



INTERNSHIP CHALLENGE

Frequently Asked Questions for Host Companies

What is the Internship Challenge?

The Internship Challenge is a workforce development program focused on enhancing the talent pipeline for Massachusetts companies engaged in the life sciences. The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) facilitates the placement of students and recent graduates who are considering career opportunities in the life sciences in paid internships across the state throughout the year. Consistent with the MLSC's role as a catalyst in growing the talent needed by the life sciences industry, the Internship Challenge is designed to create hundreds of new internship opportunities each year by enabling small businesses to hire paid interns. The MLSC reimburses eligible companies for intern stipends.

What are the program's objectives?

The objectives of the Internship Challenge are to:

- ✓ Provide the life sciences community with a talented pool of young scientists
- ✓ Enable more students to explore career opportunities in a challenging economic environment
- ✓ Enable more life sciences companies to mentor students and provide internship opportunities across a broader spectrum
- ✓ Increase awareness and meet a need identified by multiple talent reports
- ✓ Recognize and support the need for greater diversity in our life sciences workforce
- ✓ Provide a peer network of young scientists and students interested in working in the life sciences

How does the program work?

Students or recent graduates that are looking for an internship in the life sciences industry will need to first complete an online application (link below), which includes their resume and a cover letter.

Applications are accepted year-round but will expire after six months if not updated. Representatives from companies looking to host interns review applications, interview candidates, and select interns with the qualifications that are most suited to their needs. Internships can be part or full time and can take place throughout the Program Year, which runs from **May 1st through April 30th**.

The MLSC will reimburse eligible companies for pay rates of up to \$17 per hour for a total reimbursement of no more than \$8,160 per intern at the conclusion of the internship.

What are the eligibility requirements for companies to participate in the program?

Companies will be required to meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Must be located in Massachusetts and internships must take place in Massachusetts. Companies are required to be registered to do business in Massachusetts and must submit to MLSC Certificates of Good Standing from both the [MA Department of Revenue](#) and the [MA Secretary of the Commonwealth](#) (click on links to request). Companies will also need to provide MLSC with a signed copy of their [Form W-9](#).
2. Must be small businesses (100 or fewer employees in MA; 250 or fewer worldwide). Larger companies, subsidiaries of larger companies, and research institutions are welcome to participate in the program; however their internships would *not* be subsidized.
3. Must be life sciences companies or companies that provide services to the life sciences industry. "Life sciences" is defined as: "advanced and applied sciences that expand the understanding of human physiology and have the potential to lead to medical advances or therapeutic applications," – Massachusetts General Laws (MGL), chapter 23I, section 2.
4. Must offer interns a hands-on learning experience and at least one mentor that directly oversees the internship.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Multiple companies that are "Related Parties" (having any person or entity directly or indirectly controlling, controlled by or under common control) can participate, however will be limited to the funding available for ONE company. If your company is related to another company registered for this program, please notify us immediately.
- Companies cannot hire an intern who is the spouse, child, grandchild, sibling, niece, nephew, or spouse of a child, grandchild, sibling, niece, or nephew of ANY employee of the company.

How does a company register to participate?

Companies interested in hosting interns through this program should first complete the online [registration form](#) and proceed to fill out an application for the current Program Year.

As part of this application, companies are required to upload a recently issued **Certificate of Good Standing from the MA Secretary of the Commonwealth AND a Certificate of Good Standing from the MA Department of Revenue.**

MLSC staff will review registration requests to determine eligibility and reply with detailed instructions.

What is the process for reviewing applications?

Companies approved by the MLSC has prospective host companies will be provided access to a robust database of intern applications. The review of candidates is done exclusively by host companies and they will reach out directly to candidates with the qualifications that are most suited to their needs. The MLSC will provide final approval to extend an offer to the intern, contingent upon verification of the applicant's eligibility and the availability of funds.

How many interns can a company hire?

Companies eligible to receive reimbursement from the MLSC may hire up to two subsidized interns each Program Year (which runs from May 1st through April 30th). Companies have the option to hire up to two additional interns that are enrolled in a 2-year/Community College/Certificate program. Furthermore, companies will be eligible to hire more than the maximum four subsidized interns provided that each additional intern replaces an intern that was hired by the company as a full time employee.

Can a new intern be hired to “replace” an intern that has left the position prematurely?

Yes, in the event that an intern works less than 50% of the hours initially agreed to, companies can hire a “follow-on” intern to work the remaining hours. The total reimbursement for both the original and follow-on interns is still capped at \$8,160.

What are the company's contractual obligations?

Companies hosting interns will be required to execute an Intern Sponsorship Agreement with the MLSC that sets forth funding requirements. Companies must attach executed intern offer letters to this Agreement as verification that the intern(s) has/have accepted the internship position(s). There is no explicit or implicit commitment on the part of any host company to provide future employment for any intern.

How are interns paid?

Interns are to be hired and paid directly by the host company. Any employed intern shall be treated as an employee of company (not a contractor or subcontractor) for compensation purposes and preferably paid through a third party payroll service (e.g. ADP, Paychex, Intuit Payroll). If using an internal payroll system (e.g. QuickBooks) in which payroll is not processed by a third party, additional support in the form of signed weekly timesheets will be required. All applicable payroll taxes (also reimbursable) shall also be paid by the company.

How does a company request reimbursement from the MLSC?

Upon completion of the internship(s), companies must submit (electronic copies via email are OK) to MLSC the following:

1. **Reimbursement Summary Form** (template provided by MLSC) that reflects all hours worked during the internship period and calculates the amount reimbursable. This form will serve as the invoice and **MUST** be completed electronically and hand-signed by the intern and his/her supervisor.
2. **Proof of payment** to the interns (e.g. copies of pay checks, pay stubs, earnings statements).
3. A recently signed and dated **W-9 tax form**.

The MLSC will mail a check to the company within 25 business days of receipt of all above-mentioned supporting documentation.

A more detailed description of reimbursement requirements can be found on the MLSC website and will be e-mailed directly to companies once they are approved.