

The Basics

What is the general purpose of the DIS internship program?

An internship at DIS is a great way to gain hands-on experience in the field of international education and become an integrated part of a multicultural workplace. The overall goal for DIS is to create an outstanding experience for every single DIS student. This requires dedication behind the scenes, an aptitude for teamwork, and a resilient positive attitude. You must be prepared to work hard and diligently to meet the high expectations of fellow DIS staff and students. This means that, you will work long hours some times, and short hours at other times. The peak seasons fluctuate from one department to another and you will help with tasks outside your key work area.

DIS is a collaborative, dynamic, and social work environment. You are entrusted with a high level of responsibility and therefore expected to be a self-starter, have confidence, and carry out your tasks with professionalism and commitment.

DIS Internship Objectives include:

- First-hand experience in a challenging international work environment
- Further develop your organization, management, leadership and communication skills
- Enhance critical thinking and creative problem solving skills
- Develop project work skills
- Challenge your assumptions

Your overall role at DIS:

- Assist DIS faculty and fellow staff with daily operation tasks and program development
- Act as cultural translators by bridging the gaps between DIS students, faculty and staff by applying your own experiences as former DIS students
- Enrich the DIS work environment with your academic background and enthusiasm
- Set the highest standards for yourself and your work
- Seek to be a giver in the broader societal sense

How is a DIS internship different?

Since everyone may have a different concept of what an “internship” entails, it is important to be clear about what DIS would expect from you as a DIS intern:

While an American intern position is often short-term, unpaid and part-time, a DIS internship lasts at least 12 months, has a living stipend attached and is full-time (37 hours a week). This is an administrative internship; as a DIS intern, you will have some of the usual “intern” tasks of making copies, filing, and arranging food and drinks for class events; but, you will also be responsible for much of the day-to-day operations of your office. This means you will have a much higher degree of responsibility than an American intern (and hopefully gain more experience and skills as a result of the internship). Like any job, the workload can be exhausting and exhilarating at different times. An internship with DIS is exciting, but you must expect to have to adjust to living in a different country while working a full-time job.

How long does an internship last?

Most of the internship positions last for a 13-months period. In June a couple of internships start with a duration of 15 months to have an overlap of two interns during peak seasons in particular departments.

What are the working hours?

Interns are hired to work 37 hours a week, excluding lunch breaks. Normal business hours at DIS are approximately from 8:30 am – 5:00 pm. You can expect to spend the bulk of your working time between the aforementioned times, however, some tasks, such as organizing and facilitating events, happen during the evenings.

There is no overtime pay at DIS. Instead, you can have “approved absence time” to recuperate after a particularly strenuous period (dependent on arrangement with your supervisor). During certain times of the semester it is expected to work overtime, this applies to all staff. Examples are orientation week, concluding weeks and during the International Educators Workshop. It is part of an internship to work on arrival days in every semester. In the spring and fall semesters when arrival days takes place on a weekend, interns must expect to work a full day. In compensation they will receive one approved absence-day for working on a weekend-day.

What do I wear to work?

DIS is a fairly casual workplace. Most staff wear jeans and a nice shirt every day. Of course, for certain occasions (International Educator's Workshop, Julefrokost, etc.) you will be expected to dress up. Bring a range of clothing – and don't forget your cold weather gear!

Finances

Do interns receive a stipend?

Yes, interns receive a monthly stipend of 11,600 DKK before taxes, which averages to approximately 8,500 DKK after taxes.

What does the stipend mean in terms of living expenses in Copenhagen?

It is possible to live on the 8,500 DKK stipend from the internship with intentional budgeting. Renting a room in the city should cost between 4,000-5,000 kr per month including utilities. That will leave you around half of your salary for other expenses, which is enough to live on if you are sensible about food and entertainment expenditures. However, during the first month of stay the intern must expect extra expenses to get settled in before receiving the first pay check.

Will I be able to save money or pay off student loans? Will I need to use money from my own savings?

This depends heavily on your lifestyle. Several past interns have been able to save about 500-1,000 DKK a month while others spend their full salary every month, so don't count on saving money unless you can budget quite well. The stipend is meant to cover living expenses, not for savings.

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After receiving your first pay check you should have no need to dig into your own savings unless there are unexpected expenses. Personal travel and student loan repayments may be other cases where you have to spend your savings.

Do I pay Danish taxes? What about taxes from my home country?

Yes, you pay Danish taxes. For interns living in the Copenhagen municipality, approximately 38% of each month's pay will be automatically deducted.

If you are an American citizen, you are still required by US law to file taxes in the US. You won't owe any money on your income in DK, but you still have to file. You can get the necessary tax forms at the US Embassy or download them online. Much more information can be found at:

<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p54/ch04.html#d0e4191> and

<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p514/ar01.html>

If you are not American, please consult your national government's tax authority.

Does DIS provide a stipend on the relocating costs coming to Denmark?

Yes! Please refer to the section below on "Logistics" (Visa Stipend and Travel Stipend), pages 5 and 6.

Will I have a Danish Bank Account?

All DIS Staff members must have a Danish Bank Account in order to be paid, as all paychecks are given by direct deposit. The banks that many interns use are Nordea and Danske Bank, but there are many other options such as Jyske Bank or Sydbank. The process of opening a bank account will require that you have a CPR number, and then generally takes around 1-2 weeks to receive approval from the bank. You will receive more information about this in a pre-orientation package.

Can DIS help me pay off my student loans?

DIS does not help with repayment of your student loans. Some past and current DIS interns have found it possible to defer student loans while working in Copenhagen. You are encouraged to research this possibility as early as possible based on your specific type of loan.

Benefits

What about health insurance?

The Danish national health insurance card, *sundhedskort*, also commonly known as the 'yellow card', will cover your basic health insurance in Denmark.

More information about the Danish national health insurance:

<http://www.nyidanmark.dk/en-us>

Choose "Citizen in Denmark" and then choose "Health and Sickness."

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In addition to the Danish national health insurance, DIS provides interns an additional benefit of a comprehensive health, accident and liability insurance during your internship. You are covered from your first day of work to the last day. Personal travels outside of Denmark are also included with the DIS insurance. If you are required to travel for work purposes such as study tours, DIS provides an additional work travel insurance. The detailed description of the Insurance Conditions can be downloaded as a PDF on DIS' website at <http://www.disabroad.org/study-abroad-students/study-abroad-health-safety/insurance/> .

Note that neither the Danish national health insurance nor the DIS health insurance cover medication, dental, optical or treatments not given by a doctor or hospital (for example mental health or physical therapy). As a general rule in Denmark, medication is not reimbursed but is less expensive than in the U.S. An average dental check-up will cost you approximately 500 DKK, while filling a cavity can cost between 500-1200 DKK.

If you are required to travel outside of Denmark for work purposes such as study tours, DIS provides additional travel insurance to be used only during work-related travels.

In addition to the Danish national health insurance, DIS provides interns an additional benefit of a comprehensive health, accident and liability insurance during your internship. It covers you for basic travel health insurance in Europe. The detailed description of the Insurance Conditions can be downloaded as a PDF on DIS' website at <http://disabroad.org/copenhagen/student-resource/health-and-safety/insurance/> You are covered from your first day of work to the last.

What about vacation?

You will have 25 days of paid vacation for a 12-month contract, 27 days of paid vacation for a 13-month contract, and 31 days of paid vacation for a 15-month contract.

You will have a hard time finding vacation benefits this good anywhere, so start saving now and plan some epic travels!! Plan trips ahead and get tips from the study tour assistants. Also, your co-workers have a wealth of knowledge regarding various places you may want to travel to. It's a very open office, and everyone loves vacation! The stigma you may have felt in the US about taking time off does not exist here as much. Enjoy the very Danish life/work balance!

Do I go on study tours?

Many staff members at DIS have the opportunity to be study tour leaders during the short and long study tours and adventure trips. The assignment of tour leaders is based on faculty interest in participation and the staff's academic, social, and cultural leadership skills.

You will be assigned to lead or co-lead at least one study tour or adventure trip during your internship as an essential part of developing your leadership skills and thus furthering the overall goal of the internship. There is no guarantee on specific destination or duration of the study tour or adventure trip you will lead. You are expected to maintain a high degree of responsibility while leading the tour.

Can I take Danish language classes?

We strongly encourage you to take Danish, but you are not required to do so. Interns usually take Danish classes from local language schools after work in the evening. This is also an excellent way to meet other expatriates in Denmark. If you live in the Copenhagen municipality, the Danish classes are free of charge. If you live in a municipality that does not offer free classes, DIS will cover the cost for you.

Danish classes are also a great way to meet friends from many different backgrounds! Classes are usually twice a week, with each class being about 2-3 hours. In no time you will soon understand the gist of train and bus announcements, signs, and what words here and there being said.

What about cell phones?

Most current interns use Telmore, CBB, OiSTER, Bibob, Telanor, Telia or 3, which are plans where you use your own phone and pay for a sim card and monthly plan. Plans that offer unlimited text and 6 hours of talk and 6GB of Data can be found as well for somewhere around 80 DKK per month, plus an initiation fee. More expensive providers, like Telia, 3, and Telanor will cost about twice as much, but might offer additional perks such as free international roaming, Spotify premium, Netflix, etc.

Please note that all monthly plans require you to have a bank account, and 'NemID' bank validation code which comes a few weeks after you set up your bank account. Because of this, it is a good idea to purchase pre-paid sim card plans for the few weeks at the beginning of the internship so that you can be connected via phone. Finally, any phone that was purchased through AT&T with a locked cell plan will not be able to receive international sim card, so you will have to buy a new smart phone that is not locked to a cell plan.

Logistics

How do I get a Danish work and residence permit?

If you are offered an internship position and you accept the offer, DIS will prepare the necessary documents from DIS' side and mail them to you. After that, it is your responsibility to complete the forms and submit them as soon as possible to the Danish Consulate.

The current visa fee is DKK 2,480 (payable to the Danish Immigration Service in Copenhagen) + \$215 (Danish Consulate fee in New York) + \$33 (FVS Service fee) + \$30, or 60, variable depending on where you live (to have your passport sent back to you with Federal Express). Biometrics must be obtained at a Danish Consulate or Embassy before you send the application to the Consulate in New York.

Does DIS offer a VISA Stipend to help me with some of the visa charges?

Yes, the DIS VISA stipend is up to \$700 on your visa expenses upon receipts. The visa application expenses will be refunded to you by DIS after you have started work in Copenhagen.

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Please note that the Danish visa rules are often submitted to changes. However, DIS will be fully updated of any new regulations and requirements by the time a candidate is offered a position.

The application and work permit form must always be submitted as soon as possible as the process can take as long as three months. Note that you need to have a passport that is valid until 6 months after your internship ends.

When my internship is complete, can I travel around Europe for a while before travelling back to the US?

It is important to note that you have to leave Denmark no later than on the last day of your visa! However, you can stay in Europe for 90 days afterwards on visa-free tourist conditions. You may even come back to Denmark again, but remember that you are not allowed to work!

These are the current rules, but the regulations are constantly changing so make sure you double check before you make any plans. It is your responsibility to be updated on the rules to avoid an overstay on your visa.

Domestic travel and roundtrip airfare to and from Copenhagen – can DIS help with these expenses (Travel Stipend)?

Yes, DIS has a travel stipend in support for your travel expenses up to a total of \$1,000. Items that may be included with this is the international airfare to/from Copenhagen as well as any travel expenses you may have in connection with obtaining biometrics at a Danish consulate before submitting your visa application. The travel stipend is available after you have started work in Copenhagen where you must fill out an expense refund form and supplement it with all the necessary receipts.

Please note that the travel stipend will probably not cover all of your expenses, but will provide some substantial help. You are expected to finance the remaining costs yourself.

As soon as a future intern has signed the contract it is encouraged that you start to look for an airfare as prices will increase the closer you get to your start date.

What about housing?

You are responsible for finding your own housing in Copenhagen. After you accept a position at DIS, more specific information about housing in Copenhagen, rent and useful websites will be sent to you. Please note that some of these websites are in English, but most of them will be in Danish. In the material you receive from DIS, there will be a glossary of Danish housing terms that are useful when you read a housing ad. You will also have access to the apartment listings that DIS makes available for students looking for non-DIS housing arrangements. The list contains ads DIS receives from Danes who contact DIS about looking for a roommate. DIS makes these ads available to students and interns, but is not responsible in dealing with renting these rooms.

Most interns rent a room with other Danes. An average rent for a furnished room is about 4,000-5,000 DKK per month. Deposits are usually 3 months' rent, to be paid before you move in. In addition to your deposit and your monthly rent, you may need to pay for gas/electricity and heat, though in many cases this is included in the monthly rent.

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Be aware of scams, and do not transfer funds to anyone before receiving the keys. You may contact current interns and ask them to go and meet the landlord on your behalf. Also, departing interns may have good apartments or housing that they can pass on to you. Don't be afraid to ask!