowships for applicants with Ph.Ds

Tel: (202) 226-2628

Internships website: [<http://www.cbo.gov/employment/intern.shtml>]

Fellowships website: [<http://www.cbo.gov/employment/fellowships.shtml>]

Congressional Research Service (CRS). The Congressional Research Service provides research and analysis in all policy issue areas upon request to Members and committees. Internship opportunities are available year-round. In partnership with seven organizations CRS offers a limited number of paid internships to outstanding minority students. Volunteer internships are available primarily to graduate students, postgraduate students, faculty, and other professionals. In addition, CRS offers special hiring and recruitment programs under the Presidential Management Fellows Program, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) Cooperative Education program, and the Law Recruit Program. [<http://www.loc.gov/crsinfo/internships>]

Government Accountability Office (GAO). The Government Accountability Office is a congressional auditing and investigative agency that makes recommendations for more effective government operations. College students who

are U.S. citizens may be chosen to serve as paid or volunteer interns, generally for 10-12 weeks.

Tel: (202) 512-5811

[<http://www.gao.gov/jobs/intern.pdf>]

Library of Congress. The Library of Congress offers unpaid and paid internship, fellowship, and volunteer opportunities in several departments such as the American Folklife Center, the Conservation Division, and the Hispanic Division. Go to [<http://www.loc.gov/hr/employment/index.php>], then choose “Internships, Fellowship & Volunteer Programs.”

Other Opportunities

Smithsonian Fellowship & Internship Programs. The Smithsonian Institution provides various fellowship and internship programs and academic appointments within its museums and research institutes. Program descriptions are available online and in the annual print publication, *Smithsonian Opportunities for Research and Study*.

Tel: (202) 633-7070

Fellowship opportunities: [<http://www.si.edu/ofg/fellowopp.htm>]

Internship opportunities: [<http://www.si.edu/internopp.htm>]

The Washington Center for Internship and Academic Seminars. The center’s internship program provides unpaid opportunities in the Washington, DC, area to college students and postgraduates. Students are placed within the public (including the federal government), private, and nonprofit sectors. Several internship programs are available for minority applicants. Financial assistance is also available.

Tel: (202) 336-7600

[<http://www.twc.edu/internships/index.htm>]

Minority Opportunities

Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS). APAICS offers paid and unpaid internship and fellowship opportunities to Asian Pacific Americans to encourage participation in the political process. Selected students work with a congressional office or government agency in Washington, DC.

Tel: (202) 296-9200

[<http://www.apaics.org/programs.html>]

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF) Fellows Program. The CBCF offers two fellowship programs: the Congressional Fellows Program and the Louis Stokes Urban Health Policy Fellows Program. Both aim to provide research and policy analysis opportunities for persons with graduate or professional degrees.

Tel: (202) 263-2800

[http://www.cbconline.org/Congressional_Fellows.html]

Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) Internship & Fellowship Programs. The CHCI Summer Internship Program provides 32 undergraduates the opportunity to work in congressional offices. Interns receive housing, round-trip transportation, and a stipend. The CHCI Public Policy Fellowship Program provides a maximum of 20 graduate students, or recent college graduates, with the opportunity to obtain experience in public policy. The range of placements includes congressional offices, federal agencies, media, business federal affairs offices, advocacy groups, and government-related institutions. Fellows receive round-trip transportation and a stipend.

Tel: (800) 392-3532 or (202) 543-1771

[<http://www.chci.org/chciyouth/>]

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) National Internship Program. The HACU National Internship Program (HNIP) recruits undergraduate and graduate students from all academic majors for paid summer and semester internships at federal agencies and private companies in Washington, DC and throughout the country. Interns may also receive round-trip transportation and housing.

Tel: (202) 467-0893

[<http://www.hnip.net>]

Minority Access Internship Program. This is a paid internship program for undergraduate and graduate students. Applicants are selected by federal agencies and other participating organizations in the Washington, DC area. Interns may receive assistance with housing and travel expenses.

Tel: (301) 779-7100

[<http://www.minorityaccess.org>]

Morris K. Udall Foundation Native American Congressional Summer Internship Program. The foundation offers Native American students the opportunity to work in congressional offices, federal agencies, or the White House for 10 weeks. Interns receive round-trip transportation, housing, and a stipend.

Tel: (520) 670-5187

[<http://www.udall.gov/>]

Women's Research and Education Institute Congressional Fellowship Program. The program provides graduate and post-graduate students the opportunity to work for nine months in congressional offices as legislative aides on policy issues that affect women.

Tel: (703) 812-7990

[<http://www.wrei.org/Fellows.htm>]

Bibliography

This selective bibliography lists more sources of information on internships, fellowships, and summer job opportunities. The publications can be used to find additional work experience opportunities, both inside and outside the federal government. These works may be available in local libraries or school or college guidance offices. Publisher contact information, including Web addresses, is also provided. Annotations identify publications that are issued annually. Other publications are updated irregularly; check with publishers for information on the latest editions.

The Best 109 Internships (Princeton Review). 9th ed. New York: Random House, Inc., 2003.

Information is given on more than 20,000 internship opportunities in such areas as law, the environment, advertising, sports, computers, journalism, music, health care, publishing, finance, education, and television.

Available from: Random House, Inc., Distribution Center, 400 Hahn Road, Westminster, MD 21157
Tel: (800) 726-0600.
[<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog>]

Congressional Intern Handbook: a Guide for Interns and Newcomers to Capitol Hill. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Management Foundation. Annual.

A “nuts-and-bolts guide to working in a Congressional office,” this publication includes a chapter on “Finding a job or another internship” on Capitol Hill. This handbook is used in many congressional offices.

Available from: Congressional Management Foundation, 513 Capitol Court NE, Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002
Tel: (202) 546-0100.
[<http://www.cmfweb.org>]

Encyclopedia of Associations. Farmington Hills, MI: Thomson Gale. Annual.

This publication can be used to locate organizations by subject area. When standard internship directories contain no entries for internships in a specific field, relevant groups may be able to suggest contacts for internship opportunities. This work can be found in many libraries in print, on CD-ROM, or in the *Associations Unlimited* subscription database on the Web.

Available from: Thomson Gale, 27500 Drake Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535
Tel: (800) 877-4253
[<http://www.gale.com>]

The Internship Bible (Princeton Review). New York: Random House, Inc. Annual.

This publication provides information on more than 100,000 internships on almost every field of study. It can be found at most bookstores.

Available from: Random House, Inc., Distribution Center, 400 Hahn Road,
Westminster, MD 21157
Tel: (800) 726-0600.
[<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog>]

Peterson's Internships. Lawrenceville, NJ: Peterson's. Annual.

Listed here are profiles of internship opportunities across the United States and abroad. It includes indexes by geographic area, field of interest, and employer name. This work is generally available in bookstores.

Available from: Peterson's (a Nelnet Company), 2000 Lenox Drive,
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648
Tel: (800) 338-3282
[<http://www.petersons.com>]

Summer Jobs in the U.S.A.. Lawrenceville, NJ: Peterson's. Annual.

Provided in this directory are state-by-state listings of more than 55,000 summer work experiences available to students, teachers, and others in a variety of fields. The index includes access to opportunities for interns and volunteers.

Available from: Peterson's (a Nelnet Company), 2000 Lenox Drive,
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648
Tel: (800) 338-3282
[<http://www.petersons.com>].