

Best Practices for Funding Your Internship or Summer Projects

Where to Begin?

You've secured (or are in the process of securing) a summer internship or project, congratulations! Now it's time to think through how you'll make it financially sustainable. The first step is clarifying the scope of your experience by answering these questions:

- **What is it?**
 - Is this an internship, research project, or creative endeavor? Knowing the type of experience helps determine what funding sources may apply.
- **Why are you pursuing it?**
 - Consider how this opportunity connects to your goals, passions, or career path. Funders want to see not only what you'll do, but why it matters to you.
- **What skills will you build?**
 - Identify the areas you hope to develop (e.g., production experience, grant writing, project management). This helps frame your "learning outcomes" for funding proposals.
- **When/Where will it take place?**
 - Clarifying the timing (summer, quarter-long, year-long) and location (Chicago, remote, international) will guide which grants or programs you're eligible for.
- **What resources do you need?**
 - Estimate costs such as housing, transportation, food, or project materials. A clear budget helps you identify multiple funding sources rather than relying on just one.

The answers to these questions will **help you identify the right funding sources, strengthen your applications, and plan realistically for your summer**. If you're unsure how to answer them, connect with faculty, an EPICS advisor, or peers who have completed similar internships or projects.

EPICS & NCA Resources

EPICS and Northwestern Career Advancement (NCA) provide a range of resources to help students pursue and prepare for internships. From guidance on the value of internships to funding support and access to professional attire through 'Cats Closet, these offices offer practical tools to make career experiences more accessible and successful.

- [Value of an Internship](#)
- [Funding Your Undergraduate Internship](#)
- [Career Development Fund](#)
- ['Cats Closet](#)

Creative Projects

The School of Communication and the RTVF department provide funding opportunities to support students pursuing creative work, research, internships, and high-impact learning experiences. These grants can help offset costs such as project supplies, travel, data collection, and festival submissions, while also recognizing outstanding creative or scholarly work.

- [SoC Funding for Student Research and Experiential Learning](#)
- [RTVF Funding Options](#)
- [Media Arts Grant \(MAG\)](#)
- [Bindley Grant](#)
- [Max Saines Grant](#)
- [Chuck Kleinhans Essay Prize](#)
- [Festival Incentive Grants \(FIGs\)](#)
- [Pritzker Pucker Studio Lab](#)

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Fellowships

The Office of Fellowships supports students and alumni in finding and applying for opportunities. They provide tailored guidance on identifying programs, preparing materials, and strengthening applications with mentorship and coaching.

- [NU Office of Fellowships Resources & Support](#)

Research

Northwestern and the School of Communication offer many opportunities to explore and fund research. From department-based programs to university-wide resources, students can find support through labs, mentorship, and funding initiatives that make it possible to pursue projects across a range of disciplines.

- [SoC Research Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Undergraduate Research Opportunities EREA: Early Research Experience Awards](#)
- [Communication Studies Research Labs & Centers](#)
- [Communication Sciences and Disorders Research Labs](#)
- [NU Office For Research](#)
- [Internal Funding Programs](#)
- [Office of Undergraduate Research](#)
- [Undergraduate Funding](#)

Internship Housing Resources (NYC & LA)

Housing is often one of the biggest expenses during internships, especially in cities like New York and Los Angeles. The resources below provide short-term housing options commonly used by students and interns:

- [Educational Housing Services](#)
- [Intern Housing NYC](#)
- [NYU Summer Housing](#)
- [Kapi Residences - Intern Housing](#)
- [UCLA Summer Housing](#)