

## Internships

The Middle East Institute (MEI) at the National University of Singapore offers a limited number of internships each year to students interested in deepening their understanding of Middle East and North Africa, and would like to further their research through any of MEI's three research clusters.

We welcome applications from candidates who are pursuing their post-secondary (junior college or polytechnic, etc), undergraduate, and postgraduate studies. Pre-university students who are **at least 18 years of age** may intern with us on a volunteer basis.

*Note:* Please do not submit applications or queries directly to research fellows at MEI. All materials and questions related to internship matters should be directed to [weichean@nus.edu.sg](mailto:weichean@nus.edu.sg).

### Criteria

Applicants should:

- Preferably be Singapore citizens or permanent residents. However, MEI also welcomes applications from international students studying in Singapore, incoming exchange students and students from abroad (see section on foreign applicants below).
- Demonstrate interest in Middle East and North African through work/internship experience, coursework, or participation in exchange or language study programmes.
- Be familiar with social media, such as FB Live, live tweeting.
- Possess video and audio editing skills. Proficiency in Adobe Premier Pro is preferred.

Candidates who are proficient in one or more languages of the region (Arabic, Farsi, Turkish, Hebrew, etc) would have an added advantage.

### Foreign applicants

- Foreign applicants are candidates who do not hold Singapore citizenship or permanent residency. You are allowed to work for a maximum of 16 hours a week (or two full working days).
- There are different application criteria for foreigners holding a valid student pass (i.e. international students already studying in Singapore and/or incoming exchange students) and those who do not (i.e. foreign applicants studying full-time in an overseas academic institution).
- Student pass holders must fulfil the criteria laid out by Singapore's [Ministry of Manpower](#) to be eligible for the internship.
- Candidates who not possess a student pass must be eligible for the [Work Holiday Pass](#) (WHP). Please note that the internship offer is contingent on the successful approval of your WHP application.
- Foreign interns are strongly recommended to secure their own funding, e.g. internship grants from university career centres and/or self-funding, to cover airfare to/from Singapore, accommodation, etc.

## Application

- MEI accepts applications on a rolling basis throughout the year.
- Interested candidates are invited to submit their completed application dossier, which should include:
  - Applicant's (i) CV, (ii) cover letter (no more than two pages), and (iii) a writing sample on a topic related to the Middle East and North Africa (no more than five pages, coherent, and free of spelling and grammatical errors).

## Selection

- The selection process may include a face-to-face interview. Skype/video interviews will only be offered on a case-by-case basis.
- Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application two weeks following the receipt of their completed dossiers. We ask that applicants refrain from enquiring about the status of their application before this period.

## Useful advice

- MEI receives many applications for our internship positions throughout the year. Hence, the selection process can be highly competitive. Interested applicants should therefore take note of the following:
  - Applicants with generic, copy-pasted cover letters will not be considered. We would like candidates to personalise their cover letters (and CVs) to reflect (i) how their past work or internship experience demonstrates genuine interest in the region and (ii) how and what they can contribute to the Institute.
  - Writing samples riddled with spelling and grammatical errors reflect very badly on the applicant. Before sending in your writing sample, make sure to check for logical flow, spelling, and grammar.

## What to expect from an MEI Internship

MEI aims to give interns a rounded programme to expose them to experiences and teach them skills that will better prepare them as students, and for when they eventually join the workforce. It does this via three routes: Exposure to **communications, logistics, and research work**.

## Communications

Keeping abreast of developments around the world is crucial in the Information Age. So are good writing and social media skills. During their internships, candidates are required to keep up-to-date on events in Singapore, the Middle East and elsewhere, and thus broaden their knowledge base and analytical skills.

Keeping track of information flows also teaches them to identify news items that are of interest to our audience — knowing your audience is a key communications skill.

Interns are also taught to manage a social media presence, build rudimentary knowledge of analytics, and how to target readers more effectively. Crucially, good writing is important for this, and interns are trained to write effectively and concisely, across a wide variety of styles.

They are also offered the opportunity to pick up skills such as photography and videography, which are crucial elements of social media, as well as writing effective summaries and editing headlines. Live-tweeting, FB Live video-feeds, and creating podcasts are some of the skills they will learn.

### **Logistics**

Putting events together and executing them is a key part of what MEI does. Interns will be exposed to how such events are put together and industry best practices, such as estimating venue potential, sourcing for quotes, planning, and making logistical arrangements.

They will also pick up basic skills on public speaking while carrying out duties as MCs at some conferences.

### **Research**

MEI researchers will mentor interns, rounding off their academic experience. By partnering experienced and leading researchers, interns will be able to pick up skills in areas such as interviewing, data collection, analysis, networking and critical thinking.

They may also be tasked with helping researchers with work on papers, and interacting with them will prove invaluable.

They will also get insights into what researchers do, and be able to tap on their experiences if they wish to pursue an academic career.