

Internship program guide

Table of Contents

[1. INTERNSHIP PLANNING](#)

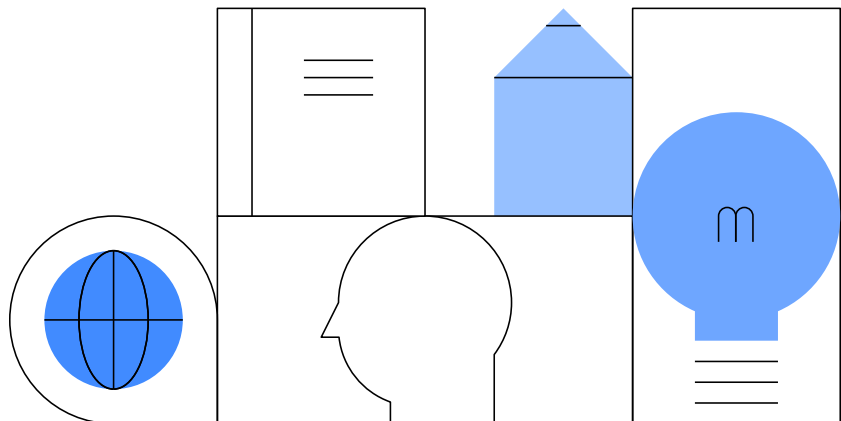
- A. [Internship Goals for the Organization](#)
- B. [Legal, Human Resources, and Other Logistics](#)
- C. [Student Goals and Preparation](#)
- D. [Delivery: in-person or virtual](#)

[2. INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE](#)

- A. [Intern Project Descriptions](#)
- B. [Manager/Team Leader Training and Responsibilities](#)
- C. [Intern Onboarding](#)
- D. [Intern Professional Development](#)

[3. INTERNSHIP CONCLUSION](#)

- A. [Offboarding](#)
- B. [Next Steps](#)



1. INTERNSHIP PLANNING

A. Internship Goals for the Organization

- i. You have decided to host P-TECH interns. Where do you begin? Before an organization dives into the details of building a P-TECH internship program they should consider:
 1. *What do we want high school students to get out of an internship experience at our organization?*
 - a. *If the organization has previously hosted college interns, they need to consider how an internship for a HS student might differ from one for a college student.*
 2. What skills/knowledge will students come to our internship with (detailed under [Student Goals and Preparation](#))? You will need to work with your school partner(s) to determine where your interns are in their skill and knowledge development.
 3. What specific skills/knowledge will we have to support them so they are successful during our internship (and that align to the highly competitive job market they will enter upon graduation)?
 - a. *Remember – your organization should act as a career bridge builder for P-TECH students, to expose them to a variety of professions/professionals.*
 4. At the end of the internship, how do we want students to describe their internship experience?
 - a. What skills, knowledge, and understanding of our organization and the ways of working will they leave the experience with?
 5. Resource
 - a. [Starting and Maintaining a Quality Internship Program](#)
- ii. Partnering with a P-TECH School
 1. You cannot build a successful P-TECH internship program on an island. As you start to envision your internship program, you will want to ensure you are aligned with your school partner(s). When establishing the relationship regarding internships with your school partner, consider the following:
 - a. Align with the school on their goals for an internship. You will want to discuss where your goals align and where there might be areas of tension.

- b. Establish who your primary contact will be for executing the internship program and how you will work together. This is often a P-TECH Workplace Learning Coordinator, Assistant Principal, or another campus designee. They will be instrumental in recruiting applicants and ensuring students meet all required deadlines.
- c. If other industry partners are offering internships, consider how your applicant pools may overlap and how that will be managed. You might consider hosting joint interest sessions, so students receive all the information concurrently.
- d. Establish minimum applicant requirements that students will be held to (detailed under [Student Goals and Preparation](#)).

B. Legal, Human Resources, and Other Logistics

- i. Your organization has made the decision to hire high school P-TECH interns. GREAT! Now it is time to delve into the logistics. This is where you must engage your human resource, legal, talent, and other teams within your organization.
- ii. Discussions that need to occur at this stage:
 - 1. Is it possible to hire minors into our organization? If so, who do we need buy-in from and what will be the requirements for hiring students under 18?
 - 2. What working hours are allowed in our state, based on state employment laws for minors (hours will typically vary based on summer vs. school year)?
 - 3. Who will fund the salaries and program costs of a P-TECH internship program?
 - 4. Which teams/business units will host interns?
 - 5. Are there any specific screenings or vaccines required for interns to be at our work location or required for specific internship positions?
 - 6. Any required agreements (with employer/partners) that include:
 - a. Expectations for student interns
 - b. Expectations for the employing partner
 - c. Expectations for other partners (i.e. collaborating industry partners, high school, or the college partners)
- iii. In consultation with your HR and legal teams, determine what documentation is required during the application and at time of offers. Examples include:
 - 1. At time of application and pre-offer:
 - a. Résumé

- b. Work authorization form
 - c. College verification form
 - d. Candidate information form
2. At time of offer:
- a. Citizenship questionnaire
 - b. Disclosure and consent
 - i. Signed by parents/guardian, if a minor
 - c. *Background verification*
 - i. Timeline Resources
 - 1. Sample Internship Framework Timeline (based on US school calendar) (Figure 1)

Figure 1

<p>Sep 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Build Internal team – Initial intern #projections – Collaborate with school partners 	<p>Oct 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Create/Update recruitment & application resources – Release Application timeline – Intern recruitment begins 	<p>Nov 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Avenue for project submissions – Host internship interest session with schools 	<p>Dec 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Host internship interest session with schools – Support schools with interview & resume preparation
<p>Jan 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Confirm internships needed – Post job application – Confirm job sites (virtual vs. remote) 	<p>Feb 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Manager training and enablement 	<p>Mar 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Conduct interviews – Select interns 	<p>Apr 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Extend offers
<p>May 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Onboarding begins – Release complete summer schedule to intern & managers 	<p>Jun 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Plan for off-boarding & end of internship experience – Interns start 	<p>Jul 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Survey (mid experience & end) – Managing internship program execution 	<p>Aug 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Survey (mid experience & end) – End of Internship – Program Review (include needed stakeholders)

2. [Sample Student Internship Timeline & Requirements](#)

C. Student Goals and Preparation

- i. Your organization may already have been partnering with the P-TECH school for 3 years before deciding to offer internships, or, you might have jumped in as a new partner with plans to offer internships right away. No matter where you enter as an

industry partner, you will want to work with your school/college partners to ensure students are adequately prepared to begin an internship.

1. Student Goals: what they hope to gain from an internship with an organization
 - a. Increase technical skills
 - b. Understand more how businesses work
 - c. Build communication skills
 - d. Learn the value of professional (soft) skills as much as the hard skills (the work tasks)
 - e. Understand what it's like to work in a professional environment
 - f. The value of working in teams
 - g. Gain a deeper understanding of balancing responsibilities, making compromises, and communicating thoughts/ideas with others
2. Who are P-TECH internship-ready students? (This can vary by campus and can be altered based on your organization's preferences.)
 - a. Have completed at least their junior year of HS
 - b. Completed some community college classes and are currently enrolled in college courses
 - c. Completed 100 hours of [professional skills](#) development
 - d. Variable technical skills training (most will be considered entry-level)
 - e. Prior introduction to a corporate business environment, but this is likely their first job
3. As a P-TECH industry partner offering internships, you will determine, alongside your school partner, the minimum requirements for students applying to internships. Many industry partners consider the following:
 - a. A minimum year completed in school (e.g., completed Year 3/junior year)
 - b. Minimum age of intern (will be determined by your organization's policies)
 - c. Completion of a certain # of college credits
 - d. Minimum high school/college GPA
 - e. References/recommendations from school staff that consider attendance, professionalism, etc.

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- f. Specific learning, such as micro-credentials (from Open P-TECH) or industry recognized certifications (e.g., Microsoft Office Excel, Word, PowerPoint)
 - 4. Supporting students through the application process:
 - a. As this will be the first time many students are applying for a job, they will need your support in navigating everything required to successfully complete the process. Industry partners should consider collaborating with the school to offer the following support:
 - i. Hosting an internship interest session(s) so students can learn more about working at your organization and the structure of the internship prior to application
 - ii. Hosting resume and/or mock interview workshops
 - iii. Working closely with the school to educate students and their families about every step of the process, forms that will be required to complete, etc.

D. Delivery: in-person or virtual

- i. Deciding to host internships virtually (versus in-person) will likely be determined by several factors, including those which might be imposed due to local or government regulations, or due to logistical limitations. While the ideal situation is to host in-person internships, considerations for both will be presented, recognizing that there will be similarities regardless of the mode of delivery. When it comes to the mode of delivery you choose to use, you will want to work closely with your school partners to ensure the proper support structures are in place for the P-TECH students.
 - 1. All internships will require the following:
 - a. Intern orientation/onboarding
 - b. Developing and assigning of intern projects
 - c. Internship manager training
 - d. Internship management supervision
 - e. Intern professional development
 - f. Intern offboarding
 - ii. In-person internship considerations
 - 1. Is the organization’s internship work site located close to the partner school and accessible via public transportation? If not, how will interns get to your work site?

2. Will there be an organized work area for the interns? Setting up phone, voicemail, computer, email, and internet access and/or other resources necessary for interns to accomplish the tasks you have stipulated in the internship position description will be required.
3. Will you have a site supervisor to support interns while on-site?
4. Will someone from your school partner be required to be at the work site to help manage the interns?
- iii. Virtual internship considerations: adaptations to an in-person internship that would need to occur
 1. Does the organization have the technical tools in place to facilitate virtual project management (and the ability to handle challenges with online communication tool issues)?
 - a. Enough time should be allocated before the start of the virtual internship to provide staff training to use any required software/systems.
 2. Interns would need to be provided a laptop and other tech tools required to fulfill their position responsibilities. If students are expected to use specific software or an IT tool, it should be provided free-of-charge. You must consider an intern's access to reliable internet. Your organization may need to provide students with mobile hotspots or MiFis to access the Internet.
 3. How will interns be managed virtually? Specific training of managers/team leaders may be required.
 4. How will intern team collaboration be handled?
 5. Resources
 - a. [Tips for Successful Virtual Internships](#)
 - b. [50 Companies That Put on Awesome Remote Internships](#)

2. INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

A. Internship Project Descriptions

- i. You've worked through the logistics of how to hire P-TECH high school students into your organization, but what do you want them to do once they are with you? This is the time to engage your contacts at your partner school as they will be able to help you consider the students' skills, areas of interest, and degree pathways to plan projects for them.

1. The intent is for every intern to be able to contribute to a real world, meaningful work project that is aligned with his/her skill set. While the work assignments do not have to be technical in nature, they should expose students to various aspects of the work in the industry field. Work assignments could vary from site to site based on employer needs. Opportunities for students to be client-facing and/or engaged in solving problems allows for practical application of workplace skills.
2. Project Resources
 - a. [Sample Internship Project Descriptions](#)
 - b. [Sample Internship Project Timelines](#)

B. Manager/Team Leader Training and Responsibilities

- i. Manager/Team Leader Training
 1. While you are identifying potential project descriptions from teams in your organization, two of the most common questions you will be asked are: 1) who are the students that will be interning with us (e.g., their background or skill level), and 2) how do I support them when they get here? P-TECH students will probably be unique hires for your organization given that they are still in high school, so it is important for you to implement training for your P-TECH internship managers to ensure they are equipped with the right knowledge and skills to successfully manage the P-TECH interns.
 - a. Resources
 - i. [Manager/Team Leader Training for P-TECH Internships](#)
 - ii. [P-TECH's Workplace Learning Essential Skills](#)
 - iii. [Sample Getting Started Overview presentation \(IBM\)](#)
- ii. Coaching Interns
 1. Working with young people in their first professional job might seem daunting. However, interns are successful at work when they have:
 - a. Clearly defined goals
 - b. Timely, specific feedback
 - c. Appropriate, challenging tasks based on their skills
 2. Helping your intern(s) find balance in the three areas noted above will support them in learning to maintain focus on the task at hand, and will encourage them to work hard by finding joy in the task.
 3. Resource
 - a. [Coaching P-TECH Interns](#)

- iii. Continual Feedback and Performance Reviews
 - 1. Since a defining characteristic of internships is a focus on learning, providing feedback is especially important for interns. In fact, it is crucial to the learning process that interns know in which areas their performance is meeting or exceeding employer standards, and in which areas they need to improve or adjust (as well as suggestions for what those adjustments might be).
 - a. Some form of weekly or bi-weekly observations and feedback discussed with the intern
 - b. Utilize existing HR feedback and evaluation criteria and materials as a basis for determining how interns are working towards and achieving their project goals
 - 2. As a host organization, you will need to provide interns with periodic performance reviews and formal evaluations
 - a. Formal evaluations: Mid-point and Final (using a formal assessment tool)
 - i. Verify with the partner school, as some may require more frequent or formal evaluations
 - b. Evaluation Resources
 - i. [P-TECH Internship Evaluation Rubric \(template\)](#)
 - ii. [Tips for Informal and Formal Evaluations](#)

C. Intern Onboarding

- i. When planning your Intern Onboarding program, a critical question to ask is "what tools and knowledge must an intern have to be successful week 1 at my organization?" A clear onboarding process will set expectations and help your interns engage with your company culture from day one. Many organizations will engage their HR team to prepare and deliver some of the standard "organization-related" onboarding topics.
 - 1. If your organization already has an internship program for other hires, there are likely great existing resources that you might be able to modify slightly for a P-TECH audience.
 - 2. Considerations might include:
 - a. The required hardware and software tools
 - b. The communication tools used daily (email, Slack, web conferencing, cloud services, etc.)

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- c. Aspects of the company's culture:
 - i. Communication expectations (e.g., response time to emails, slack, etc.)
 - ii. Expectations for dress
 - iii. Structure of workday (e.g., when it's appropriate to take a break, eat lunch, etc.)
 - iv. Process for recording hours and getting paid
 - 3. Prior to Day 1, provide interns with a detailed schedule for onboarding/training and week 1 (i.e., where to show up and when)
 - 4. Resources
 - a. [Sample P-TECH Internship Kick Off presentation](#)
 - b. [Internship Onboarding Resources](#)

D. Intern Professional Development

- i. In designing your internship experience, you should consider what professional development P-TECH students need to complete throughout the internship to be successful in your internship and beyond.
 - 1. You might want to consider topics such as time management, collaboration, financial literacy, building a resume/LinkedIn profile, career planning, and more.
 - 2. Sessions can be led by team leads for small groups or for all your interns through a format such as weekly 1-hour Lunch and Learns. You should also consider granting access to interns to complete any professional development on a self-paced site your organization has access to.
 - 3. Based on your individual internship program goals, the needs of your organizations and the skills/knowledge of your P-TECH interns, you will create professional development that is aligned to your organization. Here are some examples to get you started:
 - a. Financial literacy
 - i. Partner with a local bank branch to have a presentation for interns on financial planning, budgeting, and resources available to them through a financial institution
 - b. Resumes/LinkedIn Profiles
 - i. Adding internship experience and new skills or updating to reflect a more professional look
 - c. Presentation Basics

- i. Providing support in the creation and delivery of professional presentations (in preparation for showcase/expo at end of the internship)
 - d. Networking
 - i. The value of creating and using personal networks, while on the job and for future career connections
 - ii. Verify your organization’s professional development offerings with the host P-TECH school to identify gaps your organization might fill.

3. INTERNSHIP CONCLUSION

A. Offboarding

- i. You should consider a few main goals when designing your offboarding process:
 - 1. How will I know which aspects of the internship worked well?
 - 2. How will know which areas of the program need improvement?
 - 3. What will I report to my organization and the participating school partners?
- ii. With these things in mind, some best practices include:
 - 1. Conducting a final, formal performance review with each intern
 - 2. Providing a program evaluation survey to each intern
 - 3. Hosting an internship [showcase/expo](#) to provide them a professional presentation experience so their accomplishments can be celebrated
 - a. The showcase/expo event is where interns present their experiences and project outcomes to their peers, parents, internship providers, and others.
 - i. You will also want to consider how you close out the intern as an employee, including how to have their laptops and any other company technology returned to you. This is another area where working with your HR team is instrumental, as they may likely have this process established for university interns.

B. Next Steps

- i. You have completed a successful P-TECH internship program - make sure you take a moment to breathe and celebrate (your team, school partners, and the interns). Before you let too much time pass, we suggest you debrief the successes and areas of growth for the next internship cycle with your team internally as well as with your

-
- partner schools. Additionally, it is never too early to begin planning for the next internship cycle to ensure its continuity.
- ii. You will also want to consider how you keep in touch with interns (if you choose after the internship ends). Suggestions include:
1. Encourage interns to connect with their managers and/or mentors from your company on LinkedIn (if allowed by the school district and age of interns)
 2. Keep in touch with interns about future opportunities (e.g., opportunities for full-time roles after graduation, another summer internship, mentorship opportunities with your employees)
 3. Provide continued targeted workplace learning experiences through your school partner based on areas of skill growth your interns should continue expanding