



**Micro
Internships**

**Maynooth University Student Success
Micro Internship Scheme
Guidelines Document**

Contents

Purpose	2
Rationale	2
Benefits	3
Eligibility	4
Structure	4
Characteristics of Micro Internship Projects	4
Criteria for Student Success Micro Internships	5
Payment	5
Student Application Process	6
Appendix: Roles and Responsibilities	7

The following guidelines are designed to ensure both Maynooth University staff and students understand the Student Success Micro Internship Scheme and the requirements/responsibilities that form an integral part of the experience.

If you wish to find out more about the Student Success Micro Internship Scheme or need assistance submitting a project proposal form, don't hesitate to contact the Careers and Employability Service for further details. E-mail; MicroInternships@mu.ie

The Micro-internship programme is funded by the THRIVE Initiative's Student Engagement through Partnership (StEP) Fund. The [Maynooth University THRIVE Initiative](#) enhances student success through building a culture of partnership and belonging.

Purpose

The Student Success Micro Internship scheme is designed to provide a gateway to partnership between MU Student Talent for Professional Service Units. The scheme offers students the opportunity to contribute to defined student success projects or activities within the University, allowing them to enhance their professional development and employability skills.

Rationale

The Maynooth University [Student Success Strategy](#) outlines a vision to develop and embed a university-wide, integrated, and holistic approach to student success so that each student is empowered to recognise and fulfil their potential academically, personally, and professionally. The Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023-2028 builds on this approach by committing to *“embed a culture of partnership with students that nurtures engagement, belonging and community, working with our students to develop student learning, our curriculum, our campus and the broader student experience”*.

Micro Internships present an exciting professional development opportunity for MU students whilst enabling our Professional Services Offices to benefit from our student’s talent. This initiative aims to lead the way in good practice for Student Success whilst enhancing our reputation in the wider community as we showcase the benefits of employing Maynooth University student talent.

While your student partner will not have your service expertise, they will be an expert in being a Maynooth student. Working with a student in partnership offers you a new lens through which to view your service, understand student dynamics, and integrate the student voice. The student partner gains a level of empathy and understanding for university services and develops transferrable skills and professional experience in the process.



Benefits

Key Benefits for Professional Service Units:

- Benefit from MU student talent that contributes towards defined student success projects that add value.
- Enhance supervisory and leadership skills of staff within the office.
- Opportunity to identify future talent for the office.
- Seamless advertising and promotion process, facilitated by the Micro Internship team.
- Partnership and co-creation with MU students is vital to embedding student success.
- Developing creative and innovative ways to enhance the impact of the university's supports and services
- Flexible working dates, time and structure.

“Highly professional programme lead and managed by excellent colleagues.”

“An invaluable asset that should be a permanent fixture within MU, it gave both students and staff alike an opportunity to work alongside each other for a common goal that would not have happened otherwise”

Key Benefits for our students:

- Gain valuable experience in their field of interest
- Expand their professional network
- Develop professional skills and knowledge
- Contribute to beneficial student success projects and activities
- Fosters a sense of belonging
- Build confidence and capacity to articulate their perspectives

“The micro-internship proved to be a fun and fascinating journey. It provided a real-world context for my academic knowledge, allowing me to see the direct application of my skills”

*“I’ve gained a lot throughout my internship. Communication skills, report writing, project management, independent thinking, analysis and presentation skills among many other CV buzzwords. But most striking to me is my **newfound confidence and belief in my own resilience and capabilities**”*

Key Benefits for the University:

- Enhance our reputation in the wider community as we lead the way in showcasing the benefits of employing a Maynooth University student
- Our students are our key ambassadors. Providing professional work experience opportunities will support us in achieving our strategic goal of equipping students with *“future-focused capacities that will enable them to navigate fast-evolving societal contexts”* Lead the way in good practice for Student Success*

*This scheme is aligned with the MU Student Success Strategy, whereby the national understanding of student success is adopted:

“Student success optimises the learning and development opportunities for each student to recognise and fulfil their potential to contribute to, and flourish in society. To be achieved, this requires a culture in Irish higher education that values inclusivity, equity, and meaningful engagement between students, staff, their institutions, and the wider community”. (National Forum, 2019, p. 28).

Eligibility

Students: Maynooth University students of any level (undergraduate or postgraduate), discipline or year group are eligible to apply. Students must still be a registered student at the time the project is due to take place. Students who have finished their studies are regrettably ineligible to apply.

Staff/Offices: Maynooth University staff from any professional services unit are eligible to submit a project proposal. Academic Staff are ineligible to apply to this initiative as a lead partner, but can apply to our dedicated research programme, the [Summer Programme for Undergraduate Research \(SPUR\)](#).

Structure

Micro Internships can vary in length, hours and timing to suit the host office and the student.

- Opportunities can be part-time or full-time between June and August 2024.
- The minimum duration of the micro internship is 20 hours. The maximum duration is 100 hours.
- The hours can be dispersed over as little as two and a half weeks (e.g. 100 hours full time during holiday periods) or part-time, up to a maximum period of ten weeks.
- If full time, the weekly hours of work cannot exceed 37 hours (Human Resources, 2019).
- Micro Internships can be carried out virtually, in person or through a hybrid model.

Characteristics of Micro Internship Projects

Micro Internship projects typically:

- Are self-contained projects with the aim to achieve student success in partnership.
- Result in the creation of a deliverable of benefit to your office, for example a report, whitepaper, presentation, one pager, database etc.
- Are of sufficient complexity and have clear learning outcomes/deliverables.
- Develop students' employability skills such as project management, communication, team work and initiative.
- Are small-scale: for completion within 100 hours.

Projects can cover a wide variety of topics and come from any professional services unit within the University.

Previous projects have included:

- [Fees and Grants Office – Webchat and Webinars Project](#)
- [Research Development Office - Analysing MU Research Publication Trends](#)
- [International Office - Instagram and TikTok Content Creation](#)
- [Maynooth Access Programme - MAP is 25 Micro Internship](#)
- [Clubs and Societies Office - Handbook/Operations Manual Project](#)
- [Communications Planning for Alumni Relations](#)
- [THRIVE Initiative - Research Paper: How can a student-led feedback panel enhance a University's 'Student Voice' capability? \(ongoing\)](#)

Criteria for Student Success Micro Internships

Projects will be selected for funding based on the following criteria:

1. Quality of Submission

- Application is for a self-contained project suitable for an Undergraduate or Postgraduate student
- The end deliverable is clear (e.g. results in the creation of a deliverable of benefit to your office, for example a report, whitepaper, presentation, one pager, database etc.)
- The project submission addresses a current need or challenge which impacts the Maynooth University community
- Main Applicant is from a Professional Service Unit at Maynooth University
- Application is completed in full
- Project scope is achievable within the specified time

2. Student-Staff Partnership

- There will be a supporting structure in place to on-board the student intern and work in partnership with them during the project.
- The projects outlines how the student intern will be working in partnership with the host office rather than for the host office.
- The project enables the student to work collaboratively on a student success project or initiative, developing networks with peers and staff.
- The project methods are flexible, enabling all team members to contribute to its development and take joint ownership of the project

3. Professional Development

- The project offers an enriching and challenging environment to the student and exposure to a myriad of learning opportunities
- The project is experiential in nature and facilitates the application of knowledge, thereby enhancing the students' confidence and knowledge in their skillset.
- The project empowers the student to articulate their experience effectively to others.
- The project grants opportunities to the student to reflect on their experience, enhance their skillset and develop their knowledge.

4. A widespread distribution across Professional Service Offices at the University.

- Head of Unit's may be asked to rank project proposals if more than one is submitted.

Payment

Successful students will be employed as an occasional hourly-paid member of staff (Occasional Staff Member).

Students will be paid the Administration Standard Rate (Hourly rate of €15.76 as of October 2023).

The total amount paid will be 50% funded by the THRIVE Initiative's Student Engagement through Partnership (StEP) Fund and the remainder by the Host Office (flexibility regarding funding % will be considered on a case-by-case basis).

The Careers and Employability Service will manage the onboarding of the students as occasional staff, and the administration of their payments. Successful offices will be required to complete an internal transfer for 50% of the micro internship cost (e.g. approx €788 for 100 hours) at the end of the process.



Student Application Process

This programme is open to students of all levels (undergraduate and postgraduate) and disciplines.

The student application process is administered centrally by the Careers and Employability Service.

After the deadline, all applications are forwarded to successful offices for their candidate selection and ranking.

The student selection must be a competitive process and projects should not be tailored to suit specific students.

Appendix: Roles and Responsibilities

- The **Careers and Employability Service** is the coordinator of the Micro Internship Programme.
- The **Host Office** is the professional service unit that hosts the Micro Internship.
- The **Student** is the Maynooth University postgraduate or undergraduate that has successfully secured a place on the scheme.

The Careers and Employability Service agrees to:

- Review all micro internship project proposals to ensure they fit the criteria of the programme
- Advertise the micro internship opportunity to Maynooth University students on behalf of the Host Office
- Collate applications prior to these being sent to the host office for shortlisting and selection
- Share guidelines and support around shortlisting and interviewing
- Provide students with the opportunity to reflect on the skills gained from the experience
- Coordinate with the relevant offices to ensure timely payment for students
- Be available to provide guidance to the Host Office and student during the period of the micro internship.
- Gather feedback from the host office and the student at the conclusion of the micro internship

The Host Office agrees to:

- Provide full details about the micro internship in the project proposal form, including project overview, role expectations, hours and length of micro internship
- Conduct a fair and open selection process from the applicant pool provided and inform the Careers and Employability Service of the successful candidate
- Offer feedback to unsuccessful interviewed candidates if requested
- Agree the start and end date with the intern and confirm details with the Careers and Employability Service
- Identify a mentor, supervisor or line manager who will be responsible for the intern. This person will provide a comprehensive introduction to the intern at the beginning of the project, will conduct at least one call with the intern per week throughout the project, and should be contactable by the intern if needed
- Fully inform the intern of their responsibilities, for example, the need for client confidentiality, intellectual property rights and data protection
- Provide any training needed for the intern to complete their designated project
- Provide any equipment needed for the intern to complete their designated project (with the exception of laptop and phone, which will be the responsibility of the intern)
- Ensure the intern works for no more than hours listed in the project proposal
- Provide an appropriate workspace for the intern to complete their designated project (not applicable for remote internships)
- Collaborate with the intern on the desired student success project or initiative
- Submit an evaluation form on completion of the internship opportunity, which will be used to inform future programme developments
- Ensure that any intellectual property rights (IPR) created by the intern are wholly assigned to the host office



The Student agrees to:

- Comply with all requirements in relation to the internship opportunity as outlined by the host office
- Conduct themselves with due professionalism at all times, maintaining confidentiality where required, as well as demonstrating good timekeeping
- Keep in contact with the internship mentor/supervisor/line manager as and when agreed, to discuss the progress of the internship, and to be receptive to constructive feedback provided during these meetings
- Notify the Careers and Employability Service (MicroInternships@mu.ie) of any issues or concerns relating to the micro internship
- Complete the required outcomes of the Micro Internship scheme, and engage in all elements of the programme including events, project work, reflection exercises and evaluations
- Submit timesheets in a timely manner

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