

Business Outreach & Placement Program



BOPP

Department Social Cultural Development
Island Government
Sint Maarten N.A.

Business Outreach & Placement Program

The Business Outreach and Placement Program (BOPP) coordinated by the Department Social Cultural Development is dedicated to placing exam and pre-exam students of the secondary schools as well as students of the tertiary educational level in a four to six-weeks summer job during the months of July & August. The purpose of this brochure is to introduce the BOPP to a wider audience of the Business Community of St. Maarten and to increase the yearly participation of the private sector in the Work Placement Program thereby offering new opportunities to both students and employers.

It is believed that by encouraging our students to engage with the local business community they will gain practical knowledge and skills that will stand them in good stead for their working life. Whilst the Government already has a well developed relationship with the local business community, the relationship needs to be extended by the private sector businesses "buying into" this Government driven work placement program.

Success starts with experience

Bridging the gap

The BOPP enables highly-motivated students to gain invaluable work experience by spending four to six weeks working in government departments or local businesses during their summer vacation. The program provides a unique opportunity to 'bridge the gap' between the academic and business worlds. Both students and employers benefit from the competent and often times innovative perspective that a student can offer.



The Work Placement Program is available mainly to secondary school students who are either in the exam or pre-exam class and have reached the age of 16 years. The aim of the program is to enhance the total secondary education experience through practical experience. Additionally, University students studying abroad or at the University of St. Martin can also apply. Students will integrate theory and practice while undertaking real work in paid placements for a predetermined period. The BOPP must be viewed as a quality experiential learning program and will contribute to students' learning and employers' productivity.

Program format

The BOP Program has a unique format to assist students to make their experience the highlight of their career. The work placement is flexible to suit students' and employers' needs, with an expected time commitment equivalent 4 or 6 weeks full-time employment. The placement program is undertaken over the summer period.

The Process:

Students apply by filling out an application form and writing an application letter. They attach a resume, copy of a photo ID and proof that they are attending school. There is a pre-selection process during which applicants are interviewed by participating businesses thereby ensuring that the final selection is done by the place of business.

The students are trained in business ethics and skills prior to being placed.

A mutually beneficial investment

Your organization's support

The success of the Program depends on your support. With an investment of four to six weeks salary and the provision of a work placement position, you will be able to select a student with skills readily suited to your organization.

Benefits

To your organization

Supporting a young, highly motivated student will benefit your company in numerous ways:

1. you will be able to select a student who will have up to date knowledge and skills readily suited to your organization;
2. the student, still at a formative level, can be thoroughly grounded in your company and its established practices;
3. the infusion of bright, young people from an education environment, into an organization can provide refreshing new ideas and stimulating viewpoints;
4. students can serve as 'goodwill ambassadors' for your industry or business with other students and in the wider community;
5. the Program is an excellent source of temporary and potentially permanent employment, with no associated advertising or agency costs;
6. students, selected on the basis of their academic and personal skills, have the preparedness to undertake a hands-on role in your organization from the very beginning, thereby providing extra assistance, a fresh opinion and a newly trained business perspective;
7. a mutually important business-educational relationship is enhanced.



To students

Students are provided as much as possible with a unique opportunity to gain work experience and invaluable business contact within an area that is directly related to their field of study. Further benefits to participating students include:

1. an opportunity to apply recently acquired knowledge and skills to real-life situations;
2. first hand experience associated with assignments and tasks in a business setting;
3. orientation to the business environment, operations and procedures;
4. experience that will assist in transition from student to professional status;
5. the opportunity to implement and develop skills in a specific business sector;
6. the opportunity to refine communications skills with subordinates, peers, and superiors;
7. assisting with personal development in the areas of self-confidence, responsibility, greater understanding of career options, and a realistic appraisal of strengths and weaknesses relative to his/her career choice.

Responsibilities

Your organization

To ensure that students gain a broad work experience employers will need to complete the pro-forma, giving an outline of the proposed work activities prior to commencement of the student.

The student's role is a matter for you to determine, however examples of suitable activities are:

1. a specific project spanning the full duration of the Program;
2. an arranged program which allows rotation across a number of departments;
3. assisting a particular individual or project activity.

You will be required to:

1. identify applicants most suited to your organization for interview;
2. conduct interviews;
3. provide a full four to six-week placement in your organization;
4. provide a suitable workstation and normal working conditions;
5. develop a work program consistent with the student's level of expertise/skill that allows scope for creativity and skill development;
6. assess the student's performance in accordance with your company's staff performance and appraisal guidelines; (assess the student's performance in accordance with the evaluation form provided by the program)
7. written assessment/evaluation on the student's contribution at the end of the program.
8. pay the student a remuneration
9. be a financial partner in providing the training.
10. identify a contact person/supervisor in your workplace.



The student

Eligible students will be required to:

1. submit a detailed application (see separate form);
2. be pre-selected for interview with a panel of Coordinator on Government level and the prospective employer;
3. on completion of the placement, write a report for academic assessment by the coordinator on Government level
4. make sure all evaluation forms are submitted to the c\Coordinator
5. fill out and submit evaluation form after work period.

BOPP Coordinator

The coordinator responsibilities to all students within the Program will include:

1. training sessions;
2. student support;
3. administration of the program;
4. collection of employers' written evaluation on students contribution & student's written report for academic assessment;
5. liaison with employers and students as to the progress of the Program.



Further information:

More information on the BOPP can be obtained by:

Department of Social Cultural Development - Contact Persons:

Shermina Powell –Richardson Shermina.Powell-Richardson@sintmaartengov.org

Elmora Aventurin-Pantophlet Elmora.Aventurin@sintmaartengov.org

Tel. 542-2056 / 5423873 & Fax. 543-1172

Interested Employers can also obtain a project pro-forma and students can obtain an application form from aforementioned contacts.

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EMPLOYER PROJECT PROFORMA

Company Name _____
Address _____

Contact Name for purposes of Work Placement Program

Position _____
Phone _____ Fax _____
Email _____

Work Placement Details (complete for each position available)

Format of employment (must be equivalent to 4 – 6 weeks full time employment).

Please detail how the employment requirement will be allocated over the period and expected commencement date for work placement.

Project/Work area

Please provide a broad outline of the specific project or work area that the student will complete during the work placement.

Learning Outcomes

Please list the major learning outcomes that the student can expect during the work placement.

Assessment

The students' assessments for the Work Placement Program will be made by the employer using the following performance Agreement (which will be agreed to prior to the student commencing the work placement).

Performance Agreement

| Key Student Responsibility (List specific tasks) | Strategies (How will student achieve this responsibility?) | Performance Indicators (How will satisfactory completion of this be measured?) |
|---|--|---|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
| 5. | | |
| 6. | | |

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STUDENT APPLICATION FORM

Students must also provide the following information with the following application form

- Resume containing personal details, education history, work history
- Copy of a picture ID, proof of school attendance
- A supporting statement of 600 words (maximum) addressing the following:
 1. Describe the kinds of activities you would like to be involved in during your work placement
 2. Describe your academic, professional and personal goals for the work placement

First Name _____ Family Name: _____

Date of Birth _____ Student ID: _____

Mailing Address _____

Home Address _____

Phone Numbers _____

Home _____ Mobile _____

E-Mail _____

The field you are studying _____

Major area/s of interest _____

Do you have any preference for a particular business type

Name and phone number of contact person(s) in case of emergency: