

DAAD – Information for Virtual Internships

INTERNS: ADVICE FOR CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL INTERNSHIP

Virtual internships are part of current developments in the academic and business world, where more and more is taking place online and occurring digitally. With a virtual internship, you will expand your digital skills and learn new routines when it comes to self-organisation and communication. The following tips should help you conduct a successful internship online:

1. PREPARATION



- Clarify in advance how you and your supervisor can work together in a virtual environment. Discuss the necessary technical requirements and which tools can be used.
- If there are significant differences in time zones, agree on a fixed work schedule that regulates the cooperation with your supervisor and your team. Taking the time difference into account, consider what a good time window for a daily face-to-face session might be.
- Talk about the approximate number of hours expected of you per week; this may vary slightly for a virtual internship as compared to a physical one.
- Ask for clear objectives of your virtual internship and define their expectations regarding learning and work achievements. Will the tasks change as a result of the virtual implementation? What tasks will you be able to take on?
- Don't just discuss the feasibility of the tasks. Also clarify questions of data protection.

2. DURING THE INTERNSHIP



- Establish routines for regular exchange with your supervisor and your team. Keep your supervisor informed about the progress of your work regularly. Try to talk to your supervisor once a day via video.
- If necessary, collect questions in advance of the daily video call. Send them to your supervisor via email or chat before your scheduled meeting time so that your supervisor has the opportunity to answer your questions in detail during the actual video session. Be sure to have a plan B: A general task that you can continue without any support on your own.

- Participate in joint team meetings as much as possible to gain a broader understanding of the project and task.
- At the end of a week, if possible, present your week's work either to the team or directly to the supervisor.
- If you find that there are problems regarding communication or integration into the team, try to communicate them directly. This is the only way your placement provider can understand and respond to them.

3. SELF- ORGANISATION AND SOCIAL CONTACTS



- Create a daily routine for yourself.
- Keep an online diary of your work— this will give you an overview of successes, problems and opportunities for improvement.
- Ask if you can get to know the other team members. Something like a virtual coffee break might be a good format provided that it fits in within your schedule.
- Network with other interns, contact the DAAD to see if there are already networking opportunities in your specific field. A virtual space to meet and to network with other DAAD scholarship holders doing an internship is the Alumni portal Deutschland: <https://community.alumniportal-deutschland.org/>

4. CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION



- Arrange a monthly feedback meeting with your supervisor in which both sides evaluate the cooperation. Remember to schedule a final meeting once your internship concludes.
- If feasible, create a poster about your work and present it to the team.