



## FPI INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS - US AND AUSTRALIA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is the FPI Internship/Career Training Program?

These are different Cultural Exchange Programs of the governments of the United States and Australia that allow young professionals from around the world the opportunity to enhance their education and experience through professional training with companies in the US and Australia. Young professionals include university students, recent graduates and young professionals who have been working in their field of interest for at least two years between ages 20 to 32 years old for the US, or 20 to 28 years old for Australia. Participation in the Internship or Career Training Program improves the intern's understanding of either the US or Australian business practices and methodologies as well as gain valuable insight into the host country's culture and environment.

**Interns:** an intern is an applicant currently enrolled in a certificate granting educational program, or arriving within 12 months of graduation from school. Intern program is for a **maximum** of 12 months. This is an entry level work based internship.

**Trainee:** A trainee has graduated from a certificate granting educational institution **PLUS** has one year of experience *outside* the US. The trainee program is for a maximum of 18 months, with the exception of Hospitality Management which will be only 12 months. This is a high level training that is more advanced than entry-level.

### How long is the Internship Program?

This is a 6, 12, or 18-month program with scheduled admissions year round. The approval documents, called DS 2019 (US) or Special 416 visa (Australia), defines the start and end dates of the program. The US State Department or the Australian DIAC, through a Program Sponsor, issues these documents. There is no option to extend the visa so students must choose their preferred program duration although, US J1 visa holders are given extra 30 days for travel after their contracts.

### How many hours do I work a week?

Approximately 30 to 40 hours per week. Some companies have overtime available paid at time and a half. In some cases, the working hours are reduced due to slow down in business activities.

### How soon do I start my internship?

As soon as the J1 visa is issued, the US host company requires a two-week arrival notice.

For the Australian Internships, students/interns will fly into Brisbane for a two-day intensive cultural integration seminar and orientation then travel to the Host company location either by bus, train or plane. Upon arrival at the host company, all interns attend orientations and seminars. They also accomplish all administrative and government requirements (SSS, tax forms, establish bank details, etc).

### **Do I get paid? How much money will I make? When do I get paid?**

Internships are Paid, Unpaid or Subsidized. For the Paid Internships, allowance varies depending on position, host company and location, but trainees should be able to earn at least US\$1,000.00 / month.

For Australian Internships, the first week at the host company will be unpaid. Typically, you will get your allowances weekly or every two weeks. Interns must commit to a minimum of 6 months training with an Australian host company or 12 months minimum commitment with a US host company.

### **Where will I be placed? Who will be my Host Company?**

There are various locations available. The host companies are usually situated anywhere from suburbs or in towns outside of the big cities or in popular tourist destinations like resorts/island resorts. Please refer to the list of host companies where students have been sent and are currently accepting exclusively from FPI.

### **Can I choose my own placement?**

For the US Internships, an applicant may research his/her own placement and housing provided that all the requirements of the State Department are met. FPI provides assistance in preparing all documents required for visa applications.

### **What is the level of English required?**

It is important that the students have good conversational English to communicate with their peers and supervisors and at the same time, understand instructions well. The language ability is a must to have a credible interview with the host company representatives.

### **What are the skills required?**

All candidates must have a degree/certificate/diploma or substantial experience in the chosen field. Some practical experience will be an advantage to the participant since he/she will have a better understanding of what to expect and is usually more motivated to do the job.

### **Explain the Accommodation situation.**

Various options are available. Interns are either assisted by their host company in securing their housing or provided accommodations within the resort.

In most cases, interns find their own accommodation but the partners can assist in the search for a fee. In all cases, the intern will pay for accommodations. In some situations, a deposit is required. There must be a satisfactory turnover of the apartment/ hostel or room at the end of their stay or they will be charged to repair any damages to the room. The room must be left in good condition or the student will be liable for all the costs to return it to the same condition as when they moved in.

The interns also provide for their own food. In some cases, they are given free or subsidized meals at work.

### **How much does the program cost? When are the fees due?**

Please contact FPI for the total costs and schedule of payments. A deposit is required upon submission of initial requirements. Balance of all the fees is due once the applicant sign and confirms the Program Specifics and/or Training Plan.

### **What do I get for my fee?**

- Guaranteed internship placement prior to arrival
- Guaranteed 6 or 12 -month placement unless otherwise indicated in their preferences.
- Visa Documents (DS 2019 or Temporary Approval for Special 416 Visa, Training Plan and/or Program Specifics)
- Assistance in getting Social Security Card
- Health and Accident Insurance for the duration of the program
- Pre-Departure and Post-Arrival orientation
- Sponsorship and support throughout the program
- Embassy briefings and Cultural Integration Seminars, Coaching/Training Sessions,

### **When do applications need to be submitted?**

All applications must be submitted minimum 16 to 24 weeks for the US programs, or 4 to 6 months for the Australian Internships, prior to applicant's preferred departure date. However, we do accept applications with less notice on a space-available basis.

### **What is the type of Visa that I will apply for?**

For the US Internship Program, the applicant will apply for a J1 visa, otherwise classified as the Cultural Exchange Visitor's Visa.

The Australian Internships Program has been approved by the DIAC under the Special Program 416

### **Is it guaranteed that I will get a visa?**

**NO.** Only the embassy consuls have complete authority to approve or deny issuance of visa for any reason. FPI and the Overseas Partner are not responsible for visa denials. However, FPI provides assistance on a "best-effort" basis in preparing all documents required for visa applications as well as prepare any applicant for embassy interviews.

Currently, Australian visa applications do not require personal appearance since it is being filed and processed in Hobart, Australia. However, the Australian Embassy in Manila may call some of the applicants to conduct a personal interview.

### **Are Fees Refundable?**

Some fees are refundable based on the current schedule. Please contact FPI for details.

### **Do I pay taxes?**

Yes, all US/ Australian interns pay applicable State, Federal or City Taxes and a portion of these taxes can be refunded.

Australian Internships will provide updated information from the Australian Taxation Office on Options for Australian Tax returns. AI will assist with tax refunds (for a fee) through the electronic tax (e-tax), a service established by the Australian Taxation office.

However, interns must complete documentation before the end of their stay so that they can get part of the taxes refunded. Interns should not expect to receive large tax refunds if host companies have taxed at the low-income rate.

### **Can I change Job/position/host Company when I am there?**

**NO.** The intern cannot change the host company after the training plan is signed. More so, no changes are allowed after the visa is approved and you start your training.

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