

Developing Your Internship Search Strategy

Identify Internship Criteria

While it is important to keep an open mind and be flexible about potential opportunities, it will be helpful for you to start with specific goals, ideas, and criteria about what you are looking for. Consider the following questions:

What do I want to practice or experience that relates to my coursework? What do I want to observe? What types of skills do I want to practice? How do I want my values and/or identities to show up in my work(place)?

What type(s) and sizes of organizations would I like to intern at? Are there specific organizations I already know of that fit my qualifications or are my “dream” internship?

What time of year would I prefer to intern? Summer, spring, fall?

Where do I want to be geographically? Do I want to stay close to home or near campus? Would I consider going abroad? Do I want to work on-site, remote, or hybrid?

What is my preferred compensation? While you are allowed to take an unpaid internship for credit, we recommend finding an opportunity that will compensate you for your work.

- Think about what type of compensation will make sense for you: hourly, salary, stipend (paid one lump sum), or commission
 - A note on commission: We have gotten feedback before from students participating in commission based internships that they were disappointed with their internship because they

did not have a good grasp on the expectations. Think through the following questions related to commission-based compensation:

- SoHE's expectation is that sales-related activities (i.e. cold calling/emailing, making lists of potential clients) will be limited to 25% of total weekly hours. Can you verify this?
- What work will be done that is not related to you doing sales for yourself?
- Do you understand the sales expectations you are committing to? What questions do you have?
- Commission compensation can be unpredictable. Do you understand how it is structured for you? Are you ok with this?

What are my strengths? What can I offer the organization/employer?

What [keywords](#) or job titles could I use to search for an internship that's interesting to me?

- Examples of job titles by major:
 - [Past SoHE Internships](#)
 - [Alumni Career Map](#)
- Examples of keywords by major:
 - **CNPL**: nonprofit, volunteer, government, grant, fundraise, advocacy, community
 - **CBMS**: retail, buying, brand, product, marketing, consumer
 - **HDFS**: child, health, family, care, youth
 - **IA**: design, architect, interior, graphics
 - **PF**: finance, advising, wealth, invest
 - **TFD**: fashion, design, apparel, textiles

Create a Search Plan

What job search websites will I prioritize?

What events are happening where I could meet potential employers? (e.g career fairs, student orgs, etc)

Who could I reach out to in my field to inquire about internships? Ideas for networking:

- [Conducting an informational interview](#)
- [Alumni search tool on LinkedIn](#)
- [SoHE instructors](#)
- [My career advisor](#)

When will I start searching for an internship? How often will I search?

- Timelines vary by industry; we recommend starting *at least* 3-4 months before and building in time each week to prioritize internship search/application activities.
- International students needing to request [CPT](#) should budget at least two extra months to process paperwork and request a social security number if needed.

Who could help me feel accountable during this process? What will I do if I get stuck or feel lost in the process?