

Work Projects



COMMUNITY RESEARCH

This project could be completed as part of a team or as an individual. Have intern(s) identify an area of concern for them or their community and conduct a research project gathering community feedback and ideas.

- Develop a set of research questions and use a survey and/or interviews to gather input from family, friends, and community members
- Conduct research online including why the identified issue occurs and solutions that have been implemented in other communities
- Develop a presentation with research findings and recommendations

ELECTRONIC FILE ORGANIZATION

Many organizations have one or more folders where they've saved a mishmash of unorganized or only lightly organized files. In some cases, they may be old photos or documents, in other cases organizations may have scanned documents for electronic storage (particularly with a move to remote work) and did not have time to organize them.

The intern can review the collection of files and take steps to:

- Name files using a standard nomenclature that makes it easier to identify and find the files in the future
- Organize the files into folders by subject matter or date
- Create a spreadsheet with information about what files are stored, where they are located, last updated date, etc

MARKET RESEARCH

This project could be completed as part of a team or as an individual. Work with the intern(s) to identify a market research topic relevant to your industry and their interests, such as a new or existing product or service.

- Develop a set of research questions and use a survey and/or interviews to gather market insights from family, friends, and community members
- Conduct additional market research online, including identifying competitors, what makes this product/service unique, and ideas for future improvements
- Develop a presentation with research findings and recommendations

MEDIA PRODUCTION

This project could be completed as part of a team or as an individual. Content produced by the intern(s) can be used to help educate future interns.

- Identify a list of people (could be internal or external to the organization) to interview regarding their career path
- Compile a list of 4-5 standard interview questions
- Conduct recorded video interviews via zoom or another platform
- Edit videos into vignettes that showcase the variety of people, career paths, and backgrounds in your organization or industry
- If working as a team, other intern(s) can compile photos and written vignettes into a booklet

SOCIAL MEDIA

This project is probably best for one intern but could be expanded to be a group project. While interns may be familiar with social media, they will likely need training on the way professional social media use differs from personal.

- Review the organization's social media accounts, how they are being used, and how competitors or similar organizations are using social media
- Compile a list of recommended topics and hashtags
- Compile a list of additional accounts to follow
- Craft social media posts about the organization and their internship experience, for review and posting by supervisor
- Develop strategies for increasing followers and follower engagement
- Develop a presentation with findings and recommendations

WELCOME MANUAL FOR INTERNS

This project could be completed as part of a team or as an individual. Content produced by the intern(s) can be used to help educate future interns.

- Compile a welcome manual for future interns, with important documents and tips based on their experience
- Develop a presentation of the welcome manual and include any insights on their experience and recommendations for future improvements

Professional Development Activities

CAREER EXPOSURE ONLINE TRAINING

Intern completes an online course, [such as one of these from the LRNG platform](#), to learn about the careers available in a specific industry.

CAREER EXPOSURE VIDEOS

Similar to the Career Exposure Online Training but less structured. This is great for a self-directed intern to take a more flexible approach to researching videos on their own to learn about a particular industry and career paths. Khan Academy and TED Talks are good starting points for education videos and there are many that can be found by searching YouTube as well.

CAREER PANELS

Youth benefit from meeting and hearing from individuals with diverse backgrounds about their career paths. It's beneficial both for understanding more about the variety of career paths available to them as well as helping to connect the dots on how their journey along the career continuum may look. Having the opportunity to meet actual people and hear about the diversity of their experiences helps to make the idea of transitioning to a professional career feel more concrete.

There are a variety of ways the career panels could be organized. They could be comprised entirely of staff for your organization, or they could include staff from other organizations that you partner with. Given that the career panels will be held via video conference, you could have panelists from anywhere join in. You could also organize multiple career panels, highlighting different aspects of your industry. Panel discussions can be recorded and then re-used for future interns to view, although it's also important to provide opportunities for the interns to ask questions and interact with the panelists to facilitate engagement and networking.

COMMUNICATION ONLINE TRAINING

Interns can brush up on their written and verbal communication skills by completing online training such as [some of these badges from LRNG](#). While this may feel similar to school year academics, communication skills are vitally important for professional positions and can be tied directly to some of the work projects your intern may be completing.

DIGITAL LITERACY ONLINE TRAINING

While young people are digital natives, they may be more comfortable on a smartphone than using a computer, and they may not be familiar with the Microsoft Office suite. Digital literacy skills are vital for the 21st century world of work, particularly as we move toward more remote work. An internship is an excellent opportunity for an intern to focus on their digital literacy skills. Free online programs abound from [GCFLearnFree.org](#), to [LRNG badges](#), to [Microsoft's online learning center](#).

FINANCIAL LITERACY ONLINE TRAINING

For many youth, an internship will be the first time that they are earning their own money. Start them off right by incorporate some financial literacy courses into their internship, so that they begin to understand things like taxes, budgeting, and saving. There are many financial literacy resources available online including [PA Department of Banking and Securities](#) and [U.S. Department of Education's You for Youth](#).

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

Similar to career panels, informational interviews give interns a chance to learn about different career paths and meet professionals with a diverse set of backgrounds. Informational interviews are typically conducted on a one-on-one basis, so these work well

for youth who will be prepared with a set of questions and for youth who may be reluctant to speak up in a group setting. Having an informational interview with an individual also allows the youth to establish more of a connection with the individual than may occur in the setting of a career panel discussion.

To add a research element to this activity, have the intern research online typical informational interview questions and compile a list that they would like to ask each individual they interview.

JOB SEARCH

Understanding where and how to search for job openings and complete online applications are important skills for youth to learn. In particular, youth need to learn how to tell if a job posting is “too good to be true” and probably a scam or misrepresented. This [LRNG playlist](#) may be a good place to start.

MEDIA LITERACY ONLINE TRAINING

Media literacy is another important skill that will be valuable for youth for work and life. Being able to research information and understand how to vet reliable sources is an increasingly vital skill. This can also tie into social media use and thinking about media creation. Check out some [online courses](#) or have interns learn by doing their own research to identify useful resources.

MOCK INTERVIEW PRACTICE

Interviews can be intimidating at any age and experience level. For youth who are just beginning to feel comfortable in the world of work, they can be particularly challenging. Along with learning job search techniques and how to write a resume, it's important for youth to practice interviewing. Have your intern research interview best practices and then conduct one or more mock interview with you or others at your organization.

RESUME WRITING

Learning how to write an effective cover letter and resume is essential to landing a position. Provide your intern with some resume samples or have them research to find samples as well as tips for writing a resume. Help them to create a resume and get feedback on it from your colleagues. Optionally, interns can also set up a profile on LinkedIn and begin establishing their professional network.

VIRTUAL MEETING ETIQUETTE

Youth likely have some familiarity with virtual meeting etiquette and controls from attending classes remotely during the pandemic, but classroom norms may differ from professional meeting norms. This is also a good opportunity for interns to learn about professional meeting structure and notetaking, particularly if you incorporate job shadowing into the internship and the interns attend meetings with you.