

MICRO- INTERNSHIP IN A BOX

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Sections

- I. Micro-Internship in a Box
- II. Projects as a Pipeline
- III. The Benefits
- IV. Best Practices
- V. Getting To Work
- VI. Goals and Measurements
- VII. Identifying a Micro-Internship
- VIII. Money
- IX. Staff
- X. Promote Inclusion
- XI. INTERNational Talent
- XII. Before They Start & When They Arrive

MICRO-INTERNSHIP IN A BOX

Welcome to CampusROC's Micro-Internship in a Box. This guide is designed to educate employers on the benefits of a micro-internship and how to build these programs from scratch. Recruiting new talent has changed, and we are here to help you implement a strong, cost-effective, and successful micro-internship program.

Regardless of employer size, organizations are facing multiple hiring challenges such as budget constraints, staffing shortages, lack of a strong, talent pipeline, and overall engagement. Implementing a micro-internship program allows your organization to complete meaningful projects while diversifying your talent pool, increasing entry-level retention, and doing it in a cost-effective way.

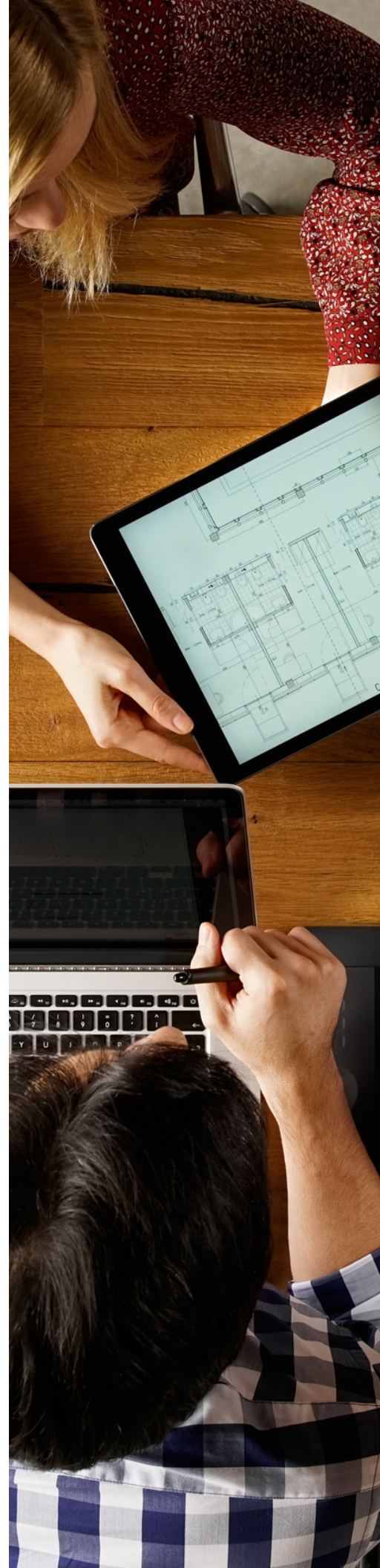


PROJECTS AS A PIPELINE

Most employers are familiar with the traditional internship concept, but may not have heard of a micro-internship. A micro-internship is a short term, paid professional project completed by college students or recent graduates. Micro-Internships let you engage, assess, and hire college students and recent grads early, more effectively, on-demand, and without adding to your workload.

Micro-Internships are typically between 10 - 40 hours total, and the projects are due within a few days or a few weeks of the start date. On average, the cost ranges from \$200 - \$800 per project or intern, but varies from employer to employer. Micro-internship projects can be hosted year-round, on demand, or on an as-needed basis. If the internship is unpaid, the student should earn academic credit per Federal Labor Standards Act unless you are a nonprofit organization. Ideally, because the student is paying tuition to earn academic credit, internships are paid at least minimum wage.

Some examples of micro-internship projects include social media and marketing projects, research, data analysis, updating or developing materials, or creating and improving applications.



THE BENEFITS

Micro-Internships are cost effective, flexible, and a great tool to support your diverse young talent recruitment and retention efforts.

COST

According to Parker Dewey¹, employers are saving between 40 and 80% when hosting a micro-intern compared to a traditional semester-long internship.

By partnering with TalentEdge, employers have the option to place their micro-interns on TalentEdge's payroll and receive services including employee wages, Medicare taxes, unemployment insurance, workman's compensation, and disability insurance.

FLEXIBLE

Most micro-internships are remote or hybrid and allow flexibility for the student, which is a priority for new grads and young professionals

Employers can tailor their projects to what needs to be done and relate them to roles that will need to be filled in the future.

ENGAGEMENT

Commitment is more difficult for this generation of students, and micro-internships can feel more comfortable for a student. They can be used as a "try out" before committing to a traditional internship or a full-time role.

Oftentimes, micro-interns don't require onboarding training or deep industry knowledge because the projects are short and specific. This extra time can be allocated to educating the student on company culture, benefits, growth opportunities, and future employment opportunities.

RETENTION

As of 2022, more than half (55%) of recent graduates leave their first role within a year. According to Parker Dewey², 98% of students who completed a micro-internship while in college stay in their first professional role for over a year.

1. Parker Dewey, "Launch Your Career" <https://www.parkerdewey.com/career-launchers>

2. YouTube, "Virginia Commonwealth University's Micro-Internship Program" <https://youtu.be/lwNc8zInfyc>



STAFF

Identify an Internship Coordinator

- It is helpful to have an internship coordinator if your organization is recruiting many interns for various staff and departments.
- This person organizes the recruiting and matches interns to their projects, departments, and direct supervisors.

Identify a Mentor, Supervisor, and Project Team

- A mentor acts as the "intern buddy." They will be the intern's go-to source for questions ranging from "can I ask someone from another team for advice on a project?" to "is there a good lunch spot nearby?"
- The mentor can be the supervisor, fellow team member, or simply a longtime employee.
- The supervisor is the intern's boss, monitoring project progress.
- The project team is comprised of the people the intern will work with the most. The best intern experiences fully integrate interns into a team. Ensure that your organization is fostering an environment that promotes intern engagement and inclusion throughout the workplace.

NEED STAFF SUPPORT?

CampusROC can help provide resources like these for your organization if you need a full-service solution for hiring an intern.

BEST PRACTICES

- Recruit business leaders from across the organization and team members to champion the development of a micro-internship program. This makes it seem less of an “HR-mandated” program and engages the rest of the organization in its success.
- Poll employees to identify their level of interest in having an intern and ask them where they think an intern could be most useful and productive.
- Hold a focus group with employees to get a better understanding of their project needs and what abilities/skills/knowledge an intern should possess to ensure a good ROI for the company.
- Create a process for requesting a project and intern. Ask employees to identify key attributes and qualifications, like specific majors, systems experience (MS Office, Excel, Salesforce), and/or prior work experience.
- Schedule meetings for the intern that expose them to leaders in the company. Examples could be upon completion of the project, a lunch and learn with members from different branches of the company.



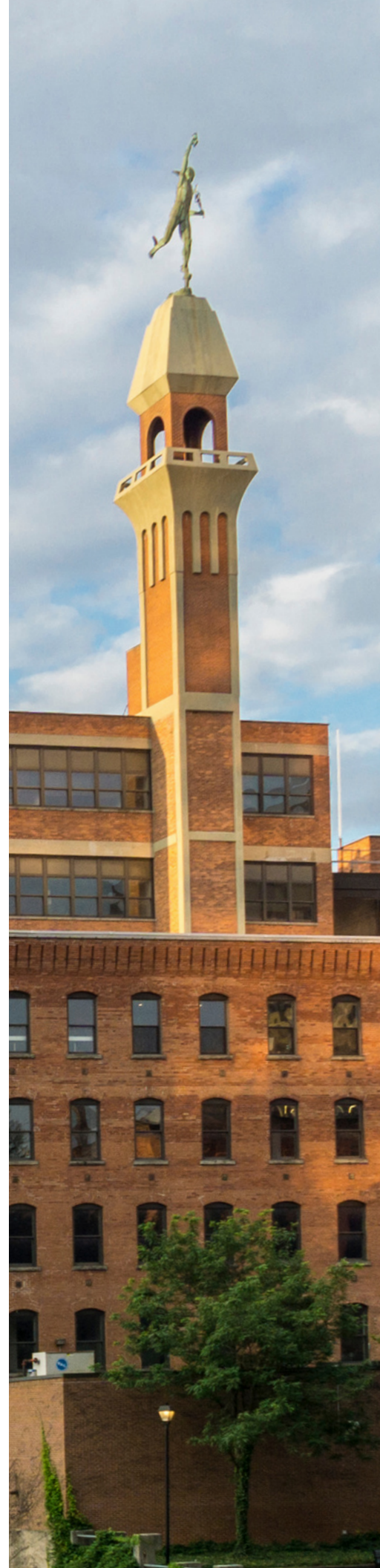
GETTING TO WORK

The best internships start with good preparation.

- Prepare by drafting a job description that include the specific project the intern will be working on.
- Identify the team and the supervisor the intern will be working with at the company before posting the position.
- Clarify and ensure everybody is on the same page regarding the hours, compensation, and evaluation the intern should expect when completing the micro-internship.

GOALS & MEASUREMENT

- Before you begin your micro-internship description, consider what your organization's goals are and how you will measure success.
- Ask yourself: Do I want to convert micro-interns to traditional interns, and then eventually to full-time employees? Is there an area of expertise micro-interns could bring to my organization we do not currently have? What project could lead to a full time role in the future?



IDENTIFYING A MICRO-INTERNSHIP

Like all job listings, micro-internship descriptions should clearly state the company background, culture, and goals, but it is just as important to include thorough details of the project – project name, department, project description, estimated hours, start date, and end date.

Also, list any other perks like free lunch on Fridays, access to the gym, or special discounts on summer housing.

MONEY

- The cost of a micro-internship program can vary depending on the project. On average, the cost ranges from \$200 - \$800 per project/intern, based on the organization's hourly wage and project length. An hourly rate for interns ranges from \$10 to \$20 depending on the experience and skill of the intern.
- CampusROC strongly advocates for paid internships for reasons that benefit both the intern and the employer.





PROMOTE INCLUSION

Micro-internships can be an effective tool for including individuals of all abilities in your organization. Research shows that employers who offer internships for people with disabilities are 4.5 times more likely to hire a person with a disability than those who do not. According to Forbes Magazine, "By focusing on inclusion directly in your internship program, you can be sure to cultivate a diverse workforce. Even better, you can establish a company culture where differences are acknowledged and valued." In 2020, Policy Link found that people of color make up over one-third of the workforce and women make up nearly half. By actively fostering diversity in your intern pool, your company can start to build a strong foundation for creating a more diverse workforce.

DIVERSITY MATTERS

Only 26% of students from an underrepresented population currently fill traditional internship roles. Roughly 80% of students being selected for micro-internships are from underrepresented populations.

INTERNATIONAL TALENT

Greater Rochester has over 25,000 international students attending the 19 colleges and universities in the region. Hiring an international student intern can bring a new outlook to the company, including new perspectives, global fluency, and unique business practices.

International students can participate in traditional internships and micro-internships, through CPT, OPT, or a work visa. If you are interested in hiring an international student, please have the student confirm with the international student services office on their respective campus before accepting the position.

UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS

- First Year International Students (graduate or undergraduate) are not eligible for off-campus employment authorization in their first year.
- All new students must be in the US enrolled in a full-time program for a minimum of one academic year (two full terms) before they are eligible for off campus work authorization (CPT or pre-completion OPT).
- International students should only be participating in experiences that align with their field of study, so all off-campus work authorization must be directly related to student's major field of study.

CampusROC can connect employers to international services offices on Greater ROC college campuses to provide additional support.



BEFORE THEY START

- Be clear when hiring about the start and end date for the project and include the number of hours/week.
- Is the student counting the internship for academic credit? If so, review their school's requirements in providing credit and schedule time to fulfill their requests.
- Explain the company's dress code if the micro-internship is in person.

WHEN THEY ARRIVE

- Identify a workspace for the intern and consider the supplies they will need: computer, company email address, and building ID card
- Review project guidelines and timeline with your intern and create metrics for measuring intern success
- Schedule an evaluation meeting following the completion of the project
- Provide a one-sheet of key contacts (IT, HR, supervisor, important clients or partners, etc.)
- Provide an overview of the company culture

We hope this guide was helpful in starting your own micro-internship program. If you need further assistance, CampusROC has all the tools and resources you need. Contact us today for help in building your own program.

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