



U.S.-German
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM 2021

May - August 2021

Student Information Package

www.german-american-exchange.com

**BAKER
DONELSON**

RÜCKEL & COLLEGEN
Rechtsanwälte Attorneys at Law
Munich Atlanta Düsseldorf



U.S.-German Internship Program - Program Description

About the Program

German-American Exchange Inc. (GAE), is a non-profit organization registered with the state of Georgia. Traditionally, the organization offers students of U.S. universities the opportunity to become familiar with German culture through a three-month (mid-May through mid-August) internship with host companies in Germany.*

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, GAE has modified the internship program for 2021 offering U.S. students internships with German companies in the U.S.

Daily business interactions with leading international businesses enable students to gain insights into the German business culture, apply and improve their German language skills and engage with cross-cultural challenges. GAE aims to cultivate a positive view of Germany among future leaders of the United States. Through new experiences and relationships, we hope to provide interns with the foundation to serve as the next generation of ambassadors of the German-American friendship.

The program is sponsored by Rückel & Collegen (Munich, Germany), Joachim Herz Stiftung (Hamburg, Germany), and Baker Donelson (Atlanta, U.S.) for the purpose of providing educational internships to students from U.S. universities.

Contact for applications:

German American Exchange Inc.

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The office of Rückel & Collegen in Munich represents the German counterpart of GAE U.S., the German non-profit organization German American Exchange e.V. (GAE Germany).

German American Exchange e.V.

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GAE U.S. and GAE Germany have agreed on a close cooperation. GAE Germany is the official administrator of the program in Germany and the contact point for all matters regarding host companies.

For more information, please visit www.german-american-exchange.com

* Based on company and student feedback, we are considering extending the program to offer five to six-month internships with several host companies in the future. However, this might apply only to some of the participating universities. So far, no dates for specific periods within the academic calendar have been fixed. In any case, if you are interested in a longer internship, you can check mark the corresponding box in the application form. We will then try to place you accordingly.

The Internship Program

The U.S.-German Internship Program provides students with an unrivaled opportunity to experience the professional environment of some of the world's leading companies - all before finishing their undergraduate degree. The internship experience poses certain challenges to students; however, it is exactly these challenges that help craft a meaningful experience for students.

The internship will require students to maintain a level of professionalism, responsibility, and decorum as they adapt to the business environment. Students are not expected to speak fluent German, or be entirely familiar with their work, but all interns must exhibit a willingness to learn, work as part of a team, and engage with their mentor and colleagues.

Why?

Our exclusive program offers students the chance to work at a U.S. affiliate/subsidiary of a German company, which includes top-tier globally renowned businesses. The student will have the chance to be placed in an internship that would, under normal circumstances, be difficult to attain.

An internship is a tremendous opportunity to make valuable networking contacts from early on and will be a steppingstone for the student's career as a young professional.

Completing the internship program will provide students with an incredible professional opportunity to complement their undergraduate studies. By immersing themselves in a new business culture, work environment, and language, students will experience first-hand many of the topics they have studied.

The U.S.-German Internship Program offers students a professional advantage necessary in an increasingly competitive job market. Gaining valuable work experience in an international context, highlights an individual's capacity for personal growth and ingenuity. Students will develop numerous skills during their internships, many of which will translate well into future professional positions. Most importantly, students will have the chance to grow and learn more about themselves and their career goals.

Testimonials of former interns about their internships can be found on the website.

Requirements

In order to be eligible for the internship program, students must:

- have intermediate knowledge of the German language;
- have completed at least four semesters of university coursework within one field;
- be in a degree-seeking program with a graduation date after the completion of their internship program; and
- be willing to commit to a full three-month internship.

Note: Master's degree students can apply as well, if their graduation date is after the completion of their internship program.

Important Qualities to Demonstrate

- Ability to work both independently and on a team
- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to act in a professional manner

Application Process

Once your university has informed you about the beginning of a coming internship program round, the first step for you is to apply by completing an application. You will need to hand in the following documents:

- Application Form;
- Statement of Purpose (optional);
- Résumé (*Lebenslauf*);
- Statement of German Proficiency;
- Two letters of recommendation (optional);
- Form I-20 / F-1 visa copy (for international students); and
- Initial application fee of USD 50.

1. Application Form

Kindly complete every section and fill out all fields on the application form. Answers must be typed out and checked for any errors prior to submission. Applicants must check the corresponding box to let us know which internship duration they are applying for.

Note: It is possible to check mark “3 months” and then “5 - 6 months” as an additional option, depending on whether the university offers this option and there will be an adequate host company available).

2. Statement of Purpose (optional)

Ideally, your letter should explain how your academic training, interests and your career goals make you a good candidate. It should be one full page typed in English (1.5 spacing, 12 pt. font). The essay should include your contact information in the header of the document and match with your résumé (*Lebenslauf*).

3. Résumé (*Lebenslauf*)

Your résumé should include current university studies and previous internships or work experience. You may also include relevant coursework, previous study abroad, and hobbies.

4. Statement of German Proficiency

The document will show your current level of understanding of the German language and will help prospective internship hosts in evaluating your overall skills.

5. Two Letters of Recommendation (optional)

These letters should be written by someone who knows you well and that can showcase your skills and abilities. Letters should reference the nature of your relationship, length of time and capacity they have worked with you, relevant coursework, accomplishments, areas of knowledge, work ethics, personality, etc. Letters should be referenced "To Whom It May Concern".

6. Form I-20 / F-1 visa

International students will need to submit a colored scan of their Form I-20 and F-1 visa.

Note: Students that are applying for the five to six-month internship duration, please speak to your academic advisor, or program coordinator to inquire whether a mandatory internship is required by your study regulations, and what the length of the internship requirement is. Please fill out these required fields on the certificate.

7. Initial Fee

Every student is required to pay an initial application fee of USD 50. The initial fee is payable through **PayPal**:

Please send the amount for the initial fee to info@german-american-exchange.com

Please give yourself enough time to assemble all necessary materials for a professional application and to write a solid Statement of Purpose. GAE can only process complete applications, with all forms submitted within the program's communicated deadline for applications. **The deadline for your application is February 26, 2021.**

Selection Process

1. The Matchmaking Process

GAE will inform you once a company has shown interest in your application via email. Always check the email addresses you provided in your application. After you have been notified by GAE, a company representative will contact you to arrange an interview. We encourage all interns to initiate a dialogue and discuss matters such as housing, mentoring and the internship contract.

The contract is negotiated between the intern and the respective company as GAE has no involvement regarding contract conditions. Interns should, therefore, read their respective contracts carefully before signing in order to be able to have the company adjust or discuss certain aspects with them. Once the contract is set up and signed by the intern, matters such as salary, vacation, etc. cannot be negotiated retroactively. Every intern must comply with the rules and regulations stated in the contract. Please update the respective GAE representatives via email about any developments regarding an internship offer.

2. Successful Placement

Once an internship position has been offered to you and you agree to accept, please inform GAE to coordinate the final steps for your internship.

3. Acquiring a Work Permit

In case you are a non-U.S. citizen, you might need to apply for a visa. **Please note that GAE cannot process your visa application.**

4. Additional Processing Fee

With your acceptance of an internship, an additional processing fee of USD 150 becomes due. This fee should be made payable through **PayPal**:

Please send the amount for the additional fee to info@german-american-exchange.com

During Your Internship

Abide by the rules and regulations of your host institution such as working hours, work safety regulations, and rules of confidentiality.

Contact the GAE representatives immediately when any major changes regarding your internship occur or in case you fall ill for an extended period. Failing to do so will result in a report to your university representatives.

Our U.S.-German Internship Program Facebook group will help all interns to get to know each other, keep in touch and initiate a helpful exchange.

The End of Your Internship

You can kindly request a reference for future employment.

Submit a two to three-page report about your internship within eight weeks after the end of your internship to GAE. It can feature personal observations and highlights made during your everyday life as well as within a business context. Photos are welcome as well! The most elaborate and fun reports are to be featured on the program's official website. You can also ask whether you are allowed to do a brief video of your workplace for that purpose.

Housing

Finding housing can be stressful, and students are encouraged to start as soon as possible. Some employers provide students with a housing option, but most should plan to locate housing on their own and cover the cost.

Office and Work Environment

We encourage all students to discuss the environment of their company before beginning their internship. Each firm will have a different policy for office dress code, expected work schedule, vacation times, etc.; accordingly, students can benefit from understanding their role in the office before starting their internship.

Similarly, students may wish to speak with their mentors about expectations of the internship. Mentors will likely have a general concept of what work they foresee the intern completing, as well as general fields in which the intern may contribute. By having conversations with mentors prior to the start of the internship, students indicate professionalism and commitment to their position.

Accompanying Activities

Pre-Departure Orientation

GAE will provide a comprehensive pre-departure orientation.

Virtual Events

Traditionally, GAE has hosted a yearly event inviting interns, host companies, and a public audience to attend a conference dedicated to a special topic.

In 2021, GAE is considering hosting one or multiple virtual events providing participating students a great opportunity to get into contact with stakeholders from companies and important institutions in the German-American business community.

Travel

Students are responsible to organize their travel to their host company as well as any additional travel during the internship period.

Participation Fees

Every student is required to pay an initial application fee of USD 50. Once a student has been selected by a host company, the student also must pay an additional processing fee of USD 150. All fees and additional charges are payable by PayPal. The respective email-address is info@german-american-exchange.com

Budgeting for your stay

Students should take into consideration the costs of pursuing an internship. Internship placements may affect the cost of living, i.e., larger, metropolitan cities will be more expensive than smaller, rural communities.

U.S.-German Internship Program - Frequently Asked Questions

Are the dates of the program fixed?

In general, yes. Traditionally, the program dates are set each year, and interns are expected to complete the three-month internship in its entirety. If you are aware of any scheduling conflicts, please notify GAE as soon as possible. Also, host companies and students may agree on alternative dates depending on their preferences or other factors, e.g., modified end and/or start of semesters due to COVID-19 related disruptions or delays.

Will I have a say in my placement?

Students have the option to state on their applications in what general field they would prefer to work. However, we cannot ensure that all students will (a) receive a placement, and (b) receive a placement exactly where they wish.

Partnering companies will review candidates' profiles - including résumé, statement of purpose and application - and then invite candidates for interviews on a case-by-case basis. Students may decline an offer should they choose; however, it is not guaranteed that another placement will be available.

Will GAE cover my transportation costs?

No, students are responsible to organize their travel

Will my mentor help with my housing process?

Certain companies may provide interns with housing or assist in finding housing. However, most interns should plan on locating housing on their own and cover the cost. Mentors may be able to provide suggestions regarding where best to find housing in your local area, but ultimately this is the interns' responsibility.

We recommend that interns remain in contact with their mentor during the housing search. The process can be difficult, and often stressful.

Will I be expected to work full-time?

Yes, the internship is considered a full-time position. Daily and/or weekly schedules will be organized between you and your mentor, but you should plan on committing to a full-time (i.e. 40 hours per week) schedule.

Will I work with other interns?

Some companies have multiple interns from the U.S.-German Internship Program, but it is not typical. In some cases, you might have the opportunity to work alongside other interns at your respective company who are unaffiliated with the internship program. This can be a great opportunity to get to know individuals in your community, as well as learn from other students.

Do I receive any vacation time?

In general, companies are not required to grant interns vacation days for short-term internships. Therefore, GAE cannot guarantee that all interns will receive vacation time. However, some companies might consider granting vacation time to interns according to their company policy. If vacation is granted the amount typically ranges between three to four days for the three-month period.

Are there any fees involved with the program?

Every student is required to pay an initial application fee of USD 50. Once a student has been selected by a host company, the student also must pay an additional processing fee of USD 150. For more details, please get in touch with your university contact for the program.

Do I get a refund if I am not selected by a host company?

No. There is no placement guarantee, therefore you will not be able to claim a refund.

Do I need an internship visa?

Non-U.S. citizens studying in the United States should consult with the responsible office at their university to assess their internship eligibility. As a general rule, GAE cannot assist with the visa process.

Will I receive an internship contract?

This will depend on the host company's policy/decision. GAE is not responsible for individual contracts between students and employers. Should you have questions regarding this before starting your internship, please contact your company mentor directly.

Participating Companies



Sponsors



Code of Conduct - How to be Successful as an Intern

For many of you, participating in this internship program will be your first opportunity to enter the business world. It may also be your first opportunity working for an international company in a professional work environment. You may be unsure or feel unprepared as to how you should approach this internship program, its etiquette and what is expected of you as an intern.

We would like to provide you with tips and some more information on how to make your experience as successful as possible.

- Your university's code of conduct will remain valid throughout your internship. This means you are to live up to the standards set by your home university including all rules and living up to its mission statement.
- Always maintain the utmost level of professionalism throughout your time here. This includes understanding and abiding by any confidentiality agreements at work at all times. Properly scheduling your vacation days (in case your company grants you any) and notifying your employer promptly when absence from work is required (i.e. sick days, vacation and personal requirements).
- Become acquainted with the daily operations of your job. This includes familiarization with work-related events, organized gatherings and work standards and procedures.
- This might be your first experience in a business environment. This means making responsible decisions and maintaining a high level of professionalism.
- The use of drugs is absolutely forbidden. Drug use in any form will not be condoned nor permitted. You will immediately be reported to your company and university for disciplinary action, and you may face the consequences of local authorities.
- Above all else, recognize the fact that you are also an ambassador for your university. In addition, you are an ambassador for your host company. Throughout your internship, your conduct should remain professional and respectful of local customs, company rules, and the organizations which you are representing.

Any action you take that negatively affects you, other interns or your employer will not be condoned. Your actions here are definitive of your university. We want you to create a positive, lasting impact that will give companies the desire to host future GAE interns.

Maintaining Your Professionalism

Professionalism is key throughout your internship. Again, we want you to enjoy your time, see new places, experience new things and above all have a wonderful experience, but the highest priority of every intern throughout the internship is learning and understanding the next phase of career-oriented maturity.

- Learn the proper dress code of your company.
- Be prompt to work and prepared for what will often be eight to nine-hour workdays.
- Follow through with plans and commitments to your bosses and co-workers. If you commit to an event or meeting and do not attend this will reflect poorly upon you.
- Communication is the biggest key to your success. Communicate when you have a problem with a task. Communicate your plans and commitments. Listen to your co-workers. Be respectful. Ask questions. Give your co-workers and the people around you the benefit of the doubt; this is important for both communication and respect.

- Accept feedback and constructive criticism from the people around you. Never forget you are here to learn new ways of thinking, so you cannot always count on previously conceived ideas to guide you. Learning new ideas is one of the most important guiding principles of this internship.
- A big issue facing all college students and interns is learning the balance of work activity and personal related activity. It is important that while being in the workplace you keep personal Internet usage to a minimum (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, personal email, blogging etc.). Cell phones and personal calls should also be kept to a minimum, unless in case of emergency. Learning this sort of balance will do wonders to help your growth throughout your internship.

If you follow and respect the suggestions presented, your internship will truly be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. You will learn about others and more about working in new situations, which will often prove to be very different than expected. You will learn and develop a standard for professionalism which will guide you later in your life. And most of all, you will learn about yourself.

This internship program and your summer spent with a host company will give you the chance to open doors you never thought existed. Your efforts will take you very far in life once you have developed an international perspective, especially through presenting yourself as a proper ambassador and a worldly citizen.

I agree to the above stated U.S. German Internship Program Code of Conduct and will make every effort to abide by it.

Full Name (type or print clearly) _____

Date _____

Signature _____

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

GAE INC, GAE E.V., JOACHIM HERZ STIFTUNG, RÜCKEL & COLLEGEN AND BAKER DONELSON WILL IN NO EVENT BE LIABLE FOR ANY LOST PROFITS, LOST SAVINGS OR INCIDENTAL, INDIRECT, SPECIAL OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES ARISING OUT OF INCIDENTS RELATING TO BODILY INJURY, PERSONAL INJURY, ILLNESS, DEATH, LOSS OR DAMAGE TO TANGIBLE PROPERTY, UNLAWFUL OR ILLEGAL ACTS, EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES (STRIKE OR WEATHER CONDITIONS), THE INABILITY TO RECEIVE A WORK PERMIT, AS WELL AS FOR FLIGHTS THAT ARE BEING MISSED OR HAVE BEEN BOOKED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF INTERNSHIP.