EPFL – Internships
Microengineering

- General context
- Administrative procedures
- Pep-talk and statistics
STI Internship Coordination

CDM
Management of technology

SV
Lifesciences

ENAC
Architecture

STI
Engineering

SB
Basic Sciences

I&C
Informatics et Communication

CDH
College of Humanities

Microengineering
111 Ma1 students
85 Ma3 students

Material Sciences
45 Ma1 students
38 Ma3 students

Mechanical Engineering
94 Ma1 students
123 Ma3 students

Electrical Engineering
51 Ma1 students
56 Ma3 students
Internship obligation

- The Internship in industry is a mandatory step of the Master degree

- Possible formats to validate this obligation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Periods</th>
<th>Contact information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electrical and electronics engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>STAP</td>
<td>Min. 8 weeks</td>
<td>After bachelor, after MA2 or MA3</td>
<td>Web Site EL</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCS (30 credits)</td>
<td>4-6 months</td>
<td>After MA2</td>
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<td>PDME</td>
<td>25 weeks</td>
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Mandatory Internship or Master Project in Industry

- **Internship**
  - Immersion into industry
  - Familiarize with company processes
  - Acquire specific competences
  - Apply transversal skills
  - Minimum duration of 2 month, up to 6 months
  - Evaluated report by student and industrial supervisor

- **Master project in industry**
  - A research project in the company
  - Student applies the competences acquired during his master
  - Supervised by a Professor from an EPFL research lab
  - **Monthly report to be sent to Professor**
  - Written report and oral defense
  - 25 week duration (+1 week vacation)
What is considered «Industry»?

- Every company or start-up offering a workplace outside of an EPFL laboratory (EPFL's Innovation Parc included)
- Every Research Organisation not delivering academic credits
- Affiliation of independent research labs with academic institutions can lead to a specific decision by the section
Internships done during the bachelor degree are not accepted for validation. Exceptions can be granted in the following cases:

- Internships done after your bachelor degree
  - The internship must be accepted by the section deputy
  - The internship duration must be at least 8 weeks
  - The ending should not be further than 1 year apart from your master beginning date.
  - An evaluation report or a work certificate has to be presented to the section deputy.

- Industrial experiences of at least 1 year related to the field of the future master studies can be accepted for validation
  - A valid work certificate has to be presented to the section deputy.
When to place your internship / Master thesis?

- **Summer**
  - Master cycle
  - 60 credits

- **Fall**
  - Minor/spec
  - 30 credits

- **Spring**
  - Master project in Industry
  - 25 weeks
  - 30 credits

- **Summer**
  - Master cycle
  - 60 credits

- **Fall**
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  - 30 credits

- **Spring**
  - Internship 8 weeks
  - PDM in academia
  - 17 to 25 weeks
  - 30 credits

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The image provides a visual representation of the timeline and credit structure for internships and master projects, illustrating the timing and duration of these activities.
When to place your internship / Master thesis?

- **Summer**
  - Master cycle: 60 credits
  - Internship 8 weeks

- **Fall**
  - Master cycle: 60 credits
  - Minor/spec: 30 credits

- **Spring**
  - Master project in Industry: 25 weeks, 30 credits
  - Internship 8 weeks
  - PDM in academia: 17 to 25 weeks, 30 credits

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Location of Master Project since 2004

- **Engineering**
  - 2004-2005: 62%
  - 2005-2006: 10%
  - 2006-2007: 28%

- **Microengineering**
  - 2004-2005: 57%
  - 2005-2006: 23%
  - 2006-2007: 20%

- **Materials Sciences**
  - 2004-2005: 32%
  - 2005-2006: 44%
  - 2006-2007: 24%

- **LifeSciences**
  - 2004-2005: 16%
  - 2005-2006: 56%
  - 2006-2007: 27%

- **Mechanical Engineering**
  - 2004-2005: 69%
  - 2005-2006: 20%
  - 2006-2007: 11%
Administrative aspects and Procedures
Mandatory Steps for a 2-6 month internship

1. Find an internship position and in case you have found it without using the IS-A portal, have the subject validated by your section deputy.

2. Inform the STI coordinator that you have found your internship.

3. Cancel all ongoing applications by gently notifying the companies. This step is extremely important to keep a good relationship with future employers.

4. Transmit the EPFL internship agreement to the employer and have it filled out and signed by the employer and the section deputy. The signing of the agreement is mandatory.

5. If you are a non-swiss/EU citizen, ask the company to request a work authorization for the duration of the internship. More information here.

6. Once all the details of your internship have been settled, enter or edit the details of your internship on the IS-A internship portal. Upload a copy of the signed internship agreement.

7. In case your internship is during a semester, make sure to update your FRAC according to the following table

8. At the end of the internship, fill out the evaluation report that will be sent to you by e-mail. The evaluation procedure starts 2 weeks prior to the official ending of the internship. Both the student and the supervisor will fill out an evaluation report.
Context of the master thesis in industry

- Companies get in touch with research labs to propose master thesis topics
- Companies can accept students for internship proposals and accept the format change to master thesis projects
- Professors and teachers propose master thesis projects with known partner companies
- Professors and teachers evaluate the academic content of proposals from companies before accepting it as master thesis projects
- Professors and teachers evaluate the academic content of proposals from students before accepting it as master thesis projects
- Students contact professors of their section to ask for existing industrial projects
- Students apply for coordinated project on the portal
- Students can apply for internships and have it validated as master thesis projects by the supervising professor
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- Professors and teachers evaluate the academic content of proposals from students before accepting it as master thesis projects

*Should be avoided*

*Should be favoured*
Ideal Scenario for Master Projects in industry

Company has an idea for a master thesis project

Company discusses the project with a Professor

Company submits the proposal on the EPFL portal and is validated by Prof

Project starts under co-supervision by company and professor

Student applies for the project through the portal and gets accepted by the company
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Entreprise mère</th>
<th>Localisation du stage</th>
<th>Févr-Sept (P1)</th>
<th>Juil-Fév (P2)</th>
<th>Juil-Sept (P3)</th>
<th>N° du stage</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Inscrits</th>
<th>Places</th>
<th>Prof</th>
<th>Date de création du stage</th>
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<td>Thales Alenia Space</td>
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<td>2.09.2017</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1.09.2017</td>
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</table>
Master thesis in industry, some advice for students

- Give priority to Master thesis proposals from laboratories of your section and proposals posted on the IS-A portal with confirmed academic supervisor.

If you can’t find a suitable topic this way, then proceed like this:

- Contact potential academic supervisors to inform them on your intentions.
- Apply for positions and inform companies on your objective to do a master thesis (in motivation letter, during e-mails exchanges and interviews, ...)
- Organize a meeting between the teacher and the company to discuss the content and workplan of the project and settle administrative issues. Suggest the signature of the EPFL master thesis agreement (to settle IP and confidentiality).
- Insure a coordinated supervision and regular meetings between the company and the teacher during the project.
Additional constraints for your master thesis

- A project found by the student has to be proposed to a Professor affiliated to the section of Microengineering the latest 1 months prior to start date

- Microengineering requires that the student send a monthly report to the Professor
Mandatory Steps for a Master project in Industry

1. Find a master project in industry by contacting the professors of your section.

2. A master subject can also be found through the IS-A Internship portal. In this case, it is mandatory to find a professor willing to supervise you before you accept the offer from the company. The STI Initiative on Coordinated Master Projects is promoting offers through the portal.

   - Project of this kind have to validated by the Professor the latest 1 month before project start to the.

3. Official starting dates for master projects in industry are as follows:
   - Beginning of spring semester - registration deadline for spring semester courses (2 weeks after)
   - August 1st - registration deadline for fall semester courses (end of September)

Other starting dates can be obtained on special request to your section.

4. All administrative details of your master project in industry have to be settled between the employer and the professor supervising your work. On request from the professor or the company, the EPFL master project agreement can be signed.

5. Once all the details of your Master project in Industry have been settled, enter the details of your PDMe in your study plan

6. Make sure to update your FRAC according to the following table
How much salary?

- There is no official regulation in Switzerland to pay a monthly salary for an internship.
- Salaries are mostly ruled by offer and demand
- Often the salary is dependent of the company’s size and status
  - Typical salary in large companies: ~3’000 SFr
  - Typical salary in start-ups and SMEs: 1’500 SFr
  - Typical salary in the European Union: 600 - 900 Euros
- EPFL recommends a typical monthly salary between 1’500-2’500 SFr. However, there is no obligation of the company to comply with this.

- In Case of a Master Project in Industry, remuneration can be handled more freely (no monthly salary, compensations, bonus at the end, ...)

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How can you find an internship?

- It is the student’s responsibility to find an appropriate internship to validate his Master degree.
- No responsibility can be taken from EPFL side if no internship has been found by the student.
- The student can find an internship position by himself, but the subject needs to be approved by the section deputy.
- EPFL offers an internship portal on which the student can find an alternative to his personal quest for finding an internship.
- Access to the EPFL portal is given through the student’s IS-Academia account.
Other opportunities for finding an internship

- Personal contacts, family, friends
- Topic related agencies and organizations
- International platforms
- Company websites
- EPFL Professors, especially for master projects in Industry

Every Internship found by these alternative ways needs to be approved by your section. Please contact the section deputy as soon as you have found an opportunity.
EPFL Alumni network

- EPFL students have access to the Alumni network
  - Website: alumni.epfl.ch
  - Pocketcampus app
Start working with Linked’In
Find an Internship during EPFL’s Forum
How does the internship portal work?

- Browse through the internship offers of your Master program
- Apply for a position by uploading 2 mandatory documents:
  - CV
  - Motivation letter
- Applications are sent on a weekly basis to the companies (every Monday 14h00)
- Wait for the company to make its selection process (up to several weeks)
- If no response after 2 months, contact your internship coordinator
- You will be contacted by the company if your application was successful (Most selection processes involve an interview and several e-mail exchanges)
- You MUST accept only one offer and reject all the others within the next 3 working days.
- Once you have accepted the offer
  - No withdrawal from the accepted position!
  - Kindly notify all other companies you had privileged contact with
Attribution process in the spring semester

- **End of January**: Mailing to Industry
- **Mid-February**: 1st student applications sent to Industry
- **Mid-February**: Following student applications sent to Industry every Monday 2:00 PM
- **June**: End of Spring Semester
- **June**: Internal processes in the spring semester
- **August 1st**: Possible 1st starting date
- **August 1st – September 30th**: PDMe 25 weeks
- **August 1st**: Internship 2-6 Months
Attribution process in the fall semester

- Sept. 1st: Mailing to Industry
- End of September: Following student applications sent to Industry every Monday 2:00 PM
- December: End of Fall Semester
- Beginning of Spring Semester: Possible 1st starting date
- Mid-February – March 1st: 1st student applications sent to Industry
- 2-6 Months: Internship
- PDMe: 25 weeks
Internship attribution, possible scenarii

1st application round
- Internship 1: Refused
- Internship 2: in progress
- Internship 3: Refused

2nd application round
- Internship 4: in progress

3rd application round
- Internship 5: in progress

4th application round
- Within 3 days
  - Internship 4: Accepted
  - Internship 3: Refuse

Cancel

EPFL
Register internships found by your own

- Submit a description of your internship to your section’s deputy
- Once you have signed the tripartite internship agreement, enter your project details on the internship portal by creating a new internship proposal, and upload a pdf copy of the agreement.
Some advice to prepare your application documents

- **2 important documents**
  - Motivation letter
  - Curriculum vitae (CV)

The criteria for interview selection by the company is mostly based in these documents. Reference letters can be added as well. Your motivation letter should specifically address the company and the proposed subject.

- **Language**: you should use the language of the offer

- **To be avoided:**
  - No motivation letter
  - copy-paste errors
  - Wrong addressing
Interview

Most companies would like to meet the students for an interview prior to making their final choice

- Be prepared for the interview and demonstrate a professional attitude
- Non EU/EFTA students: Inform the company about the required work authorization
- If the living allowance is mentioned in the description, do not bargain. If not mentioned, inquire for it.
- Follow up: After the interview, write a short e-mail as feedback of your interview to the company and Cc to the section administrator and internship coordinator.

For Master projects: Do not accept a position without having confirmed the eligibility of the project and settled the details with the academic supervisor (the latest 1 month prior to project start).
Prepare your internship campaign!

EPFL proposes 5 modules of 1h30:

This fall semester
1. Understanding recruiters (November ‘16)
2. Reviewing the CV
3. The motivation letter

Next spring semester
4. The Job interview
5. Communication and organization at work

Each course will be given 2x in English and 5x in French
Information and mandatory registration here: https://bookwhen.com/stages
Work authorization
(not required for Master Projects with no monthly remuneration)

- The federal council allows foreign students of Swiss academic institution to perform a mandatory internship during their studies: https://www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/20070993/index.html#a39

- Students with Non-EU/EFTA passports require a valid work authorization to do their internship or Master project with monthly salary in Switzerland or EU countries.

- EU students performing a 3-6 month internship have to be announced at the cantonal office.

- It is the company’s responsibility to request this authorization at the proper working office of their canton/country.

- It requires up to 8 weeks to obtain this authorization from the cantonal offices.

- It is recommended that students from non-EU/EFTA countries inform the companies in their motivation letter of these regulations.

Example: “As I’m a non-EU/EFTA resident, your company is required to ask for a temporary work authorization. Please be advised that The federal council allows foreign students of Swiss academic institution to perform a mandatory internship during their studies: https://www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/20070993/index.html#a39. As I will stay registered at EPFL during this internship, and since this internship is a mandatory part of my Master education, the delivery of this document does not fall into the quota limitation of each canton and is therefore straightforward”.
Anticipate

- A change of residence or relocation might be necessary

- Time consuming formalities might be required:
  - Confirm an internship
  - Visa, Work authorization and Residence permit (typically 4-8 weeks)
  - Collection of the signatures of the internship agreement
  - New validation of your passport
  - Reformulating the project objectives with the Professor for Master thesis in Industry

- It is your responsibility to settle these formalities prior to the Internship beginning
Update your FRAC

In case your internship is done during an academic semester, make sure to update your FRAC according to your status:

- In case of a credited internship (only EE students):
  - Semester (choose the right one: MA1; MA2; MA3)
  - Status: Internship (authorized by the section)
  - Mention in the comments « Credited internship during master course (SCS) »

- In case of a long internship without credits
  - Semester: (choose the right one: MA1; MA2; MA3)
  - Status: Internship (authorized by the section)
  - Mention in the comments « Detached internship but credited with master Project (STAP) »
Announce your stay abroad to EPFL Safety domain

http://securite.epfl.ch/voyages

**NEWS SAFETY, HEALTH & PREVENTION**

Create an account  Help

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- All EPFL news

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**Assistance program when travelling abroad**

02.06.14 - You are travelling abroad for business or studies?

As a collaborator, doctoral-assistant or student of EPFL, the Safety, Prevention and Health Domain (DSPS) provides you an assistance program when travelling abroad. Since the 1st of June, a partnership with International SOS has been set up to help you to prepare your journeys and to assist you during your business travels abroad (conferences, seminars, training, etc.). Security and medical informations on your country of destination are available, as well as the access to a call center to assist you 24/7. For any additional information, please consult the website: [securite.epfl.ch/travel](http://securite.epfl.ch/travel)

NB: Private travels are not covered by this program!

**Author:** Sylvia Fabris  **Source:** Sécurité, Prévention et Santé

[Return to previous page](#)
Internship or master project agreements

- The internship agreement specifies the commitments and responsibilities of EPFL, the company and the internship student. This agreement must be signed for all engineering internships.
- No other tripartite agreement involving EPFL will be signed by the section.
- Alternative contract proposed by the company and signed only by the student are acceptable in rare cases, but the students must carefully read and comply with the content (IP issues, confidentiality, and especially non-competition clauses).
- In case of master projects, a specific agreement between the EPFL Research lab and the company can be signed.
During and after the internship

- In case of problems (accident, personal problems, conflict with supervisors), contact urgently the Section deputy and the STI Internships coordinator.

- No written report of the student is requested by EPFL (except for credited internships in EE), but can be requested by the company.

- To validate your internship, an evaluation report has to be filled out by the student and the supervisor in the company (sent out 2 weeks prior to ending).
EPFL internships on the web

Section webpage: http://sti.epfl.ch/page-89596-en.html

EPFL webpage: http://internships.epfl.ch
Important remarks

- As an EPFL student doing an internship in industry, you act as an EPFL Ambassador. Thanks to your work and positive attitude, you will leave an important impression to the company.

- This aspect is not only important for your future professional career, but also for the EPFL internship program which will benefit from this lasting impression.
STI Internship Program

- Pep talk for Students
- Some statistics
The internship: Excellent Opportunity !!!

- **Students**
  - A Great incentive to ask oneself the right questions!
  - Familiarize with working life
  - Immerse into Industry practice
  - Future Hiring opportunity

- **Companies**
  - Benefit from highly qualified students
  - A new insight on current issues, innovate!
  - Evaluate future employees

- **EPFL**
  - A direct link to industry
  - A new platform to start collaborations on the research level
  - Feedback from industry to improve the education of our students
**Internship evaluations**

Company evaluation of the student 
(Years 2015-2017, 400 students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Area</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Sufficient</th>
<th>Insufficient</th>
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<td>Overall Evaluation</td>
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<td>175</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity to self-evaluate and to respond</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>198</td>
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<td>constructively to feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to access sources of information</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>168</td>
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<tr>
<td>and to evaluate them</td>
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<td>Ability to present and defend her/his own</td>
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<td>Quality of the work delivered</td>
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<td>Capacity to work in teams</td>
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Internship evaluations

Student auto-evaluation
(Years 2015-2017, 400 students)

- **Overall Evaluation**: 279 Excellent, 112 Good, 16 Sufficient, 2 Insufficient
- **Workplace atmosphere**: 325 Excellent, 70 Good, 8 Sufficient, 6 Insufficient
- **Technical resources accessible during the placement**: 256 Excellent, 113 Good, 32 Sufficient, 4 Insufficient
- **Professionalism and work organisation**: 256 Excellent, 128 Good, 20 Sufficient, 5 Insufficient
- **Quality of supervision**: 268 Excellent, 109 Good, 25 Sufficient, 7 Insufficient
# Internship Evaluations

Feedback on the host company by student (Years 2015-2017, 400 students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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EPFL links to Industry

Top-Down

- Vice Presidency for Innovation
  - Tech transfer
  - Innovation Park
  - Sponsored chairs
  - Special programs
  - Alliance

- Career Center
  - Alumni survey
  - Jobs for Brains Recruitment platform
  - Recruitment days
  - Round tables
  - Sponsorships
  - EPFL Forum

- EPFL Alumni
  - Network
  - Events
  - Magazine

- Section advisory boards
  - Meeting ~every 2 years

Bottom-up

- Research labs; industrial projects
- Master Thesis in Industry
- Internships in Master curriculum

1’000 EPFL students each year
Value chain from internships to industry funded research

- Internships
- Master projects
- Startups
- KTI/CTI
- EPFL academic rankings
- Innovation for Industry

Professional insertion of students

Funded research
Location of Master Project since 2004

- Electrical Engineering: 62%, 10%, 28%
- Microengineering: 57%, 23%, 20%
- Materials Sciences: 32%, 44%, 24%
- LifeSciences: 16%, 56%, 27%
- Mechanical Engineering: 69%, 20%, 11%
Master Thesis in Industry Interaction Map (Year 2015)
STI Internship offers since 2012

Since 2012:
- 580 companies
- 2'400 offers

Switzerland: 66 %
France: 17 %
Rest of Europe: 11 %
USA/Asia: 6%

At least 1 offer
More than 5 offers

In 2016:
- Electrical Engineering: 497 offers (+10% vs 2015)
- Mechanical Engineering: 336 offers (+21% vs 2015)
- Microengineering: 416 offers (+25% vs 2015)
- Materials Sciences: 321 offers (+25% vs 2015)
### STI Internship offers by country

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<tr>
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### Internship offers by category

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Internship countries of STI students

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Information and contacts

- For further information, please visit the internship page of your section:

- Depending on your inquiry, you can contact the following persons:

  - Guy Delacrétaz
    SMT
    Adjunct to the section director

  - Sebastian Gautsch
    STI
    Internship Coordinator

  - Isabelle Schafer
    SMT
    Administration
Questions?

Thank you for your attention 😊