



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of the Comptroller
Business Management Group

In partnership with



National Parks Business Plan Internship

Overview

National Parks Business Plan Internship (BPI) consultants promote the long-term health of our national parks by developing and improving financial planning and management tools at the park or program level. Up to 16 summer consultants are selected from top graduate schools of business, public policy, environmental management, and related fields to work as two or three-person teams at national parks across the country. The parks participating in this year's program will be announced in February 2015, during the applicant interview period.

Job Description

Net Impact and the National Park Service (NPS) seek top graduate students who are currently enrolled in business, public policy, environmental management, public administration, and related programs for the prestigious Business Plan Internship program. Candidates should have strong analytical and project management skills; an interest in consulting, strategic planning and public sector management; and the desire to contribute to the future of our national parks by improving the parks' operational and financial health.

This highly selective 11-week internship program runs from Saturday, June 6 to Friday, August 21 and begins with a rigorous week-long NPS operations orientation onsite at Acadia National Park in Maine. Each summer consultant will be matched with a fellow student(s), and this consultant team will work for the next ten weeks at a designated park or program office that will be the team's client for the summer. Over the course of the internship, each summer consultant team will work closely with park management to conduct strategic, operational, and financial analyses. BPI projects vary in type and have included park or program-wide business plans as well as more targeted analyses, such as developing a commercial services or marketing and outreach strategy. The position is extraordinarily multifaceted; as a consultant, you may have the opportunity to:

- Analyze current resource allocations in the context of near-term and longer-term park priorities.
- Perform specialty analyses on high impact opportunities to improve park operations. Examples include determining the most efficient fleet structure; developing a cost-benefit analysis of expanding a volunteer program; conducting a life-cycle costing exercise for different types of equipment; optimizing revenue from fee operations; and evaluating the costs, benefits, and effectiveness of various partnerships.
- Develop management and financial strategies to accomplish park goals. Examples include identifying and evaluating partnership opportunities with local nonprofits, developing strategies to increase the park's budgetary or in-kind resources (e.g., increase donations, expand volunteer recruitment, secure grant or project funding), reducing park operating costs, and creating marketing strategies for a park or specific program (e.g., a park's educational programs).
- Develop projections for staffing and financial requirements to support park priorities.
- Work with management and field staff to evaluate park programs and operations.
- Facilitate discussions to determine strategic park or program priorities.

BPI projects address pressing questions throughout the National Park Service, providing crucial analysis and decision support to park and program managers. Consultant teams present their findings to park or program management at the end of the summer, with a heavy emphasis on implementation planning. Final deliverables typically include a business plan or other formal report. Often these reports are disseminated to the public, although some teams produce deliverables for internal management use only.

Each summer consultant team works directly with his or her park's senior management, with project management and support provided by Net Impact as well as NPS staff in Washington, DC.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Required Qualifications

- US citizen or permanent resident
- Full-time graduate student at time of application
- At least two years of professional work experience
- Excellent time management/project management and analytical skills
- Superb oral and written communication skills, including presentation skills
- Flexible work style and ability to work in a team
- Understanding of and commitment to the mission of the National Park Service
- Availability for all program dates (June 6 – August 21, 2015)
- A valid US driver's license; many projects will require driving to field sites
- Consulting, government, or nonprofit experience preferred

Compensation

Summer consultants receive a weekly stipend of \$725.* The BPI program covers transportation to training at the start of the program, meals during training, travel to the park assignment, and travel from the park to the consultant's school or home at the end of the summer. Summer consultants are also reimbursed for any other work-related travel. Each park provides housing and office space. A shared vehicle for local use is typically included.

*Many schools offer students additional funding for accepting socially or environmentally focused summer internships. Check with your career office for more information.

Application Process

Application requirements and process details can be found at: <http://netimpact.org/nps>

Your application must include the following:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Writing sample – preferably from a quantitative or qualitative analysis project
- Names and contact information for at least two references, one of which must be a professional reference

Writing samples should be two to five pages and may be from any area of work, though a sample of work from a qualitative or quantitative analysis project will provide the best display of your qualifications for the type of writing a BPI consultant typically undertakes. The applicant must be the primary author of the document. Writing samples have included policy memos, case studies, and excerpts from journal articles and research reports. Please be aware that references may be contacted after interviews without prior notification from Net Impact or the NPS Business Management Group. Please inform your references that they may be contacted after the interview.

Applications will be accepted through the end of the day on January 11, 2015. We will not consider incomplete applications, and we will acknowledge receiving your application.

Applicants will be notified regarding the status of their application within two weeks of the application deadline. We will conduct interviews at universities across the country in late January and throughout the month of February. Phone interviews will be held with applicants who are unable to interview in person.

Positions are offered on a rolling basis and candidates at the same school may receive offers at different times. Project assignments will not be made until all employment offers have been accepted. Project assignments will be based on summer consultants' relevant experience and unique park or project needs, making every effort to accommodate developmental goals and personal preferences. Historically, the vast majority of consultants have been placed in one of their top project choices. Although project locations will not be available before applications are due, they will be determined by the time interviews are conducted.

For additional information, please visit our [FAQ page](#).