

# HEARTLAND ALLIANCE RESEARCH & POLICY

## GRADUATE STUDENT INTERNSHIPS | 2020-2021

### Who We Are

Heartland Alliance is grounded in over 130 years of experience providing housing, healthcare, jobs and justice to individuals living in poverty and seeking safety. Heartland Alliance's [Research & Policy Department](#) engages in *research on social issues and solutions, policy and systems change, and field building* nationwide. The department is home to the [Social IMPACT Research Center](#), Heartland Alliance's [Policy & Advocacy team](#), and Heartland Alliance's [National Initiatives on Economic Opportunity team](#). Our policy and research efforts strengthen communities, advance human rights, and foster equity and opportunity. The Research & Policy Department's work is rooted in and informed by people with lived experience, and the experiences of Heartland Alliance program participants.

### Internship Descriptions

We have three types of internships available:

- 1. Research Internship:** Heartland Alliance's [Social IMPACT Research Center \(IMPACT\)](#) conducts applied research for Heartland Alliance and organizations including nonprofits, foundations, advocacy groups, government entities, and socially-conscious private-sector companies. We focus on research related to human services, health care, employment, homelessness, nutrition/hunger, asset building, and poverty. Research interns work in a highly collaborative learning-oriented environment on a wide variety of research project components, including literature reviews, secondary data mining/analysis, database design, dashboard design, data entry, quantitative and qualitative data analysis, fact sheet development, infographic design, GIS analysis, data collection, study recruitment, assisting with report writing, thought work, data quality assurance, and research dissemination (including media work, social media, and presentations).
- 2. Communications Internship:** We leverage strategic communications, including websites, newsletters, action alerts, social media, and press engagement, to advance our research, legislative priorities, and systems change goals that address poverty, advance human rights, and foster greater equity and justice. This position will support strategic and effective external communications to promote our research and policy priorities. This intern will be able to gain exposure and support communications across a wide range of issue areas, including health care, financial security, human services and the social safety net, criminal justice, employment, homelessness, and more. The work of the Communications intern may include projects such as reporter and news research, creating content for social media, drafting legislative thank you letters, promoting events and webinars, drafting press pitches, and providing hands-on support such as taking photos, transcribing interviews, and email listserv management.
- 3. Coalition Support Internship:** Our work to achieve social change is accomplished through coalitions, collaboration, and relationships. This position will work to support events, learning opportunities, and engagement with our partners on our policy and systems change priorities. This intern will be able to gain exposure and support work across a wide range of issue areas, including

criminal justice, employment, homelessness, and more. The work of the Coalition Support intern may include supporting virtual and in-person policy learning opportunities, coalition notetaking and support, planning advocacy and other events, and publication support for fact sheets, reports, and comment letters on proposed policies.

## Internship Details

- Internship applications are accepted between January and early March.
- *Summer internships* begin in May/June and end in August/September and can be either full-time for 10 weeks or part-time for 15 weeks. *School-year internships* begin August/September and end in May/June. **Priority will be given to individuals applying for both summer and school-year internships.** Secondary priority will be given to individuals applying for school-year internships only. As space/project needs allow, summer-only interns may also be considered.
- These are paid positions at \$15 an hour for 19.5 hours per week.
- Off-campus Federal Work Study program participation may also be available for interns.

## Applicant Requirements

Wondering whether you have the right credentials or background to apply? The truth is, we don't care where you went to school or what your connections are. **We value lived experience.** We are looking for people who care about addressing poverty and fighting for equity, and who have shown the potential to do great policy advocacy or research. These qualities can come from people with all kinds of experience — not just people who are in school for public policy. If we're not looking for a specific educational or professional background, what are we looking for? Some of the specifics depend on the position (see descriptions), but the following is a list of qualities and skills we value across the board.

- **Commitment to Human Rights and Equity:** We are looking for people who are passionate about ending poverty, advancing racial and gender equity, and ensuring basic human rights for all. We are looking to see these values exhibited in your life and experiences, both personal and professional.
- **Curiosity and Eagerness to Learn:** The best researchers and advocates ask good questions, dig deep to understand the details of complex issues, and are always learning and growing.
- **Basic Communication and Writing Skills:** It will be necessary to communicate clearly with teammates and external partners in order to effectively manage projects. We are also looking for people who can synthesize and explain information accurately in their written communication. We expect that interns will develop writing proficiency over the course of the internship.
- **Critical Thinking Skills:** We are looking for people who are able to analyze the factors contributing to social problems and their potential solutions.
- **Availability:** For summer internship positions, when available, students must be available to work for either 10 weeks full time or 15 weeks part time.

You may have acquired the above qualities and skills through past work experience, advanced education, and/or personal experience with inequity. If you have personal lived experience that you think speaks to your qualifications for this internship, it is okay share this (to the extent you are comfortable) in your cover letter.

## How to Apply

If you meet the above requirements and would like to be considered for an internship position, **submit a resume & cover letter** to Jean Lam at [jlam@heartlandalliance.org](mailto:jlam@heartlandalliance.org). Your cover letter **must** indicate the following:

- **Your Availability:** Are you available for 1) school-year and summer, 2) school year only, or 3) summer-only? (Priority is given to candidates available during both the school-year and summer.)
- **Your Internship Preference:** Which of the three internship positions (Research, Communications, and Coalition Support) best fits your interest and qualifications? (If you are interested in more than one, please explain. Interest in multiple positions is allowed).

## Interview Process

If you are selected for an interview, someone from Heartland Alliance will reach out to schedule an interview time. We conduct interviews from the end of February through March, and sometimes into early April. Interviews typically last about an hour, and may be in-person or via video conference. Before or after the interview, you will be asked to complete a short writing exercise (laptop provided) that takes about an hour. If applying for a research internship, the writing exercise focuses on data interpretation skills. If you are *not* applying for a research internship, the writing exercise focuses on an issue area of your choice related to poverty and inequity.