

Commonwealth Innovative Internship Program Update

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Background

- **2018: \$200k appropriated to SCHEV to award grants to stimulate public colleges and universities to develop partnerships to provide innovative paid internship opportunities for their students.**
- **2019: The effort was expanded and enacted into law as the Innovative Internship Fund and Program (\$700k annually).**

Background (cont'd)

The purpose of the new program is to expand paid and credit-bearing student internships and other work-based learning opportunities in collaboration with Virginia employers.

Background (cont'd)

Two components:

- **Institutional grants**
- **Statewide initiative to facilitate the readiness of students, employers and institutions of higher education to participate in internship and other work-based learning opportunities**

Statewide Initiative

Question 1:

How can a statewide initiative support institutions and students to scale these efforts while maintaining consistency and quality for students and employers?

Question 2:

How can a statewide initiative support employers to scale their efforts while maintaining consistency and quality?

Initial Review

Spring & Summer 2019

- Convened a Policy and Employer Advisory Panel
- Conducted an environmental scan
- Convened regional meetings with internship practitioners from institutions of higher education
- Convened regional meetings with employers

Findings – Institutional Review

- **Every institution is focused on providing experiential learning opportunities for students**
- **Many excellent programs**
- **Experienced staff are implementing national best practices**

Findings – Institutional Review (Cont'd)

Additional attention is needed at a high level to increase institutional readiness to provide high quality, paid internships at scale.

Areas focus must include:

1. Consistent Definitions
2. Coordination
3. Access and Equity
4. Student Experience
5. Professional Development and Recognition

Efforts to Increase Institutional Readiness

- Issued RFP for \$25k grants to institutions (two rounds of awards available)
- Presidents of public institutions must convene a task force to develop an experiential learning vision for students at their institutions, determine institutional priorities and design strategies to implement the highest priority initiatives needed to achieve the vision over time.

Grant Deliverables

A comprehensive plan for grantee institutions submitted to SCHEV at the end of the grant period.

Additional activity: Engagement in state-level activities with SCHEV, the Chamber and other partners on the development of statewide initiatives for internship and work-based learning.

Findings – Employer Meetings

Employers asked for:

- **Understanding of a unified vision across K-12 and higher ed and across initiatives (workforce, academic, G3, Go Virginia) so they can choose engagement options that best suit their mission**
- **More options for engagement, especially if their needs don't align with specific degree program(s)**

Findings – Employer Meetings (cont'd)

- More productive and effective degree-program industry advisory councils
- Assistance to start new experiential learning programs; ongoing technical support

Efforts to Increase Employer Readiness

Partner with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber Foundation and regional Chambers to:

- **Identify new employer partners**
- **Ensure the readiness of employers to offer evidence-based programs, in collaboration with institutions**
- **Provide outreach and awareness for students, parents and employers**

Other Potential Initiatives in 2020

- **Student readiness (sharing & scaling best practices already underway)**
- **Professional development events**
- **Collaboration to transform federal work study**
- **Recommendations for design & development of state work study**
- **Technology for tracking, measuring, reporting**