

## EMPLOYER/HOST INTERNSHIP GUIDE

### SVA INTERNSHIP-FOR-CREDIT PROGRAM (ICP)

#### WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in hiring an SVA student as an intern.

An internship is an opportunity for our students to benefit from your professional guidance while giving them real workplace experience, and is an effective way for employers to determine if a student might be a good candidate for future opportunities with your organization. Each year, more than 300 SVA students successfully complete a paid or unpaid internship for credit and receive overwhelmingly positive reviews from their employers.

The ICP is open to eligible SVA students (US citizens and international students\*) and allows them to receive three (3) SVA studio elective credits upon completion of the internship, whether the internship is paid or unpaid.

\*Please see Page 3 for special information regarding hiring international students as interns.

(Re: unpaid internships - - According to state and federal labor laws, the primary purpose of an unpaid internship is for the student to gain practical learning experience and not for the employer to benefit from the student's labor. See Page 2 of this guide for more information).

Please review the following information on how to participate in the SVA Internship-for-Credit Program.

#### EMPLOYER CRITERIA AND REQUIREMENTS

##### **Employers must agree to the following:**

- Employ interns for 150 hours, falling within [SVA's semester dates](#).
  - NOTE: If yours is an unpaid internship that requires more than 150 hours of work, we encourage you to designate this a paid internship, providing compensation at least equal to that of NY State's minimum wage.
- Provide an experience that applies directly to a student's field of study, fulfilling relevant career objectives.
- Provide a designated creative supervisor, *qualified in the area of the student's major*, who gives counsel, advisement and career guidance.
- Work with the intern to identify their specific learning goals for the semester.
- Allow for the intern's creative participation in a hands-on learning environment where the student regularly interacts with staff and/or clients.
- Remote and hybrid work situations are currently acceptable for intern duties.
  - Employers should provide any software needed for internship work.
  - Employers are strongly encouraged to provide a computer to the intern for privacy and legal purposes.
  - As per above, employers must provide a designated supervisor with clear instructions and monitoring protocols during the period of remote work.
  - Note that in a remote experience the intern should be engaged in conversation with staff/clients also, whether by video, phone, chat, or email.
  - Employers that have returned to on-site work are encouraged to include interns on-site as well (office, studio, set).

## EMPLOYER CRITERIA AND REQUIREMENTS, continued

- Provide any appropriate or necessary training outlining duties, company policies and conduct, safety protocols.
- Be prepared to provide proof of current Workers' Compensation insurance if your company employs fewer than five (5) staff (excluding interns). See page 3 for more on Workers' Compensation requirements.
- Complete a final evaluation of the intern's performance to help keep them on track in meeting learning goals and provide feedback on the intern's performance.
- Maintain open communication with SVA Career Development, especially if any questions, concerns or problems arise with the intern.

## IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

Internships must be completed in the same academic semester in which the student seeks to receive academic credit. The internship may not begin before the first day of the semester and must end before or on the last day of the semester. ***The semester dates and deadline to register for an internship-for-credit can be found on our [website](#).***

## AFTER SELECTING AND HIRING YOUR INTERN

After the student has accepted your offer for internship, the student will request information from you in order to complete the online application form. Once they've submitted online, SVA Career Development will review it and approve it. You will then receive in an email a Credit Verification Letter and a link for you to review and approve the student's application. There you may make any changes necessary on the student's application—these changes will be rerouted to SVA Career Development and the student will resubmit for approval.

Once you have approved the application, the student will complete the registration process and, once the semester begins, they may begin working. (For U.S. students, this process can take a full week; international students need to allow at least 2-3 weeks for processing.)

**Students may not begin working until they have received all levels of approval, been registered, and, for international students, received their new I-20.**

## INTERN HOURS

**To earn credit, SVA students must complete a total of 150 hours within the semester start and end dates.** Students should not be asked to work more hours than those specified in the online application or to work beyond the SVA academic semester. Employers who want a student to continue working with their company after the internship ends are encouraged to consider offering a paid opportunity. International students participating in internships are not legally eligible to work beyond the dates specified on their application and I-20.

## COMPENSATION AND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR STANDARDS

SVA Career Development strongly encourages internship employers to pay an hourly wage, or if this is not possible, to offer a stipend or scholarship for travel and meals. To be considered a paid internship, the compensation must be equal to or greater than your State's minimum wage. (The New York State minimum wage is \$16.00/hour.) If the stipend or scholarship does not meet this minimum requirement, the internship is considered unpaid. Academic credit is granted by SVA and is NOT compensation.

**SPECIAL NOTE RE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER APPLICATIONS during COVID-19:** It is only possible for students to apply for an SSN from within the U.S. with an in-person visit to a Social Security Card Center. Even if a student is within the U.S., there may still be delays with applying for an SSN.

## UNPAID INTERNSHIPS AT FOR-PROFIT BUSINESSES

When possible, unpaid internships should offer a daily stipend. To offer an unpaid internship, you must review and abide by the New York State Department of Labor Internship Standards (or those of the state in which the business is based) and the US Department of Labor Internship Standards before hiring an intern from SVA. A major point in these laws is that the primary purpose of the internship is for the student to gain practical learning experience and not for the employer to benefit from the student's labor. The SVA Internship Agreement Form requires that you certify having reviewed these documents.

Information on federal and New York State laws is available for download by visiting these sites:

[Internship Programs Under the U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act](#)

[New York State Department of Labor: Wage Requirements for Interns in For-Profit Businesses](#)

[New York State Department of Labor: Wage Requirements for Interns in Not-for-Profit Businesses](#)

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION LAWS

Employers in New York State are required by law to provide Workers Compensation insurance for all interns, unpaid and paid. It is not necessary to add individual intern names to the policy. For full details, please visit this site:

[New York State Workers' Compensation Coverage](#)

NOTE: If your business is not based in New York State, please familiarize yourself with and adhere to the Workers' Compensation insurance policies and laws of your state.

## HIRING AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

International students must go through the Curricular Practical Training (CPT) process to obtain legal authorization to gain employment training such as an internship, whether paid or unpaid.

**Employers must draft a Letter of Hire** that follows specific guidelines and language determined by the U.S. government, outlined in the Letter of Hire Template on the following pages.

### **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- The Letter of Hire **MUST** list a **Start Date** that is **AT LEAST 2-3 WEEKS FROM THE DATE THE STUDENT SUBMITS THEIR ONLINE APPLICATION.**
- The Start Date must also fall on or after the first day of the current SVA semester.
- The End Date may not fall after the last day of the semester.
- Any Letter of Hire that does not follow these guidelines precisely will be rejected and a new Letter will have to be submitted. This will further delay the student's Start Date.
- The Letter must include the address of the employer's U.S. office, regardless of the intern's work location.

## ANY QUESTIONS?

Contact the SVA Career Development office.

[cd@sva.edu](mailto:cd@sva.edu)

212-592-2370

Thank you!

## LETTER OF HIRE TEMPLATE

### CPT EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

**Required information is in BOLD**

Please OMIT any italicized text from your final Letter of Hire

**REPLACE THIS HEADER WITH COMPANY LETTERHEAD**

International students MUST submit a Letter that follows this template precisely.  
Save it as a PDF and upload it in your online application. **\*Do not submit your offer letter.\***

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#### USE OFFICIAL EMPLOYER'S COMPANY LETTERHEAD

#### BUSINESS ADDRESS

#### Date

To whom it may concern:

**(Student's Full Legal Name)** will intern with **(Company's Name)** during the (*select one Fall or Spring or Summer 20\_\_*) semester. The internship will begin on **(Start Date – must be on or after stated semester start date and leave 2-3 weeks for application processing)** and end on **(End Date – must be no later than stated semester end date)**. **(Student's Name)** will work **(Days and Hours Each Day, i.e. Tuesday 10AM-6PM and Thursday 10AM-6PM)**, which accounts for **(Number of Hours)** per week. This internship is **(Paid or Unpaid)** at the rate of **(Compensation – for internships totaling over 200 hours, intern should be paid at least your State's minimum wage)**.

This opportunity is designed to give **(Student's Name)** professional work experience in his/her/their field of study. She/He/They will be working with **(Supervisor's Name, Title)** who can be reached at **(Phone Number and Email)**. While interning with **(Company's Name)** based at **(Company's Office Address if it does not match business address listed at the top)**, **(Student's Name)** will be **(Internship Description and Duties)**.

#### **FOR FULLY REMOTE INTERNSHIPS ONLY, please add the following:**

**(Student's Name)** will be working **remotely**, and the student's supervisor will assess their engagement and attainment of learning objectives electronically.

Sincerely,

**SIGNATURE of Company Representative** (*For this semester - electronic signatures are acceptable*)  
TYPED NAME of Company Representative

## Letter of Hire Information

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The following information is non-negotiable for the Letter of Hire:

- Employer's Company Letterhead
- Employer's Business Address
- Student's Full Legal Name
- Employer's Company Name
- Semester and Year of Internship
- Start Date
- End Date
- Days Student will be working
- Hours per day Student will be working
- Total hours per week Student will be working
- Compensation (paid or unpaid)
- Supervisor's Name, Title
- Supervisor's contact information (phone and email)
- Internship tasks and responsibilities
- Signature