

## ACI Awarded \$20,000 Challenge Grant for to Promote Micro-Internships

Nov. 8, 2021



ACI will sponsor the Micro-Internship Project for the fall 2022 semester.

The [Council for Independent Colleges](#), (CIC), Washington, D.C., awarded a \$20,000 challenge grant to ACI which aims to get greater numbers of students attending [ACI member colleges and universities](#) to apply for and secure micro-internships while they are in school. Micro-internships are paid, short-term, remote, professional projects that link students with employers.

The challenge grant is a First Opportunity Partners grant from CIC, with support from the UPS Foundation. ACI's commitment is

to raise an additional \$30,000 to fund the project, for a total budget of \$50,000, according to the grant proposal. Called the "Micro-Internship Project," ACI will sponsor the project for the Fall 2022 semester at its 26 member colleges and universities.

"Our strategic partner for micro-internships, [Parker Dewey](#), has facilitated these opportunities to help college students gain access to top employers, such as Microsoft and Abbott," said Mick Weltman, ACI executive director. "Despite the great benefits of micro-internships, a limited number of students from ACI member schools have applied for these opportunities. This grant project will help us raise awareness of micro-internships with students throughout Illinois."

Studies have shown that students who successfully complete micro-internships have a competitive edge in competing for and keeping jobs, according to the grant application. "This is especially the case for ACI students from underserved groups who may not have family or social connections that can open doors to promising careers, but who can benefit from the competitive edge that paid internships can offer," Weltman said.

The grant will include 260 students, representing 10 underserved students (juniors and seniors) at each of ACI's 26 member campuses. Each student is expected to apply for at least four micro-internships by Nov. 30, 2022. ACI will provide micro-webinars to help students write successful applications.

To help students financially, ACI will provide a \$500 scholarship for one student and nine \$100 Visa gift cards for other participants at each campus. Scholarship recipients will be randomly chosen by computer drawings. Scholarships and gift cards will be awarded in January 2023.

In addition, a student ambassador will be appointed at each ACI member campus to recruit students to apply for micro-internships. Ambassadors will earn \$480 for their efforts.