

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Business Mentor Guide



The IMSA Internship program connects high school juniors and seniors to real-world learning experiences with business professionals, nonprofits and entrepreneurial mentors to carry out an industry, business or product-focused research project. Our interns offer a fresh perspective on your business, strategies and plans and possess desired professional skills. Internship is a non-graduation requirement. Interns are unpaid and earn 1.0 semester credit hour upon completion.



Steve and Jamie Chen
**Center for
Innovation & Inquiry**

WHY INTERNSHIPS ARE IMPORTANT

IMSA Internship program directly supports [Illinois Pathways](#) initiatives to achieve College and Career Readiness. In accordance with [WIOA](#) and [Postsecondary Workforce Readiness Act](#), the minimum program partnership goal is to create opportunities for students to enhance real-world, work-based learning experiences.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Our interns have a multitude of soft skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity as well as technical skills in coding, design, marketing, communications and research. A business project that our interns could work on for you could include one project or multiple projects that best use their skills and suit your business needs. In addition, while our interns possess many skills, an internship experience is a valuable time to enhance their 21st century skills for future workforce initiatives.

TOP 10 CROSS-SECTOR ESSENTIAL EMPLOYABILITY COMPETENCY STATEMENTS*

- Teamwork & Conflict Resolution
- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Decision Making
- Critical Thinking
- Adaptability & Flexibility
- Initiative & Self-Drive
- Reliability & Accountability
- Cultural Competence
- Planning & Organizing

** [Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act](#)*

PAST PROGRAM PARTNERS



IMSA INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The IMSA Internship Program provides IMSA juniors and seniors intensive learning experiences working with business, non-profit and/or entrepreneurship related organizations and startups on business projects.

The IMSA Internship enables the student to:

- Learn about an industry, organization and/or product
- Research and develop an applied project proposal
- Generate a hands-on understanding of the industry, organization and/or product in an applied setting
- Carry out an investigation centered around a “business research” question (Inquiry-led);
- Communicate their experience and project insights to the business mentor and the Internship program team
- Present their project in a peer reviewed forum (IMSAloquium); archived in [IMSA Digital Commons](#) - online repository of the intellectual output of IMSA and increases the visibility and impact through worldwide access.

MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Business Providers are expected to be mentors to interns, helping them understand the operations of the business, how a business develops and an opportunity to work on business projects in your company. Projects could occur in the areas of Coding, Web Design, Database Management, Business Research, Marketing and/or Social Media Support.

- Provide 1-day a week (Wednesday) supervision and mentoring (during the academic year), and times as agreed during the summer, and approve students’ attendance form.
- Provide scope of work and approve the Business Project proposal students will complete during the first quarter of the internship. This will outline what the students will work on with you and your team.
- Review and approve students’ Final Project report and Project Presentation to be given at the end of the Internship.
- Communicate with IMSA program leaders as requested or needed and complete a confidential evaluation of the intern’s work at the end of the Internship.
- After the Internship concludes, you may also offer a letter of recommendation for the Intern; this is not required, but encouraged.

BUSINESS PROJECT REPORT

During their internship, students are expected to continually communicate with their Business Mentor to identify specific business projects that will also serve to satisfy the academic requirement of their internship. Interns are provided templates, forms and examples which are accessible in the program Learning Management System. Interns are required to submit the following documentations throughout the cohort:

1. Internship Time and Attendance sheet (signed by business mentor)
2. Project Proposal
3. Attend Interim Program Evaluation
4. Final Business Project Report

FINAL REPORT ONLINE

At the conclusion of the program, interns are expected to present a Final Research Project. This work will be presented at our Annual IMSAloquium event and also archived in our IMSA Digital Commons. The components of their report include:

1. Executive Summary
2. Business Context
3. Business Project Description
4. Business Project Research
5. Business Project Key Learnings & Recommendations
6. Reference List
7. Annotated Bibliography

SAMPLE PAST PROJECTS

At the conclusion of the program, interns are expected to present a Final Research Project. This work will be presented at our Annual IMSAloquium event and also archived in our IMSA Digital Commons. The components of their report include:

- Market Research/Analysis
- Quality Assurance testing on a beta version of a mobile app.
- Evaluate Investor Information
- Social Media Marketing & Management
- Developing/creating new applications
- Venture Capital Investment Research and Analysis
- Graphic Design Projects
- Website Management
- Grant Research
- Business Strategy Analysis
- Program Implementation

BUSINESS PROJECTS EXAMPLES

Digital Marketing for Leap Innovations

The problem they currently have is not knowing how to cater to highschoolers/get them engaged with their company (especially the framework) so having me on the team to give them the perspective of an actual student gives them the opportunity to learn without leaving the employee base. Using my experience in the field, I will conduct research on the tendencies and interests of my peers and use the information to adequately tailor a business proposal regarding marketing to high schoolers. Inquiry focus - What can we do to get the students of our program interested in our framework? How can we engage students in high school while still giving them academic benefits?

App Development with DealerFox

The problem is that there needs to be an efficient way to deliver information to dealerships, preferably automatically, and in addition, send alerts to dealerships about how to improve performance. While this could be done over email, many emails would be missed, causing lack of communication and ineffective service on the part of DealerFox. I am working on app development, so the business phenomena is the ability to effectively deliver information, both graphically and textually. Inquiry - How can clients view data in real time? How can DealerFox communicate with clients in an organized way?

Business Management with K8 Ventures

K8 Ventures is a venture builder studio that takes companies from an idea to a profitable, established company. Investing in early-stage companies enables K8 to take a larger share of equity, thus allowing them to take a number of traditional risks out of venture capital with managerial roles in their companies. Interns are involved with K8's major portfolio companies such as P3rceive, BAMM!, and ZiRO, and are rigorously engaged in branding, market research, data mining leads, and more. Marketing efforts include social media content, blog, advertisement development and provide interns with the opportunity to apply what they learn to their personal branding. K8 has provided the guidance and resources for interns to start a blog called Generation Z; it discusses viewpoints on a variety of topics among different generations. Engaging in such tasks and projects have had valuable contributions to K8 in addition to reconstructing the company's means of asynchronous communication.

FAQS

Is this a short-term or long-term commitment?

The IMSA Internships has Two cohorts a year. Cohort 1: Academic Year September thru April (for 25 weeks, avg. 6-8 hours a day once a week) and Cohort 2: Summer June thru August (for 25 days, avg. 6-8 hours a day)

When can IMSA Interns work?

During the academic year, to avoid conflicting with students academic schedules, IMSA interns can only work on business projects during the approved Independent study days (I-Days) - Wednesdays (one day per week). During the Summer, IMSA interns can work as agreed with their business mentor and provider, and parents. Youth are not allowed to work more than 8 hours in any one day in accordance with child labor laws.

Where does the internship take place?

During the academic year, the internship can take place on-campus or off-campus at approved locations. If working remotely, a combination of face-to-face and remote/virtual interning is possible. During the summer internship program, the location of the internship is discussed and agreed upon between the Business mentor, student and parents.

What do we need to provide interns during their internship?

The Business Mentor is responsible for directing the intern's work, overseeing the intern's performance and providing appropriate project resources for the work to be done. A student may use his or her own equipment, but is not expected to pay for any additional resources needed. Should a student require special equipment, this arrangement would be agreed upon between the Business mentor, student and parents.

Can interns be paid?

The IMSA Internship program is an unpaid learning project. We expect the internship provider to uphold Fair Labor Standards for Internships while working with our students. IMSA does not facilitate monetary negotiations. In-kind donations are appreciated and accepted via the [IMSA Fund](#).

HOST AN IMSA INTERN

If you are interested in hosting an intern, please complete the registration form to participate as a Business Mentor in IMSA's [Internship Program](#). Hosting an intern will require a simple background check and a signed agreement (optional/based on agency/business requirements).

For any inquiries, please contact the Internship Program Team:

- Betty Hart, Innovation Program Manager, bhart@imsa.edu
- Sue Fricano, Center Coordinator, sfricano@imsa.edu

Business Mentor Registration: imsa.edu/internship



CENTER FOR INNOVATION AND INQUIRY

630.907.5800 . 1500 SULLIVAN ROAD, AURORA, IL 60506-1000

IMSA.EDU/INNOVATION . IN2@IMSA.EDU

Connect with us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.