

How Much Should You Pay an Intern?

Many employers pay their interns. But how do you calculate a fair wage? And should you include benefits?

A recent internship survey from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) offers some insight into what employers are paying interns for their work.

The average hourly wage rate for a bachelor's degree intern is \$16.26. Generally, the closer to the terminal degree, the higher the internship wage. A college senior, for example, averages 20.2 percent more than a student who just completed the freshman year: \$17.47 versus \$14.53 per hour.

Similarly, the higher the level of the degree, the higher the wage. In fact, according to NACE's latest intern compensation report, the average hourly wage for a master's degree candidate is 35 percent more than the average wage rate for an intern earning a bachelor's degree: \$21.90 compared to \$16.26.

Salaries also vary by major and industry.

In addition to wages, many employers add benefits to their internship compensation packages. The most popular benefit: relocation assistance, with roughly three out five employers giving their interns something in terms of moving assistance or a housing stipend. Also popular, with approximately half of employers offering them, are social activities for interns and holiday pay.

In the end, does paying an intern yield benefits for the employer?

Absolutely. First, by paying their interns, employers ensure themselves a wider pool of candidates from which to choose. All interested students—not just those who can afford to forgo a paycheck for the summer—can be part of the pool. That's critical if one of your program's goals is to feed full-time hiring.

Second, there are a variety of legal issues surrounding unpaid internships, and this can hamper the employer's ability to give the intern "real work." The paid intern, however, can perform real work and contribute to the organization, benefitting both the intern and the employer. As an added bonus, the intern and the employer are able to "test-drive" each other to see if there might be a good match for full-time employment. Ultimately, the paid internship is a win-win.

Courtesy of the [National Association of Colleges and Employers](#).