



SUMMER 2026

Internship Dates: May 21 – August 3, 2026

STUDENT APPLICATION PERIOD:

JANUARY 1 – MARCH 1, 2026

INTERNS WILL BE SELECTED BY:

APRIL 1, 2026

Student Internship Program

Program Description:

Through the Nex-Generation Student Internship Program, college and high school students are employed by local businesses within a 28-county area of Northwest and North Central Kansas for **paid, summer internships**. The goal of the program is to provide each intern with lifelong skills that will better prepare them for future careers, right here at home.

Not only are Nex-Gen interns receiving **hands-on training** and **mentorship** from local business professionals, but they are also learning to **invest in their rural communities**. They become fully engaged in **networking** with customers and members of the business community, as well as participate in local **community events**. They also have an opportunity to participate in **leadership training** days that seek to stretch them out of their comfort zones, as well as further develop **skills** in communication, teamwork, work ethic, and more. These experiences promote **a sense of ownership and community pride** and encourage interns to use their skills and talents **locally in the future**.

OUR MISSION: Nex-Generation's mission is to educate Northwest and North Central Kansas students about local career opportunities by providing and supporting programs in career development, entrepreneurship, and internship. Through these efforts, we hope to foster a positive sense of community and encourage youth to remain or return home to prosper.

Assign a Mentor

Nex-Gen requires businesses to assign their intern to one mentor at their organization. (It is essential to have one, go-to person for questions or authorizations.) We also recommend the intern either remain in one department, or, for a broader perspective, rotate among several departments or employees, depending upon the structure of the business.

Social Media

Understanding the value of sharing the internship story with others throughout our region, we ask that businesses and interns help by becoming Nex-Gen friends on Facebook and Instagram, and by sharing internship-related pictures, short videos, and other posts on their own social media sites and tagging Nex-Gen.

Business and Intern Required Documentation and Forms

Business Applications & Forms:

- Initial application to be accepted as a participating business (found on the Nex-Gen portal)
 - Portal Link: <https://nex-generation.secure-platform.com/site/page/businesses>
 - Businesses must first create an account (if you don't already have one) to log in
- Business Media Consent Form: Gives Nex-Gen consent to post pictures, videos, quotes, etc. on various social media channels
- Grant Reimbursement Form and copies of payroll: Details the grant funding needed based on intern's hours worked

Intern Applications & Forms:

- Initial intern application goes live January 1 on the Nex-Gen portal
- Intern Media Consent and Confidentiality Forms: Gives Nex-Gen consent to post pictures, videos, quotes, etc. on various social media channels
- Performance Learning Objectives Form: Interns must keep a detailed record of their projects/tasks completed and skills gained
 - Form found on Nex-Gen portal
- Intern Presentation Requirements: Interns are required to provide a presentation about their internship experience at the conclusion of their summer to business staff members, a board or committee, or a community organization. This is a great opportunity to showcase the internship to others in the community, while developing presentation skills. Interns are welcome to put on a "community event" to present their presentations to family, friends, businesses, and other community members.

*These presentations are to be recorded and uploaded to the Nex-Gen portal by the conclusion of the summer.

Professionalism/Dress Code/Apparel:

Professionalism is expected in all facets of our program. Appropriate attire is determined by each business. Nex-Gen provides interns with logoed apparel. We recommend interns wear their Nex-Gen shirt at least once per week and when presenting or representing the program during community events.

Application & Hiring Process:

Eligibility

Students must be in college or high school (age 16+) and must be from or attending school in the following Northwest/North Central Kansas counties: Barton, Cheyenne, Cloud, Decatur, Ellis, Ellsworth, Gove, Graham, Jewell, Lincoln, Logan, Mitchell, Norton, Osborne, Ottawa, Phillips, Rawlins, Republic, Rooks, Rush, Russell, Saline, Sheridan, Sherman, Smith, Thomas, Trego, and Wallace.

Businesses/organizations must also be located (or have a branch) within these counties. Businesses may specify additional age, education, or experience requirements based on the position.

Application & Hiring Process / Availability of Funding for Businesses

To apply for the program, businesses must complete an online application via the Nex-Gen Portal at <https://nex-generation.secure-platform.com/site/page/businesses> providing the number of interns the business wishes to hire, a brief position description of each, and whether the business will self-fund or may need funding to help offset its payroll costs. Businesses must upload a W-9 form and logo. Nex-Gen offers a limited number of grants to offset the businesses' payroll expenses.

Students apply January 1 through March 1 via the Nex-Gen Portal. Nex-Gen notifies area schools, colleges, and universities; and posts to social media. Businesses receive their respective applications via the portal, and review, interview, and select their own candidates **by April 1**. Business interviews, selects, and hires its intern, and must follow legal hiring practices, including, but not limited to, adhering to state and federal employment laws and providing a safe and harassment-free work environment.

The 2026 internship dates are May 21 through August 3. Interns are employed by the individual business on the business's payroll at a required, minimum base rate of \$12.00/hour. (Businesses are responsible for payroll taxes/tax liabilities, new-hire processing, drug/alcohol testing, safety training, etc.) Businesses may elect to pay a higher wage, depending upon interns' skills and credentials, or project requirements. For instance, you may have a student who is a 2nd-, 3rd-, or 4th-year Nex-Gen intern or one who has already obtained certifications or completed higher-level coursework in their field of study. Additional grant funding may be available. On average, a business' "out-of-pocket" payroll expenses have ranged from \$1,600 (small business) to \$2,600 (large business). Classifications: "large" businesses may include, but not be limited to, manufacturing; communication, electric, and agriculture cooperatives; government entities; branch-based financial institutions; hospitals; and schools. Others are classified as "small" businesses.

The following is an example of the grant structure:

WAGE AND GRANT INFORMATION	Hourly Rate	9-week Total (if intern worked 40 hours per week)	Small Business Grant	Large Business Grant	Small Business Out-of-Pocket	Large Business Out-of-Pocket
2025 BASE WAGE	\$12.00	\$4,320	\$2,720	\$1,720	\$1,600	\$2,600
EXAMPLE - HIGHER LEVEL WAGE	\$14.00 (EXAMPLE ONLY)	\$5,040	\$3,440	\$2,440	\$1,600	\$2,600

If a business elects to pay a higher wage, Nex-Gen will ask for basic justification (person already has a specific level of experience, they are already a CNA or have a technical certification, etc.) at the time of hiring so that we may plan grant allocations, accordingly.

Grants are limited and determined annually. Nex-Gen automatically issues one-half of the grant in May and allocates the remainder at the end of the summer. Grants are paid based on actual payroll hours. Approved timesheets or payroll records showing actual hours worked must accompany a signed, grant request form, which we provide. All grant requests must be received by September 30 to be considered for reimbursement. Any unused portion shall be returned to Nex-Generation by September 30 of the current program year.

Funding is made possible by generous donations of the Dane G. Hansen Foundation, Nex-Tech Round Up customers, Nex-Generation business partners, CoBank, and other charitable contributors.

Hours & “At Will” Employment Status

We do not specify the total number of hours to be worked, but we do recommend making the position as close to full time as possible, with reasonable time off for vacation, camp, or appointments.

Interns are employed “at will.” Should the business feel it necessary to end the intern’s employment at any time, the hiring supervisor will notify Nex-Generation’s executive director of the situation and proceed with his or her company’s legal policy regarding termination. Nex-Gen recommends informing the student of the reason for the termination, to assist in his or her own professional development.

PROGRAM TRAINING & MEETINGS

Business Participation Expectations: For any business to be included in or remain in our program or to be eligible for an internship grant, the business must be willing to participate fully in the program and its curriculum. This includes participating in the business orientation; following Nex-Generation’s internship curriculum and turning in approved timesheets or payroll information with the grant reimbursement form we provide to justify the full grant allocation.

Business Orientation: Business representatives attend a virtual meeting to learn more about Nex-Generation and internship program expectations. *Meetings will take place in January.*

Intern Orientation: Interns and business mentors must attend a virtual intern orientation during the first week of the internship program. Nex-Gen provides information about the organization, internship program expectations, documenting the summer experience, and more.

Intern Leadership Days: More information about these “days” will be provided during Business Orientation.

Contact Information:

Chantelle Lawson, Internship Coordinator
758-627-6358 (cell)
clawson@nex-generation.org
Website: www.nex-generation.org
Social Media: @NexGen4Youth

Nex-Generation Round Up for Youth
235 S Chapman
PO Box 97
Lenora, KS 67645