



July 15, 2025

How do I apply for the Professional Experience Program?

Candidates should send their application in a single PDF file via email to Katja Simons (paulus@campus-owl.org) by August 31, 2025. Please see the call for application for the requirements and application documents.

How will I get placed in a company, do I have a say in the selection?

We would like to offer all interested students an opportunity to participate in the program. Some students prefer to secure their internship independently and approach potential host companies directly. Other students prefer to get more support and to tap into Campus OWL's host company network. We offer advice to both student groups, and both should be in touch with the Campus OWL office while seeking their internship placement. It is encouraged to show interest in a specific field of work and be proactive about suggesting possible companies.

What is the Career Field Profile?

Candidates must show that they are motivated to secure an internship and should therefore be proactive in the process. The Career Field Profile helps you and us clarify what areas you are interested in and demonstrates your effort in finding suitable options. In the Career Field Profile you should describe your desired field of work and list potential companies and organizations where you intend to apply.

How would you describe Campus OWL's host company network?

The NY office's network is made up of German-American non-profit organizations (e.g. policy, culture) and companies in sectors such as computer science & IT, consulting, engineering, communication, management, business, and marketing.

What are the possible areas for the internships, and what's not possible?

The German American Chamber of Commerce New York (GACCNY) is the supporting partner and J-1 visa sponsor. GACCNY cannot sponsor visas in activities such as teaching, health/medical/social work, in the arts (music, design, theater, etc.) and the government sector. Please consult the PEP brochures of the last years to see where past interns have been placed.

The internship must also have a clear relation to the applicant's academic education and must be highly relevant to the future career development and existing background of the applicant.

What is the duration of the program?

PEP starts with the skills seminar week, April 27 – May 1, 2026, and the internships are usually three months. Longer internships are possible, too, if the company and candidate prefer longer internships.

Does the internship need to be in the New York metropolitan area?

No, not necessarily. The introductory week with the skills seminar takes place in New York City but it is possible to do the internship in another region in the United States as well.

Is there a guarantee that I will get an internship if I am selected for PEP?

No, there is no guarantee. You will only receive an official offer for a place in the PEP program if you are accepted by an internship provider who will host you. Only a placement in an organization or company will allow you to apply for a J-1 visa for interns.

What is the timeline for the application process?

Candidates submit their application by August 31, 2025. Candidates who qualify for the program will be asked to submit the “Career Field Profile” by September 21, 2025. They will be notified by mid-September whether they are invited for an interview. Interview date is end of September/early October by video call. If we believe that your motivation, skills, and experience are an excellent match for the PEP program, you can start applying for internships between October and December. Candidates, who successfully secured an internship, will apply for a J-1 visa in cooperation with the German American Chamber of Commerce in New York and the internship provider (January/February).

How many students will you accept to PEP?

We have 10-12 places in the program for students from OWL.

What is the introductory week skills seminar?

PEP provides a one-week preparatory skills seminar end of April before participants start their internships in the New York metropolitan area (or elsewhere). The skills seminar offers intercultural orientation, workshops about how to use your professional network and how to develop your professional brand, as well as insights into transatlantic relations and professional life with speakers from different professional backgrounds. The week also includes a social & cultural program (e.g. welcome dinner, pizza night, museum visits, sightseeing). The students will stay in a hotel during this week (Sunday, April 26 to Saturday, May 2), paid by Campus OWL. The dates for the seminar are April 27 to May 2, 2025.

What should I include in the letter of motivation?

You should explain why you are interested in participating in the program. Explain how the program helps you achieve your goals and how it relates to your studies. Describe your skills and experiences and why you are interested in doing an internship in the New York metropolitan area (or elsewhere in the United States) and participating in the skills seminar. Make sure to highlight your motivation for intercultural experience by including an example from your professional life that illustrates why this is important to you. Please use your own words.

Is it possible to apply if you are a recent graduate?

In order to apply you should be enrolled as a “full-time” student at one of the OWL universities at the time the program takes place: summer semester 2026.

Do I need to prove English language skills?

You don’t need to document your language skills with a language certificate. However, you will need to have very good command of spoken and written English (B2 at a minimum). If in doubt, you can take the free DAAD *Sprachtest* at your university. If you are selected for an interview, the interview will be

conducted in English only. Your English language skills will also be verified during the visa application process during a phone or video interview.

What does excellent academic performance mean?

Your grades should be substantially above average, i.e. between 1.0 and up to 2.5*. We take your academic achievements into account, but also other aspects of your CV, such as extracurricular activities and other application documents (motivation letter, CV, letter of recommendation, English language skills). [*Law Students up to “very satisfactory”]

Who should write the letter of recommendation?

The professor/lecturer should ideally be affiliated with the university/university of applied sciences where you are enrolled. If you are a new student and have no contacts yet at your current university/university of applied sciences, you can also provide a letter of recommendation from your previous institution.

This recommendation letter can also be used for the internship application and for the J-1 visa application.

Please use the letter of recommendation template provided on the website: <https://www.campus-owl.org/owl-students/>

Are the internships paid?

Many internships are paid in the US. It is up to the host organization/company to use their discretion to set payment policies for interns. Campus OWL is not involved in this decision.

Is there a scholarship to support my stay in NY?

Participants will be considered for a scholarship under the DAAD PROMOS funding scheme or other funding tools for travel and stay by their universities. These funding tools will only cover parts of the expenses abroad. For further information regarding PROMOS, contact the International Office at your university.

Do you offer help with accommodation?

Campus OWL New York will organize and pay for accommodation during the skills seminar week in New York City. You are responsible for securing accommodation during your internship. Depending on where you are doing your internship there are different options. The Campus OWL office may also offer information on rooms in NYC that are rented to individuals on a short-term basis upon request.

Possible housing options in NYC, for example:

<http://www.kolpingny.org/hostel.cfm> <https://marklenyc.org/>

short-term rental platforms

What are the estimated living expenses in NY?

Living in the New York metropolitan area is expensive. We estimate that you will need approx. \$2000 per month depending on factors like accommodation (\$1000-\$1500). Estimated other expenses per month: transportation (\$130), living expenses (\$500+), health insurance (\$40), phone plan (\$20) etc.

Do I need a visa to do an internship in the US?

Yes, a J-1 visa is required for an internship in the U.S. You will apply for the visa only after you have secured an internship placement. The German American Chamber of Commerce in New York will be

your visa sponsor. Campus OWL New York will cover the 900\$ fee for issuance of the DS-2019 (certificate of eligibility for the J-1 visa). You will have to cover the costs for the SEVIS fee (ca. 200€) and the U.S. Consulate fee for the visa (ca. 160€). In order to obtain your visa, you must make an in-person appointment with the US embassy in Frankfurt, Munich, or Berlin. More information on the J-1 visa process can be found here: <https://go-j1.com/en/j-1-visa/gaccs-j-1-visa-program/>

What kind of health insurance can I get for the US?

You will need sufficient health insurance for your stay in the U.S. and the health insurance needs to meet the J-1 requirements. The requirements can be found here: [Insurance \(go-j1.com\)](https://go-j1.com/en/j-1-visa/gaccs-j-1-visa-program/)

Talk to your health insurance company about your insurance coverage abroad or inquire about the DAAD group insurance. The DAAD insurance package meets the requirements for a stay in the USA (**DAAD Gruppenversicherung**, ca. €40/month). Travel health insurance does not suffice.

You are responsible for organizing and for paying for the health insurance during your stay in the U.S.

For more information on the DAAD insurance: [Versicherung im Ausland - DAAD](https://go-j1.com/en/j-1-visa/gaccs-j-1-visa-program/)