



Finding Work Abroad

So you've always wanted to work overseas, but you're not sure where to start. That's okay, you're not alone. Finding work abroad can be challenging, but it is not impossible. This tip sheet is designed to help you navigate the often complicated international job or internship search process. It will provide you with valuable insights into how to begin searching for work abroad, key job and internship resources, and special circumstances to take into consideration when living and working abroad. Throughout, you will find that the underlying theme is "Always do your homework." Good luck and bon voyage!

The Tools of an International Job Search

85% of international jobs open to North American college students and recent graduates are with domestic or international companies based in North America.¹ In general these companies will understand your American resume style, but you will want to highlight different areas of your background when searching for an international position. Group all your international experience together to highlight your cross-cultural skills. Make sure to list your language skills, indicating proficiency levels. Many language departments at Ohio State are willing to assist you with determining how to reference such skills. You can compare your resume with the one found in the tip sheet, Resume Sample: Global Competencies to identify ways to better promote your qualifications.

If you will be applying for a position in a specific country, do your homework. Often country specific resumes require different information. It is generally expected that you will submit a resume in the language of the country to which you are applying. Also be aware that cover letters may be different and that paper sizes for job search documents may also vary. Going Global is a great resource for learning about country specific job search practices.

Key Resources for Finding Work Abroad

Interning & Volunteering Abroad

A great way to begin building your overseas experience is to intern abroad. There are opportunities available in all fields ranging from finance to art restoration. One way to narrow down your search is to begin by looking close to home. The Ohio State Office of International Affairs sponsors and co-sponsors several internship programs in countries around the world. Program costs vary, but one term's tuition typically covers academic credit (number of hours varies), housing, and supplemental insurance while traveling abroad. Airfare and meals are usually not included. For more information about these programs, visit the OIA website at <https://oia.osu.edu/getting-started/ways-to-go-abroad/internship-or-work-abroad.html>.

If you are interested in overseas internships in business, development, information technology, engineering, or education. AIESEC may be a great option for you. Run by students and recent college graduates, AIESEC partners with such recognizable companies as Unilever, UBS, DHL, and Microsoft, among others. You can learn more about this internship placement organization and the services it offers at www.aiesec.org.

The United States government routinely sends interns abroad. Organizations such as the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the USDA Foreign Service Agency, the Department of State, and the US Agency for International Development all place interns abroad. The application process can be lengthy and extremely competitive, so be prepared to be patient. Deadlines to apply for summer internships vary based on security clearance requirements, which can be found in the job posting. Internships requiring security clearance have deadlines as early as November; those positions that do not require security clearance will require submission in early spring.

You can search for overseas US government internships at www.usajobs.gov/ by clicking on the International Search link. Because some agencies do not post their openings on USAJobs, you should also check the web sites of those agencies that align with your career interest areas. A helpful directory of US government organizations is found at http://www.usa.gov/Agencies/Federal/All_Agencies/index.shtml.

In addition, the US Department of State's Bureau of International Organization Affairs also offers a wide array of internships with organizations ranging from the World Health Organization to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to the International Court of Justice in The Hague, Netherlands. You can learn more about internships with these and other international organizations by going to <http://iicareers.state.gov/> and clicking on Internship Links.

Other overseas internship resources include Going Global, CDS International (www.cdsintl.org), globalEDGE (globaledge.msu.edu/international-internships/), and Intern Abroad (www.internabroad.com).

Academic credit for independent internships (those not sponsored

or co-sponsored by Ohio State) and volunteer experiences may be available on a case by case basis through an Office of International Affairs Individualized Study Abroad Program. Visit their website for details.

One of the most popular overseas volunteer programs is the Peace Corps. Volunteers serve for 27 months around the world in fields such as education, youth outreach and community development, environment, and information technology. The Peace Corps provides a wide variety of benefits, including student loan deferment, a living allowance, and a lump sum (\$7425 as of July 2014) upon completion of the program to spend how you wish. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis and anyone over 18 may apply. For more information visit the Peace Corps website at peacecorp.gov.

Not sure about a 27-month commitment? Check out opportunities offered by BUNAC (British Universities North America Club). This organization will place you on a volunteer project in an area in Peru, Cambodia or South Africa. Programs vary in length but are generally four to seventeen weeks. Visit BUNAC's website (www.bunac.org/usa) for details about fees and eligibility.

Teaching English Abroad

As English has emerged as the predominant language in our globalized society, the number of teachers of English has increased, and native speakers are particularly desirable. Teaching English as a foreign language is a great way to work abroad. Based on the program you choose, the required level of host country language competency will range from basic to advanced. Check with the program you choose to see what it requires. Two of the most well-known and respected Teaching English Abroad programs are the U.S. Fulbright Program English Teaching Assistantship and the Japanese Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET).

The Fulbright Program English Teaching Assistantship is a fellowship which allows recent graduates to spend 8-12 months in a foreign country teaching English language and conversation classes. This fellowship is facilitated by the Undergraduate Fellowship Office. Plan to begin applying at least one year in advance, as the application process is long and competitive. For more information about the program visit <http://fellowships.osu.edu/>.

The JET Programme Assistant Language Teacher positions provide bachelor's degree holders the opportunity to live and teach English in Japan. Most teachers are placed in local boards of education or in public junior and senior high schools. A similar Korean Ministry of Education-sponsored program, EPIK (<http://www.epik.go.kr/>), provides recent college graduates an opportunity to teach English in Korea. Teaching credentials are not required by EPIK, the JET Programme or the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship. For additional information on this employment option as well as the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) certification, check out the tip sheet Teaching English Abroad on our website.

Finding a Career Abroad

The key to building a career abroad is discovering and developing your interests to determine which field is right for you. As mentioned earlier, the vast majority of North American professionals abroad work for North American companies, or with international companies

based in North America. It can be very difficult to search for a career by country due to visa, residency, and work permit restrictions. Instead, try searching by job sector and career field.

The federal government has a myriad of career positions available, particularly in education, medicine, and health and human services professions. You can search for these positions at www.usajobs.gov/, by clicking on the International Search link.

If you are looking for work in the nonprofit sector, www.idealists.org/ is a great place to begin looking. This job search website for nonprofit organizations features careers as well as volunteer positions and internships, and you can search for overseas opportunities.

Going Global, a resource accessible to Arts and Sciences undergraduates through FutureLink. Explore world-wide internship opportunities and employment trends. Review country-specific information including resume writing and interviewing guidelines, professional networking groups and work permit and visa regulations. Gain information about some of the largest cities across North America including cultural advice about office protocol, communication styles, business practices for conducting meetings and presentations.

The Riley Guide offers a great compilation of international job opportunities, spanning across multiple regions and countries. Alongside each linked job board, Riley offers a detailed description of the kinds of jobs and job hunters it targets. You can access it here: <http://www.rileyguide.com/internat.html>. Remember to focus on career field and don't get hung up on searching for a job by country.

Special Considerations to Keep in Mind when Searching for Work Abroad

Passports, Visas, Residence and Work Permits

A passport is mandatory for United States citizens traveling outside the US and its territories. This now includes Mexico and Canada. You can read about how to obtain a passport here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/apply.html>

Visas, residence and/or work permits may be required depending on which country you decide to call home. Nearly every country has restrictions of some kind, so be sure to do your homework before going abroad. These documents can be very difficult to obtain without support from an employer, so your best bet is to have a job lined up before you begin the paperwork process. Usually a non-national must be able to prove that he or she has a stable source of income and a set of specialized skills not possessed by a national. An employer can vouch for you on both of these counts. The application process can be lengthy and is very complicated so be prepared to be patient.

You can read more about how to obtain these documents on the U.S. Embassy website for the country in which you will be living (<http://www.usembassy.gov/>)

Travel Alerts and Travel Warnings

The US Department of State issues Travel Alerts and Travel Warnings for countries in which it may not be safe for American citizens to travel. Be aware that, if you are applying for Ohio State academic credit for an overseas internship or volunteer experience under a Travel Alert or Warning, the Office of International Affairs will require extra documentation validating your reason for visiting and is subject to approval. A list of the current Travel Alerts and Warnings may be found here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html>

Working Abroad as an American Woman

Working abroad as a woman can be very rewarding. Many women say that taking an international assignment increases their independence and puts them on the “fast track” in their chosen career field. International employers often seek to hire women because they have strong cultural sensitivity. There are, however, special considerations to take into account when working abroad as a woman.

As always, do your homework before departing for your international assignment. Many countries do not embrace the equal rights mentality that is prevalent in the United States. Research expected women’s behavior for your destination. While you may think that another country’s expectations for women are “backward” or “demeaning,” this information is provided for your own safety. Behavior that you may take for granted (appearing in public alone, making eye contact with a man, running a business meeting) may have unintended implications and not be acceptable in some places around the world; you could be ignored, hassled, harassed, or worse.

More about this and other helpful tips for women traveling and working abroad, including tips about what to wear and women’s health can be found on the Journeywoman website at <http://www.journeywoman.com/>

A Final Note about Finding Work Abroad

Most international volunteer and internship placement services will have some kind of fee associated with using their services. The breakdown of these fees will vary, but usually cover the cost of the placement, securing the appropriate documentation to travel and live abroad, and sometimes includes accommodation. Only in very rare cases are airfare and meals covered by these costs. Make sure to budget for these expenses.

One last time, make sure you do your homework before committing to a program or company. Traveling and working abroad has increased in popularity, and so, unfortunately have the number of scams. Use your common sense. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. If you are unsure about a program, try entering its name into an internet search engine with the words “scam” or “fraud”. This will help you find any negative information attached to it.

The Arts and Sciences Career Services Office is happy to assist you in your search for a work abroad experience and can provide valuable information about reputable programs and companies. The above mentioned resources are by no means an exhaustive list for finding work abroad. To learn more about finding these opportunities and to better focus your search, consider scheduling an appointment with a Career Prep Advisor in the Arts and Sciences Career Services Office.

¹ Hachey, Jean-Marc. *The Big Guide to Living and Working Overseas*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Intercultural Systems, 2007. Print.