

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOUNT ★ VERNON

GEORGE WASHINGTON: ENTREPRENEUR INTERNSHIP

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I submit my application?

The application can be found on Mount Vernon's website, on the employment page at <http://www.mountvernon.org/about/employment/open-positions-at-mount-vernon/>. Go to the heading "All Internships." Click on "Historic Trades Intern." Then, use the "Apply for this Position" button at the bottom of the position description page. You can submit all supporting documents through the online application platform.

May I mail my application via the U.S. Postal Service?

No. Please submit your application online, using the Employment page on Mount Vernon's website at <http://www.mountvernon.org/about/employment/open-positions-at-mount-vernon/>.

Can I email my application?

No. Please submit your application online, using the Employment page on Mount Vernon's website at <http://www.mountvernon.org/about/employment/open-positions-at-mount-vernon/>. You can, however, submit supporting documents such as letters of recommendation or transcripts by email. Please send them to gwentrepreneur@mountvernon.org. The documents should be saved in either .doc, .docx, or .pdf format. Submitting each document separately is fine, so long as they all arrive by the application deadline.

Must my resume be chronological and just two pages?

Yes, chronological, starting with the most recent activities. And yes, at most two pages. Less is fine. You can go into more details on key parts of your resume in the *Related Skills and Activities* document.

What should I include in the *Related Skills and Activities* document?

This document allows you to expand upon items listed on your resume. While we are interested in reading about what you did, we would particularly like to know what you took away from each experience and how that will make you a better intern. For example, perhaps you learned a new way to teach a game which will help you be a better museum educator, or how to deal with a disgruntled customer (customer service), or a better understanding of a historical moment (historical analysis), etc.

Do I have to submit an official transcript?

No, you can send us an unofficial, unsealed copy; however, a screenshot or download from your university's or college's web portal is not acceptable. An undergraduate transcript is generally a one-page document and looks official, except that it is not in a sealed envelope. It should include declared major, grades for each course, and cumulative GPA. If you have attended more than one institution, submit transcripts for each.

I just declared my major and I don't know any of the professors in the department very well. May I have someone else write a recommendation letter for me?

You may submit a letter from a professor in another department, if you feel that person could better address the questions listed in the application; however, if available, the first choice should be a professor within your department.

How does the vaccination requirement work?

For vaccinations, you will need to provide proof that you have been fully vaccinated against Covid-19, such as a copy of your vaccination card, to our HR department.

You will also need to provide proof of an up-to-date tetanus vaccination to the HR department prior to your first day of work. Generally, your personal physician provides this document.

How does the background check happen?

George Washington: Entrepreneur Frequently Asked Questions

Upon offer of an internship position, you will work with an HR representative on a variety of matters, including the coordination of a background check.

My semester doesn't end until after the start of the internship. Can I still apply?

The first week of the internship is devoted to orientation and training, both in the classroom and onsite. If you are not able to participate during the first week, it will not preclude you from applying. It will, however, be a significant factor in the overall evaluation of your application.

I need to leave Mount Vernon during the internship to take part in a special program/ family event. Will that be a problem?

It would depend on the number of days you would be away. We can usually make arrangements for you to leave the estate for a long weekend, but that is the limit. Given the 10-week time commitment, no vacation leave is available. We do understand that emergencies arise. If that is the case, we can work with you to accommodate your needs.

When will a final decision be made?

After an initial application review, a pool of applicants will be selected for interviews over Webex, a platform similar to Zoom. Video interviews are scheduled in advance and last approximately 20 minutes. We make our decision within a few days after the last interview. Those not receiving internships will be advised by email within a few days after the last interview.

Do you have any internships for graduate students?

Historic Trades does **not** have internships for graduate students; however, each spring, Historic Trades hires a number of part-time interpreters for our department and we welcome graduate students as applicants. If you would be interested in applying for such a position, please contact department Manager, Sara Marie Massee at smassee@mountvernon.org for more information.

Other departments at Mount Vernon do have internships for graduate students. These are posted on the Human Resources employment page at <http://www.mountvernon.org/about/employment/>.

What travel expenses are provided by Mount Vernon?

If you travel by plane or train, Mount Vernon will pay for your fare. Travel arrangements will be booked and prepaid by Mount Vernon staff. Flights are usually routed to/from Reagan National Airport; train arrival/departures are usually through the Alexandria Amtrak station. Mount Vernon will cover the cost for one checked bag. If you travel by personal vehicle, Mount Vernon will reimburse you for mileage up to a maximum of \$350 round trip. Please save gas receipts so you can submit them.

Can I bring my car to Mount Vernon?

Absolutely. Our Gristmill and Distillery site is several miles from the main estate, so having a car is helpful. We often ask interns with cars to give rides to those without. It is still a good idea to bring a car if you do not feel comfortable providing rides to others. Having transportation can facilitate basic activities like grocery shopping as well as visits to other notable sites in the region during your days off.

I won't have a car with me. How will I get to the sites where I'll be working?

Many interns carpool with other interns who do have cars. However, we can't guarantee that this option will be available. Public transportation can be accessed in most parts of this region. Please check the routes and times carefully to get a sense of your commute time. The [WMATA website](http://www.wmata.com) (Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority) has information on both the Metro system and the bus system. The [Fairfax Connector 101](#) bus come right to Mount Vernon. The [Fairfax Connector BusTracker](#) website helps you check where your bus is and whether it is running late. For those taking public transportation, it is easiest to buy a SmarTrip card to pay for your fare. (You can also pay cash, but you have to have exact change.) SmarTrip cards can be purchased online or at any metro station. A single bus ride, with no transfer, should cost \$2 for each trip. You may also want to consider getting a monthly [pass](#) (which covers both bus and Metro travel) using the SmarTrip app. You'll have to calculate whether you think it will be more cost-effective to get a pass or pay as you go. Services like Uber and Lyft are also available.

What is the difference between the work at the Farm and the Gristmill & Distillery (GMD) sites?

Interns work at both sites, educating the public and providing living history demonstrations to visitors. At both sites, they are responsible for some maintenance of buildings and equipment. The day usually begins with morning chores, then involves rotating between various stations to speak with any guests who approach. Each station covers a different topic. Scripts and background reading will be provided to help you learn the material. You will also have the opportunity to shadow experienced staff at each station. Morning chores at the Farm include planting, weeding and harvesting the fields, cleaning wooden buckets, and removing/restocking layers of wheat in the Treading Barn. Living history demonstrations include woodworking, spinning, weaving, general fiber production, hearth cooking, and other 18th century tasks. Chores at the GMD might entail waxing wooden gears in the mill or sweeping floors. Interns will help move 50-pound bags of grain, clean milling and distilling equipment, and learn to operate the mill during demonstrations.

How many visitors will I see each day?

Mount Vernon typically hosts 2,000-4,000 guests daily during the summer. The Farm is about a 10-minute walk from the main historic area, so you will typically see about 1/3 of the guests who tour the Mansion each day. The Gristmill & Distillery site is a 3-mile drive from the main estate. Visitation there is about 150-300 guests per day.

What's the weather like in Virginia?

Virginia summers are generally very hot. Our average temperatures in July are in the mid 90's with high humidity. You will be outside for much of the workday, so bring plenty of sunscreen. You also will want a large, refillable water bottle to use on site. We experience a fair number of afternoon thunderstorms, so an umbrella would be a good addition to your packing list. The period costuming is generally comfortable but we do allow for some modification for extremely hot weather.

Will I have a chance to work with farm animals?

Generally, not. Mount Vernon's farm animals are handled by the Livestock department. Usually there are sheep at the Farm, but Historic Trades is not responsible for their care. Horses and oxen are routinely brought down to the site by Livestock staff for a variety of demonstrations (plowing fields, treading wheat, etc.). Occasionally, our staff assists with these. There are no farm animals at the GMD.

When I work at the Gristmill & Distillery, will I have a chance to make whiskey?

It is unlikely that whiskey will be made during your internship. Mount Vernon usually has two whiskey runs per year: one in March and one in November. Sometimes, fruit brandy distilling takes place during the summer internship, but interns must be 21 years of age to participate.

The application states the work is "dusty." What does that mean?

Primarily, but not exclusively, this means cereal grain dust. In the gristmill, we regularly grind wheat and corn, as well as other grains. On the farm, we thresh wheat. Many of the roads around the estate are dirt and so can get dusty. Some demonstrations require building a fire, which means you will be exposed to wood smoke and ash.

I have a health consideration. Will that preclude me from the internship?

Generally, only you know whether you'll be able to perform the duties of the work. If you have concerns about a specific element of the work you would be doing at Mount Vernon, please ask us. Do keep in mind that you will spend lots of time on your feet, will be lifting and carrying a variety of items (like buckets of water, wheat shocks, bags of grain, wood), and possibly tasks like chopping wood, tending to tobacco, etc.

Will I portray a specific character?

No. While you will be wearing period clothing, you will not portray a specific 18th century person. Our clothing is typical of what working-class people would have worn during the 1790's in the Chesapeake Bay region, such as the hired, white workers at Mount Vernon. The Character Interpretation department portrays specific persons from Washington's life, but they generally stay in the main historic area of the estate.

What sort of clothes do I need to bring?

For on-site work, you need to bring one pair of shoes that can be worn with your period clothing. These should be plain black or brown leather lace-up shoes, without any obvious logos or trademarks. Clogs, sneakers, Crocs, running shoes,

etc. are not acceptable. Our historic costumer will provide examples and will work with interns prior to arrival to prepare period ensembles. We recommend that you break in these shoes before you arrive.

You will need several business-casual ensembles to wear during your first week of training and when other special events. It's a good idea to pack a pair of jeans or long pants and a long-sleeved t-shirt; occasionally, protective garments are needed for certain work tasks that are done in civilian clothes. Bring casual attire to wear during your time off. Sometimes, interns take road trips to the beach during their stay, so you may want to pack a bathing suit just in case.

I have my own period clothing. Can I wear it at Mount Vernon?

We will provide two sets of period clothing for you to wear during your internship. If you wish to wear your own period clothing, it needs to be approved by our historic costumer. You will find that work clothes can acquire a lot of wear and tear during your brief time at Mount Vernon. Please know that Mount Vernon cannot be responsible for the repair or replacement of personal garments if they are damaged.

What field trips do the interns go on?

The Historic Trades department generally takes the interns on three field trips. One is to an Amish farm in southern Maryland to collect the wheat that will be used for Treading demonstrations throughout the summer and fall. The other two field trips are to historic sites in the region. In the past, interns have visited places such as Monticello, Ash Lawn, Stratford Hall, and Aldie Mill. On their days off, interns frequently travel to the many museums and other attractions located in the Washington, DC area.

What topics can my research paper or interpretive project cover?

Your paper or project must address George Washington, Mount Vernon, or the 18th century world in which Washington lived. Topics related to the operation of Washington's farms and businesses are preferred. You will meet with the Historic Trades Manager after your arrival to discuss your planned area of research, and she will give final approval for your topic. Research papers, interpretive programs, and new media projects are all common. You will have use of the George Washington National Library while working on your paper or project. Some interns have also traveled to Washington, DC to do further research at the Library of Congress.

How do I get class credit for participating in the internship?

Whether you can obtain class credit for the internship is up to your college or university. However, we are happy to work with your faculty and administrative offices to make this possible.

What are you looking for in candidates?

We are looking for bright and eager students who are passionate about history and will take full advantage of all the learning opportunities this internship provides. Students do not need be history majors, although they often are. We have had political science, museum studies, education, agriculture, theater, and a variety of other majors represented by our interns. It is key that interns are able to communicate with a variety of people and be willing to work hard. Having a good sense of humor never hurts. If selected, we expect punctuality, adherence to Mount Vernon's employee handbook, and professional decorum.

What else do you think I should know?

Please follow the application process carefully, proofread, and ask questions.