What are the benefits of an international internship versus one located in the United States?

Although the answers are numerous, some of the benefits can include:

- The opportunity to travel and experience new cultures
- Fulfilling degree requirements while traveling
- Gaining an understanding of work environments in another country
- Making contacts for future employment or for travel
- Showing future employers that you are able to adapt to change and new challenges
- The opportunity to practice or learn a new language

Depending on the internship you choose, your work experience may be paid or unpaid. Even though an internship maybe unpaid, your agency may provide a travel stipend or housing to you. Several internships require you to pay a program fee; these programs generally provide housing and a supplemental language course as an accompaniment to your internship experience. There are other differences, too. Before applying for an internship, keep in mind what you hope to gain from your experience.

**Independent-** Housing may or may not be provided, contacts within company, health insurance or access to company services, stipend for travel.

**Program-** Housing often provided, airport transfers/pickups, 24-hour assistance with problems, help with visa processing and deadlines, official documentation such as transcripts, possible tours on the weekends, and program training.

Finding an internship abroad is not an exact science. You need to research so you can learn about all the opportunities available to you. Keep in mind that some internships may be unpaid and some may require tuition or fees. Internship programs often arrange or assist you with housing, and many require working knowledge or fluency of the country’s language.

International internships show employers that you are prepared to face new challenges and can adapt to new environments. Students who have worked abroad will be valuable assets as they bring with them work experience, cross cultural competence, and well-developed social skills.

An international internships is an added bonus to any resume. Interning abroad can make your internship experience more exciting, can make you stand out from your peers, and can give you invaluable work and life experiences to carry with you wherever you may work or travel in the future.

If the adventurous spirit takes you abroad, then an international internship can be a way to earn work experience while living and enjoying new people and their culture. Bon Voyage!!
BEFORE YOU FLY

What to bring
• Pack light. Large suitcases are hard to lug; don’t take any valuable items with you.
• Learn what kind of electrical outlets are common to the country you are visiting, and buy an adapter.
• Don’t travel with excessive amounts of money or credit cards.
• Invest in a book of translations pertaining to the native language of your destination.
• Keep an emergency list of important numbers and addresses.
• Familiarize yourself with items that are allowed to be taken out and brought into the U.S.

Make the appropriate financial preparations
• Learn the exchange rate and how the value of the dollar stacks up with another country’s currency. This will help you budget during your trip.
• Call your credit card company and let them know you will be using your card abroad.
• Have your bills forwarded to your home address and ask a responsible family member to make sure they are paid on time.

Make the appropriate health prep
• Find out if immunizations are required prior to traveling; stay up to date on vaccinations.
• Consider purchasing international travel health insurance in case you get sick or hurt and need medical assistance while abroad; check out emergency relief facilities, just in case.

Double-check with Texas State
• Make sure that you have received approval from your academic advisor if you are taking the internship for academic credit; remember to pay tuition to the University for that class.

Be informed
• Research the country and where you will be staying before your trip (i.e. culture, local laws, dress, food, traditions, etc).
• Stay updated on any severe weather or danger warnings for the area you’re visiting.

INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIP TIPS

Talk with people. Don’t be intimidated because you are a student. People are sometimes too busy to roll out the red carpet, so you have to make the first move to talk with coworkers and supervisors.

Ask for things to do. Be a self-starter. Solving problems and taking the initiative are the best ways to stand out from the crowd.

Read everything you can get your hands on. You won’t find everything you need to know in the training manual. Read contracts, letters, memos, press releases, and trade publications. These will help you become more informed about all the elements of the business. Remember: certain things must be kept confidential.

Go the extra mile. Ask to attend meetings and events. To learn how things really get done.

Focus on networking. Don’t burn any bridges. You never know when you may need to network with this contact or can use them for a job reference in the future.

Communicate. Not only is communication different in other countries; so are accents. Don’t be afraid to ask for clarification if you don’t understand something.

Relax!! The key word to an enjoyable experience is flexibility. Every culture is different and it takes time to adjust and to grasp how things operate.

WHILE ABROAD

• Keep a card with the address of your hotel or of your home with you at all times.
• Take advantage of cultural offerings such as concerts, plays and festivals.
• Leave expensive jewelry and electronics at home. If you bring them with you, don’t flash them around.
• While traveling, store your passport in a secure location. Be sure to bring copies of your passport and driver’s license or student ID card with you. Always have your health insurance card available.
• Don’t dress in a manner that will draw unwanted attention. Some cultures do not dress as casually as the U.S.
• Don’t carry all of your cash with you at one time.
• Avoid being alone late at night. Learn which areas of your location are deemed unsafe for travelers.

“Two was the best experience I ever had. Going to Italy greatly affected my life, and will help me to further my career as a fashion designer… I benefited greatly from interning abroad rather than in my home country.”
—LaDorian, Global Experience
PASSPORT INFORMATION

Passports take 10-12 weeks to be received. There may be delays in passport processing, so apply early! To apply for a passport, visit travel.state.gov and download the appropriate forms. To apply for a passport you will need a birth certificate. You may need to provide adequate time to obtain your birth certificate from your parents or the Hall of Records in your home town. Keep in mind that other supporting documentation is also required.

You will need to get two 2”x2” passport photos taken; these can be made at many photo centers such as Target, Walgreens, Wal-Mart and Kinkos.

Be sure to accurately complete the application and attach the necessary supporting documents to improve your chances of a speedy process at the nearest Passport Center. In San Marcos, the closet center is located at the City Clerk’s Office, 630 E. Hopkins St. The telephone number is 512.393.8086.

VISAS Countries in Latin America and most parts of Europe do not require a visa if you are staying for 90 days or less. If interning for a longer period, your internship coordinator in that country should instruct you on how to extend your time limit. For all other countries, visit www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html. Once again, allow adequate time to process your visa.

HELPFUL LINKS

This list is not exhaustive; the Internet provides many more options. If you want to intern through an internship program company, be sure to research the company thoroughly before paying any fees.

These companies provide internships in 14 countries including opportunities in Europe, South America, Central America, China, & Mexico.

Paid/unpaid www.culturalembrace.com
Worldwide, various majors; paid/unpaid www.iagora.com
Worldwide, allows for choice of major and country; paid/unpaid www.internabroad.com
Worldwide; unpaid www.worldendeavors.com
Chile, China, Spain, Thailand teaching positions; paid ciee.org/teach.aspx
Washington Center: Internships in Mexico and London www.twc.edu
Worldwide placement, allows for placement in areas of interest; Paid/unpaid www.idealist.org
Educational Programs Abroad Internships in Europe www.epa-internships.org
Worldwide placement, positions in management, technical, education, and development; paid/unpaid www.aiesec.org
Offers internships in several countries, links to various internship programs by region www.transitionsabroad.com
Placement in Europe and Australia; paid/unpaid www.globalexperiences.com
China, Costa Rica, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Peru, Russia, South Africa, and Tanzania; unpaid www.crossculturalplacements.org

Latin American placements; unpaid www.amerispan.com
Australia, Chile, China, England; paid www.allianceabroad.com
Placements in overseas U.S. Embassies; paid/unpaid www.careers.state.gov
American Assistants in France www.frenchculture.org
France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and United Kingdom www.mk-lax.com/ie_index.htm
Center for Cultural Exchange: Europe & South America www.cci-exchange.com/abroad/intern.shtml
The National Society of College Scholars www.internabroad.com/NSCS/nscs-search.cfm
Technical internships in approximately 40 countries www.internations.org
Intrax Intern Abroad www.intraxinternabroad.com
Arcadia University Internships Abroad www.arcadia.edu/abroad/default.aspx?id=6993
Airline and train tickets are expensive. Research websites for discounts or packages for college students. You can also apply for student traveler cards that provide discounts at various museums, restaurants, and modes of transportation. No matter where you go, make sure to make a reservation in advance. Be sure to take advantage of the excellent discounts available. This will save you time and money!

Scholarships can help to cut your travel expenses. Look into the scholarships that are available through the Study Abroad Office at Texas State. Visit their website, www.studyabroad.txstate.edu, for scholarship details and deadlines.

Before you travel abroad, be aware of the medical recommendations before traveling to other countries. It is imperative that you follow the guidelines as stipulated by the agencies below to assure your good health during an international internship. Visit these websites for their traveling guidelines:

Texas State Student Health Center
www.studenthealthcenter.txstate.edu
512.245.2161

Texas Dept. of State Health Services
www.dshs.state.tx.us
1.888.963.7111
Or 512.458.7111

U.S. Dept. of State
www.travel.state.gov

Interviewing: Hot Interview Tips for Germany
When it comes to interviewing, what works in one country doesn’t necessarily bring success in another. To learn about the cultural subtleties that can make or break an interview in Germany, check this link:
www.goinglobal.com/hot_topics/germany_weiner_interview.asp.

Safety: Companies Specialize In Helping Stranded Students
Contemplating study abroad, but worried what you’d do if unrest broke out in your host country? As some students in Beirut found out last year, there are companies that specialize in extricating student travelers from dangerous situations. To find out more, visit:
www.goinglobal.com/newsletter/novt07_general_place.asp.

Study Abroad: Coping With Homesickness
It’s the little things that get you. That’s the opinion of at least one college student who has studied abroad. Her first-hand account of the things that contribute to homesickness is good reading for anyone headed to a foreign school. For the full story, go to:
www.goinglobal.com/newsletter/novt07_general_home.asp.

Location: Sweden Does Best Job Integrating Immigrants
Wonder where in Europe you’d be most welcomed as a foreigner? According to a new study, Sweden, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Finland do the best job integrating immigrants into their societies. For more, visit: