

## WHAT IS IT?

The Non Profit Board Student Internship Program (NPBI) consists of three mutually supportive activities with an estimated total commitment time of 50-60 hours. These activities are:

1. **A series of six workshops:** Organized by University of Alberta Career Centre and delivered by volunteers from the Alberta Culture Board Development Program, the workshops provide interns with training and discussion opportunities to explore key aspects of non-profit boards. (15 hours in workshops)
2. **A board placement:** Organized by the Community Service-Learning (CSL) Program and guided by volunteer Mentors from each host board, the board placement affords Interns the opportunity to attend and to participate in board meetings, using and practising their newly acquired skills. (20 hours in board meetings)
3. **A project to support board governance:** To qualify for a NPBI Certificate, Interns contribute a final project – which they design and complete under the guidance of their Mentors. (20 hours on board project)

The internship also meets the non-credit opportunity requirement for the [Certificate in Community Engagement and Service-Learning](#).

## EXPECTATIONS AND ROLES

The relationship between the board Mentor and the student Intern is critical for success of the program.

### **Interns are expected to:**

- Attend and participate in board meetings; ask questions and apply workshop learnings.
- Practice the skills of observation, time management, personal organization, effective communication, and consideration for others at all board meetings.
- Be pro-active about brainstorming possible projects for the board that will fulfill a need.
- Produce a final project for the board to enhance board governance to be presented at graduation.
- Attend and participate in all of the workshops to ensure a basic foundation of knowledge and experience.

\*PLEASE NOTE: A participant can miss a workshop for only 2 reasons:

1. an unplanned and unexpected emergency situation; *OR*
2. a significant pre-planned commitment (advance notice must be given)

If a workshop is missed, interns must complete a make-up assignment based on the missed content. The make-up assignment has a deadline for completion and will be emailed to missing participants after the session.

If a participant misses **more than 2** workshops regardless of reason or advance notice, they will not be eligible to receive the NPBI certificate.

### **Mentors are expected to:**

- Provide the Intern with an orientation and information about the organization (e.g. website, manuals).
- Introduce the Intern to fellow board members and the organization's staff and help integrate the Intern onto the board.
- Be available to answer any questions the Intern may have.
- Discuss goals and expectations, and how the two of you will communicate and work together.
- Assist the Intern in understanding his or her role on the board and with any tasks or projects assigned.
- Identify and model expected behaviours of an effective board member.
- Provide constructive feedback to the Intern on an on-going basis.
- Be clear with the Intern as to what is considered confidential and what is not.

**Boards are expected to:**

- Provide opportunities for the Intern to fulfill the program's time commitment requirement (September to April). Activities the Intern may undertake to meet this commitment can include attending board meetings, serving on a committee, and working on a special project.
- Provide a meaningful, supportive learning experience for the Intern.
- Appoint the Intern's Mentor, and an alternate, in the event that the Mentor is unable to meet her or his commitment.

**THE PROJECT**

The purpose of the project is to:

- apply the knowledge and experience interns have gained through the internship;
- develop and deepen your intellectual and practical skills in a community setting;
- contribute something tangible and lasting to their host boards (and to the NPBI Program).

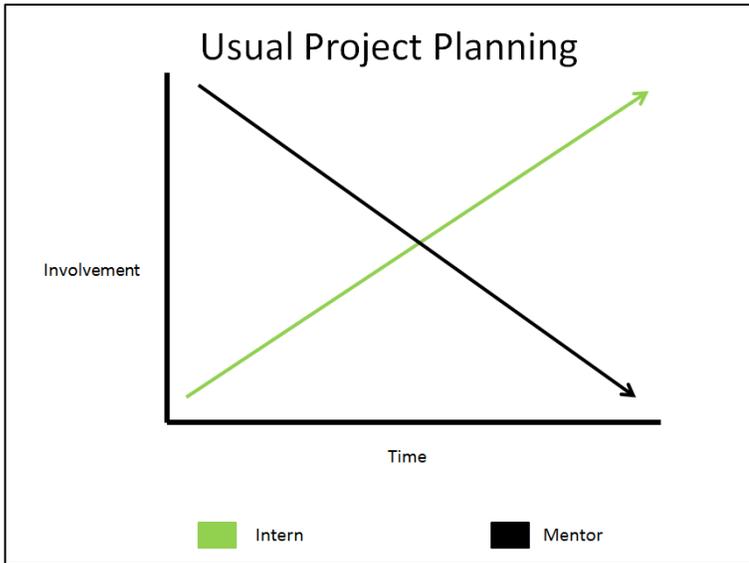
Examples of past projects include:

- Creating a toolkit for board members to communicate the purpose and value of the organization at community events;
- Investigating membership models on non-profit societies to mitigate risk;
- Developing terms of reference for subcommittees, which may include roles and responsibilities and policies;
- Developing a board evaluation tool;
- Developing guidelines on running an effective meeting and implementing Robert's Rules of Order

To ensure successful completion of these worthwhile projects:

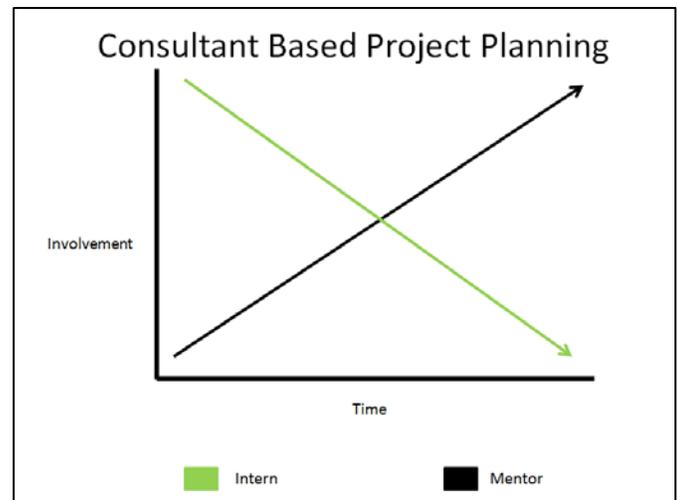
- Choose a project that will enhance the board and board member's function and that will have long term sustainability for the board.
- Start thinking about the project early (by mid to late October).
- Through discussion and negotiation, decide upon a project together.
- Select a project that is doable by the intern within the time frame, is of significance to the board, and is of interest to everyone involved.
- Create an action plan for completing the project, along with goals and timelines/incremental deadlines
- Share with the rest of the board and the NPBI Program what the project entails (and about the progress being made).
- Mentors: provide ongoing guidance, feedback, and constructive criticism.
- Interns: ask for assistance as you need it.

# Implementing best practices in project development for the Non Profit Board Student Internship Program



Typically paid staff are heavily involved in the planning process for project development and volunteers are brought in during the execution phase. For example, you might have a research project you want written where all of the information has been gathered and the volunteer has been asked to write it.

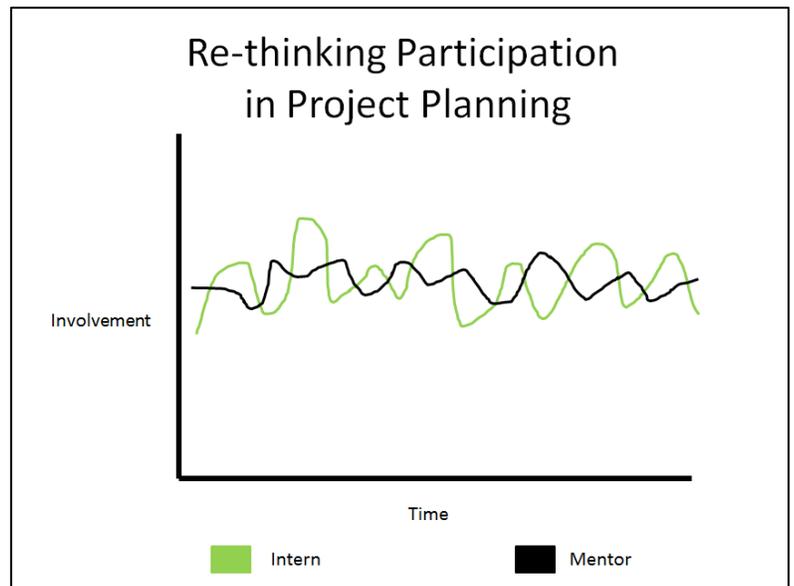
Alternatively, mentors might look to interns for ideas that can help the organization, much like you would a consultant. However, with this approach the intern doesn't have context or history of the organization. They do not yet understand the day-to-day challenges or the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and therefore aren't yet in place to offer assistance.



Interns should not choose a project for their board, nor should mentors choose a project for their intern.

Project identification should be a collaborative process.

Interns are at various stages of their learning. As they progress through the program they develop the skills needed to be an effective board member.



Involve your intern at every point of the internship and talk to them about what they are learning and how they see this helping your organization. By attending board meetings and seeing how the organization functions interns will be in a better position to see how they can assist.

Once a project is chosen it is important to check in frequently with one another to offer support and identify the resources you might need or know of. Some interns may not be aware of the resources that can assist them. For example, an annual report might be a great resource to help understand the organization's strategic goals but an intern may not know to ask for it.

**Together, identify what you hope to accomplish:**

- Projects should be 20 hours of work and must be completed by April 2017.
- When choosing a project consider the learning opportunities for your intern. Are they enrolled in any courses that could compliment the project or organization?
- What is your organization expecting from the internship and project? How does it connect back to your mission and vision?
- Could the project be altered so that the organization, mentor and intern benefit?
- Is the project finite with a clear beginning and end? What is the timeline for completion? Is the project achievable or is it something that will need to be accomplished a little at a time? What are the tangible outputs you hope to achieve?

Suggestions for establishing an effective mentoring relationship

Conversation guide		
To-do list	Strategies to try	Considerations for success
Get to know each other	Obtain copy of biography or resume in advance of meeting. Probe with introductory questions. Make notes after the meeting of highly valuable qualities and characteristics of both. Celebrate commonalities.	For the mentor, what areas of expertise do you have relevant to mentee's goals? Be authentic by being loyal to who you are and what you've experienced that has been reflected in your identity and values. Share background stories, aspirations and life goals.
Discover mentoring	Ask/Share: Have you ever been in a mentoring relationship? What did you learn? What did you wish happened? Why is this important?	Be vulnerable about your own mentoring experiences by including failures and successes.
Identify goals	Ask/Share: What are your long-term big goals? What are your short-term worthwhile goals? Where do you see yourself at the end of the eight months?	Broad goals are a good place to start. Clarity may be lacking but can be guided and made realistic by deconstructing into SMART goals.
Roles and responsibilities	Ask/Share: What do you expect out of this relationship and why? Review the roles of mentor and mentee. What does this mean in your relationship?	Discuss what your responsibility assumptions are and if they are realistic for your relationship. Document these expectations but allow for adjustments and flexibility if things need to change.
Relationship expectations	Ask/Share: What will success at the beginning, middle and end of this relationship look like to you? How will you be different at the end of the program? What will you be able to do or know?	Ask mentee to share his or her application essay and reasons for applying to the program. Who in your network can you call on to share relevant expertise to supplement you as a mentor (i.e. other board members)? Discuss methods of mentoring (phone, e-mail, in person meetings) and advantages of them.
Authentic tasks and learning criteria	Ask/Share: What learning opportunities are available? What activities or research will you do to achieve your goals? What assistance can be provided to help make sense of what you find or experience?	Discuss learning styles and how this may affect the relationship (learn by: doing, reading, trying, etc.). Discuss activities to enhance learning and incorporate network connections. (See: <i>Menu of Mentoring Activities</i> on the opposite page).
Accountability and feedback	Ask/Share: How are you going to hold each other accountable? What performance criteria can you set? How will feedback be given?	Be respectful of time. Discuss availability, communication methods, and how feedback can be given comfortably. Set boundaries and limitations.
Confidentiality and limitations	Ask/Share: What are the boundaries of this relationship? What information is confidential? What are we able to contribute to this relationship?	Set limitations and boundaries for the mentoring relationship. Consider what will happen if these boundaries are crossed.

## MENU OF MENTORING ACTIVITIES

The following are some possible activities that Mentors and Interns can do together to enhance their mentoring relationship. Mentors and Interns are not limited to the activities on this list nor should they feel pressured to engage in them. Activities should be selected and adapted based on the Mentor's and Intern's learning goals.

### Board Member Stages

A Mentor can discuss the different stages an Intern might experience throughout their involvement on a board from observer to contributor to committee chair to board chair.

### Organizational Challenges

Discuss the challenges your organization experiences and how the board goes about handling these challenges. This could help development ideas for project outcomes.

### Career History

Mentors can discuss their career path, and how their involvement in the non-profit sector compliments their career. Sharing tips on transitioning from school to work will be helpful in identifying transferrable skills from one role to another.

### Experiential Activities

Mentors and Interns can brainstorm strategies or activities that will help an Intern develop specific skills, knowledge, attitudes and/or connections. For example, if an Intern wants to improve their public speaking skills, a Mentor can suggest the Intern join Toastmasters. These activities should include a discussion before the activity (i.e. how to prepare or what to expect from an activity) and after the activity (i.e. follow-up on how the activity went and what the Intern learned).

### Intern Presentation

The Intern can prepare a presentation on a relevant topic and present it to their Mentor and the board at a later date. The Mentor can evaluate the Intern on the content and delivery of the presentation and give them constructive feedback on how to improve.

### Learning Journal

Interns can start a learning journal. The learning journal can document their thoughts and feelings about their goals, their progress in reaching those goals, and their discussions with their Mentors during their meetings. An Intern may want to start with sentences such as:

- The most important work we did today was...
- To apply what I've learned, I will...
- The questions or challenges that remain for me are...

### Progress Reports

Interns can share a sample of their project as it takes shape and get evaluated on it by their Mentor prior to the project being due. This can help Interns recognize their areas for improvement. Mentors could also share some of their own work or work done in their field to discuss its merits, strengths and weaknesses. This is a good chance for Mentors to clearly communicate expectations.

### Reading Resources

A Mentor can suggest an influential book, periodical, or journal article to the Intern. The Mentor and Intern could then discuss the literature and its application towards the Intern's goals.

### Volunteer Orientation

The Intern may wish to participate in a full volunteer orientation to get to know the organization from a volunteer's point of view. If no volunteer orientation exists, perhaps the Intern can interview volunteers or volunteer coordinators to find out what information is essential to the volunteer experience.

**NON-PROFIT BOARD STUDENT INTERNSHIP CONTRACT**
**Mentor Contact**

Name:

Phone 1:

Phone 2:

Email:

Mentor's preferred time and method of communication:

**Intern Contact**

Name:

Phone 1:

Phone 2:

Email:

Intern's preferred time and method of communication:

Together we have discussed and agree on the following goals we will work toward together to create a meaningful mentoring relationship for both of us. Our SMART goals are outlined below:

<b>SMART Goal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific</li> <li>• Measurable</li> <li>• Attainable</li> <li>• Realistic</li> <li>• Timely</li> </ul>	1.  2.  3.
<b>What tasks will help us reach this goal?</b> (i.e. volunteering, attending board meetings, reading blogs, etc.)	
<b>What performance criteria will we use to know we've reached the goal?</b> (i.e. schedule a presentation for the intern to present to the board; produce a useable project, etc.)	
<b>How will we offer each other feedback on our performance as mentor and intern?</b> (i.e. immediately after a board meeting, in person, over e-mail, etc.)	

Meeting Details					
Frequency	Length	Location	Possible Topics/Purpose	Follow up meetings to discuss learning points and observations	Action Items

We have discussed the responsibilities each of us will assume and have decided that:

I, the Mentor, will be responsible for...

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- 

I, the Intern, will be responsible for...

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*Additional information/notes:*

The formal mentoring relationship will continue as part of the NPBI Program until April. Any ongoing contact that continues beyond the formal mentoring period is entirely at our discretion. If we experience issues in our mentoring relationship, we will address them with one another respectfully; if necessary, we may decide to seek outside assistance, from CSL and Career Centre.

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Mentor's signature/date

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Intern's signature/date

### PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

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