

ISS INTERNSHIP Q&A

With Hayley

1. Why did I pick an NGO and what did I expect from this experience given that this is a non-profit organisation?

The opportunity to experience something unique and to develop new and improved skills in a challenging environment with limited resources was really appealing to me. These limited resources require initiative and the ability to multitask and take on multiple roles in order to achieve strong results, and this allows for the opportunity to grow through doing on the job, gaining first-hand experience.

You are genuinely valued as a member of an NGO and have the opportunity to make a real difference and contribute in a meaningful way, directly impacting the success of the organisation. Unlike other larger corporations which may not take such an active role in the development of its interns, ISS has allowed me to not only learn through observation, but by actually doing, allowing the opportunity to put theory into practice and work on my skills in a real-life setting.

Interning at an NGO offers an opportunity to make a genuine difference in people's lives, whether directly or indirectly; as marketing efforts by interns can raise awareness of ISS and lead to greater exposure and ultimately higher levels of client patronage, philanthropic donations, overall awareness of ISS within the community and business development and growth. This is a rewarding experience, compared to simply interning at a major organisation where your input and impact may potentially be smaller in relative terms.

Working at an NGO is an excellent thing to have on your resume, as it demonstrates your ability to be pragmatic, and to thrive under pressure with limited resources. It also demonstrates your ability to cope with taking on multiple roles and responsibilities, in order to achieve objectives and positive outcomes for the business.

Interning at an NGO you get to learn new and interesting things you likely otherwise would not be exposed to in other industries. This unique learning experience is highly beneficial to take with you into your future career as it allows for a well-rounded perspective and expanded skill set, compared to other prospective job applicants.

Interning at an NGO is an excellent way to challenge yourself and develop your ability to quickly adapt to different situations, and develop a diverse range of skills. It also demonstrates your ability to work independently at times, with minimal supervision, relying on self-motivation and drive to deliver and complete set tasks successfully.

What I expected from this experience:

- A tight budget and passionate employees who aim to make a real difference in the lives of their clients.
- The opportunity to contribute to making a difference and adding value
- The chance to take on many roles with diverse opportunities to learn and grow across a wide range of areas
- To gain experience in new areas outside of my comfort zone which will help to develop a well-rounded idea of marketing and business operations at NGO's as well as these workings within organisations in general.

2. What is the actual experience?

As an intern at ISS I was given permission to update content on the ISS website and other ISS social media platform independently, and the staff trusted me with this process. I became quite familiar with WordPress while updating the website, and this will help me in my future career. The staff are incredibly welcoming and friendly, as is Fionn the executive director, who always takes the time to listen to and consider our ideas about improvements and operations at ISS. As an intern at ISS you are given freedom to be creative and apply skills learned in tertiary education in a real-life context.

3. The culture

Interning at ISS Australia has been a great experience, thanks to the great staff and workplace culture. Upon my arrival Fionn the executive director took the time to explain how the organisation operates, and he and all the other staff have always been willing to take the time to help me as an intern better understand ISS. Fionn is very approachable and genuinely values contributions from interns.

4. My personal experience and favourite parts

The chance to apply theories and techniques I have learned at university in a real-life context has been a great opportunity and has helped me to appreciate their relevance in a new light. This internship has encouraged me to take creative initiative, as well as enabling me to continue to develop my interpersonal skills and improve professionally.

My favourite part of this internship experience has been the chance to work with a team of digital marketers from a digital advertising agency and create a strategic marketing plan for ISS Australia. I prepared a presentation and delivered it to the digital agency staff when they visited the ISS Melbourne office. They invited me to visit their offices, where I assisted them in developing a strategic marketing plan which involves structural changes to the ISS website and creating an intern plan. This helped to develop my presentation skills as well as my interpersonal skills and allowed me the chance to experience things from a digital agency perspective. This is just one of the great opportunities ISS has provided me during my time as an intern.

5. What did I learn and gain?

Throughout my internship experience at ISS I have developed a deeper understanding of the workings of an NGO, improved my multitasking skills, and strategic thinking. Preparing a presentation about ISS and delivering it to the digital marketing agency staff has been a great opportunity to continue improving my presentation skills. As an intern at ISS I have worked on multiple projects simultaneously, improving my planning and organisational abilities as well as bringing insights and ideas to the table. Working in conjunction with a digital marketing agency to develop a new strategic plan for ISS Australia has allowed me to think more strategically from a planning and segmentation perspective. Through brainstorming efforts, a greater understanding of ISS Australia's main target markets has been achieved, and a strategic plan has been created to better appeal to these three main user segments, clients, donors and partners. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as ISS Australia and encourage anybody interested to apply today!