

Vandy in Hollywood Summer Internship Program

Guidebook

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Vandy in Hollywood Summer Internship Program (ViH), a prestigious opportunity for Vanderbilt University students to immerse themselves in the heart of the entertainment industry. ViH has been a transformative experience for participants, offering unparalleled access to top studios, agencies, distributors, and production companies in Hollywood. This guidebook is designed to provide comprehensive information for college students considering applying for this program.

Program Overview

Since its inception in 2004, ViH has grown in popularity, connecting students with valuable internships, industry insights, and networking opportunities. The program places approximately 30 students each year in renowned entertainment enterprises, fostering connections that often lead to full-time career opportunities.

2026 Timeline:

- **October 27 – January 23:** Application live on Handshake.
- **November 7:** ViH Alumni & Student Reception.
- **January 12-16:** Drop-in Hours @ the Career Center (info & hours on Handshake).
- **January 15:** Info Session.
- **January 23:** Application Close.
- **Late February:** Alumni Interviews.
- **March – Early May:** Internships are shared with the cohort and interviews are happening.
- **Late May – Early June:** Internships begin.
- **Late July:** Summer Bash
- **Student Cohort Leader Appointed:** Once the cohort is set, a student liaison will be appointed to strengthen communication within the cohort.
- **Stipend Activation:** As soon as the cohort is finalized.

Importance of Connections

In Hollywood, connections are paramount. ViH not only provides valuable internships but also facilitates networking through guest lectures, studio tours, and special events presented by accomplished Vanderbilt alumni in the entertainment industry.

Screening and Interview Process

The success of ViH is attributed, in part, to its rigorous screening and interview process. Candidates are expected to articulate their career aspirations and demonstrate dedication, passion, and a willingness to work in the dynamic world of entertainment.

FAQS

1. WHAT DOES THE APPLICATION PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

The application process for ViH begins in October. Candidates will be selected and interviewed by the Vandy in Hollywood Alumni Group. An information session precedes the internship period.

2. WHAT KIND OF QUESTIONS ARE ON THE APPLICATION?

Applicants will indicate their areas of interest and provide details about prior professional experiences. Family discussions about program costs are encouraged.

3. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors in good academic standing are eligible to apply.

4. WHAT IF I HAVE NO RELATED EXPERIENCE?

While prior experience is not mandatory, candidates should highlight transferable skills developed through campus involvement. ViH values dedication and a professional development mindset.

5. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I APPLY?

After applying, if selected, candidates undergo a 30-minute Zoom interview with an alum.

6. HOW DO I FIND COMPANIES THAT MIGHT BE THE RIGHT FIT FOR MY INTERESTS?

Research the entertainment industry, explore career paths, and consider the benefits of working with larger or smaller employers.

7. HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR MY INTERVIEWS?

Be specific about your interests, avoid generic responses, and conduct thorough research on potential career paths within the entertainment industry.

8. WILL ALL OF THE AVAILABLE POSITIONS BE SHARED IN FEBRUARY?

No, opportunities continue to be shared until May.

9. WHICH COMPANIES HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE PAST?

Notable companies include Agency for the Performing Arts, CBS-Paramount, Lionsgate, NBCUniversal, and many more.

10. ARE THESE INTERNSHIPS PAID?

In most cases, these positions are unpaid. Refer to job descriptions for payment details.

11. WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR THESE INTERNSHIPS?

Each employer has a different timeline, generally starting in mid-May to early August.

12. WHAT ABOUT HOUSING?

Finding a roommate is recommended, and the Housing Ideas page provides information on housing in L.A.

13. WILL I NEED A CAR?

Having a car is highly recommended for convenience.

14. WHAT DOES THE GROUP DO ONCE IN L.A. FOR THE SUMMER?

Participants can expect a weekly speaker series, invites to movie premieres, and various social events.

15. WHAT IF I STILL HAVE QUESTIONS NOT ADDRESSED HERE?

For any unanswered questions, feel free to reach out to the program coordinators or alumni for guidance.

TIPS FROM VIH ALUMNI

Timing is Everything

Understanding the fast-paced nature of Hollywood, prioritize urgency in tasks and responsiveness.

Building Relationships

Forge connections with assistants, as they hold valuable keys to opportunities and future career prospects.

Transferable Skills

During downtime, learn essential tasks like rolling calls and understanding call sheets—valuable transferable skills.

Stay Busy and Stay Late

Always find ways to contribute and stay engaged. Attend every event and seize opportunities to meet industry professionals.

Treat It as a Job

Even though unpaid, approach the internship as a job, focusing on forming lasting relationships for future career prospects.

Keep in Touch

Maintain connections, as relationships built during the internship can be crucial for future opportunities.

HANDLING INTERNSHIP OFFERS

Addressing Financial Concerns

If awaiting aid confirmation, promptly acknowledge the offer, express enthusiasm and commitment, and inform the employer of the pending financial confirmation.

Making Informed Decisions

If scholarship information is not available, communicate your passion, request additional time, and provide a tentative date for a decision.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OPTIONS

Vandy in Hollywood Internship Fund

Undergraduate students who have been accepted into the Vandy in Hollywood Summer Internship Program are encouraged to apply for a stipend through the ViH Internship Fund. Recipients will be awarded an amount within the range of \$1,500 – \$3,000 to help offset the costs of low or no-pay internships. Award amounts are determined by several factors, including financial need, location, hours per week, and anticipated graduation date.

Arts & Media Internship Fund

The Arts & Media Internship Fund provides eligible undergraduate students interested in media-related careers for a stipend of *up to* \$5000 for un(der) paid summer internships. Eligible applicants can apply for summer internship funds during the spring semester. Funding can be

used for housing costs, meals, transportation costs (to/from internship, commuter travel, etc.), and professional attire.

Details

Applicants may apply prior to receiving an internship offer, but must have secured an offer in writing by May 1 before awards will be processed. Applicants must be current Vanderbilt undergraduate students returning full-time for at least one undergraduate semester in the fall after their internship.

For information about eligibility, application timelines, and links, visit:

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/career/financial-support/>

JOB SEARCH AND APPLICATION TIPS

Cover Letter Tips

Craft personalized cover letters tailored to each company, showcasing knowledge of their work, connecting personal experiences, and expressing enthusiasm.

Acknowledging Offers

Respond promptly to internship offers, acknowledging them within 24 hours, and express gratitude, ensuring swift communication.

Waiting for Other Opportunities

Once offered an internship, avoid waiting for other opportunities before responding. Declining an offer may limit future submissions.

Keeping Program Coordinators Informed

Inform program coordinators promptly upon accepting an internship to ensure inclusion in summer activities and opportunities.

FINAL REMINDERS

- Relax and Be Patient: It's early in the process, and opportunities will continue to arise.
- The Career Center and ViH Alum are here to help you!
- Swift Responses: Respond to internship offers promptly, ideally within 24 hours, to demonstrate commitment.
- Small Companies with Alumni: Focus on smaller companies, especially those with Vanderbilt alumni, for more meaningful experiences and opportunities.

Congratulations on embarking on this exciting journey with Vandy in Hollywood! Your summer in Hollywood awaits, filled with valuable experiences, networking, and the chance to kickstart your career in the entertainment industry. Best of luck!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- (video 1) [Vandy in Hollywood Summer Internship Program Information Session](#)
- (video 2) [Vandy in Hollywood Summer Internship Program Information Session](#)