

INTERN FOUNDRY

FOUNDRY
SUPPORT EDUCATE DEVELOP

N HONORS

Adding capacity while cultivating Nebraska's talent.

A PROGRAM BY FOUNDRY AND UNL HONORS



Connect high-achieving students with organizations to meet community need.

The Intern Foundry (IF) program is a partnership between the Foundry and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Honors Program that aims to address the “brain drain” in Nebraska. It pairs high-achieving students with work-based learning opportunities in areas of critical community and organizational need to cultivate a

long-term talent ecosystem among the next generation of community and business leaders. The program helps build a pipeline of future talent, leadership, and committed citizens across Nebraska by connecting students with nonprofits, public sector organizations, and purpose-driven businesses.



BUILD CAPACITY

Address critical areas of high community and organizational need



CREATE BRAIN GAIN

Develop stronger future talent, leadership, and volunteers



CENTER STUDENTS

Student-led, meaningful work-based learning

FOUNDRY
SUPPORT EDUCATE DEVELOP

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N HONORS

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INTERN FOUNDRY IMPACT

The Intern Foundry (IF) program connects hardworking, community-focused UNL Honors students with non-profits, public sector organizations, and purpose-driven businesses to develop a strong pipeline of future talent, leadership, and volunteers in Nebraska. In the spring, the program serves a variety of purpose-driven organizations, while the summer cohort focuses on addressing the most urgent and relevant community and business needs. The IF program's support and structure are crucial for a successful internship experience for many groups it serves, providing the talent, capacity, and quality work needed to complete essential projects.

Key Outcomes of the Intern Foundry Program



Skill Development

Project management skills, such as planning, communication, time management, and problem-solving, are valuable to students and employers. These skills are useful for many jobs in our state—particularly with nonprofits, public-sector organizations, and purpose-driven businesses.



High Expectations, High Support

The secret sauce of Intern Foundry is support - intentional support for both participating supervisors and student interns. The Foundry supports supervisors by equipping them with tools and resources to help them maximize their experience with the student. The Foundry supports student interns with individual and group coaching, professional development, and strong quality control efforts. The result? Extremely high quality learning and performance - a win-win for organizations, students, and the community.



Building Community and Business Capacity

The Intern Foundry program allows partner nonprofits, public-sector organizations, and purpose-driven businesses to undertake projects they otherwise may not be able to complete. It further provides a pipeline for future volunteers and employees invested in the organization's mission and work.



Addressing Brain Drain in Nebraska

The IF program invigorates the community by injecting high-achieving students' creativity and hard work. Experience deeply roots students in the community, increasing the likelihood that they will continue to invest in purpose-driven work, local communities, and the state following graduation.

THE CASE IS COMPELLING...

"Results of Hiring & Training Needs surveys conducted throughout Nebraska show that employers consistently report a lack of applicants for key positions across most occupations, industries, and regions of the state."

SCOTT HUNZEKER
NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR



PURPOSE-DRIVEN

Project Examples



Research, Data, and Policy Work

As we worked to grow our organizational directory to encompass resources statewide, our intern provided additional partner and policy research and website updates. Through the course of the project, our intern was able to connect with a variety of existing organizations to grow the network and help community members across the state access resources to improve their quality of life.



Organizational Planning and Support

In preparing for a rapidly growing team, our intern assisted the supervisor consider new models for restructuring. This included centralizing data such as Key Performance Indicators, assembling key data points, mapping out plans for the search process of new hires, and examining how operations could be further streamlined tied to the newly imagined structure.



Leveraging Technology

Our intern created a new computer application to improve efficiency in an organizational process that was cumbersome and time-consuming. Although the app had many challenges, the process of negotiating priorities, with a variety of stakeholder groups, was extremely beneficial to the organization. The intern facilitated the small group stakeholder meetings for feedback and helped the organization gain clarity for the app.



Event Planning and Execution

The intern assisted in the preparation of our annual advocacy day, working alongside the Executive Director. To prepare for the event, the intern coordinated all space reservations, prepared narrative for Senator introductions, communicated with advocacy day registrants, and assisted on the day of the event. Additionally, the event was shared via social media to boost awareness.

SUPERVISOR SPOTLIGHT

"The project has benefited greatly from the intern's contributions, which have included valuable insights, innovative ideas, and a wealth of knowledge."

PAST PARTNERS





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“I currently work in an acute behavioral clinic in Omaha. I can definitely draw connections between my time in Intern Foundry and my work now. My time as an Intern and Coordinator helped equip me with the interpersonal skills needed to handle patients.”

ZUHA QADEER FORMER INTERN AND STUDENT COORDINATOR

“The most impactful thing that Intern Foundry taught me is that I can be confident as a software engineering major despite being from rural Nebraska and beginning college with no coding experience. IF set me up for a lot of success... between learning how to communicate with non-technical stakeholders and understanding the business priorities of a nonprofit organization.”

DRAKE HERMANSON FORMER INTERN

“I have been very impressed with the interns that we have had. They are smart, driven, and have a willingness to learn.”

TINA ROCKENBACH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITY ACTION OF NEBRASKA



95% of participating nonprofits report that the talent and capacity provided by their intern was critical to the completion of mission-driven essential projects.