



IDAHO
STEM
ACTION CENTER

and



Idaho STEM Externship Business Handbook

Connecting education with careers

Updated 9/25/2019

Funded with investments from Idaho business partners, along with STEM Action Center and Workforce Development Council, both under the office of Governor Brad Little

Idaho is at an economic crossroads. There are currently thousands of unfilled jobs in the state and that number is projected to increase due to a lack of a qualified workforce. To address this critical need, the Idaho Workforce Development Council and Idaho STEM Action Center, both under the Executive Office of Governor Brad Little, have combined forces to develop the Idaho Teacher Externship program. The goal of this program is to provide classroom teachers and career counselors with the opportunity to engage in relevant, localized work during the summer with Idaho businesses, which in turn will allow them to better prepare their students - Idaho's future workforce.

Collaboratively, we just completed our pilot year in summer 2019 and the feedback from both business hosts and externs was overwhelmingly positive. Due to higher than expected demand, we were able to place 16 externs into a wide variety of businesses including manufacturing, high tech, health care, engineering, market research, and television production, to name a few. Businesses ranged from thousands of employees to fewer than a dozen. The teachers gained valuable, real-world experiences that will allow them to transform their classrooms and teaching practices. Businesses were able to leverage the teachers' unique skill sets to build capacity and approach problems with a fresh perspective.

In year two, we are transitioning to a cost share model whereby businesses with the means will fund up to 50% of their extern's stipend. This will allow us to expand the program across the state with a strategic emphasis on placing externs into rural businesses. By doing so, we plan to eventually bring the benefits of the externship program to all students in Idaho regardless of where they live.

Though we come from different perspectives on education and workforce, we both share the same goal: to connect classrooms to careers in meaningful ways that offer students increased opportunities to work, live, and stay in Idaho. Doing so will not only benefit our future workforce, but also will allow Idaho's economy to continue to prosper. As we look to year two of this exciting program, we remain committed to the vision of providing equity and opportunity for all Idahoans. Please join us in expanding this successful program!


Executive Director
Idaho STEM Action Center


Executive Director
Idaho Workforce Development Council

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Goal Statement

By providing classroom teachers and career counselors with the opportunity to work in business and industry, the Externship Program will allow them to better prepare their students for workforce needs in Idaho. The essential role educators play in helping students to develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to thrive in an ever-evolving economy cannot be overstated. Externships also create vital partnerships between businesses and local schools that can help students make relevant connections between their education and potential career pathways. Doing so will result in a more skilled and diverse STEM talent pipeline which is critical for the continued growth of Idaho's economy.

Participants & Benefits

Any certified Idaho K-12 public school teacher or college and career advisor who is currently working in a public Idaho school and will be returning to a public Idaho school for the 2020-2021 school year is eligible to apply. Educators will be paid a flat rate of \$5000.00 with a minimum of two hundred (200) hours per the entirety of the externship. Externs also have the opportunity to earn professional development credit or graduate credit for completing the experience.

Extern hosts receive a unique opportunity to collaborate with Idaho educators who can offer uncommon expertise and return on the investment by completing meaningful work for the host business. By leveraging externs' skills hosts can significantly enhance capacity during the summer. Additionally, extern hosts can share with educators the challenges of hiring and retaining employees, the application of new technologies, business practices in a local company and real-world information about career possibilities and workplace expectations.

Consequently, externships can build a bridge that connects education to careers by enhancing the learning environment of the classroom, deepening teacher's and student's insight to the needs, challenges, and realities of the workplace, and engaging the community in STEM and 21st century skills that lead to in-demand careers in Idaho.

Timeline

Businesses interested in hosting an extern for summer 2020 should apply through STEM AC [Externship webpage](#) between **October 1, 2019** and **December 31, 2019**. The extern host should identify and define as clearly as possible either a specific project or the general type of work an extern is expected to complete at the host site. The host may either identify several possible projects that can be matched to a broader range of teachers and/or skill sets, or identify a single project with a more particular type of teacher and skill set in mind.

To qualify, interested classroom teachers and career counselors must submit a completed application through the STEM AC [grants portal](#) between **January 1, 2020** and **February 7, 2020**. From **February 8, 2020** until **February 14, 2020**, completed applications will be reviewed based on the candidates' interests, experiences and skill sets and matched accordingly to meet the

needs of the participating businesses. Applications may be forwarded to more than one business and host sites can receive up to five applications.

Businesses will reach out to desired candidates between **February 15, 2020** and **March 30, 2020** to schedule/conduct interviews. Selected candidates will be offered an externship by the host site no later than **April 1, 2020**. In the event there remains unplaced applicants, every effort will be made to match them with any remaining businesses providing funding is available.

Following acceptance of the externship, the extern will identify a point of contact with the host site and forward his/her contact information including name, email address and phone number to the STEM AC coordinator. The extern will work with the site host to develop a mutually agreeable work schedule for the summer externship experience. Also, at this time, the extern must submit the required paperwork (contract, W-9, liability waiver, invoice template and work schedule) to STEM AC Grants and Contracts Analyst, [Stephanie Lee](#). The externship cannot begin until all paperwork has been processed by the STEM AC.

Applications & Externship Match

Once potential teacher-host matches are identified, an introductory meeting will occur between the teacher and the site host. This meeting may function as an interview of possible externs from a pool of applicants to determine the best fit for the experience. More commonly, this meeting is an opportunity to define the externship experience and clarify the expectations of both the extern host and teacher. Additionally, the extern's start date, important program dates and a projected end date should be discussed along with any vacations or commitments that require multiple days away from the externship on the part of the extern. The Idaho Teacher Externships program offers considerable scheduling flexibility to the teachers in terms of the 200-hour requirement, but this only works with clear communication between the program coordinators, extern host and the extern.

Role of the Extern Host

- Provide a challenging work opportunity that contributes to company operations while exposing the teacher to authentic workplace experiences that will enhance his/her classroom instruction in the areas of content, employability skills and technology utilization.
- Ensure that the educator sees the broader career opportunities within the organization/industry and understands the challenges of hiring and retaining employees.
- Provide the necessary training and ongoing mentoring needed for the extern to be successful.
- If possible, contribute to the stipend that will be paid to the extern.
- Aid the extern by providing time for him/her to fill out weekly reflections as part of the program requirements.
- Report any issues regarding the extern to the WDC coordinator immediately.

Role of the Teacher Extern

Externs are not considered employees, but rather independent contractors, and will not be working under the direction and/or control of the STEM AC. Nevertheless, externs are expected to:

- a. Attend the STEM AC extern orientation in May and submit all required paperwork.
- b. Complete a minimum of 200 hours at the Externship host site between June 1st and August 31st, 2020, as agreed upon by the teacher and the employer (approximately 5-6 weeks).
- c. Meet the performance expectations required by the employer.
- d. In the Community Grants Portal, submit an interim report after 100 hours of work is completed, which must include at least one photo (with the host's consent) of the extern at the work site and a timesheet reflecting hours worked. A final report needs to be submitted no later than September 6, 2020.
- e. Use this opportunity to integrate relevant, real-world examples and content into your classroom or learning environment.
- f. Share your experience with colleagues to help build program capacity.
- g. Submit at least one blog post regarding your externship experience with an approved picture from the host site.
- h. Report any issues with your externship to the STEM AC coordinator immediately.

Role of the Coordinator

As previously mentioned, there are two coordinators facilitating the externship experience: one from WDC who works primarily with the businesses and one from STEM AC who works with the externs. While they share the same goal of creating the best externship experience possible, their roles are somewhat different based on the group with whom they work.

From Workforce Development Council

- a. Provide support to employers from selection of the teachers to the completion of the externship experience.
- b. Organize a competitive selection process for teachers.
- c. Provide employers with assistance for planning the externship experience.
- d. Recognition that you are running a business. If there are issues with the program, let us know and we will fix them or you can end the externship, if necessary.
- e. To make sure the experience you provide goes farther than the one teacher you impact.

From STEM Action Center

- a. Ensure externs are provided with all required documentation.
- b. Conduct reference checks with the externs' building principals.
- c. Submit applicant resumes to WDC for consideration by prospective employers.
- d. Provide externs with training and ongoing support to meet all program requirements and ensure a positive experience.

- e. Provide documentation for externs who choose to earn professional development or graduate credit.
- f. Conduct at least one on-site visit with each extern over the course of the externship experience.
- g. Support educators to ensure the knowledge gained from the externship goes farther than just this single experience (i.e. sharing your involvement with other educators and/or school counselors).

Extern Compensation & Host Contributions

As independent contractors, externs will be paid \$5,000.00 by the STEM AC for 200 hours of work at their host sites. It will be the shared responsibility of the extern and the site host to establish a work schedule for 200 hours agreeable to both parties. Funds will be disbursed in two payments. The extern's initial disbursement of \$2,500 will follow their successful completion of 100 hours and their submission of the interim report. The final payment will follow the externs' submission of the final report and approval by the STEM AC. Should the extern's work with their site host, for any reason, fall short of 200 hours, final payment will be prorated at the rate of \$25.00 per hour.

In year two, priority selection of externship host sites may be given to organizations sharing the cost of the externship. Cost sharing of at least 50% will help expand the externship program across Idaho. Host site cost sharing contributions should be made directly to the STEM AC or its Foundation. Consideration will be given to businesses that currently cannot contribute, but can still offer a high quality experience for an extern.

Workers' Compensation will be paid for by the STEM AC. All other benefits will be the sole responsibility of the contractor.

Externship Termination

It is important for both the teacher and host to know that if problems occur in the early stages of the experience, the coordinators are in place to assist both parties and do everything possible to allow the experience to continue. If it is determined that the externship cannot be continued, the teacher will be compensated pro rata for the hours worked and accepted by the STEM AC.

Contact Information

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