

# The Maryland Lighthouse Industries and AI Internship Program

## Questions & Answers

**Question:** Is the internship program grant period for one year?

**Answer:** The grant is for a period of one year from the date of the executed grant agreement.

**Question:** Is there a specific length of time for the internship? Does it need to be 400 hours?

**Answer:** As a requirement of the program, the applicant must provide an internship opportunity that is at least 400 hours in length.

**Question:** What happens if an intern quits early? If paying interns through monthly payroll, how would repayment work if an intern quits early?

**Answer:** If an intern does not complete the program and the grantee wishes to hire another intern, this is allowable. Grantees must notify MD Labor in writing and submit an amended interim report to reflect the change. There would be no guarantee of additional money beyond the initial grant to pay for the new intern. The grantee would have to make sure they can cover the intern's wages for the required number of hours through other means in the event the grantee's remaining funds were insufficient to pay for the full wages. Grantees must adhere to the requirements in the Maryland Lighthouse Industries and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Internship Program Policy and the grant agreement, including the grant period and required length of the internship program. If it is not possible to onboard another intern, any unspent funds must be promptly returned to MD Labor and written notification must be sent via email to [brittney.hansen@maryland.gov](mailto:brittney.hansen@maryland.gov). The Department will work with the grantee to ensure the funds are properly returned.

**Question:** Does the employer only need to submit an end of internship report once a candidate is approved?

**Answer:** Grantees are required to submit two reports. Grantees must identify and select interns within 90 days of executing a grant award. Grantees must provide an interim report to MD Labor once candidates have been selected. Applicants must submit a final report three months after the final intern(s) complete the program. MD Labor will provide templates for both the interim and final report. MD Labor may recapture funds from organizations that fail to comply with terms and conditions of their grant agreement, including submission of these required reports. Please refer to the Maryland Lighthouse

Industries and AI Internship program policy for more information about the interim and final reports.

**Question:** Will the internship program funding be evergreen, or available only until the current allocation is exhausted?

**Answer:** Proposals for the Maryland Lighthouse Industries and AI Internship Program will be accepted until the current allocation is exhausted.

**Question:** Can an existing intern be applied toward the Lighthouse AI Internship program?

**Answer:** Grant funds may not be used to reimburse applicants for interns hired and/or interns who have received offers of internship placement before the date of grant award.

**Question:** Do you submit one application for the internship program, or a new one each time you have a qualified candidate?

**Answer:** Applicants may only submit one application for the internship program that requests funds for all intern positions for which you are seeking funding. Applicants must identify and select interns within 90 days of executing a grant award. Grant funds may not be used to reimburse applicants for interns hired and/or interns who have received offers of internship placement before the date of grant award.

**Question:** For seasonal internships (summer, fall, etc.), can you submit one application to cover the full year with rotating interns?

**Answer:** The grant is for a period of one year. Applicants should submit applications for internship opportunities that are able to take place within that timeframe.

**Question:** Can four year colleges apply for the internship grant for junior or senior students?

**Answer:** Institutions of higher education are eligible applicants. This opportunity is intended for individuals near completion of their schooling. Interns may be college seniors.

**Question:** Can community college students participate in the AI internship program?

**Answer:** Yes, community college students nearing completion of their schooling at that institution are eligible to participate in the internship program.

**Question:** Is the maximum amount to be paid per intern \$10k?

**Answer:** Applicants may apply for up to \$10,000 per intern, plus administrative and support services costs for new internships. Administrative costs and support costs are each respectively capped at 10% of the grant award.

**Question:** Could an internship participant be enrolled in a Master's program even if they are beyond two years after graduation?

**Answer:** Yes, current Masters students and other graduate students are eligible to participate as interns. Interns must be enrolled in and attending a Maryland institution of higher education and/or a Maryland resident.

**Question:** Can Universities/colleges can host interns or partner with a company to host an intern?

**Answer:** Yes, per the Maryland Lighthouse Industries and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Internship Program Policy, institutions of higher education are eligible applicants and can host interns or may partner with a company to host an intern.

**Question:** Can the internship take place in the summer or fall as long as we identify the interns within 90 days of receiving the grant award?

**Answer:** The grant covers a one-year period, during which all internship activities and related expenses must take place. Grantees are required to identify and select interns within 90 days of accepting the grant award and must submit an interim report to MD Labor after the candidates have been chosen.

**Question:** How will payments operate? Are funds provided up front or on a reimbursement basis?

**Answer:** Grantees are able to select if they would prefer to have the payment provided up front or on a reimbursement basis. For grantees who select to receive the funds up front, an invoice should be submitted with the fully executed grant agreement. For grantees that select to receive funds on a reimbursement basis, an invoice should be submitted with the final report. If a grantee is unable to fully spend a grant, funds must be promptly returned to MD Labor and written notification must be sent via email to [brittney.hansen@maryland.gov](mailto:brittney.hansen@maryland.gov). The Department will work with the grantee to ensure the funds are properly returned. Additionally, MD Labor may recapture funds from organizations that fail to comply with terms and conditions of their grant agreement. This may include, but is not limited to, failure to submit required reporting. A grantee's failure to produce evidence of permissible expenses (i.e., payroll records, receipts, etc.), making purchases outside of the approved grant agreement, or spending grant dollars on prohibited costs may also result in recapture.

**Question:** Can supportive services funding cover moving expenses, transportation expenses, and food insecurity? Also, can those funds be given to interns to cover those expenses? Can the host organization use the funds to cover professional development, equipment, travel, transportation, interview coaching, matching mentors, etc.?

**Answer:** Funds may be given to interns to cover supportive services expenses. Supportive services for interns may include but are not limited to: transportation; childcare; individualized planning for successful internship completion; identifying or locating potential employment opportunities; deployment of long term strategies to encourage retention of participants in lighthouse industry careers; and other wraparound support measures, as approved in writing by MD Labor.

**Question:** If we apply for up to 12 interns and only have 8, what happens?

**Answer:** If a grantee is seeking funds on a reimbursement basis, they may amend their interim report to reflect the new number of interns, and then their reimbursements will only be for the revised number of interns. For grantees that received funds up front, if a grantee is unable to fully spend a grant, funds must be promptly returned to MD Labor and written notification must be sent via email to [brittney.hansen@maryland.gov](mailto:brittney.hansen@maryland.gov). The Department will work with the grantee to ensure the funds are properly returned.

**Question:** If interns start the program and quit, do we have a time period to select a new intern?

**Answer:** If an intern does not complete the program and the grantee wishes to hire another intern, this is allowable. Grantees must notify MD Labor in writing and submit an amended interim report to reflect the change. Grantees must adhere to the requirements in the Maryland Lighthouse Industries and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Internship Program Policy and the grant agreement, including the grant period and required length of the internship program.

**Question:** Are current students allowed to earn credits through the internship?

**Answer:** Grantees must adhere to the requirements outlined in the Maryland Lighthouse Industries and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Internship Program Policy. There is no language in the policy that disallows current students to earn credits as a result of participation in an internship funded by the program.

**Question:** Can applicants offer incentives for the employers to take interns? For example, could a stipend for an industry mentor be included under supportive services?

**Answer:** Supportive services may include but are not limited to: transportation; childcare; individualized planning for successful internship completion; identifying or

locating potential employment opportunities; deployment of long term strategies to encourage retention of participants in lighthouse industry careers; and other wraparound support measures, as approved in writing by MD Labor. A stipend for an industry mentor may be permitted as this would support career development and retention of the participating interns. The applicant would need to provide justification for a mentor stipend as a supportive service, and MD Labor would have to approve it in writing.

**Question:** Do all internship sites have to be identified at the time of application, or can some sites be added over the course of the year?

**Answer:** Host employers must be identified at the time of application (Question 8 in the application). Intern position descriptions (Question 9 in the application) must identify the physical location of the work, which would require knowing the location of the host employer.