

# Idaho STEM Externship Business Handbook



**IDAHO  
STEM  
ACTION CENTER**

**IDAHO  
WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

*Connecting Education with Careers*


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 year three in summer 2021 and the feedback from both business hosts and externs was overwhelmingly positive. Despite the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to place 26 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 transitioned to a cost-share model whereby businesses with the means funded up to 100% of their extern's stipend. Thanks to the generous support of the host businesses, we will continue this model in year three. 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 (2015 – 2020)  
Idaho STEM Action Center

  
Executive Director  
Idaho Workforce Development Council

# Table of Contents

- Goal Statement ..... 1
- Examples of Past Externship Projects ..... 2
- Participants & Benefits ..... 4
- Timeline ..... 4
- Applications & Externship Match ..... 5
- Role of the Extern Host ..... 5
- Role of the Teacher Extern ..... 6
- Role of the Coordinator ..... 6
- Extern Compensation & Host Contributions ..... 7
- Externship Termination ..... 7
- Contact Information ..... 9

## **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.

# Examples of Past Externship Projects



**ALLATA**

Participate on teams as a quality analyst, product tester, and a project coordinator

Provide training, develop transitions services and individual plans for employment



**IDAHO VOCATIONAL  
REHABILITATION SERVICES**



**HOME CU**  
DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR CREDIT UNIONS

Create training deliverables for client credit unions including development/editing of video

Manage school pilot program, stakeholder interviews, program data presentation

ACHD

COMMUTERIDE



**University of Idaho**

Design, build, program and fly a drone in preparation for a student camp

Maintain equipment, assist with machine changeovers, program robots, and generate solutions to existing manufacturing problems



**SCHWEITZER  
ENGINEERING  
LABORATORIES**



Robotic programming classes, engineering-related support activities (mechanical, electrical and software)

Performing compensation analysis, working with Excel to calculate rates, building formulas, and analyzing data



Create a workforce development/college and career pathway project

Production, food safety & quality, continuous improvement, human resources, maintenance



Lumber and manufacturing, an overview of policy issues, particularly around environment, forest management, and education

VR/AR device prep, media campaign, video production, website creation



Video production, research and data analysis to inform decision making, program planning and outreach

Client/industry research and public relations



Research appropriate programs for the LEADER database, provide communications support to promote the externship program

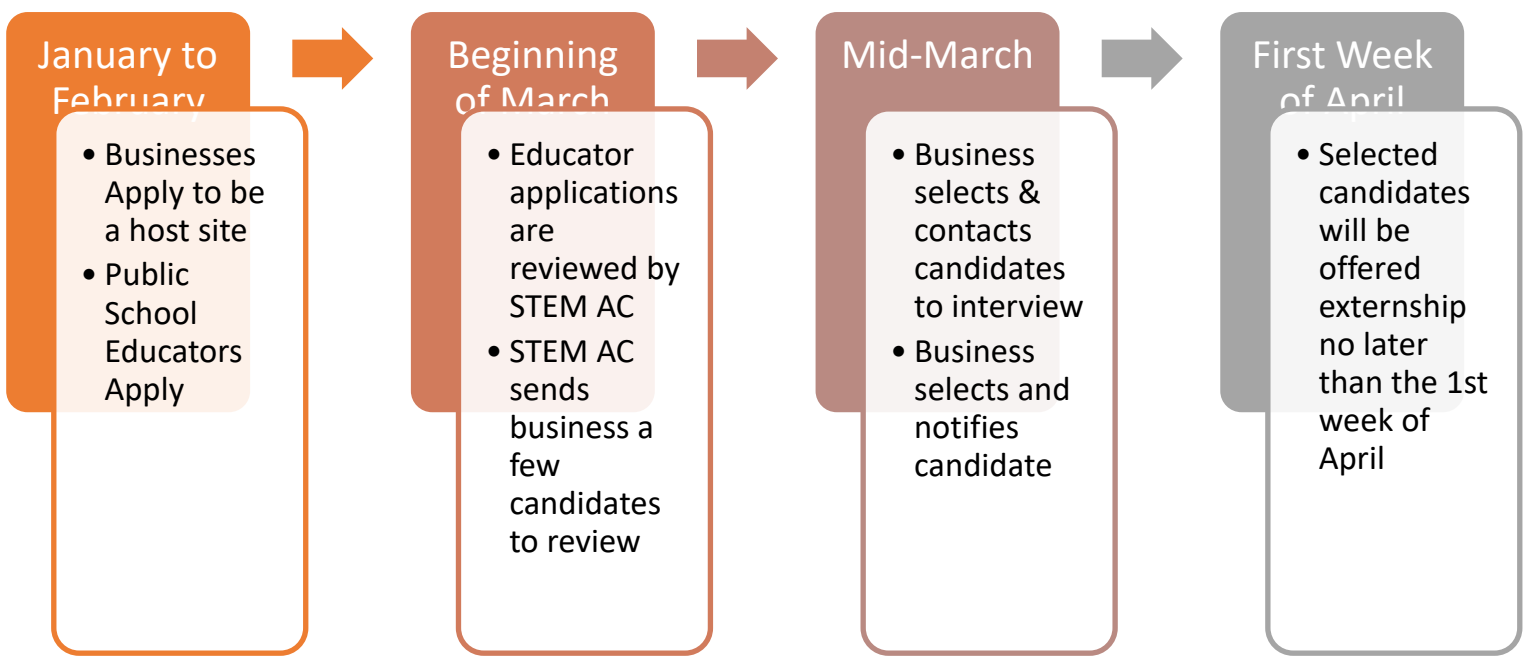
## Participants & Benefits

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 2021-2022 school year is eligible to apply. Educators will be paid a flat rate of \$5,000.00 for 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 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 into the needs, challenges, and realities of the workplace, and engaging the community in STEM and 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills that lead to in-demand careers in Idaho.

## Timeline





Businesses interested in hosting an extern for summer 2022 should apply through STEM AC's [Externship webpage](#) between **January 3, 2022** and **February 11, 2022**. 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.

**NOTE:** STEM AC, together with WDC, will host two orientation meetings (one in mid-January, the other in mid-February) for host sites to review this handbook and answer any questions that may arise.

To qualify, interested classroom teachers and career counselors must submit a completed application through STEM AC's [Community Grants Portal](#) between **January 3, 2022** and **February 11, 2022**. From **March 1, 2022** until **March 9, 2022**, completed applications will be reviewed based on the candidates' interests, experiences, and skillsets 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 **March 14, 2022** and **March 31, 2022** to schedule/conduct interviews. **Selected candidates will be offered an externship by the host site no later than April 15, 2022.** In the event there remain unplaced applicants, every effort will be made to match them with any remaining businesses, providing funding is available.

## **Applications & Externship Match**

The extern interviews provide an opportunity to define the externship experience and clarify the expectations of both the host and the educator. Additionally, the start date, important program dates and 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 applicant. The Idaho Teacher Externships program offers considerable scheduling flexibility to the educators in terms of the 200-hour requirement, but this only works with clear communication between the program coordinators, extern host, and the extern.

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 [Partnership Program 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, and tentative work schedule) to STEM AC's [Grants and Contracts Analyst](#). The externship cannot begin until all paperwork has been processed by the STEM AC.

## **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 Workforce Development Council's [Business Partnership Manager](#) 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 STEM AC. Nevertheless, externs are expected to:

- a. Attend STEM AC's 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 31, 2022, 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 worksite and a timesheet reflecting hours worked. A final report needs to be submitted no later than September 9, 2022.

- e. Use this opportunity to integrate relevant, real-world examples and content into your classroom or learning environment.
- f. Share their experience with colleagues to help build program capacity.
- g. Submit at least one blog post regarding the externship experience with an approved picture from the host site.
- h. Report any issues with the externship to STEM AC's [Partnership Program 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).
- h. Survey both externs and site hosts regarding the externship experience.

## **Extern Compensation & Host Contributions**

As independent contractors, externs will be paid \$5,000.00 by STEM AC for 200 hours of work at their host sites, as well as professional development credit, if they so choose. 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, completion of another 100 hours (total of 200 hours), and approval by STEM AC**. Should the externs 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. **\*NOTE:** *payments to externs may take approximately 30 days to process once the invoice has been emailed to STEM AC's [Financial Officer](#) and either the interim or final report has been submitted and confirmed received.)*

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 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 STEM AC.** All other benefits will be the sole responsibility of the contractor.

### **Suggested Host Site Cost Sharing Levels**

*Sponsors will have their logo placed on STEM AC's website based on the amount of their sponsorship.*

#### **Gold Sponsor \$5000**

- Suggested minimum level for employers with 50+ employees or employers who have participated in the Educator Externship Program for more than 2 years.

#### **Silver Sponsor \$2500**

- Suggested minimum level for employers with 25-49 employees, non-profits, or employers who have participated in the Educator Externship Program for more than 1 year.

#### **Bronze Sponsor \$1000**

- Suggested minimum level for employers hosting an extern.

## **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 STEM AC.

# Contact Information

## STEM Action Center

Partnerships Program Coordinator (Main Contact)

John McFarlane  
208-231-1466

[partnerships@stem.idaho.gov](mailto:partnerships@stem.idaho.gov)

Senior Research Analyst (Reporting)

Crispin Gravatt  
208-332-1722

[crispin.gravatt@stem.idaho.gov](mailto:crispin.gravatt@stem.idaho.gov)

Grants & Contracts Analyst (Contract & W9)

Stephanie Lee  
208-332-1724

[stephanie.lee@stem.idaho.gov](mailto:stephanie.lee@stem.idaho.gov)

Financial Officer (Invoice)

Sondra Chadd  
208-332-1721

[sondra.chadd@stem.idaho.gov](mailto:sondra.chadd@stem.idaho.gov)

Executive Director

Dr. Kaitlin Maguire  
208-332-1726

[kaitlin.maguire@stem.idaho.gov](mailto:kaitlin.maguire@stem.idaho.gov)

## Workforce Development Council

Business Partnership Manager (Main Contact)

Matthew Thomsen  
208-488-7562

[matthew.thomsen@wdc.idaho.gov](mailto:matthew.thomsen@wdc.idaho.gov)

Executive Director

Wendi Secrist  
208-488-7561

[wendi.secris@wdc.idaho.gov](mailto:wendi.secris@wdc.idaho.gov)