

## InternNE Program Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions

InternNE connects college students and employers from across the state, providing a unique opportunity for them to co-invest in the future. Interns gain valuable business experience that will help them in future careers, while successful internships help businesses develop tomorrow's leaders. Internships create lasting connections between students and the region; more than 50% of interns become full-time employees at their place of internship, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers. The InternNE program facilitates relationships between Nebraska employers and college students through an online environment and offers financial assistance to companies creating new internships in Nebraska.

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Grant Application Questions:

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General Grant or InternNE.com Questions:

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## Section A: Eligibility

To be eligible, the applicant, internship and student must meet all of the following requirements:

### Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are businesses with physical operations facilities in Nebraska, including for-profit businesses and non-profit organizations. State and federal government entities, governmental subdivisions (including counties, cities, villages, school districts, metropolitan utilities districts, or any other subdivision of the state, which receive revenue raised by taxation), and public and private colleges and universities are not eligible to apply for funding from the InternNE program.

### Eligible Internships

1. An internship is the employment of a Student in a professional or technical position for a limited period of time, by a business in Nebraska, in which the Student (a) gains valuable work experience, (b) increases knowledge that assists with career decision-making, and (c) assists the business in accelerating short-term business objectives.
2. If the applicant has 100 or more employees company-wide at the time of application the Internship must be a Net New Internship. This means the internship position is filled on or after the date of application and is (1) in addition to the business internship baseline (the highest number of interns employed by the business and located in Nebraska at one time during the twelve months prior to the application date), or (2) within a business division or location that has not employed a student as an intern within the twelve months prior to the application date. Companies must first fill the number of positions in their baseline before filling and requesting reimbursement for internships approved by the InternNE program.
  - a. Businesses that hired one of their previous interns as a full-time permanent employee in the last 12 months, or the length of their participation in InternNE, whichever is less, may be able to retain their baseline from their previous application.
3. The internship must be completed within a period of no more than twelve (12) months and for a sufficient duration to allow the student to gain significant valuable work experience and knowledge. Sufficient duration will be determined individually for each application and internship description. (Internships that are of a sufficient duration are typically at least 160 hours.)
4. The internship must pay at least the current state minimum wage, currently \$9.00 per hour.
5. The internship must be completed within the State of Nebraska.
6. The internship must not result in internships constituting more than 50% of the company workforce in Nebraska. InternNE is not intended to be support for indefinite or part-time employment. Internship positions may not take the place of permanent full-time positions.
7. The internship must not be provided for the purpose of meeting required residency or clinical hours per the student's intuition requirements.
8. An intern may be allowed to telecommute if the business is located more than 30 miles from the college or university in which the intern is enrolled, and if the college or university is in Nebraska. The business

must receive written preapproval from the Department to hire an intern that will telecommute or for an intern to transition to a telecommuting internship.

### **Eligible Students**

An eligible student is any person who:

1. Is in eleventh or twelfth grade in a public or private high school
2. Is enrolled full-time in a college, university, or other institution of higher education; or
3. Applies for an Internship within six months following graduation from a college, university, or other institution of higher education

Students employed by a business with 100 or more employees must start on or after the business' application date and before the contract hiring period end date. Students who start before the business' application date are not eligible for InternNE positions.

Students employed by a business with less than 100 employees may start up to three months prior to the business' application date, but must start before the contract hiring period end date. Students who start before the three months prior to the business' application date are not eligible for InternNE positions.

## **Section B: Grant Amounts**

### **Level of Grant**

Businesses will be awarded grants of up to 50% the cost of the internship and may request grants from the Department of up to \$5,000 per internship. The business will be required to provide a match equal to 50% of the cost of the internship.

### **Pell Grant Recipients**

Businesses will have the opportunity to submit a supplemental application to the Department requesting up to \$2,500 in additional funds and an increased match by the Department equal to 75% of the total grant amount per internship. This supplemental application will require the business to hire students who are Federal Pell Grant recipients at the time the student applies to the internship. The business will be responsible for providing the Department with documentation to prove that the student is a Federal Pell Grant recipient.

### **Maximum Number of Grants**

A business will be limited to a maximum of 10 awarded internships and to no more than 5 awarded internships per location in a fiscal year per location in a fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). A business may apply for no more than two grants for the same Student.

### **Total Grant Awards Available**

The Department may award up to \$1.5 million in InternNE grants to businesses each fiscal year. The Department may limit the amount allocated during each review period to \$250,000 in order to ensure grant funds are available for the duration of the fiscal year. The Department may also allocate any remaining funds from previous award periods or forfeited funds.

## Section C: Application, Review and Contract Dates and Criteria

### Application, Review and Contract Schedule

Applications will be accepted continuously and will be reviewed bi-monthly, at a minimum, and evaluated based on the information provided in the application, plus information obtained by Department staff. The Director of the Department or a Designee maintains the discretion to award grants at any time.

Application Date	Application Deadline	Application Review Date	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date
May 1 – June 30	June 30	July 1	July 15	July 15
July 1 – August 31	August 31	September 1	September 15	September 15
September 1 – October 31	October 31	November 1	November 15	November 15
November 1 – December 31	December 31	January 1	January 15	January 15
January 1 – February 28/29	February 28/29	March 1	March 15	March 15
March 1 – April 30	April 30	May 1	May 15	May 15

\*The Department may elect to review applications more frequently (e.g. on April 1 and June 1) if the Department has a high volume of applications. Please contact the Department if you would like to determine the next application deadline.

- *Application Date:* This is the date that the business submitted the application on InternNE.com. Students must start on or after the Application Date to be eligible if employed by businesses with 100 or more employees. Students may start within 3 months prior to the Application Date to be eligible if employed by businesses with less than 100 employees.
- *Application Deadline:* In order for an application to be included in the next review cycle the job descriptions and application must be submitted on InternNE.com on or before the Application Deadline.
- *Application Review Date:* All applications that were submitted on InternNE.com on or before the Application Deadline will be reviewed by Department staff starting on the Application Review Date.
- *Contract Start Date:* If the applicant is awarded an InternNE grant, the contract will begin on the Contract Start Date. Only costs incurred on or after the Contract Start Date may be eligible for reimbursement.
- *Contract End Date:* Only costs incurred on or before the Contract End Date may be eligible for reimbursement. All forms and reimbursement requests must be submitted on InternNE.com on or before 30 days after the Contract End Date.

A company may apply for a consecutive grant of InternNE funds by completing a new application and following the same award process as an original application.

### Application Review Criteria

The Department will evaluate applications competitively; approval and the amount granted per internship will be dependent on the availability of funds. Department reserves the right to fund internships at its discretion. The Department *may* preference internships with these attributes:

- Include opportunities to develop internship goals that are related to the professional goals of the intern

- Include tasks and responsibilities that have a purpose beyond advancing the operations of the employer or that is work that a regular employee would routinely perform
- Include minimal menial tasks
- Would require an associates or bachelor's degree if the position were a full-time permanent position rather than an internship
- Provide a diverse learning experience
- Provide a mentor or supervisor that will work closely with the intern
- Provide compensation above the minimum requirement
- Internship is within the STEM field
- Internships is within an industry or business with a significant economic impact in the project area
- Internship is located outside of Lancaster, Douglas or Sarpy Counties (the importance of state support for economic development in rural and economically distressed areas will be taken into account)

### **Supplemental Application for Pell Grant Recipients**

Businesses may submit a supplemental application to the Department requesting up to \$2,500 in additional funds per internship, and an increased match by the Department equal to 75 percent of the total grant amount per internship. The supplemental application will require businesses to hire students who are Pell Grant recipients at the time the student applied to the internship.

The business will be responsible for providing the Department with documentation to show that the student is a Pell Grant recipients within 30 days of the student hire date, or if the student has already been hired, within 30 days of the contract start date, whichever is later. Documentation should be emailed to [DED.InternNE@nebraska.gov](mailto:DED.InternNE@nebraska.gov). Acceptable documentation is a letter from the student's college or university stating that the student received a Pell Grant for the current academic year.

The supplemental application does not take the place of the full InternNE application, and should only be submitted after the full application has been completed and submitted. The supplemental application will not be reviewed or considered for funding until the full InternNE application has been submitted.

### **Section D: Process**

**1. Register on [www.InternNE.com](http://www.InternNE.com)**

All companies and contacts must first register on InternNE.com.

**2. Create/Post Internships on [www.InternNE.com](http://www.InternNE.com)**

Located within the 'Internships' section. All internships must have a description, location and wage specified to be reviewed with your InternNE application. Please be sure to specify if and when you would like for your internship to be posted live (and viewable to students).

**3. Apply on [www.InternNE.com](http://www.InternNE.com)**

Located within the 'InternNE Grant Application' section. Please review the steps outlined in the InternNE.com Guide for InternNE Grant Program document; you can find this document in your Documents Library.

**4. Application Review**

## 5. Application Approval – Receive Notice of Award/Denial

You will receive a formal Notice of Award or Notice of Denial via email. Your award information will be visible to the company's primary contact on [www.InternNE.com](http://www.InternNE.com) within the 'InternNE Grant Award Information' section.

## 6. Execute Contract

A contract will be created and funds will be reserved for one year from the application date. The contract will contain the following:

- a) Business' obligations for the project
- b) State funding approved and requirements for use of those funds
- c) Time of performance
- d) Reimbursement schedule
- e) Business reporting requirements
- f) Any special terms and conditions to the project established by the Department
- g) Accounting, auditing, conflict of interest, political activity and civil rights requirements
- h) Non-compliance definitions and penalties
- i) DED monitoring provision
- j) Non-performance penalties

Once the contract is provided to you via email, one copy must be printed, signed by the authorized individual and mailed to the Department. We can accept facsimiles of the [ACH Enrollment Form](#) and [W-9](#); please email these forms to [ded.InternNE@nebraska.gov](mailto:ded.InternNE@nebraska.gov).

## 7. Hiring Students

Students employed by a business with 100 or more employees must start on or after the business' application date and before the contract hiring period end date. Students who start before the business' application date are not eligible for InternNE positions.

Students employed by a business with less than 100 employees may start up to three months prior to the business' application date, but must start before the contract hiring period end date. Students who start before the three months prior to the business' application date are not eligible for InternNE positions.

## 8. Student Completes Student Verification Form on [www.InternNE.com](http://www.InternNE.com)

Once the internship has been filled the student must self-verify their eligibility by completing and submitting the Student Verification Form online at InternNE.com. If the intern position includes telecommuting, the business must request written pre-approval from the Department.

All students will need to register on [InternNE.com](http://InternNE.com) and navigate to the 'InternNE Forms' tab located within their 'Profile' section; they will need to select "add new" in order to complete the Student Verification Form

## 9. Complete the Internship

## 10. Student Completes the Student Evaluation Form on [www.InternNE.com](http://www.InternNE.com)

The Evaluation Form is located within the student's 'Profile' section, in the 'InternNE Forms' tab.

**11. Complete the Internship Completion and Request for Reimbursement Form on [www.InternNE.com](http://www.InternNE.com)**

The Internship Completion and Request for Reimbursement Form is located within the business contact's 'InternNE Grant Program Forms' section, select "Completion Form for This Student."

**12. Submit payroll records**

Payroll records must be provided to [ded.InternNE@Nebraska.gov](mailto:ded.InternNE@Nebraska.gov) in order for your reimbursement request to be processed. Payroll records must show the student's total wages, hours and weeks worked.

**13. Receive reimbursement deposit**

Once all of your documentation is submitted and reviewed by staff you will receive an email confirmation. The requested amount is typically deposited within 10 to 15 business days after approval.

## Section E: Forms and Documentation Required

### Timing of Disbursements

InternNE grants are disbursed on a reimbursement basis. Reimbursements are upon completion of an internship by an intern and within 30 days of the completion of the internship, within 30 days of incurring the maximum grant allowance, or within 30 days of the Contract End Date. All disbursements will be made on a proportional basis, with a minimum match from the business required, either 50 or 75 percent, depending on whether the company submitted a supplemental application to hire Federal Pell Grant recipients and contractual terms.

### Forms and Documentation Required

No funds will be disbursed until all forms and reports from the intern and business are received. Please follow the steps outlined above and detailed in the InternNE.com Guide for InternNE Grant Program document; you can find this document in your Documents Library.

- a) **Executed Contract:** the authorized individual must print and sign two copies of the contract; both contracts must be mailed to the InternNE Program at the Department of Economic Development.
- b) **ACH Enrollment Form:** completed by the business and company's financial institution; required by the State to reimburse your account directly; please submit form to [ded.InternNE@nebraska.gov](mailto:ded.InternNE@nebraska.gov), not to State Accounting as stated on the form.
- c) **W-9 Form:** completed by the business; required by the State to reimburse your company.
- d) **Student Verification Form:** this is completed on [InternNE.com](http://InternNE.com) by the student at the beginning of their internship.
- e) **Student Evaluation Form:** this is completed on [InternNE.com](http://InternNE.com) by the student at the end of their internship.
- f) **Internship Completion Form and Request for Reimbursement:** this form is completed on [InternNE.com](http://InternNE.com) by the business at the end of each student's internship.
  - **Supporting Documentation:** Documentation of the student's wages earned and hours and weeks worked is required with the Request for Reimbursement Form. Submit this documentation directly to [ded.InternNE@Nebraska.gov](mailto:ded.InternNE@Nebraska.gov).

## Section F: Use of Funds

### Eligible Use of the Funds

Eligible uses of the InternNE funds are the wages of the eligible intern. Eligible matching funds are wages of the eligible intern. Any activities not specifically authorized in the business' contract are ineligible to be carried out with InternNE funds.

## Section G: Contract Time of Performance

### Contract Period

Student Verification Forms must be submitted within the 12-month period and must be received by the Department no later than 30 days after the Intern's first day of employment with the business. All costs must be incurred within the 12-month contract time of performance.

### Contract Amendments

A business may request a contract amendment to change the number of positions the business is eligible to create, change the positions titles and descriptions of the eligible positions or change the location of the positions. Amendment requests should be submitted to the Department on [www.InternNE.com](http://www.InternNE.com).

## Section H: Performance Requirements and Non-Compliance Penalties

### Performance Monitoring

The Department will review progress on the project as needed, with at least one monitoring prior to final grant reimbursement. The monitoring may be desktop or in person. The review will assure the following:

- a) Positions for which the InternNE funds were granted were actually created
- b) An eligible intern was hired for the internship positions
- c) Employees received the wages agreed to in the contract
- d) All costs were eligible
- e) The internship position and duties meet required criteria

### E-Verify

The business will be required to use the E-Verify Program to verify the employment eligibility of the intern and all employees the business hires during the contract period.

### Non-Compliance

If the business is found to be non-complaint, the Department may revoke funding commitments and/or seek repayment of funds granted. If the business relocates or abandons its site during the grant disbursement period, the future disbursements are deemed invalid and the contract is canceled. The Department will remit repayments of internship grants due to non-compliance to the State Treasurer for credit to the Job Training Cash Fund.