



MASTER OF URBAN INNOVATION

CLASS OF 2022
STUDENT INTERNSHIP REPORT

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INTERNSHIP OVERVIEW

The Master of Urban Innovation Program includes a 4-month work placement, in which students contribute their knowledge, skills and experience in an actual workplace. Through their internship, students are able to provide organizations with fresh perspectives, innovative ideas and enthusiasm to learn.

The Master of Urban Innovation Program Office would like to thank all employer and industry partners who worked with us to create these meaningful co-op opportunities. These experiential opportunities have clearly provided an important learning experience for our students which will help them as they launch their careers in industry.

INSTITUTE FOR MANAGEMENT & INNOVATION

The Institute for Management & Innovation (IMI) is a collaborative institute that offers cross-disciplinary and leading business education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels at the University of Toronto Mississauga.

IMI aims to produce mission-focused leaders through academia and by fostering close interactions and sharing of expertise between faculty, staff and students within its programs.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

The University of Toronto is Canada's leading institution of learning, discovery, and knowledge creation, and is one of the world's top research-intensive universities. Students have the opportunity to learn from and work with preeminent thought leaders through its multidisciplinary network of teaching and research faculty, alumni, and partners.





JASON ADADE

JOB TITLE

- Investment Attraction Intern

ORGANIZATION

- **Toronto Global**
As an arms-length organization representing municipalities in the region, Toronto Global works with partners in the Ontario and Canadian governments to provide a comprehensive, customized service that allows for a smooth transition for international companies wishing to do business here.

INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION

- Supported market teams (Europe, Asia, United States) sell the Toronto Region to potential investors
- Conducted several scans in search for companies in targeted industries including Renewable Energy & Tech.
- Prepared business cases (reports we sent to companies to tell them more about what the region has to offer)
- Gained knowledge of the Toronto Region's economic structure, demographics, government policies and support for businesses
- Created a Key Performance Matrix for our service providers to evaluate how well they supported the organization and potential clients
- Completed a report paper on the relationship between innovation and foreign direct investment

WHAT I LEARNED

I learned quite a bit during my internship. I gained an understanding for how organizations work – particularly a not-for-profit organization that is governed by both the Provincial and Municipal government. Within this setting, Toronto Global had to meet specific requirements set individually from the two levels of government as well as individually across municipalities. I discovered quickly it was a challenging task to appease all of their funding partners.

In addition, I also obtained a substantial understanding of the practice of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Securing FDI from companies is a complex process involving the appropriate incentives, policies, industry partnerships, and talent. It also involves how well you were able to sell these specific areas which involves effective communication and persuasion skills.

MY ADVICE FOR FUTURE STUDENTS

My advice for future students is simple: always look for the good. There is always something to learn from a situation even, when it may not see that way at first. It is more than keeping an open mind or remaining positive (which are great attitudes), it's about exercising your critical thinking skills to find the value in seemingly obscure assignments and situations. With this, you will value your time at your internship all the more!



SAMARA BELL

JOB TITLE

- Business Development Intern

ORGANIZATION

- **Urban Living Futures (UPPlift Platform)**

Urban Living Futures Inc designs innovation programs creating convergence between urban innovators (supply) and built asset owners/managers (demand) to create efficiencies and enhanced user experience with smart technologies. They bring together private sector companies, city authorities and global technology leaders and harness their support to help innovators pilot and ultimately commercialize emergent technology.

INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION

- Assisted with the launch of Innovate Edmonton's adoption of the UPPlift platform (EDGI) and developed various marketing campaigns and initiatives to drive attention to EDGI
- Researched current projects/goals being developed by municipalities and EDO's in Canada. Wrote a report and highlighted the projects that aligned with the deployment of the UPPlift Platform
- Prepared briefing notes and research reports on potential customers and identified their interest in the UPPlift platform prior to customer demos
- Developed a market demographic profile to and presented the findings
- Conducted an outreach strategy to drive target audiences to EDGI portal through e-mails and phone calls
- Updated and organized UPPlift's CRM to include contacts for media releases and prospective customers

WHAT I LEARNED

Throughout the first year of the MUI program I became acutely aware on how cities require solutions to improve the quality of life and technology often arises as a quick solution, leading to 'uneven innovation.' The UPPlift platform helps address this problem by creating an innovation management portal. This process facilitates innovation through a streamlined process. I came to understand the government and firm's pain points in order to market the platform adequately. Tailoring each portal to the client's needs is important in approaching the marketing of the company. Additionally, I came to understand the barriers to working with government, which often leads to a waiting period and uncertainty. Similarly, an overarching strategy and breaking down projects and goals are vital to the functioning of a company and a start-up in particular. Applying the theories learned in class to the projects at UPPlift provided a tangible outcome to the ideas discussed throughout the year.

MY ADVICE FOR FUTURE STUDENTS

Completing an internship is an exciting time for students to apply what you have learned. Let your passion and enthusiasm feel palpable to your coworkers and employees. You are your own best advocate. Take initiative. Ask questions and speak up if you want to work on a specific project or learn particular skills. Transfer the skills you have learned in your classes to create meaningful work in your internship. Internships are about learning and growing. It helps to set up a learning plan and set goals. Looking back at your learning plan is invaluable and allows for one to see how much progress they have made in their position throughout the summer.



LAURA HERNANDEZ

JOB TITLE

- Economic Development Research Intern

ORGANIZATION

- **City of Mississauga, Economic Development Office (EDO)**
Mississauga is the sixth-most populous municipality in Canada, third-most in Ontario, and second-most in the Greater Toronto Area. The City of Mississauga's Economic Development Office provides information and services to help business grow and prosper in Mississauga.

INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION

- Managed a research project that identified the significant COVID-19 impacts on main street businesses in Mississauga
- Created and distributed an online survey to capture insights and learnings from small business owners in Mississauga
- Scheduled and coordinated interviews and focus groups with small business owners in Mississauga
- Compiled information about economic development strategies from main Canadian cities and identified similarities with Mississauga's EDO strategies
- Researched various COVID-19 impact studies from American and Canadian Universities
- Delivered presentations to the Economic Development offices to report project updates
- Participated in weekly team meetings by contributing ideas/insights
- Wrote a final report that included all project phases, learnings, and recommendations to EDO

WHAT I LEARNED

I learned how to put my knowledge and skills into practice. From conducting comprehensive analysis research, to design a project plan, my knowledge of economic development and urban innovation theories was transformed into a series of practical techniques and skills that I can implement in real-life scenarios. Also, during my internship, I learned how to build relationships with the people I worked with. This process overall helped me develop my professional network and emphasized the importance of creating these connections. Finally, as an intern, I understood it is essential to be enthusiastic and open to learning new things by asking more questions. This showed that I enjoyed being part of EDO and that I was keen to help. Overall, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to do this internship and have received so much value from what I learned.

MY ADVICE FOR FUTURE STUDENTS

Asking for and receiving professional feedback is very important. Every time my manager provided feedback, I took notes of both the positive and negative points. By doing this, to can grow and excel in your career. It may not be easy to hear, but it will significantly impact your future career and success.



TUA HYTÖNEN

JOB TITLE

- Policy & Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION

- **WoodGreen Community Services**

With a rich history spanning more than 80 years, WoodGreen is one of the largest social service agencies in Toronto, serving 37,000 people each year from 36 locations.

INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION

- Conducted extensive research on Toronto's housing crisis for a report series created with the Toronto Region Board of Trade
- Attended meetings with different teams for initial research for internal strategic planning
- Actively participated in mentorship meetings with VP of the department
- Created PowerPoint presentations for internal meetings on government relations planning
- Collaborated weekly with team members and other interns on government relations planning
- Created a plan for internal strategic planning and government relations
- Performed various professional administrative tasks including sending out email correspondence, creating event pages and writing reports

WHAT I LEARNED

When I first started the internship, the team that I was working with was brand new with certain individuals having joined the team only a few months earlier. The team itself had only been created 10 months before I joined it. Due to the newness of everything, I was able to experience firsthand what policy and goal setting look like internally within a non-profit organization. I was able to draw from courses from my graduate program as to what power structures in the Toronto region look like, for example, which guided my understanding of which external meetings were being prioritized in the organization, and whose opinions were being carefully listened to in decision-making. I did not expect my internship to focus as much on government relations as it did, but it helped me a great deal in understanding why learning policy processes is important.

MY ADVICE FOR FUTURE STUDENTS

If you are interested in understanding how non-profit organizations function in the Toronto region, this placement (or one similar to this) can give you insight into the structures of non-profits, how they collaborate with other organizations, and what their internal plans look like. It can be helpful in understanding how policies are created within organizations from the ground up, and what it looks like for organizations at-large.



JESSICA LIU

JOB TITLE

- Policy and Programs Assistant

ORGANIZATION

- **Ministry of Energy, Ontario Public Service (OPS)**

Part of the Government of Ontario, the Ministry of Energy oversees the regulatory framework for electricity pricing and develops policies to mitigate energy prices for Ontario. They also support the growth of clean tech and innovation in the electricity sector and engages with stakeholders in making sector decisions.

INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION

- Conducted research, performed analysis, and synthesized information and data (e.g., develop summaries, options, policy recommendations, etc.).
- Planned, coordinated, and managed daily assigned work through developing written communication skills to document findings and prepared a variety of documents (e.g., research reports, briefing decks).
- Utilized the Internet and other sources to gather and aggregate data, analyze, and input data findings, and summarize information to support policy development. This included using Microsoft Office applications, such as Word, and Excel as well as databases and email to conduct research and prepare a variety of documents.
- Applied knowledge with policy development principles to support clean energy policy and/or program-related work, including one project that required cross-branch efforts to deliver the data visualization product.
- Applied customer service and verbal/active listening communication skills to respond to email inquiries, and provided information to internal branches/divisions/ministry to coordinate meetings and events.
- Took the initiative and interpersonal skills to work collaboratively within a multi-disciplinary team (cross-divisional) to organize a networking/information event for over 60 participants across the ministry.

WHAT I LEARNED

This has been a very rewarding and memorable experience. I am more confident that I will continue to grow and develop professionally and in my endeavors. Within my internship, one distinct learning experience stood out to me as the most influential aspect of my development is the research policy development that delivers the data visualization project, and teamwork efforts to coordinate a learning/networking event across the ministry. Additionally, from the application of time management, coordination and communication, my development in managing daily tasks delivered effective research support that directly impacted some of the briefing decks that we presented to the ministers. This was an excellent experience to get to know how policy development works, and I look forward to where my career in policy analysis takes me in the future.

MY ADVICE FOR FUTURE STUDENTS

My advice is to review your own goals and expectations at the beginning of the experience to ensure you are truly making the most of it. Alternatively, set the scope and make concise notes of the roles you played in each project; ask for feedback from your colleagues and managers and take time to reflect on the skills you learned throughout the entire process. Always ask for help from colleagues and mentors, or even a quick coffee chat would be a great way of learning, improving, and networking.



LATONYA LUDFORD

JOB TITLE

- Human Rights Research Intern

ORGANIZATION

- **The Maytree Foundation**

Established in 1982, Maytree has been dedicated to creating solutions to poverty with various partners including governments, civil society organizations, policy advisors, employers and major institutions, ultimately building strong and vital communities.

INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION

- Created an internal jurisdictional review on promising local human rights accountability and justice mechanisms
 - Conducted a wide scan and a subsequent typology of promising models and mechanisms
 - Researched and compiled data for 5 human rights jurisdictions (San Francisco, Barcelona, Eugene, York, Seoul) and produced 5 case studies and a brief comparative analysis
- Planned and executed a staff workshop that focused on the internal jurisdictional review; created staff workshop packages that included invitations, discussion questions, and guided reading questions for the report
- Supported the planning and execution of Maytree's Human Rights Cities Roundtables with civil society and community groups by drafting invites and meeting materials, helping create discussion questions, notetaking, and producing a summary of notes that was circulated among participants
- Developed Excel databases to capture key human rights city stakeholders from academia, civil society/ community, and local government
- Worked alongside Maytree's Policy Team on a policy brief that focused on the income supports available for working-age singles in Canada; researched and compiled information on the different non-refundable and refundable tax credits and benefits offered by Canadian provinces for working-aged singles living in poverty

WHAT I LEARNED

First, I realized that you do not have to work in-person to experience a good working environment. Building relationships with co-workers is vital, and whether work is virtual or not, it requires a conscious effort to take the time to get to know your co-workers, which really can change your work experience for the better. I also learned the importance of being open to constructive criticism. To be successful and to grow as an employee you have to be willing to learn new skills, and thus un-learn old ones. For example, though academic writing is an important skill that allowed me to thrive in school, it does not produce the same results in a non-profit working environment where our goal is to have people across various sectors understand the work we are doing.

MY ADVICE FOR FUTURE STUDENTS

Be to be open-minded. I believe we tend to enter new experiences, whether it be school or work, with preconceived notions, or specific expectations which can prevent us from having the opportunity to learn, grow, and adapt. That is why I would advise that future students choose to be welcoming to new opportunities even if they do not always align with their goals and objectives.



OLIVIA PADIERNOS-MAPUE

JOB TITLE

- Researcher & Communications Strategist

ORGANIZATION

- **KPMB Architects**

Established in 1987, KPMB is an internationally recognized architectural practice based in Canada. Their wide-ranging work has earned over 400 respected awards, including 16 Governor General's Medals, Canada's highest honour.

INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION

- Evaluated existing innovation lab (KPMB LAB) material using competitor and SWOT analysis
- Collaborated one-on-one with Director of Marketing on Communications research and strategies
- Spearheaded Communications Plan for social media rollout of award announcement and series of KPMB LAB blog posts
- Presented Communications Plans to Partners, Director of Innovation, Director of Marketing, and project architect
- Initiated Communications project of a series of blogs about KPMB LAB, focusing on cultural and policy context
- Conducted research and created written content for KPMB LAB blogs
- Collated KPMB LAB material for office Intranet

WHAT I LEARNED

My internship at KPMB Architects was an opportunity to integrate my background in architecture with my MUI interests in policy and technology innovation. I worked for the Marketing department of the firm, in the specific capacity of communications strategy for their innovation lab, KPMB LAB. The current focus of KPMB LAB is predominantly in climate-responsive design. The first half of my internship consisted of familiarizing myself with the climate change space, as well as conducting a full evaluation of KPMB LAB material produced over the years, wherein I completed a SWOT analysis and competitor analysis to understand the business context in which the LAB exists. The major project I proposed during my internship was a set of blog posts that describe the cultural and regulatory contexts for the work that we do at KPMB LAB, and also explain the tools and technologies that we use in designing our buildings. This will be the first time that LAB has produced communications of this kind, an introduction (or re-introduction) to its purpose for clients and the public.

MY ADVICE FOR FUTURE STUDENTS

Be thoughtful and open-minded. When looking for a placement, think deeply about what kind of skills you want to develop in an internship, and be open to various opportunities. It's okay to have a specific idea of a dream role, but know that there may be other opportunities that align with your goals/interests that you may not have yet considered. On the job, stay communicative with your team and supervisor – if you don't feel happy about the way the internship is going, have a constructive conversation with your supervisor. Sometimes, supervisors are just too busy to realize that you, the intern, are not busy enough! So feel confident to have that conversation, and keep a positive and open-mind when having it.



ANJULI PERERA

JOB TITLE

- Research Support, Applied Solutions Lab

ORGANIZATION

- **Canadian Urban Institute (CUI)**

The national platform that houses the best in Canadian city building – where policymakers, urban professionals, civic and business leaders, community activists and academics can learn, share and collaborate with one another from coast to coast to coast.

INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION

- Worked in CUI's Applied Solutions Lab on a report for the City of Brampton called, "Unboxing Uptown: The Transformation of a Main Street from the Inside Out". Report will be presented to Council on September 13th, 2021, as part of the "Implementation Framework."
- Research for the report included stakeholder engagement in the form of surveys and interviews with business owners, business support networks, community leaders, and youth experts. Summarized key findings and themes to be inserted into the report.
- Conducted interviews with youth service providers in Brampton to ensure youth voices were heard during the redevelopment of Uptown.
- Captured the current context of Uptown Brampton by looking at the study area's demographics
- Participated in Mayor Tory's Summit on the recovery challenges facing the entertainment and hospitality sectors and prepared material to be posted on the website.

WHAT I LEARNED

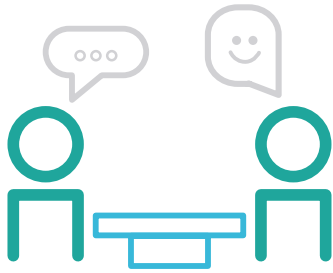
I learned a lot about community engagement. I did a lot of interviews during my time with CUI so talking to community leaders and experts were a common occurrence. I learned a lot about myself and my working habits. For example, working remotely was an adjustment but you learn a lot about managing your time and prioritizing specific tasks over others. I was able to see collaborative governance in action in Windsor. It was great to see community leaders, councillors, youth, city staff, etc., all gathered around the same table to address issues they were facing as a community. Also, things change very fast, so you have to adapt. New ideas come up, so you must find ways to fit it into the scope of the project. Overall, I learned about city-building, in particular what a successful main street looks like and the 'ingredients' that go into making one.

MY ADVICE FOR FUTURE STUDENTS

Be confident because you'll surprise yourself by your knowledge and expertise. I never felt out of place during my internship because we learned so much about city-building during our first year. If you don't understand something, reach out for help. Familiarize yourself with the company you're working at. It will only help you in the work you do. Report writing is a great skill to hone. Sometimes, the responsibility put on you can be overwhelming but embrace it. You're doing meaningful work and that's a wonderful thing!

NOTES

OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED



Mock Interviews



Guest Speaker



Networking Events



Capstone Projects



Field Trip



Coffee Chats

CONTACT



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HIRING A STUDENT AND ENGAGING WITH THE MUI PROGRAM:

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