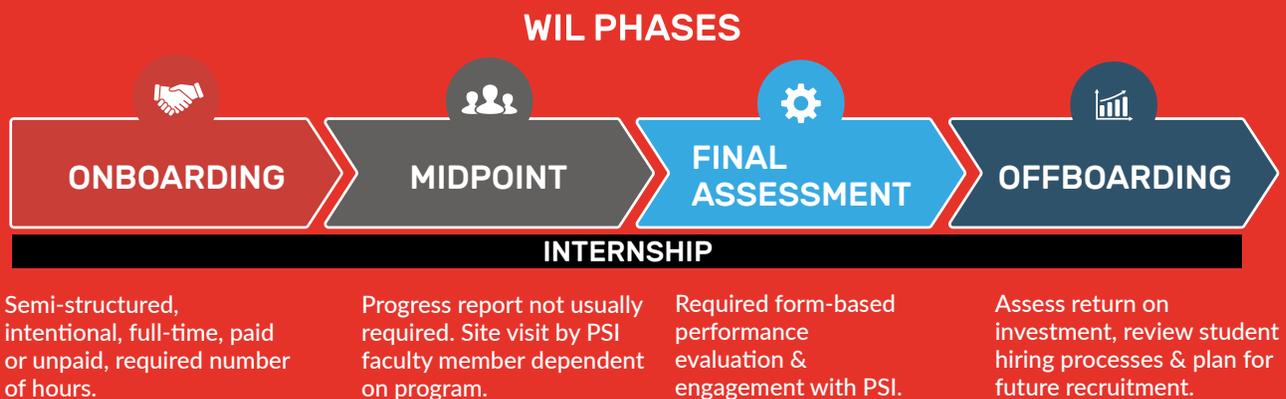


INTERNSHIP

For WIL partners

Internships are typically single discipline-specific, supervised, and structured work experience placements. One and done. Usually for credit, they can be paid or unpaid. While internships are often longer and not as structured as Co-ops, they are still intentional and planned.

Internships can take place in the middle or at the end of a student's formal academic work. Typically, internships follow an academic program and offer industry partners more flexibility and a longer time with the student, facilitating significant opportunities for teaching, mentorship and building skills within an organization. Internships can be of any length, but are typically 12 to 16 months long.

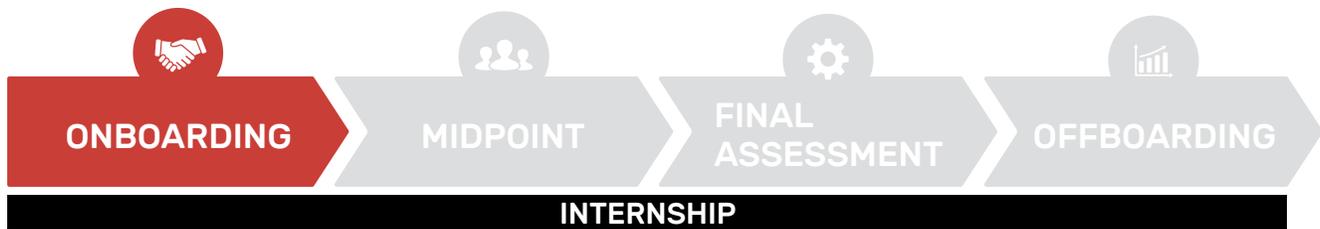


SUPPORTING BUSINESS OBJECTIVES WITH INTERNSHIP

Top 5 ways Internship can support your business objectives

1. Fill short term staffing needs
2. Leverage day-to-day business operations support
3. Increase resource capacity during peak business times
4. Access resource support for new or existing projects
5. Build your talent pipeline

WIL PHASES



ONBOARDING & PRE-ENGAGEMENT

Before bringing internship students onboard, you will need to plan and prepare for a semi-structured Work Integrated Learning (WIL) experience. A well-planned internship experience makes powerful educational opportunities possible and gives you opportunity to benefit through co-collaboration, co-education and skills development. In order to get the most out of an internship you will want to consider the following:

Steps to get started with an internship student

1. Determine your business goal and needs
2. Assess your budget
3. Assess your ability to offer supervision and mentorship

BUSINESS GOAL & NEEDS

Review your business goal.

The internship should directly benefit your organization, so you need to consider what business goal you are trying to achieve.

The internship should align closely with your operational goals. Engage your organization and consider what staffing or skills gaps you have. What projects or work do you want to complete?

Similar to Co-op and other WIL types, you will want to create a position that fits both your employment needs and the student's professional development goals.

Each year, The Victoria Chamber of Commerce, a completely member-driven non-profit engages with senior management to determine their project needs. They assess costs and benefits related to revenue generating business activities to see where the gaps are and how internship students could play a role; "the first year of building a student engagement program takes the longest, after that the planning only takes an hour or two" ~ Cheryl Wirch-Ryckman, Victoria Chamber of Commerce

WIL PHASES



Narrow down your skills needs

Consider the roles that exist within your organization and focus on the skill and competency needed to perform these roles. Interns want to do work that adds value and aligns to your business success - to do work that matters. Think about projects you want to get off the ground or a business problem you need to solve. This type of focused work is a win-win as it provides clear lines of accountability and allows you to work towards addressing a specific outcome with your student intern(s).

“We apply for federal funding but are prepared in case we don’t receive it. If funding is iffy, we try to place them on a revenue project so there is an easy line to draw between costs and benefits.” ~ Cheryl Wirch-Ryckman, Victoria Chamber of Commerce

BUDGET

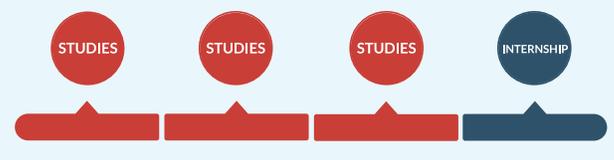
Review your budget.

Some internships are unpaid but the majority of these roles are remunerated. Review your budget and capacity to pay a student for anywhere from a 4-16 month work term depending on your employment needs. Similar to Co-ops and other WIL types, various federal and provincial funding programs are available to offset expenses so you can open your door to intern students. Most funding programs require that you have a candidate before you apply.

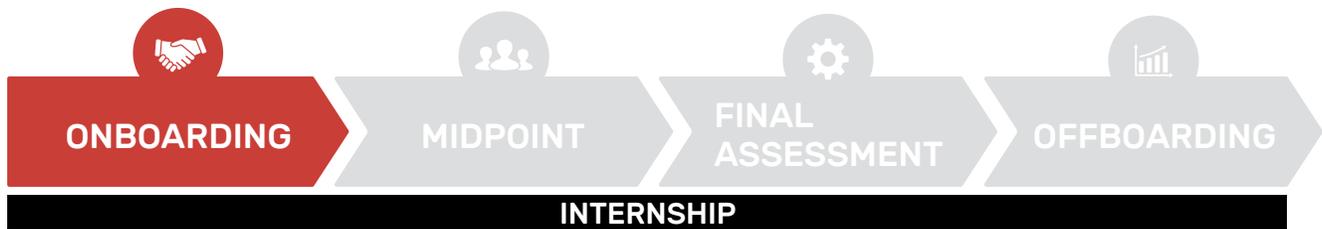
Interns are a low-cost way to increase capacity as well as opening up a new source of potential long-term work-ready talent. Successful internships build your organization’s reputation by demonstrating commitment to education and the community. They enliven your organization with the presence of young and innovative employees.

INTERNSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Paid or unpaid
- Full-time
- Typically 12 months
- For credit
- Can be mandatory or not mandatory
- Competitive recruitment process



WIL PHASES



SUPERVISION & MENTORSHIP

Explore and develop the internship in a flexible, mutually beneficial way.

You will want to assign a mentor, supervisor or manager that can provide guidance to your intern student. As with all WIL types, coaching and feedback are primary drivers of performance, development and growth for interns. Intern students want mentors who will work with them to help them understand themselves, the world of work and build their workplace skills and competencies.

RebalanceMD provides students with access to an innovative multidisciplinary team that includes physiotherapists, kinesiologists and other health professionals who work together collaboratively to mentor students and provide practical, hands-on experience with diverse clientele. Working alongside these professionals, students are able to network, develop their professional competencies and better understand their career possibilities. ~ ACE-WIL

Internships that are designed to include strong contributions from supervision and mentorship enable students to get the ongoing feedback needed to help them develop into the skilled employees that Canada's future workforce needs.

Fostering this type of growth mindset has benefits for both your organization and the student. Your employees will benefit from participating as mentors with all involved having a greater self-awareness and focus on skills-building.

[Read more about mentorship](#)

6 ONBOARDING STEPS

1. Determine your business goal and skills needed.
2. Determine when and how long you need to hire students to meet your business goal.
3. Research Internship programs.
4. Reach out to PSI's with your employment needs.
5. Post positions in Outcome Campus Connect.
6. Apply for WIL funding.

WIL PHASES



MIDPOINT CONSIDERATIONS

Internships typically do not have formal midpoint reviews.

Depending on the program you may be required to do a formal midpoint review. Even when a midpoint review isn't a requirement this is an ideal time for a performance assessment and feedback. As some internships are only a few months long, it's recommended that supervisors or managers don't wait for a scheduled review to start providing performance feedback, but begin on Day 1. Starting early means your intern won't miss out on valuable feedback and you'll benefit from improved performance.

Participating in internships allows students to explore their chosen career path and whether or not it is a good fit. It is common for students to think a certain field or profession will be different than it is. The midpoint is an ideal time to offer guidance and support in order to facilitate self-guided reflection, learning and assessment. It's also an ideal time to assess if you are fulfilling your responsibilities as an employer by creating a fully immersive learning experience for your intern.

Create a fully immersive learning experience:

- Encourage necessary skills development at the right times.
- Focus on behavioural mindset required for success.
- Create opportunities for self-reflection and compound learnings.

- Offer regular assessments of competencies with clear expectations
- Encourage interns to see their growth and mastery of skills.

Unstructured Midpoint Reflections for Partners

- What has been accomplished so far (tasks and deliverables)
- How it was accomplished (skills and competencies)
- What is the intern learning about themselves?
- Goals and what they'd like to learn before the end of the internship.

"At the socially-distanced worksite visit in July, I was most impressed with the professionalism, trust and respect that was placed in the student by the managers at Eatmore Sprouts & Greens Ltd. I spent an hour talking with a manager and the student, both individually and then together. We reviewed the student's midterm evaluation as a group and provided feedback on her strengths and areas of opportunity where she can focus to grow and develop further." ~ Anita, Coordinator, Work Integrated Education, North Island College, BC.

WIL PHASES



FINAL ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Internships usually conclude with a formal evaluation.

Like Co-ops, Internships typically require that both you and the student intern complete an evaluation. Depending on the PSI, you may have another meeting with the faculty member overseeing the program. If your organization has acquired funding for the work term you may also need to provide an evaluation to the funding delivery partner.

In order to create the greatest amount of value to your business and the student, it is recommended that you take time to evaluate the work term from your own standpoint.

"The employer (Eatmore Sprouts & Greens Ltd.) completed a written evaluation and assessment of the student's overall performance. 6 months later I followed up with employer and student - the student has graduated and is continuing to work there." ~ Anita, Coordinator, Work Integrated Education, North Island College, BC.

Reflect on your initial business goal and skill requirements. Was the business goal you set out in the beginning met? Did the student have the necessary skills and requirements? What feedback did you receive from other employees? Who was involved in supporting the student? What is your team's assessment of the value of the program and experience? What did the student contribute to the company, in terms of deliverables, energy, ideas, or perspective? Did other employees engage in the WIL process? Did the wider community within the company notice? What about the external community? What were the actual costs, in terms of money and time, of the work term?

"Some of our best hires were former internship or Co-op students. Sadly we can't hire every student, so it fills my heart with joy when I hear about the great jobs they have now, and hope that we had a little to do with their success."
~ Cheryl Wirch-Ryckman, Victoria Chamber of Commerce

At the end of the work term you should have a clear sense of the impact of the internship on the student, on your organization, and on the employees who played a role in it.

WIL PHASES

**OFFBOARDING CONSIDERATIONS**

Assess your return on investment, review student hiring processes and plan for future recruitment.

When your organization participates as a WIL partner with a PSI to offer a high-quality internship experience you are preparing students to transition to the workforce and contribute to a resilient skills-based Canadian economy.

"Each student is an investment in the region's future talent. And selfishly, each new student brings a new idea or skill that jars us off our "we usually do it this way" path and takes us in a new and exciting direction." ~ Cheryl Wirch-Ryckman, Victoria Chamber of Commerce

Canadian businesses and organizations continue (even despite COVID-19) to struggle to find and recruit qualified talent with the right mix of changing skill sets in a timely manner. The job market is evolving rapidly and many young people are unclear about their career goals or how they can achieve them. Creating internships that provide students the opportunity reflect on and determine their career path are invaluable to both students and employers. The flexibility of internships allows students to explore the world of work and build the understanding needed to target their next role.

At the end of the internship experience, you have a roadmap of how to build WIL into your organization, you have structured feedback and assessment, and you have clear guidelines for hiring. Consider how this roadmap could help you in hiring other types of WIL students, or more of the same to meet your organization's needs.

"We pay all of our student interns despite being a non-profit because you can't expect them to invest in you if you don't invest in them. The energy from having three students in the office was phenomenal and it brought everyone's creativity up. I'd do it again, but that is definitely funding dependent as a non-profit." ~ Cheryl Wirch-Ryckman, Victoria Chamber of Commerce

Research shows that employers who coordinate more frequently with education providers have better results in their search for talent, but the best way to gather the information is to speak directly with students. Hosting events or focus groups to find out what students are looking for helps you align this with your organizational goals. Build, test, reflect, and evolve. Gather ongoing feedback from all stakeholders – interns, managers and leaders to assess your results and determine if change is needed.

For more information about Internships for industry partners visit the [CEWIL Resource Hub](#).