

INTERNSHIP 101

The secret to a successful internship
for your company.



Recycled Materials
Association
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INTRODUCTION

Learn about the Pathways Program, get a clear overview of the hiring process, and explore helpful resources to make bringing interns on board easier. Our aim is to give you the tools and knowledge you need to build a strong, dynamic team. We hope this guide serves as a useful resource as you continue growing a skilled and resilient workforce. Thank you for choosing ReMA to support your company's talent and workforce development.

THE
PATHWAYS
PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

The ReMA Pathways Program helps companies attract talent, meet workforce needs, promote diversity, bridge competency gaps, and strengthen their hiring process.

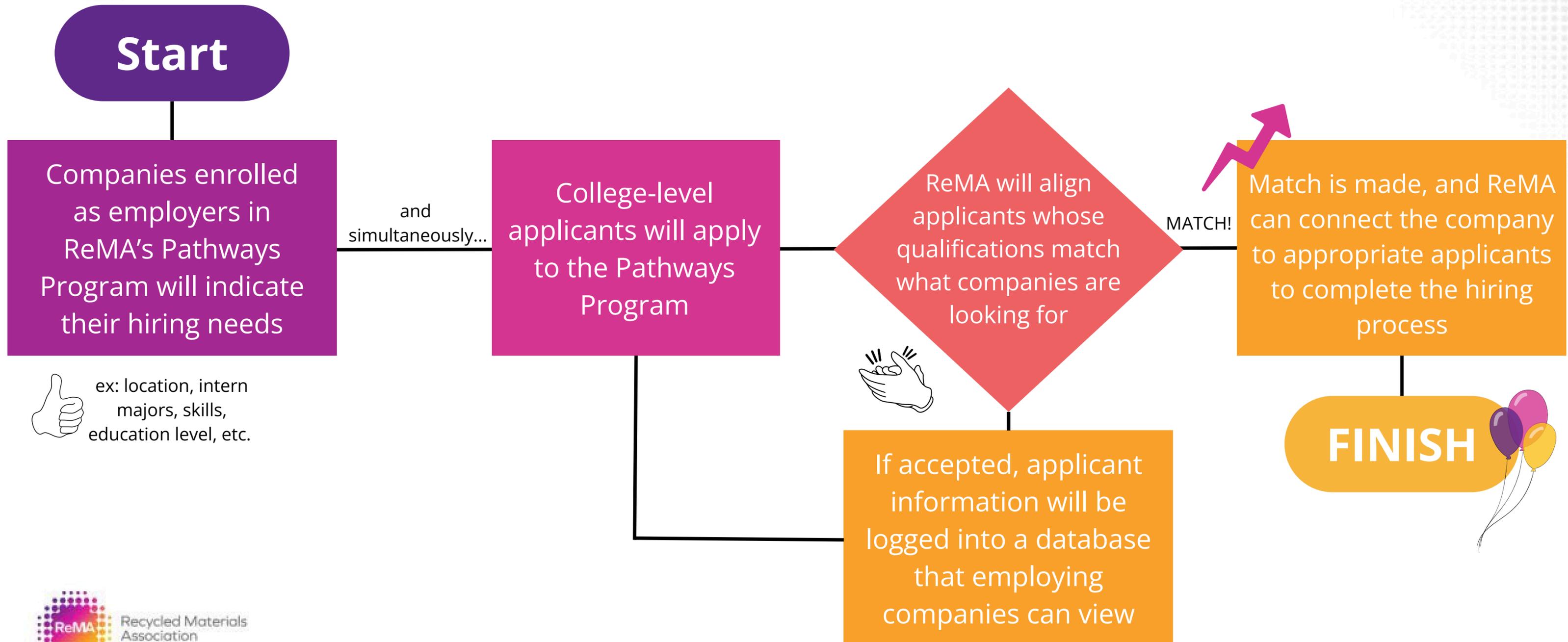
This program offers students valuable hands-on training, a paid experience, and mentoring opportunities to prepare them for successful careers.

Internships within the Pathways Program are designed for college students who want to learn and grow their skills during college, while fellowships are meant for recent graduates seeking real-world business experience. By participating in the ReMA Pathways Program, companies invest in their future by discovering and developing the next generation of leaders.



THE PATHWAYS PROGRAM

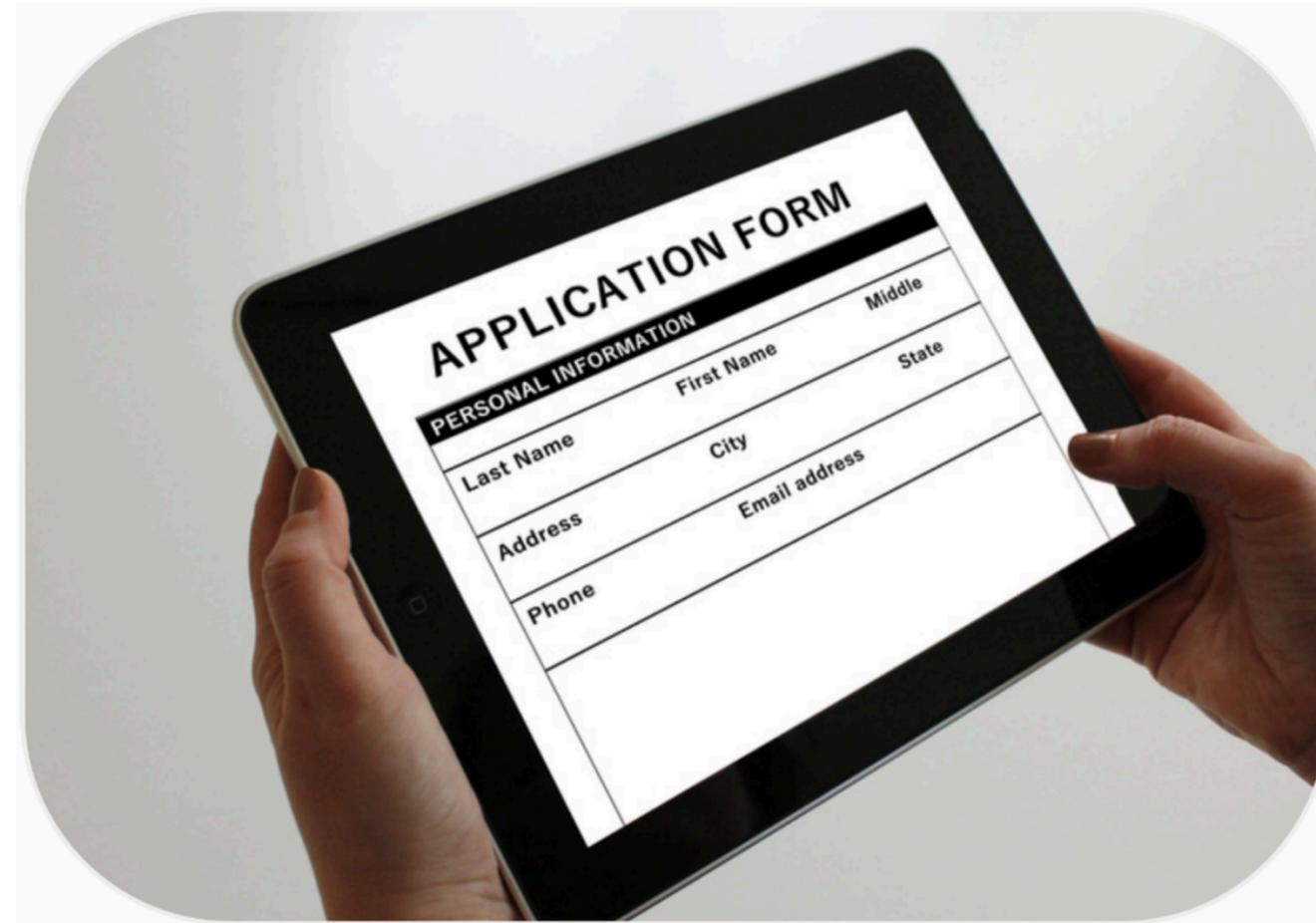
An introduction to the ReMA Program





STEP 1: INITIAL INTEREST AND CONSULTATION

Member companies complete a brief initial form, followed by a virtual 30 minute consultation with the Program Coordinator. During this consultation, company representatives can ask questions and come up with their specific workforce requirements. This makes sure that the chosen talent aligns perfectly with their business needs.



STEP 2: DETAILED APPLICATION AND MATCHING PROCESS

Before welcoming your intern, take a few minutes to review local labor laws, including rules on minimum wage and work hours, and make sure to explain these clearly to your interns. If you're unsure about the details, the Department of Labor's Fair Labor Standards Act section on internships is a great resource for understanding compliance.

Resource: [Internship Under the Fair Labor Standards Act](#)



STEP 3: CANDIDATE SELECTION

Companies can interview pre-screened candidates and choose the best fit, or request more help with recruitment. We'll work with you to find additional qualified talent from our database to make sure your needs are met.



STEP 4: ONGOING SUPPORT

Following a successful hire, our Program Coordinator remains by your side. They will check in with you, interns/fellows, and their supervisors to offer ongoing support and make sure the program is running smoothly. If you make the decision to offer your intern/fellow a permanent position, let us know! We celebrate these successes and the lasting impact of Pathways on our member companies.



WHY YOU NEED IT:

No more digging through piles of resumes or spending hours searching for candidates! Pathways brings you pre-screened, interview-ready talent straight to your inbox, complete with resumes. It's a faster, easier way to find the right people while saving time and resources. Plus, you'll tap into a diverse pool of talent and help inspire the next generation to join the recycled materials Workforce!

Enroll with this short form: **[ReMA Pathways Program Enrollment](#)**

HIRING INTERNS
STEP BY
STEP

STEP 1: DEFINE THE ROLE

Creating a clear and engaging role description is key to attracting the right candidates. Be sure to outline specific responsibilities, highlight the skills you're looking for, and include how long the role will last. Clear expectations help applicants understand what's expected and set everyone up for success.

Try to include one or two long-term projects the intern can complete during their time with you, along with shorter or daily tasks that support your team's work. This balance gives the intern valuable training and keeps them engaged, while also preventing extra strain on your staff since they'll have an independent project to focus on.

Resource: **[Guidelines On How To Write a Job Description](#)**

STEP 2: LEGAL AND COMPLIANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Before hiring your intern, work with your legal counsel to review all relevant labor laws that apply to interns in your state or local area, and for compliance with federal labor laws.

STEP 3: RECRUITMENT PROCESS

ReMA's Pathways Program accelerates your recruitment process, by delivering pre-screened candidates with polished resumes right to your inbox. It provides your company with the opportunity build a stronger workforce while making your hiring process more efficient.

After reviewing the resumes that the Pathways Program has sent, identify the best candidates to advance to an interview. If you find a good fit from the interview stage, great! Go ahead and make an offer. If not, let the Program Coordinator know and we can support your continued search.

STEP 4: CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A STRUCTURED ONBOARDING PLAN

Make sure your intern gets off to a smooth start with a clear onboarding that explains policies, introduces your company culture, and sets expectations. An internship isn't just about short-term help, but about developing future talent and building lasting relationships. A well-planned onboarding helps the intern quickly understand their role and your company, while creating a positive experience from day one.

In your orientation session, introduce them to the company's values, policies, and to their teams. This helps your intern understand the company they are working for. Easy access to essential tools, resources, and training allows them to tackle their responsibilities with ease, but don't just throw them in the deep end! It is important to assign them a mentor who can help provide support and answers to their questions, which can help to accelerate their integration into your company.

Resource: **[30-60-90 Day Onboarding Plan](#)**

STEP 5: ENSURE A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT WITH REGULAR COMMUNICATION

Clear communication is your best friend. Learn your intern's communication style and make sure that you can communicate with them in a way they understand. Regular scheduled check-ins, at least weekly, are essential to making sure they're on the right path, addressing challenges, and helping them grow. Create a welcoming atmosphere where interns feel valued and part of the team is important! Ask your intern if there is any accommodation they may need while working at your company. Your goal is to prevent barriers so your intern can do their best work. Expose interns to diverse departments and professionals, allowing them to learn, connect, and explore future career paths.

STEP 6: EVALUATE AND RECOGNIZE

When your intern's time at your company comes to an end, consider closing with a final evaluation. Reflect on the intern's achievements, growth, contributions, failures, areas to improve, and their successes. You can show appreciation with a letter of recommendation for their future endeavors. By investing in the intern's future, you show your commitment to their development and fostering a lasting relationship. Ask for their feedback on their internship experience. This can help support your company's growth and continuous improvements as you welcome future interns. Provide your intern with a send-off gathering, celebration or other recognition that is part of your company culture for your permanent employees.

STEP 7: POST-INTERNSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Keeping in touch with your interns helps build a pool of familiar, valuable talent for future roles. It also benefits the interns by opening doors for future opportunities and collaborations. By maintaining these relationships and listening to feedback, you show that you care about growth and employee experience. This strengthens your talent pipeline and sets your internship program up for long-term success.

MYTH
vs.
REALITY

MYTH VS. REALITY

Myth: Internships are primarily for larger organizations with more resources.

Reality: Despite the scale of the organization, smaller businesses can create meaningful and impactful internship experiences that not only benefit the interns but also enrich the company by tapping into fresh perspectives and talents.

Myth: We can't hire an intern because we don't have a program set up or the ability to maintain one.

Reality: Interns can seamlessly become part of a company's workforce, even without a dedicated internship program. Additionally, the Pathways Program can fill many of the same functions for a small company as an internship program within an HR department would for a large company: recruiting candidates, creating regular check-ins, and offering dedicated staff support for challenges or questions that crop up.

MYTH VS. REALITY

Myth: Interns can only handle mundane or repetitive tasks and are not equipped to handle more complex responsibilities.

Reality: Interns offer a wealth of fresh perspectives and valuable skills to an organization. Given the opportunity, they can actively contribute to meaningful projects, introducing innovative solutions and providing a fresh set of eyes on tasks that can reduce the workload, offering valuable support to existing teams.

Myth: Interns are temporary hires who won't have a lasting impact on the organization.

Reality: Interns have the potential to evolve into valuable long-term assets for companies. By investing in their professional development and providing a positive internship experience, many organizations discover future employees within their pool of former interns.

MYTH VS. REALITY

Myth: Interns take too much investment in time and resources.

Reality: A well-structured internship is indeed an investment in the future of the company, but it can pay off in several ways. Interns not only bring fresh ideas to the organization, but can also become valuable full-time employees if their experience is positive. Even if they do not become full-time employees themselves, they can be ambassadors and advocates for your company within their own networks. Moreover, companies play a larger role in the recycled materials industry when they hire interns: fulfilling a vital role in educating and mentoring the next generation of professionals, which furthers knowledge and expertise within the industry. Finally, mentoring an intern is a leadership opportunity for your existing employees, and can support their growth into management roles.

RESOURCES

RESOURCES

1. Department of Labor Fact Sheet on Internships

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/71-flsa-internships>

This resource provides information and guidelines regarding internships according to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). It outlines the criteria that must be met for an internship to be considered legally compliant, including factors such as the educational nature of the experience, the benefit to the intern, and the absence of immediate advantage to the employer.

RESOURCES

2. Sacramento Employment & Training Agency - “How to Create a Youth-Friendly Workplace: An Employer’s Guide to Building a Quality Internship”

<https://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/180223-sw-internship-book1.pdf>

This employer-focused guide offers a comprehensive framework for designing and running internships that engage youth. It covers topics such as the business case for internships, what differentiates an internship from a job, youth development principles, how to work with teens, mentoring practices, designing a structured internship program, managing interns, and evaluating the program.

RESOURCES

3. National Association of Colleges and Employers “Best Practices for Internship Programs”

<https://www.naceweb.org/talent-acquisition/internships/15-best-practices-for-internship-programs/>

This guidance document offers a comprehensive set of best practices for employers who design and run internship programs. It emphasizes foundational principles such as paying interns to broaden and diversify the candidate pool; recruiting interns as thoughtfully as full-time employees; aligning internship efforts with broader workforce and diversity goals; providing meaningful, major- or skill-related work; offering orientation for interns and mentors; and maintaining contact with interns after their term ends.