



Sprinternship™ Overview



UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND





Our Mission

Break Through Tech DC, an affiliate of the national Break Through Tech initiative, works at the intersection of academia and industry to propel more underrepresented women into computing degrees and jobs.

Through **curriculum innovation**, **career access**, and **community building**, our goal is to achieve gender equality in tech.



We take an ecosystem approach.



We engage with both sides of the supply chain.



We develop innovative pathways for students in tech.



What is a Sprinternship™?

A **Sprinternship™** is a three-week micro-internship for first- and second-year college students from underrepresented backgrounds.

Sprinternships give employers a programmatic way to build a diverse entry-level talent pipeline. Student participants build their resumes and networks to become more competitive applicants for jobs and internships.





Making the Business Case for Diverse Teams

25%

More profitable

59%

Increase in
creativity and
innovation

50%

Decrease in
employee
turnover



Sprinternship™ Core Elements

Challenge Project

A **constructive, goal-oriented experience** that might involve solving an internal issue, prototyping or enhancing products or services with tech innovation. More information on Challenge Projects can be found on page 9.

Team Approach

Allow Sprinterns to collaborate on the challenge project and in other settings so that they experience the efficacy of a **coordinated team approach**. This also enables your company to manage the group's time more easily.

Intro to Your Business

Immerse Sprinterns in **your company's unique culture**. Introduce them to different departments, provide résumé guidance, and design activities that give them a sense of what matters to your company and how things work.



Who are Sprinterns™?

Sprinterns...

- Are Mason or UMD first- or second-year students with an interest in computer science, data science, immersive media design, information science, technology, etc.
- Represent diverse backgrounds (students from underrepresented communities, including first-generation students)
- Have taken at least one college course in computer science, information science, or data science
- Have completed Break Through Tech DC workshops on goal-setting, professional communication, and résumé preparation
- Will arrive on time and are present either in-person or virtually 35 to 40 hours a week



What are Sprintern™ Hosts Responsible for?

- Creating a safe and comfortable learning environment
- Assigning a lead mentor to supervise the Sprintern team
- Conducting an onboarding session to welcome the Sprintern team
- Providing related background resources to prepare for the Challenge Project
- Scheduling regular check-in meetings to provide guidance
- Providing a résumé review session and/or professional development opportunities
- Explaining the intern hiring process for your organization
- Introducing Sprinterns to people in various roles and departments
- Offering constructive feedback on the final Challenge Project deliverable



Who are Sprintern™ Host Organizations?

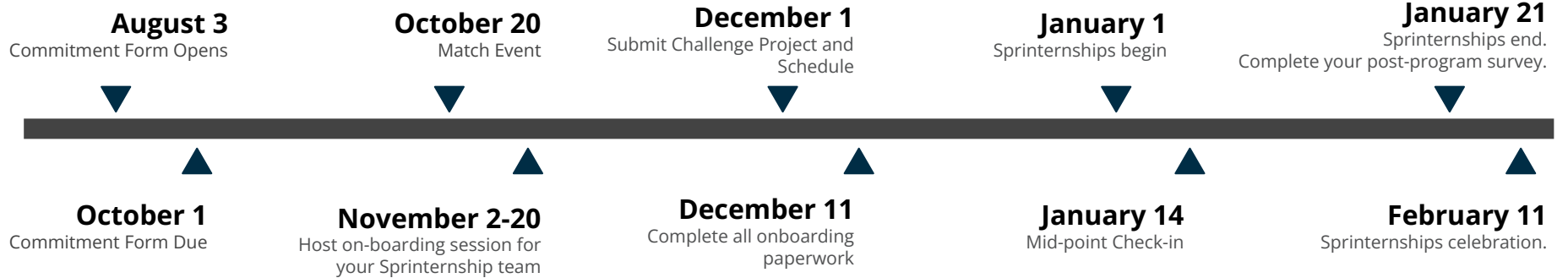
Since Break Through Tech launched in New York City in 2016, **more than 100 organizations have sponsored more than 1,350 Sprinternships**. Break Through Tech's industry partners include big-enterprise companies, mid-size companies, startups, foundations, and nonprofits.



and more...



Sprinternship™ Timeline





Choose Your Own Sprinternship Adventure

1. Register for a [Sprinternship employer information session](#).
2. Reach out to [Caitlin Rudy](#) to learn more about the program.
3. Continue reading this Sprinternship Overview for more in-depth information about the program.



Challenge Projects



What is a Challenge Project?

Each organization designs its own Challenge Project that asks the Sprintern team to develop technological innovations, perhaps to solve an internal issue or enhance specific products and services. This is a great opportunity to **take a deep dive into areas your core team may not have the bandwidth to explore.**

The Break Through Tech DC team can help you develop different levels of complexity so we can strike the right balance between the Sprintern team's capabilities and your organization's expectations.

Suggested Framework

- Position the project as a creative sprint.
- Pose the question: How might we...?
- Give students a flexible structure for how to approach a problem, ideate, and choose a solution.
- Provide opportunities for both individual brainstorming and teamwork.
- Finish the project with a presentation to relevant stakeholders.



Challenge Project Inspiration

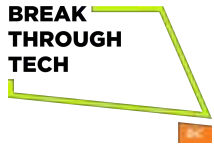
American Rivers Sprinterns developed a dashboard aggregating digital media data to help track successful marketing tactics.

Capitol Interactive Sprinterns used virtual reality photo capture to create an interactive virtual tour experience along historic U Street.

KPMG Sprinterns helped create a series of visualizations to hypothesize how the firm's policy could reach carbon neutrality.

Two Six Technologies Sprinterns created a hate speech classification model in LaBSE using Python.





Challenge Project In-Depth

Here's how Goodshuffle planned its Challenge Project's levels of complexity.

Objective: Design and build a mobile solution that's intuitive and easy to adopt for warehouse workers.

Approach: Research best practices in mobile design. Prototype and develop a proof of concept application that empowers warehouse personnel to shift from paper solutions to a digital solution.

Tiers:

Straightforward – Using some foundational coding built prior to Sprinternship, design and build a mobile application that enables fulfillment workers to login, then view assigned projects and tasks.

Moderate / Ideal – In addition to step 1, add components that support task creation, team chat, and attaching uploaded files to projects.

Challenging – In addition to steps 1 and 2, add functionality to check in and add/edit items.

Difficult / Stretch Goal – Integrate the ability to scan barcodes to track inventory.



Next Steps

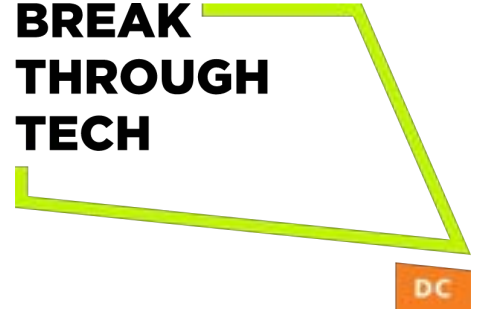


We can break down barriers.

We can open doors.

We can reshape industries.

**BREAK
THROUGH
TECH**



Are you ready to be part of the DC region's inclusive tech ecosystem?

Organizations that have hosted Break Through Tech Sprinterns report that with just a few basic ingredients — a flexible Challenge Project, a strong tie between your Sprintern mentor and your HR team, and the willingness to be a champion for your Sprinterns — you can provide a career-changing experience.



Your Commitment

Your organization's contribution to our partnership involves:

- A **Challenge Project** for which the Sprintern team can develop and propose a tech-based solution
- A **lead mentor** to supervise the Sprintern team
- **Compensation** for the Sprinterns
- Ability to offer Sprinternships during **January and/or May**



Planning 3 Transformative Weeks

How you structure the Sprinternship schedule is up to you.*

Week 1

Possible experiences:

- ▶ Orientation session
- ▶ Organization overview
- ▶ Challenge Project kickoff
- ▶ Project work sessions
- ▶ Market research exercises
- ▶ “Get to know our department” presentations
- ▶ Shadowing afternoon

Week 2

Possible experiences:

- ▶ Project work sessions
- ▶ Industry 101
- ▶ Technical workshops (e.g., coding, design, UI/UX)
- ▶ User research to inform design
- ▶ Career guidance session
- ▶ Chat with a senior leader
- ▶ Résumé review
- ▶ Mentor check-in

Week 3

Possible experiences:

- ▶ Project work sessions
- ▶ Final presentation prep
- ▶ Sit in on a meeting
- ▶ Recruiting overview
- ▶ Mentor check-in
- ▶ Final presentation
- ▶ Closing celebration

*See the FAQ section for a more detailed sample schedule.



Onboarding Sprinterns

- Sprinterns can be onboarded as employees via your HR office or as independent contractors.
 - If you choose the latter, these are some third party vendors that existing partner companies use: [Tapfin](#), [Diversant](#), [Yoh](#) or [nextSource](#).
- Check in with your onboarding team to ensure the process is running smoothly and on deadline. Onboarding can take several weeks or longer, so be sure to begin as soon as you are matched with Sprinterns.
- Onboarding students for a three-week experience might seem like a hefty task. But keep in mind that should you offer them the opportunity to intern at the company, they will already be in your HR system, making that conversion process more seamless.



Sharing Your Sprinternship™ Story

Communicating why your organization is hosting Sprinterns is a great opportunity to **amplify the message of inclusion in tech.**

Break Through Tech DC will provide you with a marketing toolkit so that you have everything to need to share your Sprinternship story.

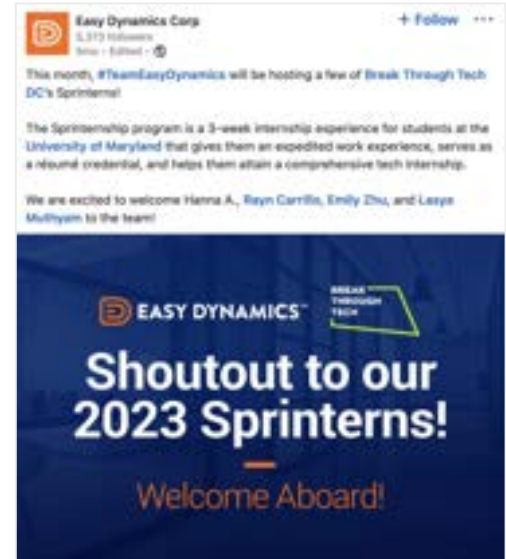
Blog Article



Press Release



Social Posts





Building a More Inclusive Tech Ecosystem

When you join Break Through Tech DC to host a Sprinternship, our team is here to guide you through the entire process.

**Together, we can achieve
gender equality in tech.**



Shveta
Soundararajan

Shahnaz
Kamberi



Kate Atchison Caitlin Rudy



FAQs





FAQS (Page 1 of 2)

How are Sprinterns matched with us? The match event is a career fair-style event for enrolled students and employers to meet each other and begin to identify and rank their preferred matches.

Why do Sprinterns come in teams? Because Sprinterns are college students, many of them in their first or second year, it works well for them to have peer support. It helps organizations have a balanced slate of skill sets, and industry partners report that it isn't extra work to host a group, as our students participate in all of their activities together.

Is three weeks long enough to provide a valuable experience for all involved? A Sprinternship is intentionally designed to be a "sprint," a model that has been tested and refined in New York over the last six years. It is long enough for students to gain exposure and set themselves up for success for future internships. For employers, the effort is substantial yet achievable, and aligns with their core values of diversity and equity.

How do partner organizations typically use Sprinterns' findings and/or final products? Sprinterns' findings and/or final products can do anything from inspire new ideas among your full-time staff to provide an action-ready plan. Just as importantly, several organizations have embedded the experience of leading and mentoring Sprinterns into their leadership development programs.



FAQS (Page 2 of 2)

What is the mentor time commitment like? The time commitment varies depending on the project selection and the mentor's ability to coordinate with others at the host site. The mentor will lead the project and should expect to provide hands-on coaching but then should expect to benefit from the work that the Sprintern team provides.

Do the staff mentors for the Sprinterns need to be physically located in DC? We specifically seek DC Metro-area organizations as Sprinternship partners. However, we recognize that many workplaces may be working remotely. Sprinternships can be held in person, virtually, or utilizing a hybrid model. This is determined by the partner organization and should provide an authentic experience.

What financial commitment is required? We advise organizations to plan an expense of \$10,000 to \$15,000 to pay a team of five Sprinterns for a three-week duration. Your financial support is what allows our Sprinterns to pursue this career-shaping experience, as many of our students' situations would not allow them to choose an unpaid internship over a paid position outside of tech.

How will we connect with Break Through Tech DC during the Sprinternship? A member of our team will check in with you throughout the Sprinternship. Feel free to reach out to us at anytime with questions or concerns. After the Sprinternship ends, we'll ask for feedback to help us improve on our processes. We also hope to see you at our partner event, where we will reconnect, debrief, and network.



Sample Schedule: Week 1

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Orientation (3 hrs)	Orientation (3 hrs)	Intro to Engineering (1 hr)	Staff Meeting (1 hr)	Job Shadow: Programmer (2 hrs)
Lunch (1 hr)	Lunch (1 hr)	Project Worksession (1 hr)	Intro to Market Research (2 hrs)	Project Check-in (1 hr)
Challenge Project Kickoff (2 hrs)	Project Worksession (4 hrs)	Lunch (1 hr)	Lunch (1 hr)	Lunch (1 hr)
Project Brainstorm (1 hr)		Job Shadow: Project Manager (2 hrs)	Diversity comms meeting (1 hr)	Coach Check-in (1 hr)
Intro to Mission (1 hr)		Career Paths (1 hr)	Project Worksession (1 hr)	Project Worksession (2 hrs)



Sample Schedule: Week 2

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Challenge Project Worksession (3 hrs)	Project Worksession (2 hrs)	Resume Review Session (2 hrs)	Staff Meeting (1 hr)	Intro to Client Case Study (2 hrs)
	Meet the CTO (1 hr)	Meet the COO (1 hr)	Leadership Training (2 hrs)	Project Check-in (1 hr)
Lunch (1 hr)	Lunch (1 hr)	Lunch (1 hr)	Lunch (1 hr)	Lunch (1 hr)
Challenge Project Worksession (4 hrs)	Site visit to organizational ops site (4 hrs)	Project Worksession (4 hrs)	Project Worksession (1 hr)	Coach Check-in (1 hr)
			Intro to Business Development (1 hr)	Project Worksession (2 hrs)



Sample Schedule: Week 3

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Challenge Project Worksession (3 hrs)	Off-site Industry Event (3 hrs)	Project Check-In (1 hr)	Staff Meeting (1 hr)	Project Presentation Prep (2 hrs)
		Job Shadow: Client Development (1 hr)	Project Presentation Prep (2 hrs)	Coach Check-in (1 hr)
Lunch (1 hr)	Lunch (1 hr)	Lunch (1 hr)	Lunch (1 hr)	Lunch (1 hr)
Challenge Project Worksession (4 hrs)	Project Worksession (4 hrs)	Project Presentation Prep (4 hrs)	Project Presentation Prep (1 hr)	Project Check-in (1 hr)
			Closing Get-together (1 hr)	Project Presentation / Farewell (2 hrs)



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