

Municipal Internship Program for Administrators

2010/11 Grant Application Guidelines

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2010/11 Municipal Internship Program for Administrators Grant Application Guidelines

1. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Alberta Municipal Affairs sponsors the Municipal Internship Program for Administrators in partnership with Alberta municipalities. It is designed to attract recent post-secondary graduates to the field of municipal administration. Its objective is to assist in the training and development of competent, well-rounded senior municipal administrators as a means of assisting municipalities with their succession planning. It is expected that upon successful completion of the program, interns will be prepared to enter municipal administration in Alberta's municipalities.

The program provides funding to municipalities in Alberta so they can hire and support the training of an intern for a 12-month period. During the year, the intern is exposed to many different aspects of managing a municipality. They are supervised, mentored, and coached by either the chief administrative officer (CAO) or a senior member of the management team. Program scope is broad so interns have the opportunity to explore each of the key functions of their host municipality. The year also includes sessions organized by Municipal Affairs where all interns meet as a group for the purpose of networking, becoming more familiar with industry trends, learning about provincial services and meeting provincial personnel. These sessions permit the interns to share with one another their experiences and lessons they have learned. The intern's supervisors also meet during the year to discuss the program, talk about issues, and work with their intern.

Please review these guidelines prior to completing the [grant application form](#).

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact:

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The application deadline is September 4, 2009.

1.1 General Requirements

a. Eligibility

Alberta municipalities with populations between 700 and 100,000 are eligible for the 2010/11 Municipal Internship Program for Administrators. Population figures are based on Municipal Affairs official populations as of September 1, 2008.

Joint applications by municipalities willing to work together to host an intern are also eligible. Although three municipalities have partnered in the past, that experience suggests a partnership between two municipalities would be more effective. One municipality in the partnership must be designated as the managing partner for the initiative. Only the managing partner must meet the population requirements and must submit the application to the program on behalf of the partnering municipalities. A council resolution from each partnering municipality, including the managing partner, must be included in the application package. The resolution should indicate that the partnering municipalities have agreed upon which municipality will be the managing partner. The managing partner will be responsible for all administrative requirements of the program and for ensuring the intern completes the internship Workplan.

Municipalities may also partner informally with neighbouring municipalities. In this case, the interested municipality submits an application to be a host and can simply outline plans for collaborating with another municipality during the year; a joint proposal is not necessary.

b. Selection Criteria for Host Municipality

The intent of this program is to help train an intern so that he/she may pursue a career in municipal administration. Having the opportunity to work closely with staff and council in a municipality is a valuable experience. It is important to ensure that interns gain the greatest benefit possible from their internships. In addition to the population requirements, municipalities are expected to meet certain criteria:

- A strong council-administration relationship exists and there is strong commitment from the CAO, council, and management team to have an intern;
- There is an organizational commitment to the Internship Program's vision and goals;
- The CAO or a senior manager has agreed to serve as the intern supervisor for the duration of the program (see the following paragraph for more information);
- A sufficient commitment of resources, both financial and staff, has been made; and,
- There is an ability and willingness to provide training in a wide range of municipal functions and there is a strong interest in sharing knowledge and experiences with the intern and in working with the intern to complete the Workplan.

The internship is designed to produce well-rounded, highly capable management candidates for Alberta's municipalities. The ultimate aim is to ensure that Alberta has a sufficient number of skilled and qualified CAO and senior management candidates to meet future needs. The role of the intern supervisor is primarily to act as a mentor and provide career guidance and specific advice to the intern. The individuals best positioned to offer this advice are the CAO and the senior management team. Since this program requires significant commitment from the CAO or a senior manager, it may not be suitable for all eligible municipalities.

c. Expectations of Host Municipalities

i. Attending sessions

Interns are expected to participate in all program related events sponsored by Municipal Affairs, such as the Orientation, Executive Week, and Wrap-Up sessions. These sessions are important career development and networking opportunities for the interns; they have the opportunity to get to know the colleagues they will be working with in the future. Intern supervisors are also required to attend an orientation session and other sessions during the year with their intern.

ii. Implementing Workplan

Municipal Affairs has developed a Workplan and a Guidebook that will help provide guidelines for determining the activities and opportunities interns should be exposed to during the year. However, the intern and supervisor will have the flexibility to decide on the specific activities undertaken based on the needs of the municipality and the interests of the intern.

The Workplan is provided as the framework for the intern's work during the year. It has been designed so that the interns are exposed to ten key aspects of municipal administration. Ideally, interns will experience these ten key areas in the first ten months of the internship, leaving a two-month period for interns to spend time in a particular area of interest or on a specific project. Special projects that would be beneficial to the intern's experience can be incorporated into the Workplan. However, such projects should be only a small part of the intern's activities during the year and should relate directly to their training and development in municipal administration.

iii. Training an Intern

The purpose of this program is to introduce the intern to municipal administration therefore the focus is on understanding the overall management responsibilities of the CAO and senior managers. While taking part in specific hands-on activities is an effective method of teaching the intern about municipal activities, it is important that such hands-on experiences are related back to the overall management perspective. Having time to reflect on experiences is as important as the experiences themselves. Hosts are also responsible for the intern's professional development during the year; interns should be coached and mentored in areas such as building competencies, networking, and career path development.

1.2 Application Process and Deadlines

a. Host Municipality Selection

Municipalities interested in hosting an intern for 2010/11 must submit a Municipal Internship Program grant application to Alberta Municipal Affairs no later than September 4, 2009. The ministry will select the 12 host municipalities for the 2010/11 internship in October 2009. Notification will be provided to the municipalities selected to host interns in November 2009.

Host municipalities are required to submit a signed conditional grant agreement (CGA) and a customized Workplan. The CGA outlines the terms of reference for the Internship Program and how the grant funding can be used. A CGA will be forwarded to the host municipalities in December. The customized Workplan is based on the generic Workplan provided on the Internship website. Host municipalities will be asked to add, delete or modify activities based on their own municipal circumstances and needs. The Workplan can be further refined once an intern has been selected so that the intern's activities during the year also reflect his or her own interests. In this way, the Workplan can help provide a measure of progress and can be used in the ministry reporting requirements.

b. Intern Selection

The ministry invites individuals interested in participating in the program to submit an application package to the ministry by January 29, 2010. The ministry will process the applications and create a shortlist of those candidates who meet the criteria specified. This shortlist will be forwarded to those municipalities that have been selected to host interns in February 2010.

Host municipalities will be responsible for contacting candidates, setting interviews, selecting interns, and negotiating contract terms. The final selection of interns should be completed by March 29, 2010, with employment to commence in May 2010. Interns are employees of the municipality; therefore you may negotiate salary, start date and other details.

To be considered for the Municipal Internship Program for Administrators, the candidates must have:

- A recently completed post-secondary degree or diploma (or be graduating in May 2010);
- A desire to experience and learn the functions of a municipality;
- Work or volunteer experience that is related to the skills needed in municipal administration;
- Willingness to relocate to host municipality if necessary; and,
- Work, character, educational or volunteer-related references.

Candidates will also be assessed based on their ability to demonstrate a variety of additional attributes that would be valuable to an individual pursuing a career in municipal management. These attributes include, but are not limited to:

- Some basic knowledge about local government;
- A wish to develop a career in municipal administration;
- Experience working with community groups or involvement with volunteer community organizations;
- A desire to influence public policy and community development through public service;
- Flexibility in terms of work hours and job requirements;
- Problem-solving ability; and
- Positive public relations skills.

It is important to remember that these qualifications will act primarily as a guide. An applicant's entire submission package will be considered, and individual circumstances will be examined. **Host municipalities will have the freedom to set additional criteria for their intern selection.**

c. Eligible Candidates – Current Municipal Employees

The intent of this program is to attract new people to the field of local government and provide an opportunity for recent graduates to enter municipal administration as a career choice. It is not the intent to have municipalities hire an individual who is already employed in local government. A municipality may not hire an individual who is currently employed by the municipality or who has worked for the municipality in the past 12 months (excluding casual or summer students).

d. Intern Placement at End of Internship

There is no expectation that you will hire your intern at the completion of the internship, but you are welcome to approach the intern with a job offer or encourage him/her to apply on a position with your organization. If you do not intend to hire your intern, you are encouraged to assist and support your intern in his/her search for another municipal position.

2. GRANT APPLICATION FORM (BY SECTION)

This section describes each section in the Grant Application Form. You may wish to refer to the form while reading this section.

2.1 Part 1: General Requirements

This section outlines the parameters of the Municipal Internship Program for Administrators, including the purpose and use of the grant, the grant budget, the project timeline, and grants previously received by the municipality (to be attached by Municipal Affairs).

2.2 Part 2: Grant Eligibility

Alberta municipalities with populations between 700 and 100,000 may apply for this program. In the case of two or more municipalities partnering to host an intern, the managing partner must meet this population requirement.

2.3 Part 3: Program Requirements

This section covers both financial and activity-related details. This is the primary section used to evaluate applications.

a. Funding

Each host municipality will receive a grant of \$43,000 to help cover the costs of hosting an intern. The grant funding provided is intended to help cover the costs associated with hosting an intern; the grant will not fully cover all intern costs for the year. Municipalities are expected to contribute financial resources to the internship as necessary.

In this section you are asked to indicate how your municipality intends to manage the financial details of this initiative. Funding can be used for the following:

- 1) **salary** (\$30,000); 2) **benefits** (\$2,000); 3) **intern's expenses** (\$10,000); and
- 4) **supervisor's travel expenses** (\$1,000).

You will be required to account for how the grant funding was used during the year in your Final Report. The grant funding cannot be used for other expenses not listed in the tables. Please see Section 5 of the guidelines for more information about reporting requirements associated with the grant funding.

Completing the Tables

In the first table, under Part 3 of the application, indicate what contribution your municipality will make toward the intern's **salary**, in addition to the \$30,000 provided as part of the grant. Also indicate what contribution your municipality will make towards **benefits** and benefits/payroll costs, in addition to the \$2,000 provided as part of the grant. Host municipalities will normally find it necessary to contribute additional dollars for salary, payroll expenses, and benefits in order to be competitive in attracting an intern. In previous years the average salary ranged between \$37,000 and \$55,000.

In the second table, under Part 3 of the application, two types of **expenses** are outlined: required and optional. The minimum amount must be requested for the **required** expenses (i.e. recruitment, ministry workshops, professional development courses, relocation, and conferences/conventions). Funding in the amount of \$1,000 is included for recruitment costs, relocation costs, and supervisor's travel expenses. Recruitment costs include mileage and accommodation for *candidates* being interviewed. Eligible relocation expenses include any expense that you would normally reimburse any other employee of your organization. Supervisor's travel expenses include mileage, accommodation, and meals associated with travel to ministry workshops or career fairs and information sessions in support of program promotion.

If a host municipality's actual recruitment, relocation, or supervisor's travel expenses are less than \$1,000, the host must contact the program for approval to allocate the remaining funding to other eligible intern expenses, such as ministry workshops, courses, membership fees, safety gear, etc. If permission is not received for this reallocation, any remaining funding must be returned to the ministry.

Interns are expected to attend ministry workshops, such as the Intern Orientation, Executive week, and Wrap-up. As well, interns are expected to attend **at least one** professional development course, and **at least one** conference or convention during the year. Host municipalities are expected to support their interns to take part in these professional development opportunities.

For the **optional** expenses, you are to indicate the amount of funding you would like in each of the areas (laptop computer, association membership or meeting fees, and safety gear). The \$10,000 can be allocated based on your own needs.

For example, if your municipality already has a computer for the intern's use (preferably a laptop), the \$2,500 can be allocated to another type of expense noted in the table. Regarding laptops, the program's experience has been that the interns' culture is closely tied to electronic communication and working on a computer. The ministry is supporting the cost of a laptop computer at the beginning of the internship because the interns will be moving around through the various departments and cannot always access their desktop in the administration building. The Internship Toolkit of reference materials is also provided in electronic form so that interns can work with the material online. The laptop is owned by the municipality, but is used by the intern during the

year. For returning hosts who already have purchased a laptop for the intern's use, the \$2,500 can be allocated for a printer, projector, office chair, desk, or filing cabinet to be used by the intern.

Note that unused funds provided for expenses cannot be reallocated to salary or payroll expenses and benefits. Any unused expense funding must be returned to the ministry at the conclusion of the internship.

b. Hosting Plans

There are six questions to be answered regarding your reasons for wanting to host an intern, your understanding of the Municipal Internship Program for Administrators objectives and requirements, your proposed supervisor, and your plans for training an intern should you be selected as a host. The answers to your questions will be evaluated by the ministry to determine which municipalities will be selected for the 2010/11 program. The criteria are listed in section 1.1 (b). Provide thorough and comprehensive answers that clearly illustrate your capacity to effectively train and develop an intern. You may attach your answers on a separate document if you require additional space. Selected passages from questions 2 – 7 will be used to create a short profile of your municipality on our website. This will help provide intern candidates with more information on your municipality.

2.4 Part 4: Certification

The application must be signed by the chief administrative officer or designate.

3. INTERN WORKPLAN

3.1 Workplan Structure and Purpose

The Internship Workplan is a learning tool that has been prepared to ensure the intern is involved in a variety of practical experiences in the overall management of a municipality. The Workplan is designed to meet the following objectives:

- Provide each host municipality with a structure to guide the intern's training and learning;
- Ensure that interns are exposed to the key aspects of municipal administration to gain an understanding of municipal structure, management, and operations;
- Set standards in terms of the requirements to complete the internship program, and to help the intern develop competencies essential to municipal administration; and
- To support the intern's training through contact with a number of experienced and knowledgeable individuals, and information from various resources.

Along with the Workplan, interns are provided a Guidebook containing information and activities designed to enhance their learning during the year. For each item on the Workplan, background information is given, along with other questions or topics to consider. Interns are not expected to complete all of the activities in the Workplan and Guidebook, as there are a large number included in the materials. However, interns are encouraged to do as many activities as possible so they get a comprehensive overview of the activities that occur in municipal government. Interns are required to submit interim and final reports about their activities to the ministry, and are encouraged to share their findings and reports with each other and their supervisors. Supervisors are therefore expected to work closely with their interns to ensure the schedule for the year allows for a variety of activities to be experienced.

3.2 Customizing the Workplan

Host municipalities are encouraged to customize their Workplan to make it applicable to their individual circumstances. Activities can be added, removed, or modified as necessary. If a special event or project is happening in your municipality and you feel the intern would benefit from becoming involved, you can add it to the Workplan in the appropriate section. In some situations where particular activities are not undertaken in your municipality or the functional area does not exist (e.g. planning and development), you are encouraged to collaborate with a neighbouring municipality that does offer those activities. Scheduling activities will vary depending upon the municipality; some activities may be experienced over a block of time, while others will be dispersed throughout the year.

4. SCHEDULE FOR THE YEAR

4.1 Intern Start Date

Interns are expected to begin work by May 31, 2010. Start dates are to be negotiated between the host municipality and intern. If necessary, an intern may start after May 31; however, given the timing of the Intern Orientation in early June, it is to the intern's benefit to have sufficient time to become familiar with his or her host municipality prior to attending the Orientation.

The internship must be completed by June 30, 2011, regardless of the intern's start date. However, the end of the internship does not restrict the municipality in any way of continuing the intern's employment after that date. The municipality may wish to extend their contract to have the intern finish projects or to provide additional time while the intern finds a permanent position. The June 30 date simply means that all grant funding associated with the program must be fully expended by this date.

4.2 Orientations

A one-day orientation session will be held in mid-April for all host supervisors. This session focuses on preparing to host an intern and reviewing the schedule for the year. It is the supervisor's opportunity to meet the other participants to discuss approaches, concerns, and issues.

Interns will attend a three-day orientation in June. The main focus of this session is to introduce interns to each other and to ministry staff, to review the purpose of the program, and to establish goals for the year. The intern supervisors are invited to attend on the final day of intern orientation so that all supervisors and interns have the opportunity to meet early in the year.

4.3 Executive Program

Approximately half-way through the year, the ministry hosts a five-day executive style program for all interns. During that week, various Municipal Affairs staff members, staff from other provincial ministries, and experts in the municipal field, will present short seminars on their areas of expertise. This helps give the interns a better understanding of the provincial government and its role in working with municipalities and enables them to network with others in the field. A one-day supervisors session is also scheduled during the week.

4.4 Wrap-up Sessions

The final ministry session of the year will be a Wrap-Up session, usually scheduled in February or March for interns and April for supervisors. Topics covered during the wrap-up include reviewing the year's activities, discussing the challenges and opportunities for both hosts and interns, and potential enhancements to the program.

4.5 Site Visits

Program staff may visit interns in their host municipality as time permits during the year. This is an opportunity for the intern to showcase their activities and host municipality, for program staff and supervisors to meet to discuss progress, and for any questions or concerns to be addressed.

5. GRANT AGREEMENT AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Conditional Grant Agreement

All host municipalities are required to sign a conditional grant agreement (CGA) in order to receive the \$43,000 grant provided as part of the Municipal Internship Program for Administrators. Once the host municipalities have been selected, a copy of the CGA will be sent to the municipality for signing. It is then returned to the ministry to be signed, at which time the grant money is sent to the municipality.

The CGA includes a Terms of Reference and Program Parameters that outlines how the grant funding can be used for this initiative and expectations regarding supervisor and intern participation in program events.

5.2 Interim Report

An Interim Report must be submitted to the ministry six months after the start of the internship. A template will be provided to assist with formatting the report. At a minimum, the report will require a summary of activities to date, comments or concerns regarding any issues, and projected activities for the remainder of the internship.

5.3 Final Report

Host municipalities are required to submit a Final Report to the ministry within 30 days of the completion of the internship. A template will be provided to assist with formatting the report. At a minimum, the report will require a summary of the year's activities, recommendations for program enhancements, and a financial report outlining how the grant funding was allocated.

Any grant money not expended during the year for either salary or expenses must be returned to the ministry as outlined in the conditional grant agreement.

Appendix A: Application Checklist

1. Complete parts 2, 3 and 4 of the grant application form. You may print off the form and complete it manually or complete it electronically (the form automatically provides spaces), print it off and submit it. The form cannot be submitted electronically. If you are completing the form manually (i.e. typewriter or handwritten), please add additional pages if more space is needed to fully answer the questions.
2. Ensure the application form is signed.
3. If the application is a joint submission, attach copies of council resolutions from each of the participating municipalities, including the managing partner, indicating which municipality will be the managing partner for the internship.
4. Submit the application by **September 4, 2009**.

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