

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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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. The internship must be a Net New Internship. This means the internship position is filled on or after the date of application.
 - a. An applicant with 100 or more employees company-wide at the time of application must also fill 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). **Businesses will be required to first fill the number of positions in their baseline before filling and requesting reimbursement for internships approved by the InternNE grant funds.**
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 240 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 program 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; or
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 the business must start on or after the business' application date. Students who start before 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 (dependent on availability of funds) or 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 (July 1 to June 30). A business may apply for no more than two consecutive grants for the same Student.

Section C: Application, Review and Contract Date and Criteria

Application, Review and Contract Schedule

Applications will be accepted during the Application Dates below and evaluated based on the information provided in the application and internship job posting, plus information obtained by Department staff. The Director of the Department or a Designee maintains the discretion to award grants at any time. InternNE Grant timeline:

Application Date	Application Deadline	Date of Notice of Awards/Denials	Contract Start Date (1 year contract)
February 15, 2022	March 15, 2022	March 28, 2022	March 15, 2022 – March 15, 2023

- **Application Date:** Applications and internship postings must be submitted during this timeframe to be considered for a grant award. This is, also, the date that the business submitted the application on InternNE.com and eligible students must start on or after the Application Date to be eligible for InternNE funds.
- **Application Deadline:** In order for an application to be included in the review cycle the internship description(s) **and** application must be submitted on InternNE.com on or before the Application Deadline. Applications received after the Application Deadline will not be considered for funding.

- **Contract Start Date:** If the applicant is awarded an InternNE grant, the contract will begin on the Contract Start Date for one year. 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.

Should funds allow and another round of applications is available, 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. The 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 mentor or supervisor that will work closely with the intern
- Provides a competitive wage in their occupation/major
- Internship is within the STEM field or in an H3 (high wage, high skill, high demand) occupation in Nebraska
- 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)
- Intend to hire an intern as a FT permanent employee after the internship

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 (dependent on availability of funds) or 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 lori.shaal@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

All companies and contacts must first register for an Employer InternNE account at InternNE.com.

2. Create/Post Internships on www.InternNE.com

Located within the 'Home' section, select 'Create Internship Posting', complete form and submit. All internships requesting funds must have a description, location and wage specified to be reviewed with your InternNE application – **if you do not specify one these items your application will not be reviewed**. Also, please be sure to specify if and when you would like for your internship to be posted live (and viewable to students).

3. Submit Application on www.InternNE.com

Located within the 'Home' section, under 'Apply for Grants' section. Select 'InternNE Grant Application (January 2021)', complete and submit form.

4. Application Review

5. Application Approval – Receive Notice of Award/Denial

Applicants will receive a notice of award/denial via email around the Contract Start Date of the cycle they are applying for. If awarded, your award information will be visible to the company's primary contact on www.InternNE.com within the 'Your Grant Award' section of your InternNE account.

6. Complete ACH Form & Execute Contract

An ACH Form will be emailed to the primary contact and must be completed and submitted via email to lori.shaal@nebraska.gov. The ACH Form can also be found in the Document Library section of your InternNE account.

A contract will be created and funds will be reserved for one year from the Contract Start Date. The contract will contain the following: obligations for the project, State funding approved and requirements for use of those funds, time of performance, reimbursement schedule, business reporting requirements, any special terms and conditions to the project established by the Department, Accounting, auditing, conflict of interest, political activity and civil rights requirements, non-compliance definitions and penalties, DED monitoring provision, Non-performance penalties, etc.

Once the contract is provided to you via email, the contract must be signed by the authorized individual and emailed to lori.shaal@nebraska.gov or rose.baker@nebraska.gov.

7. Hiring Students

Students employed by a business may start on or after the business' application date. Students who start before the business' application date are not eligible for InternNE positions. However, wages paid before the contract start date will not be reimbursed.

8. Student Completes Student Verification Form (SVF) on www.InternNE.com

Once the internship has been filled, the student must first register for a Student account on InternNE.com to gain access to required student forms. Once the student has registered they will have access to the required student forms. To fill out the SVF, from the 'Home' page, select 'Student Verification Form', select 'Add New Student Verification Form', complete and select submit at the bottom of the page.

9. Student Completes the Student Evaluation Form on www.InternNE.com

The form is located online within the student's 'Home' section, select 'Student Evaluation Form', complete and submit. The Student Evaluation Form is required in order for the business to receive reimbursement.

10. Complete the Completion Form/Reimbursement Request Form on www.InternNE.com

The Completion Form/Reimbursement Request Form is located online within the business 'Home' section, select 'Completion Form/Reimbursement Request', select student, complete and submit the form. The Completion Form/Reimbursement Request is required in order for the business to receive reimbursement.

11. Submit payroll records

Payroll records must be provided to lori.shaal@nebraska.gov in order for your reimbursement request to be processed. Payroll records must show the student's total wages, hours and weeks worked.

12. Receive reimbursement deposit

Once all three forms (SVF, Student Evaluation Form, and Completion Form/Reimbursement Request) and 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 three forms and reports from the intern and business are received. Please follow the steps outlined above and detailed in the contract.

- a) **Executed Contract:** the authorized individual must sign the contract; the contract must be emailed to the Department (rose.baker@nebraska.gov or lori.shaal@nebraska.gov).
- b) **ACH Form:** completed by the business and required by the State to reimburse your business account directly; please submit form to rose.baker@nebraska.gov or lori.shaal@nebraska.gov.
- c) **Student Verification Form:** this is completed on InternNE.com by the student at the beginning of their internship.
- d) **Student Evaluation Form:** this is completed on InternNE.com by the student at the end of their internship.
- e) **Internship Completion Form/Reimbursement Request:** this form is completed on InternNE.com by the business at the end of each student's internship. After submitting this form, email Lori Shaal at lori.shaal@nebraska.gov.
 - **Supporting Documentation:** Documentation of the student's wages earned and hours and weeks worked is required with the Reimbursement Request Form. Submit this documentation directly to lori.shaal@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 positions titles and descriptions of the eligible positions or change the location of the positions. Amendment requests should be submitted online to the Department at 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
- f) Awardees with a 100 or more employees company-wide filled the business internship baseline

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.