Federal Internship Portal FAQs for Agencies

What is the Federal Internship Portal?
The Federal Internship Portal is a new internship opportunities page on USAJOBS: intern.usajobs.gov. This page will serve as a one-stop shop for internship postings across the Federal government, allowing prospective interns to easily find opportunities at any agency.

Why create a Federal Internship Portal?
Feedback from prior interns indicated that it’s often hard to find internship opportunities because prospective interns must navigate each agency’s website to find information, and there is no easy way to search for opportunities across agencies in a specific field such as engineering.

The portal will simplify the search for potential interns by aggregating Federal internship opportunities and allowing them to use the USAJOBS search functions more effectively. It will also help agencies recruit for their intern positions by driving increased traffic to their postings.

When will the Federal Internship Portal be live?
intern.usajobs.gov is ready now. The banner graphic and accompanying language will go live early in the new year. Anyone can find internships by going to the URL or through the student or recent graduates hiring paths on the USAJOBS landing page. While we are making a coordinated recruitment push in January to attract summer 2023 interns, agencies can continue to post internships to the portal year-round.

How does an agency post internships to the Federal Intern Portal?
Agencies will use the same process they use today to post internships to USAJOBS by selecting the Internships Appointment Type and the Student Hiring Path when building the vacancy announcement in the Talent Acquisition System.

How can agencies participate in the Federal Internship Portal?
We ask that every agency post their 2023 internship opportunities to the portal by January 13, 2023, with an emphasis on summer 2023 internships. This date aligns with the academic year and the recruiting timeline in other sectors, and agencies that post by this date will be included in government-wide internship promotion and rollout activities. Our aim is to attract a large and diverse intern candidate pool in advance of their internship start dates.

Are there any planned rollout activities?
Yes. The portal is being developed and implemented by OPM in collaboration with DOL and OMB. We plan to publicly promote the portal in mid-January with several press components, including a campus-specific push and a national story, as well as videos that can be posted to websites and shared via social media. By using recent/current interns as unofficial spokespeople, coupled with quotes from agency heads (including OPM Director Ahuja), we plan to place several stories that drive interest for the new site.
What kinds of opportunities can agencies post to the portal?
Agencies can post information about any internships they offer – for example, Pathways internships. HR teams should consider removing any internal policies that are more restrictive than what the law or OPM regulations allow (for example, using the maximum eligibility window for Pathways, including the ability to allow prospective graduates to apply to positions up to 9 months before graduation).

We especially encourage agencies to consider posting opportunities under the Post-Secondary and College Grads Hiring Authorities. Making full use of these authorities demonstrates that we are taking advantage of every possible hiring avenue to bring on early career talent and enables us to make the case in the future for more resources.

We recommend that the posting’s wording be as clear as possible, using plain language to convey the timeframe of the internship and who is eligible. For example: “We are seeking undergraduate students in STEM majors, to work part-time in various locations across the nation during the summer of 2023,” or “we are seeking graduate students in the field of public health (or closely related majors) to work full-time in Washington, DC or Atlanta during the summer of 2023.”

We also recommend standardizing the job titling, for example: “Job Title – Internship” or using (Internship) as a parenthetical along with the official title.

Should agencies post unpaid internships to the Federal Internship Portal?
Agencies are allowed to post unpaid and paid internship opportunities. However, given the emphasis on increasing paid internships in the President’s Management Agenda and Executive Order 14035, we strongly encourage agencies to focus their efforts on promoting their paid internship opportunities through the portal.

Agencies are also allowed to post unpaid opportunities, projects, or experiences to www.openopportunities.gov. For some part-time or project-based experiences, Open Opportunities may be more appropriate and streamlined.