

INTERNSHIP PROCESS CHECKLIST

Searching for an internship can feel overwhelming, so it's helpful to break the process into manageable steps. The items on this checklist do not have to be followed in order. To give yourself adequate time, be sure to start your exploring and preparing months in advance of when you want to start your internship. You can receive assistance for every one of these steps (and more) at the CLS. With the help of your CLS adviser, keep working your way through these checklist items. Soon you'll find yourself on the way to securing a great internship!

SELF-EXPLORATION PHASE

- ☐ I have identified and reflected on my personal strengths, skills, interests, and values individually, through self-assessments available through the CLS, and/or with my CLS adviser.
- ☐ I have made a list of possible fields of interest or job functions that I would like to explore more through an internship.

PREPARATION PHASE

- ☐ I have spoken with my faculty adviser about my internship interests and have discussed the best times and ways to use internships throughout my time at Grinnell to complement my academic four-year plan.
- ☐ I have met with my CLS adviser to discuss my internship interests and to strategize various ways of searching for internships based on my interests, experience, financial considerations, geographic interests, and parameters.
- ☐ I have contacted the Office of International Student Affairs (OISA) to discuss my internship options regarding work authorization in the U.S. if I am an F-1 student.
- ☐ I have created a list of potential networking contacts, including Grinnell College alumni, previous supervisors, faculty members, peers, family members, and friends. Alumni can be identified via LinkedIn and Grinnell Connect.
- ☐ I have developed my "elevator speech" for interactions and communications with potential organizations, alumni, or other networking contacts to pitch my previous experience, skills, and desire for an internship.
- ☐ I have learned how to develop and tailor my résumé for each internship opportunity I apply for and have had my résumé reviewed by a CLS adviser and/or professionals in the industry for more feedback.
- ☐ I have learned how to write a convincing and compelling cover letter and have had them reviewed by a CLS adviser.
- ☐ I have identified 8-10 keywords that correspond with the type of internships I am seeking that I can use in online searches (e.g., policy, finance, psychology, youth, art, legal, publishing, consulting).
- ☐ I have identified three individuals who could serve as professional references for my applications and have created a reference sheet to provide if requested by organizations.
- ☐ I have set up a neutral/professional email address to use on my application materials (e.g., firstname.lastname@gmail.com) and a professional voicemail message on my phone for when organizations call.
- ☐ I have developed strong interviewing skills for phone, video, and in-person internship interviews by practicing responses to typical questions. I have participated in mock interviews at the CLS, used Big Interview, and learned the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Results) for formulating my responses.
- ☐ I have professional attire that is appropriate for the interview in the

- ☐ field in which I plan to intern.

SEARCH PHASE

- ☐ I have researched and identified at least 10 potential internship organizations that offer the type of experience I am seeking and have submitted my application materials in advance of my deadlines.
- ☐ I regularly check Handshake for internship opportunities in various industries and geographic locations that are targeted toward liberal arts students.
- ☐ I have looked at peers' profiles in Handshake to find names of organizations where current Grinnell students completed internships, and I have either contacted the previous intern to inquire about their experience and contacts at the organization or visited the organization's website directly to identify opportunities.
- ☐ I have reviewed the various internship resources on the CLS GrinnellShare Internship site and have incorporated them into my search strategy.
- ☐ I have been contacting everyone on my list of potential networking contacts to inquire about possible internship leads, sharing my internship interests, and keeping in touch with them regarding my process.
- ☐ I have checked Handshake to review the Grinnellink internships with an alumni or friend of the College connection and have applied to those that have interested me. (In Handshake, choose the internship filter and search "Grinnellink" to access them.
- ☐ I have familiarized myself with CLS resources for support and guidance regarding my search, including decision-making processes if I receive multiple offers.
- ☐ I have created a reliable system for keeping track of the status of my applications (e.g., contacts, interviews, and other internship-search activities), to keep me organized.
- ☐ I have sent handwritten thank-you cards (recommended) or email messages to every person who interviewed me.
- ☐ If I would like to intern in another country, I have incorporated identifying networking contacts in the country I plan to intern in. I have utilized Goin'Global to find valuable information about my country of interest, including unique differences in application materials, interviewing etiquette, visa requirements, and other factors that will influence my ability to intern successfully in another country.

AFTER YOUR INTERNSHIP IS SECURED

- ☐ I have a confirmation in writing from the organization that I have officially accepted the internship that was offered to me. The confirmation communication includes the start and end dates, as well as an agreement regarding my compensation amount.
- ☐ I have contacted all other organizations that have offered me internships to decline their offers professionally and courteously.
- ☐ I have sent handwritten thank-you cards (recommended) or email messages to each of my professional references to thank them for serving as a reference for me, as well as to update them on the actual internship I secured.
- ☐ I have learned about various Grinnell-specific options via the CLS for my internship, including registering for the INT-300 course for academic credit (if required by an organization or needed for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) work authorization for F-1 students) and applying for funding support for an unpaid (or underpaid) summer internship.