



NEXT Host Orientation

Northwestern Alumni Association

Northwestern
EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM



Timeline

Alumni host registration: October 1 - October 22, 2026

Student application process: October 7 - October 28, 2026

Alumni host ranking process: November 6 - December 1, 2026

Alumni and students matches announced: Week of December 4, 2026

Externship: Can occur anytime between time of match through June 2027



Matching Process

During the application period, students will be able to view your externship and apply. Once the student application process is complete, you will be able to view all your applications and rank each student who has applied for your externship. Once all rankings are submitted, matches will be made, and alumni and students will be notified. Students will be responsible for contacting alumni to coordinate a date.



Matching Process

We utilize a matching algorithm that considers student application rankings and host applicant rankings. The algorithm works to match as many students and hosts as possible while considering everyone's rankings.

While the algorithm takes your rankings into consideration, there is still a chance you could be matched with a lower ranked applicant. If you feel an applicant would not be a good match, you have the option to decline their application during the review process.

Logistics



Communication

- Students and alumni should maintain contact after being matched to secure a date for their externship.
- We encourage the students to follow up with their match between one to two weeks post-match.
- We recommend moving your communication directly to email and off the NEXT platform to ensure effective communication.

Travel

- Students will be responsible for any travel or housing expenses that will be required for their externship.

Logistics

Length of Externship

- Externships typically last one full work day but can be up to 3 if desired.
- Externships are held any time between the time of match and June.
- Externships may take place over the summer if more convenient for student and host.

Sample Itinerary: IN-PERSON



Time	Schedule of Events
8:30-9:00AM	Meet in lobby at given address and tour the office space
9:00-9:30AM	Meet to discuss the day's schedule and talk more about alum's role and the greater office mission
9:30-10:15AM	Introduce student to colleagues in department who will briefly explain their roles
10:15-10:30AM	Break for coffee
10:30-11:00AM	Call with colleague out of state who will brief us on the status of their projects in that region
11:00AM-12:00PM	Debrief from the call with student to understand topics discussed on call and go through example emails and marketing materials used in day to day communications about organization
12:00-1:00PM	Lunch with host and colleagues/fellow alumni
1:00-2:00PM	Meet with colleague in a different department to provide updates and give an overview of department
2:00-3:00PM	Attend weekly team meeting
3:00-3:30PM	Discuss other projects and previous roles held that led to alum's career path
3:30-4:30PM	Student meets with HR to learn about internship program and entry-level positions
4:30-5:00PM	Debrief the day, answer questions, and discuss how to stay in touch

Planning for Externship

We recommend setting up a call with your student before creating an itinerary to ensure you're both on the same page as to what is expected from the externship.

Sample Itinerary: VIRTUAL (ONE DAY)

Itinerary for Student Name
Name of Organization
Date



Time	Schedule of Activities
9:00 AM – 9:45 AM	Get to know your alumni host -NU experience -Career path -Current role and organization's mission
9:45 AM – 10:00 AM	BREAK
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Introduce student to colleagues on host's team -Information about each role and how they work together -Current projects
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM	BREAK
10:45 AM – 11:00 AM	Debrief on team meeting and inform for client call
11:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Call with a current client -Status of project and updates -Next steps
11:30 AM – 11:45 AM	Debrief client call and answer any questions
11:45 AM – 12:00 PM	BREAK
12:00 PM – 12:30 PM	Student meets with HR to learn about internship program and entry-level positions
12:30 PM – 1:00 PM	Debrief the day, answer questions and discuss how to stay in touch

Planning for Externship

Visit our website to explore more sample itineraries of [virtual](#) and [in-person](#) externships.

Sample Itinerary: VIRTUAL (TWO DAY)

Itinerary for Student Name
Name of Organization



Day 1:

Time	Schedule of Activities
9:00 AM – 9:45 AM	Get to know your alumni host -NU experience -Career path -Current role and organization's mission
9:45 AM – 10:00 AM	BREAK
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Introduce student to colleagues on host's team -Information about each role and how they work together -Current projects
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM	BREAK
10:45 AM – 11:00 AM	Debrief on team meeting and inform for client call
11:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Call with a current client -Status of project and updates -Next steps
11:30 AM – 11:45 AM	Debrief client call and answer any questions

Day 2

Time	Schedule of Activities
2:15 PM – 2:30 PM	Check in on questions from day 1 and what to expect for day 2
2:30 PM – 3:00 PM	Student meets with a colleague from a different department or concentration of company
3:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Student meets with HR to learn about internship program and entry-level positions
4:00 PM – 4:15 PM	BREAK
4:15 PM – 4:45 PM	Debrief the day, answer questions, and discuss how to stay in touch

Planning for Externship

Suggested Externship Activities

- One-on-one or small group meetings with colleague(s) from your team
- Sitting in on a group meeting
- Resume review
- Office or broader organization tour
- Meeting with someone from your human resources department to learn about internship opportunities or hiring processes
- Anything that might be unique to your industry that is not listed above



After Externship

Once the externship has been completed, discuss with your student if and how you would like to stay in touch. This would be the ideal time to share your contact information—LinkedIn profile, email address, phone number. Be sure to complete the end-of-program survey to let us know about your experience and share any ways we can improve for next year!



Thank you for choosing to
participate in NEXT!

next@northwestern.edu

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