

VISEDAL Baltimore Student Internship Program

Purpose

The VISEDAL Baltimore Student Internship Program provides opportunities for Baltimore-area high school students to engage in meaningful service to VISEDAL scholars, while also honing their leadership skills. In addition, the program helps students learn about nonprofit operations, develop relationships with VISEDAL scholars, and prepare for a potential trip to Nicaragua.

The internship experience strengthens students' belief that service is a lifestyle, not just an activity. As a result, students build on their internship experiences to serve their local communities in Baltimore.

Overview

Student participants have a high degree of independence in shaping their internship experience. First, they choose a focus area(s) and specific task(s). Next, they develop specific goals and work toward those goals. At the conclusion of the internship, they present their results.

Focus Areas

- Fundraising and School Supply Collection
- Social Media, Marketing, and Communications
- Scholar Engagement
- Program Development
- Design Your Own

Logistics

- *When:* The internship program is available during the spring semester, summer, or fall semester.
- *Time commitment:* At least 10 volunteer hours per student.
- *Eligibility:* The internship program is currently open to students at Baltimore-area high schools, by invitation from VISEDAL.
- *Supervision:* VISEDAL provides the program framework and guidance, while the School Internship Leader (school representative) oversees the students' work.

Distinguishing Factors

This program provides several exciting and unique opportunities for high school students:

- Complete the activities on your own schedule
- Design your internship experience
- Engage in advanced, consulting-style activities
- Learn about the inner-workings of an international nonprofit organization
- Make a real difference for a nonprofit and youth in Nicaragua

Sample Schedule

Pre-Internship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VISEDAL leader meets with School Internship Leader • School Internship Leader promotes internship and identifies student participants
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Internship Leader leads kickoff meeting with student participants to discuss goals, expectations, and logistics
Weeks 1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student participants submit their proposed focus area(s), specific task(s), and goal(s) • School Internship Leader reviews submissions and approves/refines plans
Weeks 2–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student participants conduct their internship activities
Weeks 4–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Internship Leader meets with student participants to review progress • VISEDAL representative meets with School Internship Leader to review students' progress and address any questions
Weeks 8–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student participants complete activities and prepare final reports
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students submit final reports to VISEDAL

Role of Student Participants

1 - Learn about VISEDAL

- Research VISEDAL (e.g., our work, beliefs, history, funding, and communications) via VISEDAL's website, annual report, and social media pages.

2 - Choose a focus area(s) and task(s)

- Considering your interests and skills, choose from the focus areas listed or design your own.
- Identify a specific task(s) within the focus area(s) to complete.

3 - Develop a goal(s)

- Develop a goal that is SMART (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-Bound) by utilizing the provided SMART Goal development template.
- Meet with your School Internship Leader to finalize your goal(s).

4 - Conduct your internship

- Work toward your goal(s).
- Track your hours on the provided time tracking sheet.
- Meet with your School Internship Leader periodically to review your progress.

5 - Prepare a post-internship report

- Describe your internship experience in a 1-2 page paper, PowerPoint, video, etc.
 - Goal(s)
 - Results/findings
 - Recommendations to VISEDAL based on your findings (if relevant)
 - Highlights of your internship
 - Challenges of your internship

Role of School Internship Leader

1 - Achieve approval from the school

- Complete steps necessary for VISEDAL Internship Program to be offered at the school

2 - Serve as main liaison between VISEDAL and the school

- Work with VISEDAL in arranging meetings, Skype sessions with scholars, etc.
- Communicate students' questions to VISEDAL
- Contact VISEDAL with any questions or concerns throughout the internship

3 - Direct student recruitment

- Promote the internship
- Identify final participants (e.g., through applications or informally)

4 - Oversee students' involvement

- Help students choose a focus area(s) and task(s) and develop goals
 - Ensure that students' proposed activities align with and support VISEDAL's mission and vision
- Meet periodically with students to review progress
- Oversee students' preparations of final reports

Focus Areas and Tasks

- Fundraising and School Supply Collection
 - Research fundraising best practices employed by other nonprofits. Identify ideas for potential use by VISEDAL.
 - Design and lead fundraising activities.
 - Solicit donations of school supplies.
 - Assist with existing VISEDAL fundraising activities.
 - Identify grants for VISEDAL to pursue.
- Social Media, Marketing, and Communications
 - Research social media, marketing, and communications best practices employed by other nonprofits. Identify ideas for potential use by VISEDAL.
 - Develop ideas for types of recurring social media posts.
 - Research updated statistics about Nicaragua for use in VISEDAL materials.
 - Assist with graphic design efforts, as needed.
- Scholar Engagement
 - Research scholar engagement best practices employed by other nonprofits. Identify ideas for potential use by VISEDAL.
 - Help VISEDAL scholars practice English through direct Skype conversations.
 - Promote English language learning by creating a video or writing letters to VISEDAL scholars.
 - Identify English language resources for use by VISEDAL staff.
- Program Development
 - Research organizations in the U.S. or Nicaragua that could potentially provide funding, supplies, expertise, or volunteers to VISEDAL.
 - Identify potential activities VISEDAL staff could lead with scholars in Nicaragua.
- Design Your Own
 - Develop a focus area and a specific task(s) that will benefit VISEDAL. Be sure to consider how your proposed activities align with and support VISEDAL's mission and vision.