



Institutional Internship Data Collection Grant: Letter of Interest Instructions

Activity	Date
Letter of Interest Instructions Issued	Thursday, November 30, 2023
Informational Webinar	Thursday, November 30, 2023, 10 a.m.
Letters of Interest Due	Tuesday, December 19, 2023, 11:59 p.m.
Award Announcement (estimated)	Tuesday, January 16, 2024

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Fast Facts

Overview: In 2018, the Virginia General Assembly appropriated funding to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) to stimulate public colleges and universities to develop partnerships to provide innovative paid internship opportunities for their students. In 2019, the effort was expanded and enacted into law as the Innovative Internship Fund and Program. In 2020, through a partnership with the Virginia Chamber Foundation, the program was rebranded as the [Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership \(V-TOP\)](#).

The primary focus is a statewide initiative to facilitate the readiness of students, employers, and institutions of higher education to participate in internships and other work-based learning opportunities. **The focus of this grant competition is to assist institutions in collecting, compiling, and reporting data on students' internship experiences. These experiences involve for-credit, non-credit, zero-credit, and transcriptable activities.**

Public four-year institutions of higher education should submit a three-page (max) letter of interest with a cover sheet conforming to the instructions. SCHEV intends to award one-time grants to public institutions in the Commonwealth.

Grantees may use funding to:

- Purchase incentives to encourage students to report internship experiences.
- Develop an internship-specific program or curriculum that will facilitate internship readiness of students.
- Purchase platforms or resources that support institutions with internship data collection, tracking, and reporting methods.
- Purchase or develop a comprehensive transcriptable record system of students' participation in an internship (inside or outside of the classroom).

Grantees are expected to:

- Comply with standard grant administration requirements, such as tracking expenses and submitting progress reports as described in the instructions.

Please see the full instructions for details.

Letters of Interest Due: Tuesday, December 19, 2023

Estimated Start Date: Upon announcement of the award, the grant must begin immediately.

Length of Award: 12 months, this grant is a one-time-only, non-renewable award.

Number of Grants: Fifteen

Award Amount: \$100,000.00

Background

In 2018, the Virginia General Assembly appropriated funding to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) to stimulate public colleges and universities to develop partnerships to provide innovative paid internship opportunities for their students. In 2019, the effort was expanded and enacted into law as the Innovative Internship Fund and Program ([Va. Code § 23.1-903.4](#)).

In 2020, through a partnership with the Virginia Chamber Foundation, the program was rebranded as the Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (V-TOP). The Chamber Foundation also launched a new [website](#) and produced the Virginia Employer Readiness Toolkit: A Blueprint to Develop Quality Internship Opportunities for Virginia’s Talent Pipeline, available on the Employer tab of the V-TOP website. The primary focus is a statewide initiative to facilitate the readiness of students, employers, and institutions of higher education to participate in internship and other work-based learning opportunities. V-TOP has developed and launched a series of readiness-related resources and activities to support this focus.

For employers, V-TOP has launched the Employer Readiness Toolkit and an online course entitled, “Developing an Internship Program.” Eligible employers can also access the services of a staffing agency to recruit and hire interns and receive matching funds for intern wages, as well as matching funds for housing and transportation stipends that they offer to students.

For institutions, V-TOP offers scholarships for professional development and is currently developing a series of online modules to ensure that faculty and staff are ready to support students on their career discovery journeys.

For students, V-TOP has launched two online courses, “Developing Career Readiness Skills” and “Internship Toolkit” to assist students to find an internship, get hired, and make the most of their experience.

A new student and institutional readiness resource, the Institutional Career Services Grant, will be launched statewide through this Letter of Interest process.

Description of Funding Opportunity

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are Virginia's 15 public four-year institutions of higher education.

Limited Submission

Each institution may submit one Letter of Interest.

Award Amount and Type

SCHEV expects to make fifteen grant awards.

Award amount: \$100,000.00, this is a one-time only request.

No matching funds are required. However, grantees are expected to track and report expenditures that support the project.

Funds will be awarded in the form of a grant, with a Memorandum of Understanding between the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and the institution (see Appendix for terms and conditions).

Period of Performance

One calendar year from the award date. A final report will be due to V-TOP 30 days after the end of the calendar year.

Letter of Interest Instructions and Submission Information

Letter Length, Type Face and Size, Spacing

Letters of Interest are limited to three pages, not including the cover sheet.

- Letters may be single-spaced.
- Font must be either Times New Roman 12 pt. or Arial 11 pt.
- Font for figures, tables, formulas, and diagrams can be reduced to no smaller than Times New Roman 10 pt. or Arial 9 pt.
- Margins, in all directions, must be at least an inch; margins for illustrations, graphics, diagrams, tables, or figures that take up a full page may be reduced to no smaller than half an inch.
- Inclusion of other information in headers or footers is at the discretion of the applicant.

Contents of Letter of Interest

Cover Sheet

The cover sheet should include the following information:

- Name of the institution
- Name and contact information for the project director
- Printed name, title, and signature of the authorized signer

Narrative

Narratives are limited to three pages and should include the following:

- **Introduction:** Provide any background information you would like SCHEV to know, i.e., about your institution, about similar programs that could be leveraged, etc.
- **Body:** How this grant funding will help your institution gather baseline internship data.
- **Conclusion:** Key reason why your application should be funded.
- **Budget:** Provide a brief description of the planned expenditures. The budget will be accepted in Excel or Word.

Submission of Letters of Interest

Please submit letters of interest via email to Stacey Garnett, V-TOP Finance Service Specialist at staceygarnett@schev.edu. Letters must be received by 11:59 p.m. on the due date (December 19, 2023).

Letter of Interest Processing and Award

Letter of Interest Processing

Upon receipt via email of a letter of interest, SCHEV staff will respond by return email within two business days to confirm receipt.

SCHEV staff will conduct an administrative review to ensure that letters are complete and conform to the instructions. Some applicants may receive follow-up questions from SCHEV staff. If issues of compliance are found, SCHEV staff will work with the applicant to resolve the issue(s), if possible.

SCHEV staff will review letters of interest to determine whether more than institution expressed interest in serving the same V-TOP region. If so, staff may reach out to several applicants in an attempt to re-align applicants with available regions.

Award

SCHEV leadership and staff will discuss the applicants, the regions they propose to serve, the qualifications of the proposed instructors, and the other contents of the letters of interest to make the final decision regarding awards. SCHEV staff may negotiate further with applicants prior to making awards.

Funds will be awarded in the form of a grant, with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and the institution (see Appendix). Upon execution of the MOU, SCHEV will notify the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget to release the approved funds to the grantee for the first year.

Reporting Requirements

Narrative Progress Reports

Narrative progress reports are required and are due 30 days after the end of the grant period.

Award Administration

SCHEV staff would like to build a relationship with grantees and foster a collaborative approach to addressing issues and removing any roadblocks that arise. For details regarding post-award revisions that require prior approval, along with other conditions of award, please see Appendix: Terms and Conditions of Award, specifically Attachment 1. Special Terms and Conditions.

Appendix: Assurances and Certifications – Terms and Conditions of Award

Assurances and Certifications

The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) signing the letter is assuring and certifying the following:

Certification Regarding State Funds: The AOR is certifying that the applicant understands that SCHEV is awarding state funds. The grantee will comply with all rules and regulations regarding state funds, including but not limited to the Commonwealth Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual, the Virginia Public Procurement Act (when applicable), and the Library of Virginia's Virginia Public Records Management Manual.

Terms and Conditions

Grantor and grantee agree that this MOU will be performed in accordance with the following:

1. The scope of work is as specified in the grantee's letter of interest submitted _ (date; to be filled in only if grant awarded) _; the budget is as negotiated during the award process; both are incorporated herein by reference. In its performance of the statement of work and budget, the grantee shall be an independent entity and not an employee or agent of the grantor.
2. Matters concerning the performance of this award should be directed to the appropriate party's contact, as shown in Attachments 3A & 3B. [To be completed at the time of award]
3. Matters concerning the request or negotiation of any changes in the terms, conditions, or amounts cited in this award agreement, and any changes requiring prior approval, should be directed to the appropriate party's Contact, as shown in Attachments 3A & 3B. Any such changes made to this MOU require the written approval of each party's Authorized Official as shown in Attachments 3A & 3B.
4. Incorporated into this MOU by reference are the instructions for submitting a letter of interest, the grantee's letter of interest, the budget negotiated during the award process, the assurances and certifications above, the special terms and conditions in Attachment 1 and the general terms and conditions in Attachment

Signature lines will be added at the time of award.

Attachment 1: Special Terms and Conditions

Applicability

The terms and conditions in the MOU and all attachments apply directly to the grantee and also apply to collaborating entities, sub recipients, and contractors. The grantee is accountable for the performance of the project, program, or activity; the appropriate expenditure of funds under the award by all parties; and all other obligations of the grantee, as cited in the MOU and all attachments.

Changes

The changes listed below require the prior approval of the grantor. Requests should be directed to the grantor's Contact, as shown in Attachments 3A & 3B.

- Changes to the scope of the project
- Changes to the project director, primary instructor, or secondary instructor (if any) named in the approved letter of interest
- Plans for continued progress during extended absence of lead personnel
- Changes to the budget resulting in a deviation of 20% or more in any budget category; the request must include the current allocation of resources along with specific detail and justification for the reallocation

No-cost extensions require the approval of the grantor. Requests for a no-cost extension should be addressed to and received by the Contact, as shown in Attachments 3A & 3B, not less than sixty (60) days prior to the desired effective date of the requested change.

Disbursement of Funds, Accounting and Audit

Grantor will authorize the State Comptroller and the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget to release the awarded funds to the grantee.

All payments shall be considered provisional and subject to adjustment within the total estimated cost in the event such adjustment is necessary as a result of an adverse audit finding against the grantee.

Award monies not expended by the end of the period of performance must be returned.

The grantee will oversee the expenditure of all grant funds by all parties and ensure that all funds are expended in strict compliance with state rules, regulations and guidelines; the terms and conditions of this MOU; professional accounting standards; and all applicable state laws and requirements.

The grantee will maintain systematic accounting records of all expenditures relating to this award, including the supporting source documentation. Records will be retained by the grantee in accordance with Library of Virginia Record Retention Policy.

Records will be available for inspection and/or audit by SCHEV, the Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts or other appropriate entity.

Reporting

Report type and due dates are required as detailed in the instructions.

Termination of Award

SCHEV may terminate this award in the event of non-compliance with the terms and conditions of this MOU, significant lack of progress, or other extenuating conditions. In the case of termination, the grantee will return any unexpended and unobligated funds.

Attachment 2: General Terms and Conditions

- A. **VIRGINIA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT ACT (VPPA):** NA
- B. **APPLICABLE LAWS AND COURTS:** This solicitation and any resulting contract shall be governed in all respects by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and any litigation with respect thereto shall be brought in the courts of the Commonwealth. The agency and the grantee are encouraged to resolve any issues in controversy arising from the award of the contract or any contractual dispute using Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) procedures (Code of Virginia, § 2.2-4366). The grantee shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.
- C. **ANTI-DISCRIMINATION:** By submitting their proposals, applicants certify to the Commonwealth that they will conform to the provisions of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, as well as the Virginia Fair Employment Contracting Act of 1975, as amended, where applicable, the Virginians with Disabilities Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and § 2.2-4311 of the Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA). If the award is made to a faith-based organization, the organization shall not discriminate against any recipient of goods, services, or disbursements made pursuant to the contract on the basis of the recipient's religion, religious belief, refusal to participate in a religious practice, or on the basis of race, age, color, gender or national origin and shall be subject to the same rules as other organizations that contract with public bodies to account for the use of the funds provided; however, if the faith-based organization segregates public funds into

separate accounts, only the accounts and programs funded with public funds shall be subject to audit by the public body. (Code of Virginia, § 2.2-4343.1E). In every contract over \$10,000, the provisions in 1. and 2. below apply:

1. During the performance of this contract, the grantee agrees as follows:
 - a. The grantee will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment, except where there is a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to the normal operation of the grantee. The grantee agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices setting forth the provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.
 - b. The grantee, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the grantee, will state that such grantee is an equal opportunity employer.
 - c. Notices, advertisements and solicitations placed in accordance with federal law, rule or regulation shall be deemed sufficient for the purpose of meeting these requirements.
2. The grantee will include the provisions of 1. above in every subcontract or purchase order over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or offeror.

D. ETHICS IN PUBLIC CONTRACTING: By submitting their proposals, applicants certify that their proposals are made without collusion or fraud and that they have not offered or received any kickbacks or inducements from any other applicant, supplier, manufacturer or subcontractor in connection with their proposal, and that they have not conferred on any public employee having official responsibility for this procurement transaction any payment, loan, subscription, advance, deposit of money, services or anything of more than nominal value, present or promised, unless consideration of substantially equal or greater value was exchanged.

E. IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT OF 1986: By entering a written contract with the Commonwealth of Virginia, the grantee certifies that the grantee does not, and shall not during the performance of the contract for goods and services in the Commonwealth, knowingly employ an unauthorized alien as defined in the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

- F. **DEBARMENT STATUS:** By submitting their proposals, applicants certify that they are not currently debarred by the Commonwealth of Virginia from submitting bids or proposals on contracts for the type of goods and/or services covered by the scope of work/proposal, nor are they an agent of any person or entity that is currently so debarred. (Not applicable to state agencies)
- G. **ANTITRUST:** By entering a contract, the grantee conveys, sells, assigns, and transfers to the Commonwealth of Virginia all rights, title, and interest in and to all causes of action it may now have or hereafter acquire under the antitrust laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia, relating to the goods or services purchased or acquired by the Commonwealth of Virginia under said contract. (Not applicable to state agencies)
- H. **MANDATORY USE OF STATE FORM AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** NA
- I. **CLARIFICATION OF TERMS:** NA
- J. **PAYMENT:** See “Disbursement of Funds, Accounting and Audit” in Attachment 1: Special Terms and Conditions.
- K. **PRECEDENCE OF TERMS:** The following General Terms and Conditions APPLICABLE LAWS AND COURTS, ANTI-DISCRIMINATION, ETHICS IN PUBLIC CONTRACTING, IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTRAL ACT OF 1986, DEBARMENT STATUS, ANTITRUST, MANDATORY USE OF STATE FORM AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS (NA), CLARIFICATION OF TERMS (NA), PAYMENT shall apply in all instances. In the event there is a conflict between any of the other General Terms and Conditions and any Special Terms and Conditions, the Special Terms and Conditions shall apply.
- L. **QUALIFICATIONS OF (BIDDERS/OFFERORS):** NA
- M. **TESTING AND INSPECTION:** The Commonwealth reserves the right to conduct any test/inspection it may deem advisable to assure goods and services conform to the specifications.
- N. **ASSIGNMENT OF CONTRACT:** A contract shall not be assigned by the grantee in whole or in part without the written consent of the Commonwealth.
- O. **CHANGES TO THE CONTRACT:** See Attachment 1: Special Terms and Conditions.

- P. **DEFAULT:** See Attachment 1: Special Terms and Conditions.
- Q. **TAXES:** Sales to the Commonwealth of Virginia are normally exempt from State sales tax. State sales and use tax certificates of exemption, Form ST-12, will be issued upon request. Deliveries against this contract shall usually be free of Federal excise and transportation taxes. The Commonwealth's excise tax exemption registration number is 54-73-0076K.
- R. **INSURANCE:** NA
- S. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARD:** NA
- T. **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE:** During the performance of this contract, the grantee agrees to (i) provide a drug free workplace for the grantee's employees; (ii) post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or marijuana is prohibited in the grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition; (iii) state in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the grantee that the grantee maintains a drug-free workplace; and (iv) include the provisions of the foregoing clauses in every subcontract or purchase order of over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor. For the purposes of this section, "drug-free workplace" means a site for the performance of work done in connection with a specific contract awarded to a grantee, the employees of whom are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful PIM 98-031 manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of any controlled substance or marijuana during the performance of the contract.
- U. **NONDISCRIMINATION OF GRANTEES:** An applicant or grantee shall not be discriminated against in the solicitation or award of this contract because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, faith based organizational status, any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment or because the applicant employs ex-offenders unless the state agency, department or institution has made a written determination that employing ex-offenders on the specific contract is not in its best interest. If the award of this contract is made to a faith-based organization and an individual, who applies for or receives goods, services, or disbursements provided pursuant to this contract objects to the religious character of the faith-based organization from which the individual receives or would receive the goods, services, or disbursements, the public body

shall offer the individual, within a reasonable period of time after the date of his objection, access to equivalent goods, services, or disbursements from an alternative provider.

V. eVA VENDOR REGISTRATION: NA

W. AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS: It is understood and agreed between the parties herein that the agency shall be bound hereunder only to the extent of the funds available, or which may hereafter become available for the purpose of this agreement.

X. AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT BUSINESS IN THE COMMONWEALTH:
NA

Y. SET-ASIDES AWARD PRIORITY: NA

Z. CIVILITY IN STATE WORKPLACES: The grantee shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that no individual, while performing work on behalf of the grantee or any subcontractor in connection with this agreement (each, a “Contract Worker”), shall engage in 1) harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying, cyber-bullying, or threatening or violent conduct, or 2) discriminatory behavior on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, political affiliation, veteran status, or disability.

The grantee shall provide each Contract Worker with a copy of this Section and will require Contract Workers to participate in agency training on civility in the State workplace if grantee’s (and any subcontractor’s) regular mandatory training programs do not already encompass equivalent or greater expectations. Upon request, the grantee shall provide documentation that each Contract Worker has received such training.

For purposes of this Section, “State workplace” includes any location, permanent or temporary, where a Commonwealth employee performs any work-related duty or is representing his or her agency, as well as surrounding perimeters, parking lots, outside meeting locations, and means of travel to and from these locations. Communications are deemed to occur in a State workplace if the Contract Worker reasonably should know that the phone number, email, or other method of

communication is associated with a State workplace or is associated with a person who is a State employee.

The Commonwealth of Virginia may require, at its sole discretion, the removal and replacement of any Contract Worker who the Commonwealth reasonably believes to have violated this Section.

This Section creates obligations solely on the part of the grantee. Employees or other third parties may benefit incidentally from this Section and from training materials or other communications distributed on this topic, but the Parties to this agreement intend this Section to be enforceable solely by the Commonwealth and not by employees or other third parties.

Additional Terms and Conditions

1. **AUDIT:** NA (See “Disbursement of Funds, Accounting and Audit” in Attachment 1: Special Terms and Conditions.)
2. Award: NA
3. Cancellation of Contract: NA
4. eVA Orders and Contracts: NA
5. RENEWAL OF CONTRACT: NA
6. Optional Prebid/Preproposal Conference: NA
7. **PRIME GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES:** The grantee shall be responsible for completely supervising and directing the work under this contract and all subcontractors that he may utilize, using his best skill and attention. Subcontractors who perform work under this contract shall be responsible to the prime grantee. The grantee agrees that he is as fully responsible for the acts and omissions of his subcontractors and of persons employed by them as he is for the acts and omissions of his own employees.

8. References: NA

9. **SUBCONTRACTS:** No portion of the work shall be subcontracted without prior written consent of the purchasing agency. In the event that the grantee desires to subcontract some part of the work specified herein, the grantee shall furnish the purchasing agency the names, qualifications and experience of their proposed subcontractors. The grantee shall, however, remain fully liable and responsible for the work to be done by its subcontractor(s) and shall assure compliance with all requirements of the contract.

10. **CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION:**

The grantee assures that information and data obtained as to personal facts and circumstances related to patients or clients will be collected and held confidential, during and following the term of this agreement, and unless disclosure is required pursuant to court order, subpoena or other regulatory authority, will not be divulged without the individual's and the agency's written consent and only in accordance with federal law or the Code of Virginia.

Grantees who utilize, access, or store personally identifiable information as part of the performance of a contract are required to safeguard this information and immediately notify the agency of any breach or suspected breach in the security of such information. Grantees shall allow the agency to both participate in the investigation of incidents and exercise control over decisions regarding external reporting. Grantees and their employees working on this project may be required to sign a confidentiality statement.

11. STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: NA

12. **E-VERIFY PROGRAM: EFFECTIVE 12/1/13.** Pursuant to Code of Virginia, §2.2-4308.2., any employer with more than an average of 50 employees for the previous 12 months entering into a contract in excess of \$50,000 with any agency of the Commonwealth to perform work or provide services pursuant to such contract shall register and participate in the E-Verify program to verify information and work authorization of its newly hired employees performing work pursuant to such public contract. Any such employer who fails to comply with these provisions shall be debarred from contracting with any agency of the Commonwealth for a period up to one year. Such debarment shall cease upon the employer's registration and participation in the E-Verify program. If

requested, the employer shall present a copy of their Maintain Company page from E-Verify to prove that they are enrolled in E-Verify.

13. BEST AND FINAL OFFER (BAFO): NA

14. INDEMINIFICATION: Grantee agrees to indemnify the Commonwealth of Virginia, its officers, agents, and employees for any loss, liability, cost, or reasonable settlement cost incurred as a result of any claims, damages and actions of any kind or nature, whether at law or in equity, arising from or caused by the use of any materials, goods, or equipment of any kind or nature furnished by the grantee/any services of any kind or nature furnished by the grantee, provided that such liability is not attributable to the sole negligence of the using agency or to failure of the using agency to use the materials, goods, or equipment in the manner already and permanently described by the grantee on the materials, goods or equipment delivered. (Not applicable to state agencies)