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The mission of this guide is to help future public servants and those looking for a unique work experience to learn how to land an internship or fellowship and launch a career in public service. Beginning a career in government is increasingly difficult in the current climate of tightening budgets and hiring freezes. But there is good news for those who follow the steps we outline in this guide. We'll help you identify where you want to go, and set a plan for getting there.

During your discovery process, focus on the things that you can learn, the interesting people you will meet, and the ways in which you can use an internship or fellowship to explore your interests. This guide reveals the tactics you may use to your advantage – whether you're hired by an organization or not. Don't necessarily go into your internship search with the sole purpose of obtaining future full-employment; it's a good idea to begin with an open mind.

As you'll see in the pages ahead, we've provided a lot of information for you and our intel is based on professional insights we've collected from interviews and surveys of more than 40 career counselors, former interns and fellows, and program coordinators. These experts shared their firsthand knowledge of the best ways to establish yourself in government. Their valuable insight is collected in the following pages for you.

It's time for you to think about your first steps. The next section will get you started making a plan.
This guide was made possible through funding from the Robertson Foundation for Government, a nonprofit family foundation dedicated to helping government meet its talent needs by identifying, educating and motivating top U.S. graduate students to pursue federal government careers in foreign policy, national security and international affairs.

Established by the family of the late philanthropists Charles and Marie Robertson, and named in their honor, the Robertson Foundation for Government pursues a mission that was central to Mr. and Mrs. Robertson's philanthropic activities: strengthening the United States government and increasing its ability and determination to defend and extend freedom throughout the world by improving the training and education of men and women for government service, with particular emphasis on international relations and foreign affairs.

The Robertson Foundation for Government partnered in the preparation of this guide with GovLoop, the leading knowledge network for government that connects and advances the careers of over 100,000+ public sector professionals. Through blogs, discussions, research guides, in-person events and online training, GovLoop connects government to improve government through innovative approaches and resources.

**INTERNERSHIPS VS. FELLOWSHIPS**

*What’s the difference?*

Before we get started, you must know: the words internship and fellowship mean different things to different sectors. Even within government, the words can mean different things. In general, this guide on internships and fellowships is meant to cover entry-level ways to get into government.

Generally, we refer to internships as programs for current students either during summer or during the school year.

Fellowships vary in structure and format. Some are six-month short-term programs to get a taste of government. Others are more extensive two-year programs and are basically entry-level rotation programs for recent graduates.
Internships and fellowships are excellent opportunities to try out roles and take on responsibility in settings that are short term. They can also offer more access to leadership and decision-makers since they are designed to maximize the participant’s experience. Many former interns interviewed for this guide often talked about the substantive projects they would not have been able to work on in a full-time work environment given their limited work experience. Internships and fellowships open doors and launch careers.

However, the federal recruitment process has seen its fair share of troubles in the past few years. For example, traditionally, successful entry points to government like the PMF program accept more finalists than agencies are able to place. This leaves many of our best and brightest confused by and frustrated with government service.

In light of these challenges, internships enable those who are early in their career to gain experience that will give them an ‘in’ with an organization, or set them up for other opportunities. This is the real beauty of internships and fellowships. However, the process can sometimes be unclear.

As a general rule, government fellowships are designed for people with advanced degrees or work experience. Fellowships last longer, often from nine months to a year or more. Internships, on the other hand, are generally designed for students at virtually any level. Their duration is shorter, lasting perhaps only a semester or a summer. In this guide, we will differentiate between internship and fellowship according to this general rule unless otherwise noted.

Matthew Upton, Assistant Dean of Career & Student Services at the Bush School of Government, highlighted the importance of internships for getting experience and developing specific skills:

“| I think an internship is vital. If you have limited knowledge and work experience an internship, especially one related to the type of work that you want to do, is critical to enhance the skills that you've already begun developing, or to develop skills that you're going to need to be successful in the field you want to go into.” |

Moreover, Aileen Axtmayer, the Associate Director at the Office of Career Services, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, mentioned the value of learning more about government through internships or fellowships:

“| If you have not worked in the public sector before, an internship is one of the best ways to ‘try out’ the sector. It’s very competitive to get any type of federal job, so when I work with students contemplating government as an option for after graduation, I encourage them to complete an internship first. It’s more likely for them to get in at that point versus trying it after graduation when it’s a lot more competitive. Through an internship, they can build their resume, contacts, and try out the sector for a short time before making the effort of delving into intensive full-time applications.” |

With this foundational knowledge, let’s walk through a few steps you can take to narrow down your options.
6 STEPS TO IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT INTERNSHIP OR FELLOWSHIP

One of the first things college career advisors do with students interested in public service is help them figure out their interests, skills, geographical preferences, and work styles. This is because the world of government work is immense – so immense that it is useful to begin with your own personal filters to get a better handle on all of the different opportunities out there. The following six factors should help you think through some of the most important decision-making questions.

1 UNDERSTANDING GOVERNMENT: WHAT LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT INTERESTS YOU THE MOST?

What type of internship or fellowship are you looking for? It’s time to assess your options. Remember, the United States government is the largest institution in the entire world by most metrics. The Department of Defense alone employs 3.2 million people, and that doesn’t include the roughly 1 million working outside of defense and the tens of millions working at the state and local level. So identifying where you want to fit into the puzzle is no small task. Let’s begin to break it down.

Federal

We know that the federal government divides into the three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. There are internship and fellowship opportunities in all three.

The executive branch sub-divides into fifteen executive departments, executive agencies, and over fifty independent federal commissions, among other entities.

Each one of these entities may conduct its own independent internship opportunities, or may participate in the Pathways program, which is administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and accessed only by applications on usajobs.gov.

As Ryan Underwood, former PMF at the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) said, “Every agency is different and each sub-office within each agency is incredibly different.”

The advantage of working for the U.S. federal government is that you can work on problems on a national scale. The downside is that sometimes it’s harder to see the impact of your efforts in the short term.

One misconception among new applicants is that they’ll be working to craft or change policy, hammering out some of the issues that play out on the news every evening. The reality is that a very small percentage of government jobs are ‘policy’ jobs, and even fewer of those roles touch those at the internship or fellowship level. But don’t be discouraged! There is a wealth of fascinating roles out there that are more interesting than even the most riveting episode of ‘West Wing.’ Here are a few examples:

• Help plan a trade mission to South Africa and Zambia with the U.S. Commercial Service.
• Study and report on the latest trends in cybersecurity at a national laboratory.
• Participate in a multi-country joint naval exercise at the U.S. Pacific Command.

Policy only scratches the surface of the opportunities available to interns. For better or worse, some of the most exciting government work doesn’t get reported in the news. Much of the internship is likely to include hands-on programmatic work. You will certainly learn how your internship organization works in the broader context of policy and politics, and gain opportunities to develop research and writing skills appropriate to each agency.
Not sure exactly what subject matter you want to focus on in your career quite yet? Think tanks can be a great option for those who aren’t exactly certain yet what they want to do in government. Doing public sector research and gaining policy-related research builds your resume and helps you explore options. In fact Tamara Golden, Career Consultant at UC San Diego’s School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, said that, “doing an internship at a think tank would be the next best thing to being in government.”

On the upside, these organizations allow you to critique and recommend change in government that is difficult to address from the inside. Also, because of the research focus of most think tanks, you can develop subject matter expertise that can partially make up for any lack of direct government experience. Of course, outside of network opportunities, working on the outside is not the same as being within, so take that into consideration when making your choice.

Moreover, for those who have a clear passion about an issue, or want to expose themselves to different points of view, a think tank internship can offer a wonderful opportunity.

Examples of such places that have good internship and fellows program focused on governance include Brookings Institute, Partnership for Public Service, and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

Finally, while not a focus of this guide, government contractors such as Deloitte and Booz Allen Hamilton are another approach for getting an internship with a government perspective. Often, these individuals are places on government clients so get experience working closely with government.

**State/Local**

For local government internships, many city and town halls seek interns to work alongside their full-time staff. For internships at the state level, most state legislatures have internship directors, and individual departments and agencies run their own programs. Even if there is no formal program in a place where you are interested in working, check LinkedIn or your university’s alumni listing to see if you can find someone who currently works there. You might even post in a discussion group on GovLoop! If all else fails, you can go the old-fashioned route and go directly to the source – making a phone call to human resources and public affairs offices could start a productive conversation. Beleaguered offices are often very open to having talent join them to lighten the load.

In terms of work experience, what state and local government internships have over their federal counterparts is that you are often dealing more directly with the citizens and stakeholders that are affected by government policies and actions. You may also enjoy working in your own home state and some of the issues that impact your own community.

**Nongovernmental / Associations / Third Party Think Tanks**

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As we will explore later on, the federal government’s new Pathways Program opens the door to something that rarely existed in the past – a paid federal government internship. However, a large number of unpaid internships – now known as volunteer internship programs – still exist in the federal government.

Students located in the Washington, D.C. area are in the best position to take up a semester or even year-long part-time internship while in school. For students outside of the area, summer internships offer a way to gain valuable experience without interrupting your studies, although you may consider taking a semester off to gain more experience. Summer is ‘intern season’ in Washington, D.C., but it can be tough to cram in all the experience you need into 10 weeks or so. Fall and spring offer the opportunity to gain more experience, since there are fewer interns in D.C.

Michael Schneider, Director of the Washington Public Diplomacy Program at the Maxwell School and a career advisor to the Robertson Foundation for Government, provided another tip for working on the periphery of international experiences:

“There are international dimensions and international offices in almost every federal agency. Just below the radar are very important national engagements. For instance, a student who wants to look at agricultural policy or healthcare, etc., from an international standpoint can look at offices at the Department of Agriculture, Health and Human Services, and several others.”

### 3 PAID OR UNPAID – WHICH IS BEST?

As we will explore later on, the federal government’s new Pathways Program opens the door to something that rarely existed in the past – a paid federal government internship. However, a large number of unpaid internships – now known as volunteer internship programs – still exist in the federal government.

So should you work for free? This is a difficult question for students at all levels of education, and there isn’t really one correct answer. However, here are a few things to consider when exploring unpaid internships:

Some of the most prestigious internships in the federal government are unpaid volunteer positions. For example, the State Department’s embassy internships are some of the most competitive and highly coveted positions in the federal government. They are also unpaid, although some embassies do provide housing assistance for interns.

Additionally, it is often much easier to convince an employer to create an unpaid internship position – if one currently doesn’t exist – because, well, they don’t have much to lose. Most employers in government would love to get free help from smart students, and if they don’t have to request additional funds for this help, it makes it much easier for them to take you on.
But even if you do take an unpaid, volunteer internship, don't just settle for zero compensation. Contrary to popular belief, there are some perks to being a government employee. For example, federal employees in the Washington, D.C. area receive a monthly public transit subsidy worth up to $130 per month – a benefit that extends to interns. There are small, intangible benefits as well, such as free online newspaper subscriptions, trainings, conferences, and other professional development opportunities.

And that leads to the most important consideration - unpaid interns often have a greater opportunity to craft their own experience. While paid interns are usually slotted for specific tasks, unpaid internships are often designed to maximize exposure to the work of the department or agency. Since you are donating your time to the organization, you can make a case for structuring your internship around the skills you'd like to develop or the activities in which you'd like to participate. Of course, when negotiating with a superior, keep in mind that your goal should be to add value to the department as well as develop your own professional skills, so make sure you've thought ahead about the best way to maximize the benefits to both parties.

Justin Amos, former local government management fellow for the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), said:

“In a volunteer position, don’t be afraid to let your mentor/supervisor know what you would like to get out of the internship experience. Your ability to design the course of your internship can be your currency.”

This is not to say that unpaid internships are better than paid internships. There are times when working for little to no compensation just isn't feasible. But it is important to take the intangibles into consideration, especially when you discover that your dream internship isn't paid.

OFFICE ENVIRONMENT: WHAT IS MY PREFERRED WORK STYLE – AND PACE?

Most people dread the idea of spending an internship responding to the mundane requests of the entire office. Fortunately, this was not the experience of most fellows and interns that we interviewed for this guide. But that isn't to say that you shouldn't stop to think about the work environment you prefer. Some people are more interested in learning how a particular office works rather than the actual tasks they are assigned.

If you don't care about the type of work that you'd be completing in your internship or fellowship and just want to be in a particular agency or environment to make connections, then decide up front that you'll be okay with lower level tasks.

However, if it's important that you make a real contribution to an organization or support more substantial...
Another way to build a focused basis for your internship search is to ask: “What issue(s) is most important for me to learn more about and gain relevant experience? If you are impassioned about a broad historical concern – e.g. gender rights or human rights more broadly, global trafficking, security, arms reduction, the growing national debt, healthcare -- it is possible to find think tanks and advocacy NGOs that take strong positions, or governmental agencies that work on policy and programs related to your interest.

Projects, be sure to ask questions about the nature of the work that you’ll be performing in the organization during the interview process. There’s nothing more frustrating than spending two hours scanning documents if you think you’re qualified to be running a program.

Also think about the size of the organization you want to work for. A large office can provide lots of opportunities for making professional connections and learning from mentors, but you can also get lost in a large office (or one that is unorganized, for that matter). Consider how independent you want to be. If you are looking for an opportunity to use skills that you have already developed, then maybe a little more autonomy is for you. If you are looking to learn from the people around you, make sure you pursue an internship or fellowship with a little more structure and guidance.

When negotiating with a superior, keep in mind that your goal should be to add value to the department as well as develop your own professional skills, so make sure you’ve thought ahead about the best way to maximize the benefits to both parties.

5 WHAT ISSUES ARE MOST COMPELLING?

Even if you do not have a strong commitment, but want to learn more about an issue, this is one factor to consider when looking for internships. It’s wise to look for descriptions of the goals, mission and points of view of various internship opportunities from the vantage of issues most compelling to you. Some will argue for aligning only with organizations with vantages in accord with your own, but if you are open-minded, or undecided, an organization that isn’t necessarily on the same page might be a worthwhile experience. If you have strong feelings and some understanding of a particular issue, it is not easy to work for an organization that is explicitly opposed to your views.
Answering this question is actually much easier than it sounds. Once you've figured out the specific field, subject matter, and work environment that matter to you, you'll likely come up with a list of agencies that match your interests.

But that's only half of the battle. The reality – as we keep saying – is that government is a lot bigger than you think. That means you've probably missed half a dozen other organizations that match your interests because they don't feature as prominently in the public view.

Let's focus just on the federal government for a second. How many agencies can you name? (We'll give you a moment.)

Well, if you managed to name all fifteen executive departments (like the Department of Defense or Department of Labor) – that's pretty impressive. But within each of these departments, there are dozens and dozens of agencies, and that doesn't include agencies under Congressional or Judicial jurisdiction – or the many independent or quasi-independent commissions or federally owned corporations.

We can't name them all here, but at the end of this guide we'll give you an appendix with some great places to start looking. As an exercise, we've also provided a few alternatives to the 'big name' agencies, just in case you thought we were exaggerating all of the many opportunities out there.

**INTEREST AREA:** International Development  
**THE BIG PLAYER:** U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)  
**THE ALTERNATIVE:** The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)

*Why MCC?* Unlike USAID, MCC is a much smaller federal agency. It even has an employee cap of around 300 employees. Also, although unpaid, MCC interns usually spend their time abroad, working directly on MCC development programs.

**INTEREST AREA:** Intelligence  
**THE BIG PLAYER:** The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)  
**THE ALTERNATIVE:** The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA)

*Why NGA?* If you like maps, the NGA is at the cutting edge of using maps, data and geospatial analysis to support homeland security, disaster relief and military operations.

**INTEREST AREA:** International Trade  
**THE BIG PLAYER:** The Department of Commerce  
**THE ALTERNATIVE:** The U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA)

*Why USTDA?* The USTDA is another small agency that works at the intersection between trade and development, often partnering with bigger agencies like Commerce, USAID, and even other lesser-known agencies like the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) and the Export-Import Bank. As a matter of fact, if interested, you should look into those agencies as well. They all have internship programs for undergraduates and graduate students.

This isn't to say that you should choose one agency over the other. In fact, you should apply to as many relevant agencies as possible to maximize your chance of getting selected. But a big mistake would be to stop at the obvious names. Not only are lesser-known agencies just as exciting, they also aren't getting bombarded with applications by every other eager student, which could increase your chances of employment.
Now that you’ve gone through the thorough exercise of figuring out what you are looking for in an internship or fellowship opportunity, let’s start to examine the many different opportunities that are out there. To establish a baseline, let’s begin with the federal government’s relatively new Pathways Program.

THE PATHWAYS PROGRAM: PAVING THE WAY TO FEDERAL SERVICE

In 2010, the White House released Executive Order 13562, “Recruiting and Hiring Students and Recent Graduates.” In the executive order, President Barack Obama stressed the need in the federal government to attract talent coming out of the nation’s schools – from high school to doctoral programs. It lays forth a number of measures to help students get over two significant hurdles to federal employment. The first is the general tendency in the Federal civil service to favor candidates with a significant amount of previous work experience. The second is the complexity of the hiring process, which can inadvertently push people away from government and into the private sector.

The resultant program, called Pathways, is the federal government’s way of offering students and recent graduates a clear path to internships, training, and career development opportunities – all under the umbrella of a single program. There are three main components to Pathways:

- The Internship Program
- The Recent Graduates Program
- The Presidential Management Fellowship

This guide specifically covers the Internship and Recent Graduates programs. For information about the Presidential Management Fellowship, read our Path to PMF guide from Robertson Foundation for Government and GovLoop (found at PathtoPMF.com).
The Pathways Internship Program is a system of internships offered to current high school, college, and advanced degree students across the federal government. It replaces the former Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) and Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP).

The Pathways Recent Graduates program offers placements to graduates of college and advanced degree programs. OPM says, “The Recent Graduates Program affords developmental experiences in the Federal Government intended to promote possible careers in the civil service to individuals who have recently graduated from qualifying educational institutions or programs. To be eligible, applicants must apply within two years of degree or certificate completion (except for veterans precluded from doing so due to their military service obligation, who will have up to six years after degree completion to apply). Successful applicants are placed in a dynamic, developmental program with the potential to lead to a civil service career in the Federal Government. The program lasts for 1 year (unless the training requirements of the position warrant a longer and more structured training program).”

In addition to paid internship programs, there are also volunteer programs available, which are essentially unpaid internships. Agencies often call these opportunities “internships” as well, even though they are not part of Pathways, so you’ll want to be sure and do your homework to determine if you are compensated in a given program.

If you think that the PMF could be a good option for you, it’s worth taking a look at Path to PMF.

The U.S. State Department pays its interns—unless you are an unpaid intern. Pathways has simplified the many different internship and apprenticeship programs across the federal government by consolidating them into one, but you should still do your research.

For example, the State Department participates in Pathways for civil service jobs (it also has recent graduates and PMF positions). However, it also offers unpaid internships at U.S. embassies around the world to give students firsthand foreign affairs experience. For a breakdown of the State Department’s programs, click here for a helpful infographic on their site.

Note: The same is true for a number of federal agencies, so if you have a specific department or agency in mind, check its website for a complete list of internship offerings.
FEDERAL INTERNSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

White House:
The White House Internship 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.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA):
From a Marine Policy Fellowship Program in Washington, D.C. to an internship focusing on biodiversity and sustainable fisheries in Miami, NOAA hosts a diverse range of popular programs.

State Department:
Opportunities range from an unpaid program for current students to several prestigious student programs and fellowships (including the Virtual Student Foreign Service program). This site for students will help you parse through your many options.

National Archives:
The D.C. metro area hosts a great variety of programs that preserve our most treasured artifacts. As you might guess, social science students will be drawn to the obvious history and archival oriented programs at the National Archives. But unpaid internships for hospitality industry students and green-energy or engineering students are also available here.

Department of Homeland Security:
The Acquisition Professional Career Program DHS Acquisition Professional Career Program draws participants who work in one of six career fields, each of which plays a vital role in Department Acquisition: contract specialists, program managers, systems engineers, industrial engineers, logisticians, and information technology specialists.

Environmental Protection Agency:
EPA's Science to Achieve Results (STAR) program funds research grants and graduate fellowships in numerous environmental science and engineering disciplines through a competitive solicitation process and independent peer review. The program engages the nation's best scientists and engineers in targeted research that complements EPA's own outstanding intramural research program and those of our partners in other federal agencies.

Central Intelligence Agency:
One of many departments offering internships at the CIA, the National Clandestine Service is the covert arm of the CIA. Its interns support the CIA's mission of collecting human intelligence on critical issues and international developments. The CIA provides a competitive salary to its interns as well as the same benefits as fulltime employees. Ideal interns are interested in national security and possess advanced written and oral communication skills. All applicants for the CIA internship program must submit to drug testing, a polygraph, and a background check in order to receive security clearance.

Caveat:
"Internships in the intelligence community are difficult to obtain. They last longer than the semester in some cases. And the security process takes longer than other types of internships." - Michael Schneider, Director of the Washington Public Diplomacy Program at the Maxwell School and a career advisor to the Robertson Foundation for Government

INSIDER TIP!
Get Clearance

“For students who are interested in national security, getting an internship that requires top secret (TS/SCI) clearance opens up doors for them to work for the government or federal contractors down the line…”

Matthew Upton, Assistant Dean of Career & Student Services at the Texas A&M Bush School of Government and Public Service
**National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA):**

Intern at an agency with a cool mission and a long track record of being one of the best places to work in the federal government. And the intangible benefits are out of this world (c’mon, you knew we’d go there).

**Public Health Informatics Fellows Program at CDC:**

This program at CDC provides training and experience for its participants to effectively apply computer and information science and technology to real public health problems, including the ability to lead and manage all aspects of the design, development, and implementation of public health information systems.

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**4 TIPS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR GRADS**

*Graduate students have a much shorter time in school than undergrads, which means they really have to hit the ground running as soon as they begin. Here are four tips to get you started on the right path from day one.*

**START EARLY:**

As soon as you start school, or even the summer before your first year, start looking for internship opportunities. Many government internship applications are due in the fall, which gives you precious little time to pull your transcripts, personal essays, and other documents together before the due date.

**PREPARE TO BE VETTED:**

For many internships that deal with national security issues, students are required to go through a thorough security clearance process. This can take up to six months, which is why so many internship due dates are so early in the year. If you do apply to an internship with a security clearance requirement, make sure to fill out your security form (traditionally known as ‘Standard Form 86’ or SF-86) as soon as your agency requires it of you. Make sure you are thorough – leave nothing out – and return it as soon as possible.

**HAVE A BACK-UP PLAN:**

Unfortunately, there are times when a student’s security clearance cannot be completed in the time allotted – usually because the student is older, has spent a significant amount of time abroad or has many relatives or friends living in a specific foreign country (all of which require more time and effort for security researchers to comb through your history). Sometimes a student may fail the security clearance outright. In either case, it is very important to have a second or third option just in case the security clearance process is delayed or falls through altogether. If you want to complete an internship, have a few options so you don’t end up spending your summer at home.

**REACH OUT TO ALUMNI:**

This is particularly true for students enrolled in professional programs, like business, law or public policy. Chances are that a former student has already passed through your targeted agency or is currently working in a field of interest. Use these contacts to learn about the organization, get interviewing tips, or even have them circulate your resume around the office. Alumni are usually extremely willing to help out current students.
**The Consumer Finance Protection Bureau:**
The CFPB has a variety of fellowship programs for a range of skill-sets. It has an honors attorney program, financial analyst program, as well as technology and innovation fellows program. All are two-year, highly-competitive excellent programs.

**The Presidential Innovation Fellows**
This program was created in 2012 to bring in top technologists to work in federal government for six to twelve month stints. These individuals are assigned to host agencies to work on specific projects such as State Department but also receive training as a cohort.

**LEGISLATIVE OPPORTUNITIES**
If Capitol Hill is calling you, internships in Members’ Washington, DC, and state offices are generally available in every season and for extended periods of time. Positions are also available in congressional committee offices. Application information can be found at each individual Member’s or committee’s website. The best course of action is to contact each office directly. For lists of Member and committee websites and office contact information, see the Senate and House websites.

Many career counselors have also had success with legislative agencies such as Government Accountability Office, Congressional Research Service, and Congressional Business Office.

These agencies list internships and fellowships on their programs and are highly targeted mainly at graduate students. Here are a couple examples:

**Library of Congress:**
There are lots of hidden gems at this legislative organization including the highly respected Congressional Research Service. Assist with research, programs, and outreach that support the work of Congress.

**The Government Accountability Office (GAO):**
Popular with a broad array of students and others interested in making government work better. The team positions within the office are unique; for example, they have a defense capabilities group, a public infrastructure group, and an education group. So it’s worth a look to see if there is something that might interest you here. Appointments for intern positions last from 10 to 16 weeks and are normally held during summer months. GAO student interns are appointed on a non-permanent basis and may be eligible to be converted to a permanent position after completing 400 hours of service and after meeting degree requirements.
THIRD PARTY / FOUNDATION OPPORTUNITIES

**Boren Fellowship:**
Boren is an educational program dedicated to fostering language learning. It also gives you a year of non-competitive status when you are looking for a job, which can be a tremendous asset for you.

Tamara Golden, Career Consultant at UC San Diego’s School of International Relations, explains Boren this way:

“It’s a government fellowship that provides students with a stipend to do language studies overseas. Language study has to be the primary component, but they can also additionally do an internship for a nongovernmental organization, an unpaid internship for a nongovernmental entity, and/or an independent research. But the language study has to be the key component and they have to write a whole series of essays and a proposal, and they can go anywhere. The most competitive applications are 9 to 12 months. It requires you taking a year off between your two years of graduate school, but you come back and what you come back with is noncompetitive eligibility. It gives you special hiring in an intelligence agency.”

**AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellowships**
These fellowships are 1-2 year stints for doctoral-level people with technical experience to advise diverse parts of the federal government.

**The Switzer Fellowship Program**
The Switzer program offers one-year fellowships to graduate students in New England and California whose studies and career goals are directed toward environmental improvement.

**The Bullitt Environmental Fellowship**
This program is a two-year, $50,000/year fellowship for graduate students interested in pursuing leadership positions within the environmental field.

**The Harold W. Rosenthal Fellowship**
This program offers qualified students pursuing a career in international relations a summer fellowship position with a Member of Congress or in the State Department. In the recent years, between 9 and 23 fellows have been selected.

Donna Dyer of Duke also notes that, “Students who focus on international development have found good fellowships/internships with NGOs that sometimes lead to work at USAID (such as CARE and Catholic Relief Services).”
Every major city in the United States faces its own set of challenges based on unique regional and economic concerns. Similarly, each city is poised to deal with these challenges in their own way based on their structure and assets. There is a lot of exciting work being done at the local level. And you may be a prime candidate to be a part of it.

A number of large metropolitan cities have their own specific fellowship program for recent grads such as City of NYC’s fellowship program. Another approach is The ICMA Local Government Management fellowship -- a highly popular fellowship placing recent MPA/MPP graduates for year-long stints at small to medium size cities in city and county manager offices. The program is relatively small with 5-30 participants per year, but is a great way to get into local cities and be part of a broader cohort. ICMA also maintains a page of other local government fellowships: http://icma.org/en/icma/career_network/job_seekers/interns

Additionally, there are multiple outside programs targeted at state and local government. Code for America fellows program and FUSE Corps are both new local government fellowship programs created in the last five years. The Code for America fellowship is a 12-month fellowship where technologists are placed at 8-10 host cities to work on a specific project. FUSE Corps fellows are targeted at bringing mid to senior-level private sector leaders in for impactful stints. The Coros Fellows Program in Public Affairs is a 9-month program for recent graduates passionate about public affairs that is hosted in L.A, NYC, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and St. Louis. Sixty-four applicants are selected nationally each year. And City Hall Fellows places recent undergraduates with broad skills for a 1-year fellowships at cities including San Francisco.

Besides these specific programs, many cities, counties, and states take interns and fellows each year. It takes a little more work, but do your research and contact them directly.

Cities and towns are also innovation laboratories. Aaron Hufford, an Economic Development Fellow at the City of Hamilton, Ohio, explained, “As a recent graduate I did not have any experience with government. The fellowship position helped me learn more about how cities operate and who to talk to for information.” Aaron’s boss told him, “Do whatever you want, just make sure you have a plan.”

This won’t happen to you at every local internship, but if you have an idea and a plan for implementation that you can communicate, chances are you will find a mayor, manager, or council member willing to work with you. If you have an idea that you believe is worth

“COMMUNITIES BIG AND SMALL, AND IN DIFFERENT LOCATIONS, OFTEN FACE SIMILAR ISSUES AND HAVE VERY SIMILAR EXPERIENCES, BUT THEY ALL OCCUR AT DIFFERENT SCALES”

Jon Radermacher, Former City Manager
Intern, Vermillion, South Dakota
pursuing, then go for it. Perhaps starting small is the way to go for you.

And local governments aren’t the only places where you will be encouraged to innovate in an internship or fellowship. Many of the same issues are being addressed at the state level as well. One great example is the Empire State Fellows program in New York. It was designed to recruit mid-career professionals into state government drawing on their private and non-profit sector experience to create innovative policy. Dylan Hayden served as one of the early fellows in this program. He says that the ultimate outcome of his time participating in the program was “a wealth of knowledge and experience that I can draw upon is almost any career field.” This type of state level program can be a strong stepping-stone to a career in state government.

“For the past year I was the Earl Brush Fellow (Economic Development) at the City of Hamilton, OH. The City of Hamilton has three fellowship positions – one in the City manager’s office, one in Economic Development, and one in the Utilities Department. I would highly recommend these fellowships to a person who shows initiative and wants to make a positive impact in their community.”

– Aaron Hufford, Business Development Specialist at City of Hamilton, Ohio

**INSIDER TIP!**

In addition to the database provided here and official government websites, look at existing job sites. Internmatch is a website for internships that has a specific section on government internships. While mainly internships related to politics, there are a number of government internships throughout the country.

- [https://www.internmatch.com/s/government-internships](https://www.internmatch.com/s/government-internships)
- [http://www.internships.com/government](http://www.internships.com/government)

**STAY CLOSER TO HOME: START WITH YOUR STATE LEGISLATURE**

In a Google search for “legislative internships,” you might think that the majority of opportunities are on Capitol Hill. Instead, you’ll find that there are many more links to legislative experiences much closer to home. The National Conference on State Legislatures has a list of every state’s legislative internship programs and application procedures, which you may peruse [here](https://www.ncsl.org/research/legislative-internships.aspx).

For instance, the top hit in our aforementioned search turns up the State of Washington’s Legislative Intern Program, which offers students the opportunity to gain professional, paid work experience and study the legislative process at the state level. The Washington program is paid and full-time, happening in the winter and spring quarters – and it provides academic credit. Interns receive training in legislative ethics, engage in mock committee hearings and floor debate, and participate in a job shadow at a state agency, giving them great exposure to state officials, policymakers, journalists, and lobbyists in the process. One requirement is that you are going to school in Washington state, but it’s likely that your favorite state has a similar program, so be sure to check it out.
HOW TO SEARCH FOR INTERNSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

ADVICE FROM CAREER COUNSELORS

No one understands the landscape of government internships and fellowships better than the career counselors we interviewed for this guide. This is their life’s work and they’ve seen it all. So here are some general tips that career counselors think you should know:

Start your internship and fellowship search as early as possible. It’s never really too early to start the process. How early is too early? Here’s what Aileen Axtmayer, Associate Director, Office of Career Services, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy has to say:

“For me, I recommend research as the first step. The US government is huge and I think it can be overwhelming for students to navigate. I tell students to ask the question ‘Which organization is doing work that I’m interested in and what are their unique requirements and timelines?’ In terms of research, I would say starting as soon as September is not a bad idea, especially because some applications open as early as October for the following summer.”

But what if I am a little late to the application process for the internship and fellowship timeframe I want to be part of? Don’t call off your search just yet. Just reframe your approach says Matthew Upton of the Texas A&M Bush School of Government and Public Service:

“If you are late to the internship search process, don’t think topically. Rather think, ‘If I want to work in the development world, what are the four or five critical knowledge and skills I’m going to need to work in the development world?’ Then look for any internship that will help you gain those skills. That experience is what will help you get another look from employers when you start to apply for jobs.”

Now that you have your timing figured out, you need to be well versed and understand what the offices you are applying for do. For example, what type of research they do or what their objectives are? If you understand what they do, this will help you demonstrate that you are a good fit for the office. If you don’t know, be prepared for your experience to be somewhat undefined as well. Move quickly. “There might only be a short timeline or window in which the internship is open. Turn around your application as soon as possible. The USAJOBS website can have some technical issues, so it’s good to leave yourself some time for anything unexpected that may come up,” says Aileen Axtmayer.

Understand where your school already has relationships. Many schools have dedicated recruiting relationships with specific agencies built over time where they may do in-house resume collections for that agency, explained Tamara Golden, Career Consultant at UC San Diego’s School of International Relations. Ask your career counselor where those exist.

Try to connect with past graduates of the program and current fellows and ask them about their experiences: what they gained; what they would have done differently if they could participate in the program again; what they think someone applying for the program should know? In particular, inquire about the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

Once you’ve figured out the programs you are going to apply to, start improving a few basic professional skills you will use when your work starts. As you know, the daily life of anyone in government moves quickly. If you are able start your internship and fellowship with a strong command of basic communication skills like social media, presentation making, and memo writing, this will help you integrate into the operation of any office. You’ll be able to spend your valuable time focusing on developing other skills when you eventually hit the ground running, says Michael Schneider of the Maxwell School.

Don’t be afraid to reach out directly. “Don’t limit yourself to just the official programs listed on USAJOBS or on the website,” says Christine England, Presidential Management Fellow at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. “Pick up the phone and see if you can make it happen. After my first year of law school, I wanted to work at a government legal office. I contacted Argonne Office of Science at Department of Energy and was told they never had an intern before and there was no program. In March, the HR person called me back and they could use the extra help if I was willing to help them figure out the logistics.”
Finally, come in with an open mind ready to learn and grow. Listen to everyone's advice, but be selective in how that advice aligns with your own personality – only you can decide this. “I recommend that interns and fellows take time to explore their own values. To truly think about the work and the issues they are dealing with,” says Michael Schneider. With these tips you’ll have a head start on any workplace endeavor.

HOW TO SEARCH FOR FEDERAL INTERNSHIP / FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

In the “Guide to Getting into Government for High Achievers,” the Robertson Foundation for Government and GovLoop teach you how to navigate USAJOBS, the federal government’s primary employment search tool. We’ve also provided a compendium appendix at the end of this guide with a list of fellowships and internship programs that is a great starting point for you. If you are focusing on federal government internships and fellowships, you will likely end up applying through USAJOBS for the actual fellowship.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has prepared a landing page just for you: https://www.usajobs.gov/StudentsAndGrads. To browse the different available options, click on the link for either internships or recent graduate jobs. Use the “refine your search” tool on the left to hone in on your desired agencies and/or locations.

You can save listings you like by signing up for a USAJOBS account, which is something you need to do before you can apply, and it’s the first step to setting up saved searches to automatically receive job opportunity announcements matching your specified criteria through email.

HOW TO APPLY FOR FEDERAL INTERNSHIP / FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

When you’ve identified a USAJOBS position that you want to apply for the requirements tend to vary. For example, the State Department Summer Internship requires an online resume submission, a 2,500 character statement of interest, and an online application you complete via USAJOBS. You must have your resume and statement of interest complete before you begin your the online application process.

“Tailor, tailor, tailor your applications. It’s more about quality than quantity. Students need to make sure they take the time to thoroughly vet what the organization is looking for. A lot of times applications have a ton of little details that you need to be prepared to answer before going live.” - Aileen Axtmayer, Associate Director at the Office of Career Services, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy
The first step for getting your federal resume together is having all your transcripts lined up. It only lets you upload a single document, so you have to combine them all if you have multiple. You should include courses, volunteer activities, and papers – all the things you wouldn’t normally include in under work experience. You need to demonstrate in whatever way you can that you have the knowledge, skills or abilities that they’re asking for.

Make sure your USAJOBS resume is as complete as possible. Program coordinators report that an internship position can receive hundreds of applications on USAJOBS, so you’ll want to do everything you can to stand out from the crowd and demonstrate your qualifications for the opportunity.

Writing your USAJOBS resume is almost an entire guide in itself. Luckily, we’ve already got a resource for you. Pages 58-64 of our free Getting into Government guide has tons of resume tips and examples you can leverage. In the guide, we provide formatting tips to how to stand out in the computerized review process.

As Paul Binkley, former GWU career counselor stated in an interview, “There used to be two resumes for federal jobs: one for internships and one for jobs. That is no longer true. The sooner students start using their ‘adult’ resumes, the better.”

"THINK ABOUT WHAT MAKES ‘YOU’ SO UNIQUE, THAT THE RISK OF NOT ACCEPTING YOU WILL PUT THE US AND ITS CITIZENS AT RISK."

Adam Dole, former Presidential Innovation Fellow

ONCE YOU’RE ACCEPTED: 13 WAYS TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR INTERNSHIP OR FELLOWSHIP

If we had to narrow all of the insights we received from our interviewees in terms of how to make yourself memorable in an internship or fellowship, we’d end up with the following baker’s dozen of tips:

1. **Be vigilant.**
Prepare yourself to be innovative, thoughtful, and make your voice heard. Ask for specific assignments. Set up frequent meetings with your supervisor. If there are multiple interns, try to coordinate lunches or outings with them to trade notes on your experiences.

2. **Be proactive.**
It’s easier to spend time making plans and setting goals at the beginning of your tenure instead of scrambling to hit checkpoints at the end. “Try to connect with past graduates of the program and current fellows,” said Saira Qureshi, Presidential Management Fellow and former National Urban Fellow. “Ask them about the experience. What they felt they gained about the fellowship? What they would have done differently if they could participate in the program again? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program?”
3. Be curious.

Qureshi also advises you to “figure out who does what in your office and why. Learn as much as you can about the people around you, above you and below you.” Before you start, get to know the organization’s chart for the bureau. For many agencies, these can be found online. Familiarize yourself with the offices and the functions within your bureau or agency. Try to learn the names of the directors and top players. This will help you follow conversations easily when you enter (and know them when you happen them halls or meetings.

4. Do research.

Get up to speed on the big issues impacting your office. For example, if you are going to be working in a Navy-oriented office, you should read up on current Navy issues. If you are going to be working in a think tank, read reports from the Congressional Research Service and the Congressional Budget Office among others. Become a go-to person for insights on the topics du jour.

5. Seek out opportunities.

Make a point to try and work with or for people who are good leaders and mentors. Volunteer for projects that give you exposure to them.


Remember that you are there to help your assigned office, not save it or fix existing staff members’ perceived mistakes. “Any time you come in as an outside expert, it’s very important to quickly figure out ways to help people inside government solve existing problems. Also, realize that it’s likely that many other great people inside government share the passion for the problem you’re trying to solve. Identify these people, and work with them. They’ve likely dedicated their careers to this challenge. Absorb everything you can from their hard-won knowledge.” – Daniel Chapman, former Presidential Innovation Fellow.

7. Set goals.

Determine what you want to achieve during the span of your internship and constantly review yourself and ensure that you are making progress.

8. Expect to spend a great deal of your time communicating.

Plan for this and you won’t get frustrated. Then, figure out ways to balance communication needs with getting work done.


“Interns who are incredibly organized make a strong, memorable impression.” – Christina England, Presidential Management Fellow at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission

10. Be positive.

“If an internship isn’t going as well as you hoped, you can take solace in knowing that you’ve walked away with a more focused understanding of what you do and don’t want to do.” – Charles Morrison, Research Assistant at American Enterprise Institute

11. Write memos.

If you don’t already know how to do it, learn how to write a clear, concise, and professionally organized memo. “In today’s world, from a professional standpoint, being able to write a memo that catches your supervisor’s eye – one that is coherent and succinct enough to move an action or discussion forward – is essential. There’s an art to it. And it’s an important ability to have in federal service.” – Michael Schneider, Director of the Washington Public Diplomacy Program at the Maxwell School and a career advisor to the Robertson Foundation for Government.

12. Be yourself.

Explore your own individual values. Think about the greater importance of the issues you are dealing with.

13. Don’t waste a single day.

You may never get another opportunity to impact as many lives as this one.
CONCLUSION

As you pursue your government internships and fellowships, we hope that this guide has given you helpful directions for the outset of your journey. We hope that you have a better sense of where you can find job opportunities, how you can maneuver to position yourself, gain experience, and understand how to make the most of your internship or fellowship. This is a valuable opportunity for you to serve your country and develop as a professional and as an individual.

If you feel up to helping create these futures, we hope that this guide strengthened your resolve and solidified your strategy as you explore your important and unique place in government.

By pursuing internships and fellowships, you are looking to join the teams of men and women whose work will dictate the future of our cities, the future of our countries, and the future of our world. We know you will be a great asset to this exciting work of government that we have ahead.
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Here, enjoy the GovLoop appendix of some of our favorite and top internships and fellowships in and around government. We’ve reached out to career advisors for their lists, talked to our GovLoop members about what fellowships they have had, and also spent a lot of time on Internet research. This is not a comprehensive appendix — just some of our favorites — but if you have additions we missed, email info@govloop.com with your information.

Below, find our favorite 50 internships and fellowship programs with a brief description and the accompanying website.

**TOP 50 INTERNSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS**

**ADMINISTRATIVE CONFERENCE OF THE U.S.**  
*Research Fellow*  
[http://www.acus.gov/internships-and-research-fellows](http://www.acus.gov/internships-and-research-fellows)  
The ACUS is an independent federal agency dedicated to improving our nation’s administrative and regulatory processes. Visiting research fellows with expertise in administrative law, economics, public policy, social science or regulatory reform are invited to apply for this program. Non-U.S. citizens can also apply, but must demonstrate proficiency in both written and spoken English. Admissions are accepted on a rolling basis.

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE U.S. COURTS: SUPREME COURT**  
*The Judicial Internship Program*  
The Supreme Court offers exceptional undergraduate and graduating students the chance to immerse themselves in the judicial process through the Judicial Internship Program. Chosen interns work alongside federal attorneys and judges in the same building that hosts Supreme Court hearings and decisions. In addition to performing office tasks, interns take on large research projects and write articles. The opportunities in the program are unpaid, but interns do get a lot of exposure to the court and academic credit for their participation.

**AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION**  
*Graduate Internships*  
USADF is a government agency dedicated to empowering African-led development and community enterprises. The agency seeks two graduate interns to assist with the submissions review process for their USADF Power Africa Off-Grid Energy Challenge in Rural Africa. The internship lasts approximately three months.

**AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND DISEASE REGISTRY (CDC)**  
*Collegiate Leaders in Environmental Health Summer Internship*  
[http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/cleh/](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/cleh/)  
Are you passionate about the environment and/or interested in human health? The CDC’s National Center for Environmental Health and Agency for Toxic Substances and Diseases is seeking undergraduate interns for a 10-week summer program studying the relationship between health and environment. Accepted interns will interact with federal officials and scientists and work on several environmental health projects. The internship takes place in Atlanta.
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Animal Care Externship


An agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service determines and enforces standards in the humane treatment of animals. The service carries out its mission through education, inspection, and cooperative work with state and local governments. In the Animal Care Externship, students can spend 1-4 weeks connecting their academic education to professional experience. In this unpaid position, externs can work in a variety of fields, ranging from enforcement and information technology to nonclinical veterinary care and emergency services. This short, flexible position is great for students hoping to break into the veterinary or animal care fields.

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)

National Clandestine Service Undergraduate Internship Program

https://www.cia.gov/careers/student-opportunities/undergraduate-students.html

One of many departments offering internships at the CIA, the National Clandestine Service is the covert arm of the CIA. Its interns support the CIA’s mission of collecting human intelligence on critical issues and international developments. The CIA provides a competitive salary to its interns as well as the same benefits as fulltime employees. Ideal interns are interested in national security and possess advanced written and oral communication skills. All applicants for the CIA internship program must submit to drug testing, a polygraph, and a background check in order to receive security clearance.

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission)

Internship Program


The Helsinki Commission is an independence agency that encourages compliance with the Helsinki Final Act. The Commission offers unpaid semester-long internships for highly motivated undergraduate and graduate students interested in international affairs and Congressional proceedings. Interns will research relevant human rights issues and assist staff with hearings and briefings.

Corporation for National & Community Service / AmeriCorps

Eli Segal Fellowship

http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri corps/eli-segal-fellowship

The CNCS is looking for one AmeriCorps alum to serve with the Eli J. Segal Citizen Leadership Program, an organization that provides assistance to emerging leaders dedicated to creating a more equitable world. The fellow will work in the CEO’s office on several initiatives to advance national service policy and strategy. The fellow will also assist with AmeriCorps 20th Anniversary Celebration.

Council of Economic Advisers (White House)

Internships

http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/cea/jobs/internships

The CEA assists the President with economic analysis and implementation advice for a variety of macro and microeconomic policy issues. Internships are available during the fall, spring and summer semesters for graduate or undergraduate students with a background in economics and strong written and analytical skills.
DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (DIA)
National Intelligence Scholars Program
The Defense Intelligence Agency is the combat support arm of the Department of Defense. The DIA provides military intelligence to defense-planners, military personnel, and policy-makers. The National Intelligence Scholars Program gives a select number of college graduates the opportunity to work for the DIA while earning a masters degree in strategic intelligence. Scholars have a choice to concentrate on one of five concentrations, including Weapons of Mass Destruction; Information Operations and Cyber; Emerging and Disruptive Technologies; Geostrategic Resources and the Environment (Energy, Resources and Power); and Foreign Denial and Deception. This position comes with a full salary and benefits.

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD
Summer Scholars
http://www.dnfsb.gov/summer-scholars-program
Motivated, academically successful college juniors and seniors can spend the summer working for the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board in this competitive program. Students chosen to participate in the Summer Scholars Program receive a salary, mentor, and benefits. Geared towards undergraduate students studying engineering, this summer program is also used to recruit future candidates for the Board’s graduate Professional Development Program. Undergrads who foresee a career in nuclear safety can thus get their foot in the proverbial door by becoming a Summer Scholar.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (FBI)
FBI Honors Internship Program
https://www.fbi.gov/jobs/internship
The Federal Bureau of Investigation is responsible for protecting the United States from terrorists and spies, enforcing the law, and providing leadership to law enforcement at the state and local level. The FBI’s Honors Internship Program provides an insider’s view of the FBI and the opportunity to explore a career within the Bureau. Paid interns work for ten weeks alongside FBI professionals in a variety of areas. After that ten-week period, interns have the option to apply for an extended internship position. Applicants from all educational backgrounds and experience are welcome, but all interns must also consent to drug testing and a background check.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS
Psychology Internship Program
http://www.bop.gov/jobs/psychology_internship.jsp
BOP’s Psychology Predoctoral Internship provides training for clinical and counseling graduate students. The internship includes both individual and group supervision and assignment of a wide range of therapeutic cases. Interns that are proven competent clinicians and comfortable working within corrections have the potential to be recruited by the Bureau. Applicants must pass a security clearance, background check and drug test.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC)
International Bureau
http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/internships-available-fcc
The International Bureau in the FCC oversees international communications and satellite programs. It coordinates a spectrum of FCC activities and promotes US interests in international communication. Interns at the International Bureau conduct research, write reports, and draft US policy papers for upcoming conferences. Students from all academic disciplines are welcome to apply, though preference is giving to business, communications, and international studies students. This position is unpaid and located in Washington DC.
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Summer Intern Program

FERC is an independent agency that regulates inter-state transmission of energy, reviews natural gas pipeline project proposals and license hydropower projects. This internship is designed as a stepping-stone for students into corporate experience in fields such as business and engineering. Interns will be introduced to the challenges of energy regulation through a variety of projects and assignments.

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION (FTC)
Legal Internships in the Bureau of Competition

The Bureau of Competition seeks qualified law students interested in the fundamentals of antitrust law for an 8-10 week summer internship. Interns will participate in brown bags and social events to gain strong professional relationships with Bureau staff. In addition, the Bureau offers semester internships for second and third year law students. This internship requires about 10-15 hours of work per week in various divisions. Students with a background in antitrust, economics or finance are preferred.

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Career Discovery Internship Program
http://www.fws.gov/northeast/youth/cdip.html

The US Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to preserving the country’s wildlife and natural resources. The agency also seeks to educate and engage citizens in a dialogue about environmental conservation. Interns receive hands-on experience working in the field of environmental science by focusing on topics such as resource conservation, invasive species, and outreach. Interns are paid a living wage and receive valuable mentorship from agency professionals, making it a great stepping-stone to a career in environmental policy.

HARRY S. TRUMAN SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION
Summer Institute
http://www.truman.gov/summer-institute

The Truman Scholarship Foundation’s mission is to support the potential of young leaders committed to public service. Most scholarship programs serve as a stepping-stone for students between undergraduate and graduate careers. Participants of the Summer Internship in D.C. will gain a deepened understanding of policymaking and national politics. Participants are required to take part in an 8-week public service internship and will engage in several other activities, such as seminars, networking and group presentations.

INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES
Museum Research Intern
http://www.imls.gov/about/internship_position_description_opre.aspx

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is an independent federal agency that aims to support our nation’s museums and libraries and promote a citizenry of learners. The IMLS Office of Policy, Research and Evaluation seeks a part-time internship for the fall or spring semester. Interns will be responsible for researching and tracking trends in museum usage and practices. This is an unpaid internship, but students can apply through their university for the possibility of earning college credits.

INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION
Student Internship

The Inter-American Foundation is an independent federal agency that coordinates grant support for and fosters partnership with those in need in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Student Volunteer Service Program is an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to work with the IAF in a variety of offices, from the Evaluation Unit to the Office of the General Counsel. The program is designed to give students work-related experience and set the foundation for successful future careers.
INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION  
*Video/Photo Editor Intern*


The Inter-American Foundation is an independent federal agency that coordinates grant support for and fosters partnership with those in need in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Video/Photo Editor Intern will work directly with the External Affairs team to assist with portrayal of the organization’s work with grantees through video/photo essays. Applicants must be current college students pursuing video, multimedia, filmmaking or a related field. Additionally, applicants should have an interest in international affairs and proficiency in both written/spoken English or Spanish.

INTERPOL  
*Internship Program*

http://www.interpol.int/Recruitment/Other-recruitment-pages/Internships

Interpol is an organization whose mission is to use an international network of police to make the world a safer place. Those selected for this internship program have the opportunity to work in a multicultural environment, learn about international police cooperation, and perform practical tasks for the organization. Interpol offers internships to anyone from its member states, and internship sites itself are either based in Lyon, France or at one of Interpol’s regional bureaus around the world. Interns are provided a monthly stipend.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
*Preservation Digital Technology Internship*

http://www.loc.gov/hr/employment/index.php?action=cMain.showFellowships

The Library of Congress offers dozens of internship programs and positions related to academic research, library science, and the preservation of manuscripts. One of those programs is the Preservation Digital Technology Internship, a position that combines the Library’s mission of manuscript preservation with technology and innovation. The position offers students and post-graduates the opportunity to use state-of-the-art digital technologies for the digital reformatting of library materials. In addition to experience, interns receive a small stipend during the course of the internship.

MARITIME ADMINISTRATION  
*Office of the Chief Counsel Internship*

http://www.marad.dot.gov/about_us_landing_page/chief_counsel/occ_internships/OCC_Internships.htm

The US Maritime Administration promotes and supports the American shipping industry. Within MARAD, the Office of Chief Counsel focuses on the legal aspect of the agency’s mission. Interns participating in this program conduct research and write legal documents concerning maritime, environmental, international, contract and government law. Each intern is assigned to a mentor, who makes sure the intern is constantly challenged with balanced and valuable experience. The position is unpaid, but it offers academic credit to law students.

MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY (MDA)  
*Missile Defense Career Development Program*

http://www.mda.mil/careers/jobs_entry_level.html

The Missile Defense Agency serves at the technical and administrative hub for the most advanced defensive arsenal in history. The agency provides a three-year career development program for students and entry-level professionals interested in national security and the mission defense community. Interns are provided with classroom training and paired with a professional mentor within the organization. The combination of educational seminar, mentorship, and practical experience will help interns jumpstart their careers in missile defense. The program provides a full salary and benefits to its interns.
NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION (NASA)
NASA Interns, Fellows, and Scholars Program
https://intern.nasa.gov/

NASA internships are hands-on educational experiences that allow students to dive into NASA-related research. The program has a strong emphasis on mentorship, placing interns alongside seasoned NASA professionals to perform both research and operational tasks. There are a variety of positions in technical and nontechnical fields, and internships can be completed at NASA centers around the country. Internships last between 8-16 weeks long, but excellent interns have the option to apply for a year-long extension.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION (NARA)
Editorial Internship
http://www.archives.gov/careers/internships/dc-metro/

Aspiring writers and editors can apply for the Editorial Internship with the Office of the Federal Registrar, an office that falls under the National Archives and Records Administration. The Office is responsible for providing the official text for federal laws, Presidential notices, and other announcements in the executive branch. Editorial interns help organize documents and proofread Presidential reports and memos. They also assist with several other administrative tasks. Both undergraduate and graduate students are welcome to apply for this voluntary position.

NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
NNSA Graduate Program
http://ngp.pnnl.gov/

In the NNSA Graduate Fellowship Program, fellows work to develop counter nuclear proliferation programs and increase nuclear security. This program provides fellows with 12-month, fully salaried positions in Richland, Washington as well as specialized training and practical experience. Fellows also can collaborate with the Department of Energy on various research projects and initiatives. Masters and Ph.D. students interested in science, defense policy, and business are all encouraged to apply.

NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY (NSA)
Director's Summer Program
http://www.nsa.gov/careers/opportunities_4_u/students/undergraduate/dsp.shtml

This highly competitive Director’s Summer Program reaches out to high-achieving mathematics majors to put their problem-solving skills to the test. Interns get access to state-of-the-art computing technology, and have a chance to apply abstract algebra, geometry, number theory, computer science, and other mathematical fields to practical problems. At the beginning of the summer, students attend a series of lectures and seminars, and by summer’s end must present their own research to their mentors and other NSA professionals. Students in this program are paid.

PRESIDENT’S COUNCIL ON PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS
Intern for the President’s Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition
http://fitness.gov/img/pdfs/internship

The Council’s mission is to empower all Americans to adopt a healthy lifestyle and motivate people to lead active lives. The Council seeks an intern to assist the Communications and Partnerships teams to assist in creating presentations, managing databases and developing marketing materials. Applicants should be current undergraduate or graduate students with backgrounds in public health, nutrition, business administration and/or public affairs. Though the internship is unpaid, interns are eligible to receive credit hours.
SECRET SERVICE
Student Volunteer Service

http://www.secretservice.gov/opportunities_interns.shtml

Student volunteers working for the Secret Service receive academic-study related assignments to develop their professional skills and explore their career options. The program does not pay its volunteers, but it does expose volunteers to new technologies and prepare them for a potential career with the secret service. The main internship site is in Washington DC, but volunteers can also work at various field offices around the country. To be hired by the Secret Service, however all applicants must submit to a background check and drug test in order to receive security clearance.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE
Fellowship Opportunities

http://www.smithsonianofi.com/fellowship-opportunities/

Want to intern at the National Museum of Natural History? Look no further. The Smithsonian Institute offers several fellowship opportunities for students looking to advance their careers and education at the world’s most prestigious museum system. Smithsonian-wide programs include the Molecular Evolution Fellowship Program, Secretary’s Distinguished Research Fellowship, Committee on Institutional Cooperation Fellowship and many more. There are also myriad gallery/museum specific programs available.

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
Curatorial Internship


Interns working for the Supreme Court’s Curator’s Office gain valuable curatorial experience while learning about museum practices and the Supreme Court. The Curator’s Office serves to preserve and record Supreme Court history in order to promote a better understanding of the Court and its impact on national policy. Interns aid the office’s mission in sharing the Court’s rich history with a diverse audience and preserving it for future generations. Intern duties include conducting research, giving tours, and taking on long-term historical projects. This position is unpaid, but it provides academic credit and exposure to the inner-workings of the Supreme Court.

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
Judicial Internship Program


The role of Counselor to the Chief Justice has been serving the Supreme Court for more than 40 years. The Office of the Counselor is seeking judicial interns to support the Counselor and maintain Supreme Court administrative functions. Interns will work under guidance of the Supreme Court Fellow and will assist in tracking news events, drafting correspondence and conducting research. The internship is unpaid, but interns can receive academic credit.
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID):
USAID Democracy Fellow, Elections and Political Transitions
http://www.iie.org/Programs/USAID-Democracy-Fellows-and-Grants-Program

USAID provides financial aid and health resources to developing countries around the world. Its Democracy Fellowships Program is designed to incorporate graduates and professionals to USAID’s human rights, democracy, and peace-building campaigns. Fellows provide technical and research support to USAID campaigns. The program normally lasts two years, and fellows are placed either at the USAID office in Washington, DC or on a USAID mission overseas. USAID requires its fellows to obtain secret-level security clearance, so applicants must submit to a background check and drug test.

U.S. COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM:
Internships
http://www.uscirf.gov/about-uscirf/employment-internship-opportunities

Currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students are eligible to apply for an internship with the USCIRF. The Commission was created by the International Religious Freedom Act and monitors the status of religious freedoms according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Available internships including the following: administrative, communications, government relations, office of legal counsel, policy & legal research and regional policy analysis.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)
Internship Program
http://www.dm.usda.gov/employ/student/

As a part of its Pathways Program, USDA’s Internship Program gives current high school, undergraduate or graduate students the opportunity to gain valuable work experience with the Department. Interns will work directly with a mentor and venerated scientists and professionals in a variety of projects designed to advance their Federal or agricultural career paths. The USDA accepts interns year round on semester rotations. There are opportunities for a paid internship, though not all internships are compensated.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE)
DOE Scholars Program
http://orise.orau.gov/doescholars/

The Department of Energy’s Scholars Program introduces undergraduate students and recent graduates to the DOE’s research programs and operations. Interns gain a competitive edge by applying their education and skills to a professional research setting. They also have a chance to work with the DOE’s top scientists and experts. The program offers positions in an array of disciplines, including engineering, environmental science, law, policy, and more. In addition to experience, the DOE offers its interns a monthly stipend and travel arrangements to and from the internship site.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE)
Mickey Leland Energy Fellowship

Sponsored by the DOE’s Department of Fossil Energy, the Mickey Leland Energy Fellowship is a 10-week summer internship for students interested in science and engineering. Accepted applicants get to work and study with an experienced mentor and assist on research projects important to the Department of Fossil Energy. In addition to a stipend, interns receive a housing allowance and transportation expenses to and from the work site. At the end of the program, interns participate in a “Technical Forum,” where they present their research projects.
GUIDE TO INTERNSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS IN GOVERNMENT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
Public Health Internship Program
http://www.hrsa.gov/about/jobs/internprogram.html

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) semester internship provides public health students an opportunity for professional growth and practicum experiences. The interns will interact with a public health expert in various fields, such as maternal and child health, program analysis or rural health policy. Interns will apply their skills in goal-based projects, shadow field experts, and assist with management of grants and programs. The internship equips students to be ambassadors of HRSA and public health in their communities, academic work and professional careers.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ)
The Summer Law Intern Program

The Department of Justice’s Summer Law Intern Program (SLIP) is the agency’s professional recruitment program for law students. Every summer, 60-70 new interns enter the SLIP program. These paid positions offer law students the opportunity to immerse themselves in the legal system and operations of the DOJ. They also get to work under federal judges and attorneys. Interns come from law schools all over the country. In the selection process, the DOJ evaluates the academic background, leadership experience, and court experience of every applicant. Most positions are located in Washington DC.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE (DOS)
The Council of American Ambassadors Fellowship
http://careers.state.gov/intern/other-programs

One of many offered through the Department of State, this internship combines practical training, education and government experience all into one. The internship is only offered during the summer semester for undergraduates who have completed their junior year by the start of the stint. Students with an interest in diplomacy or international affairs are preferred. Accepted applicants will be mentored by former U.S. ambassadors and study at Georgetown University.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE (DOS)
Virtual Student Foreign Service
http://www.state.gov/vsfs/

This internship is designed for students who want their part in advancing U.S. Department of State missions and engage in digital civil society. The entire internship is virtual: accepted applicants to not report to a post but instead complete tasks and assignments online. There are more than 300 projects to apply for, from updating fact sheets for the U.S. Embassy in Bolivia to conducting human rights research in Algeria.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
General Counsel’s Summer Intern Program
http://www.treasury.gov/careers/Pages/honors.aspx

The Treasury Department is looking for law student interns to advance it’s mission of promoting and maintain economic prosperity. Interns will work in Washington, D.C. at one of a variety of Treasury offices. Applicants should have a strong work ethic and demonstrate interest in the legal issues facing the Treasury.

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Greater Research Opportunity Undergraduate Fellowship
http://www.epa.gov/ncer/guidance/faqs/faq_gro_undergrad.html

In line with the EPA’s mission to reduce pollution and ensure human health protection, the GRO fellowship aims to secure our nation’s human resources needs in regards to environmental science and policy. Applications are open to undergraduate students in environmental fields of study. This is a two-year fellowship.
provides tuition support for students in their junior and senior years of study, as well as a summer internship with the EPA.

**U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND**  
*Volunteer Internship Program*  
http://www.eucom.mil/organization/personnel-resources/volunteer-internship-program-evip

The European Command serves the nation by conducting military operations, international military engagement and interagency partnership. The Command headquarters seeks interns interested in advancing their academic careers and learning about Department of Defense missions. Students enrolled in accredited trade schools or undergraduate/graduate universities are eligible to apply. Admissions are accepted on a rolling basis.

**U.S. MINT**  
*Extern Program*  
http://www.usmint.gov/about_the_mint/careers/index.cfm?action=externs

The US Mint Extern Program is geared towards law students looking to gain exposure to the inner-workings of the legal profession. In this program, interns conduct legal research, draft memorandums, and respond to document requests. Past interns have had the opportunity to work on matters involving consumer education, ethics, equal employment opportunity, Freedom of Information Act, intellectual property, labor relations, and the Privacy Act. Externs are unpaid, but they do gain unique access to mentors and legal professionals working for the US Mint.

**U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**  
*USTDA Program Internships*  
https://www.ustda.gov/about/internships.asp

The USTDA’s mission is to promote economic growth in developing countries while providing new markets for American businesses. Students and young professionals who participate in the USTDA’s internship program have the opportunity to immerse themselves in international business, economics, finance, and communications. Most interns work at the USTDA headquarters in Arlington, VA, but interns can also apply for positions in regional offices around the world. Intern positions with the USTDA are unpaid, but the program offers a mass-transit stipend and academic credit.

**VOICE OF AMERICA**  
*TV to Africa Internship*  
http://www.insidevoa.com/info/voa-internships/2311.html

The Voice for America is a multimedia agency funded by the US government that broadcasts accurate, balanced information to an international audience. VOA offers many types of media and business-related internships, including the TV to Africa internship. In this position, students with a demonstrated interest in Africa, international affairs, and communications have a chance to produce content for the VOA’s African channel. Interns write program descriptions, assist with field shoots, edit film projects, and participate in other newsroom activities. All VOA internships are voluntary and unpaid, but the agency does provide a travel stipend.

**THE WHITE HOUSE**  
*The White House Internship*  
http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/internships

Striving to make the “People’s House” accessible to future public servants, this internship is a hands-on program designed to bolster young leaders’ understanding of the Executive Office. Accepted applicants will cultivate critical leadership skills and build professional experience through mentoring and projects. It is an unpaid internship offered during spring, summer and fall terms.