

# A Guide for Career Services Centers

InternshipsVA is partnering with Handshake to connect students with internships through a first-of-its-kind partnership.

## What is InternshipsVA?

InternshipsVA, a program of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), helps Virginia employers create high-quality, paid internships that build strong talent pipelines and keep Virginia's best and brightest here after graduation. Virginia's vision is for all students at each of our exceptional colleges and universities to have the opportunity to participate in at least one paid or credit-bearing internship opportunity before graduation.

InternshipsVA gives Virginia employers a structured path to source student talent from Virginia institutions, plus training, resources, and technical support for all businesses as well as financial support for organizations with 150 or fewer employees in Virginia.

- In order to receive funding to offset the cost of an internship through InternshipsVA, employers must hire students who are currently enrolled at a Virginia higher-education institution or intending to enroll next semester, have a high school diploma, and have not yet completed an undergraduate degree.

Look for the following language in an internship posting to indicate the company is participating in the InternshipsVA initiative: “[Company Name] is a proud participant in the InternshipsVA program.”

Learn more at [vedp.org/internshipsva](https://vedp.org/internshipsva).

## Why Handshake?

InternshipsVA's [partnership with Handshake](#) provides a marketplace to connect Virginia students with paid, high-quality internships with Virginia employers.

Handshake's scale, data, accessibility, and activity across many of Virginia's colleges and universities make it easier for all students to find opportunities and for all employers to build strong talent pipelines.

This partnership also enables aggregated, state-level reporting so VEDP can use Handshake's proprietary data and insights and work with institutions to identify gaps and opportunities across internship supply and student demand.

## Why participate?

The Commonwealth's investment in InternshipsVA reflects Virginia's commitment to strong outcomes for its institutions and students. Students who have a paid internship report higher levels of knowledge and confidence about their career, feel more supported by their college or university, are more likely to feel their

education was worth the cost and helped them to achieve their goals, and are more likely to recommend their college or university to others.

**InternshipsVA** expands access to paid internship pathways for Virginia students. Your promotion and curation drive equitable access and employer engagement.

**Handshake** works for students and job seekers across all institutions. Schools already using Handshake can curate and track InternshipsVA roles with labels, publish a jobs feed to your site, create custom collections for jobs and internships, and report on engagement to show impact and drive equity at scale.

Schools not using Handshake can confidently point students to Handshake to discover internships, events, and peer learning tools to help students discover quality internships, apply efficiently, and build early career connections.

## How to participate

### Institutions using Handshake as their primary tool

- Create and promote a Virginia-based collection in Handshake. See the [Step-by-Step Guide](#).
- Encourage students to explore opportunities by promoting these saved searches on websites, in email signatures, in newsletters, at staff or department meetings:
  - All Internships in Virginia: <https://tinyurl.com/vainternships>
  - Internships with employers participating in InternshipsVA: <https://tinyurl.com/inva-internships>
  - All full-time job opportunities: <https://tinyurl.com/vafulltime>
- Curate and track InternshipsVA employers and jobs with a school label (e.g., “Virginia employers”) so staff and reports can filter these roles consistently.
- Create and publish an internships feed on your website using External Feeds filtered by that label (RSS → embed on your site or route via your CMS/email tool). See the [Step-by-Step Guide](#).
- Promote on social media and Handshake’s student feed. Post concise explainer content with the program link, key dates, and a filtered job search links.

### Institutions that don’t primarily use Handshake

- Promote the following saved searches for students to explore:
  - All Internships in Virginia: <https://tinyurl.com/vainternships>
  - Internships with employers participating in InternshipsVA: <https://tinyurl.com/inva-internships>
  - All full-time job opportunities: <https://tinyurl.com/vafulltime>
- Publish a simple “How to apply via Handshake” or “InternshipsVA” webpage or resource with sign-in guidance and the program link so students can find/apply efficiently.
- Promote on social media. Post concise explainer content with the program link, key dates, and a filtered job search links.