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Action Plan for Internship Offices

THE INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

What is an internship? And why is it important?

An internship is a short-term work experience – for students. Most of the time they are offered by companies, institutions, organizations to gain some knowledge about a particular industry of field. Through the internships the student gets in depth knowledge about a working habitat and a certain profession. The ideal aim is that the student works on relevant projects and learns skills. Sometimes an internship can lead to a full-time job.

Internships for students in the field of archaeology, include archaeological digs, tourism, museums, restoration and conservation, cultural institutions, documentary films, state offices, International and National institutions dealing with cultural heritage etc.

It will help the students to:

- find out what he/she wants to do and what not to
- learn specific skills and specialize
- create a network
- to lay groundwork for the future

What is an Internship/Career office?

The aim of an internship/career office at a university is to specify the needs for the students of each department/faculty together with faculty members to lay groundwork for future employments. The office needs to work closely with faculty members, industry and institutions, which are relevant for students internships.

The career office endorses help for internship applications, such as preparation of CV and statement of purpose. The career office would monitor the whole process for the internship and intern, as a tie between university and industry.

The Importance of an Alumni Office – Alumni Network

An alumnus is a graduate of a particular university or program. For example a graduate of the archaeology program at Baghdad University, would be an alumnus of Baghdad University Department of Archaeology. Alumni are an important way to create places for internships.

If the university doesn't have an alumni office or a person who tracks them, this needs to be created.

The departments should have lists of alumni, to get in touch with them. Lists of who is working where or what kind of business they have, should be created. A second step would be to get in touch with them through certain meetings, gatherings, social media and events and ask whether they could help to place students for an internship. Through the alumni network, which include with every year new alumni, a sustainable way of creating internship places could be created. Alumni website can be created. Monthly newsletter prepared by the faculties can be shared with them.

Duration of an Internship

In university programs internships are mandatory or optional, depending on the university. The duration is up to the department and also governmental rules. It can be from 1 week to 6 months or even longer. This needs to be determined by the departments and/or universities.

Paid and Unpaid Internships

It is the duty of the internship office to find out, what the conditions and circumstances for the internship are. Most of time the intern just gets food; sometimes also a small budget for the daily commute is included. Some of them don't include anything. Sometimes – for longer internships – companies and such provide a weekly

or monthly payment. The intern needs to be informed about the conditions of an internship.

Social Security

Every country has its own rules. The internship offices need to inquire about governmental rules for interns and if they need social security. If yes, the social security fee should either be covered by the institution where the intern will go, or by the university.

Feedback on Interns and Internships

The feedback of the students and also the place where the internship was conducted is highly important. The feedback of the museum, institute, company is very important. This feedback needs to be collected through written forms by each university. A form for the student could be prepared, which includes certain questions. Such as: a) what kind of work the internship included; b) if it was educational; c) how the environment was; d) if they would recommend that place for an internship to another students etc.

CURRENT IRAQI FRAMEWORK AND PERSPECTIVES

Situation at Baghdad, Kufa, Qadisiyah and Mosul Universities

These four universities currently have a general university-wide internship office, however they don't operate just for single departments, such as a department of archaeology, which creates problems such as a student conducts an internship not in his or her field.

Comments and Constrains

- the universities in Iraq are academic institutions following the regulations and instructions of the ministry (MOHESR), therefore establishing a new office in the university will need official approval from the Ministry;
- CDC (Career Development Center) is a standard office at all universities in Iraq (since 2016/18); website includes only information about the university, nothing specific about CDC and internships. Websites needs to be improved

for the students, to gather a complete picture of the internship opportunities. Students compete for the internship; the criteria are set by companies and the interns are chosen by the university and the company together. Link: Facebook page

- CDC (Career Development Center) department at Mosul University organizes a number of internships for different colleges and disciplines with various levels and periods in collaboration with national and international organizations
- the educational system in Iraq considers the internship period for the third stage students mandatory (1 month) and is considered one of the graduation requirements;
- problem: some students conduct an internship not in their field – and it is not effective; hence the establishment of such an internship office would be valuable, so that they get a training in their own field;
- 2019, the (MOHESR) made some updates for the internships by approving a number of companies with specific conditions to train the students of the universities. However, unfortunately, the numbers of trainees were low because it was a new experiment to both universities and the private sector, in addition to the influence of the pandemic on the decreased number of trainees. Rules. Min. 50 employees in the company. This system continues, but not very effective.

Link for internship office is a Facebook page, where students also can ask questions

<https://www.facebook.com/%D8%B4%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%87%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%B8%D9%8A%D9%81-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B5%D9%84-2057908170982853>

- the suggested BANUU WP 2 plan for the internships should be discussed in detail with the MOHESR, to get a new version that can be more applicable to the situation here

Action Plan

The action plan which is explained below, is a model/suggestion, which could help to facilitate a department/college/faculty internal internship office which collaborates with the faculty of archaeology/arts to create a sustainable way to place interns who study archaeology and related fields. However, since such an entity needs official permission by MOHESR, an internal solution of appointing “internship coordinators” seems to be a constructive idea.

- The faculty of archaeology/arts needs to appoint one or more (better) faculty member(s), who is/are going to deal with the internships. Those will be the “internship coordinators”, whom the students can contact for their internships;
- It is suggested that these faculty members work for 3 years (suggested) on this matter, and that there is a rotation every 3 years (suggested) and other faculty members continue;
- The appointed faculty members will collect all necessary information on the university internship policies;
- If there are no internship policies at this university, they need to be created by the faculty members together with the department addressing these issues:
 - Should internship be mandatory or optional
 - Duration
 - Social security
 - Paid or unpaid
 - Report of the intern, which needs to be submitted to the department
- The internship coordinators need to create a network for the internships; which means they need to determine and contact institutions, excavations etc., which would take interns;
- This network can be created through
 - University resources network
 - Personal network

- Alumni network
 - International and National Institutions
 - Contacting the cultural institutions listed in the WP 1 BANUU report
- The internship coordinators should be easy to reach, with office hours and steady email addresses
- They should have an open ear for problems the interns will face during their internships
- The department should talk with the university so that the internship coordinators would get a lift of one of their classes, so that they can dedicate enough time to this duty