



Tips & Tricks for Applying to the CLA-ACE Summer Student Internship Program 2010

**Applications Due at 5:00 PM EST on
Friday, January 22, 2009**

GENERAL ADVICE

- **Start early.** Previous interns have asked us to remind you not to leave your application to the last minute! The application requires some thought and effort.
- **Be specific.** Answer the questions that are asked. Describe your experience in a clear and concise manner.
- **Be careful.** Sloppiness in the form of typographical errors, grammar mistakes, and incomplete applications are some of the first impressions that are considered when we eliminate candidates. Proofread your application before submitting it!
- **Be concise.** The application form is limited in space and word count. Respect these requirements.
- **Be professional.** This is not the place for casual or colloquial writing.
- **Ideal candidates** have a demonstrated interest in international human rights, good governance and rule of law issues, a respect for diversity, and an ability to perform in new and often challenging environments. They are flexible, understand the importance of cultural awareness, and have a strong work ethic. Previous overseas experience is preferred but is not required. Note that your previous volunteer work may be more relevant to this application than formal work experience.

Some of the criteria that we consider when selecting candidates includes:

- Previous volunteer or work experience in Canada or abroad
- Demonstrated interest in human rights, good governance and the rule of law
- Relevant educational and work background
- Strong communication skills
- Strong legal research skills
- Self-sufficient and self-motivated
- Problem-solving skills and demonstrated ability to work with limited resources
- Respectful, highly adaptable, and open to change

SPECIFIC POINTERS

1. **Section:** Application Details, Personal Information, Education, Languages

In this section, list the details of your application as indicated on the form. Take care to ensure we have accurate information, especially with regards to your phone number and email address. That is how we will reach you if you are short-listed for a telephone interview.

2. **Section:** Relevant Employment and/or Extracurricular Background

You are limited to **three** employment and/or extracurricular activities you believe will most accurately demonstrate your experience, so choose wisely! Volunteer experience can be more valuable than unrelated paid employment.

Under “key responsibilities,” try and think of what your internship might entail, and draw on your previous experience to show us how you can transfer your skills.

Example: If you were a research assistant to a professor working on international issues, highlight your research skills, ability to identify key information, synthesize this information, and present it well. The resources available to you at some of our host organizations will not be the same as those you have access to in Canada. Demonstrate that your research skills will transfer to situations where the resources might be reduced.

Under “reason for change”, if the position was short-term or ended because it was a set contract, just write that. Don’t get too wordy where you don’t need to be!

3. **Section:** Experience and Qualifications

This is your opportunity to show us what you’re made of. Read the question and make sure you’ve answered it. These questions are where you need to distinguish yourself from your peers.

Q1: *Indicate your interest in the rule of law, good governance, and human rights. Describe where your interest stems from, as well as any experience you may have had in these areas.*

Are you interested in a career in the areas of rule of law, good governance and human rights? Describe how the experience of an internship might relate to your professional and personal goals. Is there a specific issue or subject that you are passionate about?

Q2: *Have you ever lived and/or worked in a developing country? If yes, explain your experience.*

Note: If you have only travelled for pleasure, refer to that if it is relevant. Just be sure to explain how your travel experiences have led to your understanding of different cultures and ability to thrive in a challenging environment.

Q3. *Describe a situation where, in the face of challenging circumstances, you demonstrated cultural sensitivity, initiative, flexibility, and adaptability.*

Internships often present challenging situations due to a variety of factors, such as being in a new, sometimes isolated, environment with different customs, and being far from home and family. Show us that you can cope with such situations if they arise by demonstrating your initiative, your flexibility, your adaptability, and cultural awareness.

Q4. *What will you contribute to the organization that will be hosting the internship?*

What skills can you share? What are your strengths? Is there a particular skill you are working on refining? Be sure to communicate your skill set to us.