

Frequently Asked Questions About OSSI:NIFS for Student Applicants

- What does NASA do? In aeronautics, NASA enables a safer, more secure, efficient, and environmentally friendly air transportation system. In human exploration, NASA operates the International Space Station (ISS) and prepares for human exploration beyond low Earth orbit. In science, NASA explores the Earth-Sun system, our own solar system, and the universe beyond. In engineering, NASA designs the aircraft, spacecraft, and scientific instruments that make all of this possible.
- In what fields are NASA's internship opportunities? NASA has internships in aerospace, chemical, environmental, materials, mechanical, civil, electrical, thermal, systems, optical, robotic and computer hardware and software engineering. Engineers also work in the fields of composites, cryogenics, microelectronics, signal processing, high performance computing, and nanotechnology. Our computer engineers develop artificial intelligence systems, and conduct research into data information and visualization systems technology. NASA computer scientists develop models that help us learn about gravitational astrophysics, study the Earth's oceans, study the Earth's atmosphere, and study the biospheres of other planets. Earth and planetary scientists study the physics and chemistry of the Earth's oceans, the Earth's atmosphere, and the biospheres of other planets and exoplanets, using these models. Astrophysicists use satellites, aircraft, balloons and sounding rockets to conduct research into high energy astrophysics, astroparticle physics, stellar physics, heliophysics, and cosmology. Some of the other areas of study at NASA are radiation, space weather, geodynamics, planetary magnetospheres, geospace physics, and climatology. Remote sensing is crucial to all of this research. Our engineers and scientists work with radio, thermal, infrared, optical, ultraviolet, X-ray, gamma ray, laser, particle, acoustic and many other types of sensors and detectors.
- Where are NASA internship opportunities located? Internship opportunities are located at NASA centers and field installations all over the country: Ames Research Center, Moffett Federal Airfield, Mountain View, California; Dryden Flight Research Center, Edwards Air Force Base, Los Angeles County, California; Glenn Research Center, Cleveland, Ohio; Goddard Institute for Space Studies, New York City, New York; Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Maryland; Independent Verification and Validation Facility, Fairmont, West Virginia; Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, California; Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas; Kennedy Space Center, Merritt Island, Florida; Langley Research Center, Hampton, Virginia; Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, Alabama; Michoud Assembly Facility, New Orleans, Louisiana; NASA Headquarters, Washington, DC; NASA Shared Services Center at Stennis Space Center, Mississippi; Stennis Space Center, near Bay St. Louis, Mississippi; Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Virginia; White Sands Complex, Las Cruces, New Mexico; and White Sands Test Facility, Las Cruces, New Mexico.
- The OSSI Frequently Asked Questions link is <https://intern.nasa.gov/ossi/web/faq/index.cfm?subAction=VIEW>
- What does OSSI:NIFS stand for? OSSI:NIFS is the One Stop Shopping Initiative for NASA Internships, Fellowships, and Scholarships.

- Is there an OSSI:NIFS help desk? The help desk E-mail is <MSFC-DL-HelpdeskMSFC@mail.nasa.gov>. The help desk phone is 1-866-419-6297. The help desk hours of operation are 24/7.
- How do I apply? Here is how to apply. The application is online. You need to go to <<http://intern.nasa.gov>>. Then click on internships. Next click on the register-as-a-student Button. You then need to continue by registering, completing your interest profile, and application. Then, you must search for specific internship opportunities at specific NASA centers and field installations and apply for them. Letters of recommendation are uploaded by the recommender. Your application will not be completed until at least one letter of recommendation is uploaded. This means that you will not be able to apply to, although you will be able to view, specific opportunities until you have at least one letter of recommendation uploaded to the OSSI:NIFS system. The "getting Started" link, visible after you login, should help you as you go through the aforementioned process. Nothing is accepted by snail mail.
- Are NASA internships for college and high school students also offered during Spring, Fall and Year Long Sessions? Yes
- Are the website and the application process the same for all NASA internships, regardless of the time of year? Yes
- Will specific opportunities for the Summer be identified as early as Nov 1, or do others get added later? Specific opportunities get posted to OSSI as of November 1 of each year for the following Summer and are added all of the time by mentors through late May of each year.
- I am not currently a student because I either graduated or am taking some time out from school; am I eligible to apply? You must be accepted to an accredited institution of higher learning, i.e., a college or university, at the time of the internship. So, if you don't plan to continue with your formal education next Summer or Fall, I'm sorry to tell you that you would not be eligible to apply for a NASA internship.
- Can good letters of recommendation really help me land a NASA internship? You will have a better chance of being selected for an internship if you have your recommenders tailor their letters for the specific opportunities that you will be applying to. This is because your recommenders will be explaining to the mentors why your skills will be a good match.
- How long does a recommender have to submit her/his letter of recommendation? Recommenders receive an E-mail from the OSSI:NIFS system after an applicant enters a recommenders name and other information. This E-mail gives instructions and a link for uploading the letter to an applicant's account. The link is specific with a user name and password. Warning! The link is disabled 20 calendar days after it is sent to the recommender. The applicant must enter the recommender's information again after the 20 calendar days has expired.

- How do I upload a transcript? What if I want to update the transcript? After logging into your account, click on “My Applications.” Then, click on “Education.” Go to your college, and click on the “Upload” button, and upload a transcript. Then, save the record. If you want to update the transcript, repeat the aforementioned process, and the old transcript will be overwritten by the new transcript. This change will affect all of the internship opportunities that you applied or will apply to.

- How do I disclose my disability status if I am a student with a disability? There is a place in the online application process to voluntarily disclose disability status. It is located under "My Applications." Then, click on "General Information." This information is used in order to determine the degree to which members of each disability, ethnic, and racial group are reached by this internship/fellowship program. Additionally, NASA uses information about disability status to provide reasonable accommodation if requested. NASA requests that the student select the appropriate responses. While providing this information is optional, you must select decline to answer if you do not want to provide it. Mentors will not be able to view this information when considering students for opportunities. For more information, please visit the following website:

http://www.nasa.gov/about/highlights/HP_Privacy.html

- Why can't I find any internship opportunities specifically for students with disabilities? There are no NASA internships specifically for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities compete with other students for our internships. We are making a concerted effort to recruit students with disabilities into our mainstream internship programs.

- Why do I see so few internship opportunities when I search for them? The OSSI:NIFS system only displays internship opportunities that request students at the grade level that you entered, i.e. the grade level that you will be at the time the internship begins. The way to work around this is to search for opportunities before you log in at <https://intern.nasa.gov/ossi/web/public/guest/searchOpps/>. A pre-login search will eliminate the grade-level limitation on your search. When you find an opportunity that you wish to apply to, open it and apply. You will be prompted to log in at this point. Do so, and you will be able to apply or add it to your saved opportunities of interest.

- When can students start applying for and what is the deadline for applying for Summer 2014 internships? Students can apply for summer 2014 internships, starting on Friday, November 1, 2013. The deadline for submitting applications is Friday, March 14, 2014, and we will begin extending offers to students as early as Monday, February 3, 2014.

- What is the minimum GPA in order to qualify for a NASA internship? A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required for college students and 3.0 for high school students. However, applicants must understand that the competition for internships is keen.

- What is the minimum age for an intern? High school students must be at least sixteen years old at the time the internship begins. There is no upper age limit for college students.

- When and for how long do Summer 2014 internships run? Summer 2014 internships run from early June until early August for college students and from late June until early August for high school students.
- Do I get paid? Yes, all student interns get paid. For example, at Goddard last Summer, college students received a stipend of \$6000 and high school students \$1800.
- What do I do for housing? You will not be assigned housing. You must find it on your own. We do have lists of places that other students have stayed. However, we do not recommend specific housing. You will be expected to find and pay for your own housing out of your stipend.
- Do I need to be a United States citizen to apply? Yes. Having a green card does not qualify someone as a U.S. citizen for purposes of this program. Please go to the following link to learn about internship opportunities for foreign citizens:

<https://intern.nasa.gov/content/internship-information/one-stop-shopping-initiative-ossi-student-online-a/non-us-opportunities/index.html>

- I'm having browser problems; what should I do? We can offer some suggestions on what to do without knowing what browser or OS the student is using. First, if they are using IE 9 or higher, please click on the Compatibility View, located on the Address bar. If they are using IE 8, please click on the Compatibility View, located under tools on the menu bar. This should correct the display. If they are using Firefox 5, try typing in the entire institution name and then tab down to get the address to fill completely. If neither of these work, please use the OSSI Information Center (OIC) to submit the technical inquiry at the following link:

<https://intern.nasa.gov/content/help/ossi-information-center-oic/index.html>

- I'm having trouble selecting a college; what should I do? When selecting a college, don't put anything in the edit field for the school, and just click search. You will then see a section at the bottom of the page that allows you to select a school, city, and state. Put in the city and state. Again, leave the school field blank. The website will give you a list of schools in that city and state as links. Just click on the school that you want, and it should be entered as your school in the original edit field.
- I'm a high school student, and I don't have a college to enter yet: what should I do? Just write in a college that you think that you would like to attend. You will be asked for your high school later on in the application process.
- Should I apply to all opportunities which look interesting to me at the same time, or sequentially by my priority interest? The choice is yours. You can apply to a maximum of 15.
- If I apply to multiple internship opportunities at the same time, would I only receive an offer from one? You may get an offer from more than one opportunity. However, once you accept an offer. You cannot accept anymore offers. You are committed.

- Do all internship opportunities reply at the same time if I apply for them concurrently?
No.
- Does NASA only have Summer internships? NASA internships for college and high school students are also offered during Spring, Fall, and Year-Long Sessions. the OSSI system <<http://intern.nasa.gov>> is the site to look for and apply to all NASA internships. The process is the same for all our internships.
- Are NASA internships only for students with disabilities? No. Students with disabilities compete with other students for internships. Disclosure of one's disability, during the application process, is only seen by the Office of Education. The mentors, who select their students, do not have access to this information. We use information about a student's disability to provide reasonable accommodation in a timely manner if reasonable accommodation is requested.
- For whom does NASA have internships? NASA has internships for high school students and for rising freshmen through doctoral students in STEM fields. A rising freshman is a high school student who has been accepted to an accredited institution of higher learning, i.e., a college or university, at the time of the internship.
- Where are NASA internships located? Internships are available at all NASA centers and field installations nationwide. Students can submit a completed application whether they apply to an opportunity or not. However, applying to opportunities has the advantage of allowing applicants to be considered by mentors who work in disciplines of interest and at a particular center. Applicants may apply to as many as fifteen posted opportunities. For example, an opportunity having to do with the Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO) will be at the Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland because SDO is located there. Not applying to an opportunity means that prospective interns will be hoping that a mentor happens to read their applications rather than directing their applications to mentors in fields and at centers of interest.
- I applied to various opportunities. Will there be an interview before an offer is made?
No. There will not be an interview before an offer is made. However, a mentor may contact you if she or he wishes for more information or to discuss your application.
- What happens if I am selected for an internship? Students who are selected for summer internships will receive an offer letter by E-mail sometime after February 3, 2014. They will then have five days to either accept or reject the offer through their OSSI: NIFS account. The offer will automatically expire after five days if no action is taken. Offers will be made from February 3, 2014, until all internship positions will have been filled. This continuous process may take until late May. So, you may receive an offer at any time during this period.
- What happens if I am not selected for an internship? You will receive an E-mail after all interns are selected for the session to which you applied, i.e., Summer, Fall, Spring, year long. This E-mail will notify you that you were not selected.

Please feel free to contact me for more information or help with applying.

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