

The Tostan Washington, DC Internship Program

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Benefits and Requirements

- [Can I do my internship part-time?](#)
- [I've never worked in an NGO before, do I need to have experience to apply?](#)
- [I've already worked in an NGO before, how would interning with Tostan be beneficial to me?](#)
- [I am not an American citizen, can I still apply?](#)
- [With whom will I collaborate with as an intern?](#)
- [How does Tostan keep track of my accomplishments?](#)
- [Do I have to be in college to apply?](#)
- [What is special about interning in Washington, DC?](#)
- [Is this a paid internship?](#)

The Application Process

- [When should I apply?](#)
- [Should I mail a hard copy of my application?](#)
- [After submitting my application form and my application materials, how long does it take to hear back from Tostan?](#)
- [I am/ live in Washington, DC. Can I come to the office for the interview?](#)
- [I would need to do my internship for credit, how does Tostan manage this need?](#)

BENEFITS AND REQUIREMENTS

Can I do my internship part-time? Yes. Tostan offers internships on a part-time and full-time basis. With a required minimum commitment of ten weeks, part-time internships are a minimum of 15 hours/week while full-time internships require a minimum of 35 hours/week.

Past interns have found that longer commitments help them become more productive, integrated members of our team while providing a certain level of continuity for the projects with which they are involved. A longer commitment also allows our interns to participate in some of the many events that are regularly held in Washington, DC. These events are great learning experiences and networking opportunities.

I've never worked for an NGO before. Do I need to have past experience? The Tostan Washington, DC Internship Program is open to people from different backgrounds. We strongly believe that an internship at our US office is a great opportunity for experienced professionals as well for people who are new or have just started their path in the development field.

I've already worked in an NGO before. How would interning with Tostan be beneficial to me? As stated before, intern positions are available to both experienced as well as those newly involved in the NGO world. Interning at our US office in DC is a great way of gaining additional experience with a growing organization by committing to Tostan's globally recognized work while networking in the greater DC area.

I am not an American citizen, can I still apply? Yes, the Tostan Washington, DC Internship Program is open to all nationalities. However, because we focus on committing the maximum level of resources to our communities, we are not able to sponsor our interns in the US, regardless of his/her time commitment. It is therefore the candidate's responsibility to assure that he/she able to come and legally intern in the US. Please visit the [US Department of State](#) web site to see the requirements for internships in the USA. It is also possible to find organizations and scholarships that sponsor students in the US and enable them to take internships. Examples of organizations that sponsor students with a J-1 visa include the [International Center for Language Studies](#) and the [Council on International Educational Exchange](#).

With whom will I collaborate as an intern? Interns at the Tostan US office enjoy a strong working relationship with the Director and the Associate Director of US Operations, as well as frequent contact and interaction with staff and volunteers in Tostan's field offices in East and West Africa. Through daily and weekly office check-ins, interns gain an overall idea on projects the permanent staff and other interns are working on. Tostan believes in the power of collaboration, and therefore strongly supports the exchange of ideas and suggestions from employees, volunteers, and interns alike.

How does Tostan track my contributions to the organization and help me to achieve my personal objectives?

While at Tostan, interns are asked to send daily emails to his/her supervisor, listing the tasks they completed or worked on a particular day and a quick note about what they plan to work on the following day. These mails are not meant to be a burden but rather are beneficial to both Tostan staff and interns. These daily summaries are in fact used to discuss interns' accomplishments, needs, questions, etc. during interns' monthly one-on-one check-ins with their supervisor and are also later used to compose a detailed letter of recommendation for the intern. Also, at the beginning of the internship, every intern is asked to express his/her expectations through a goal letter, which along with the daily summaries acts as a basis for the intern and staff to ensure that that the intern's daily tasks and projects align with his/her original internship goals.

Do I have to be in college to apply? No – students, graduates, and professionals are welcome to apply. We have benefited from a broad range of skill-sets in the past and invite qualified applicants from all backgrounds.

What is special about interning in Washington, DC? Washington, DC is one of the best environments for networking, learning about the NGO world, attending conferences and symposiums and the like. In fact, on a regular basis, interns and available staff participate in professional/educational activities outside the office. In addition to what has already been mentioned, a few days throughout the summer, Tostan interns will have the opportunity to participate in our intern exchange program. During the day of exchange, interns and available staff will travel to the offices of the other organizations whose work in international development, human rights, health, and community empowerment has a similar focus to Tostan's. Interns will attend presentation on the hosting organization and will have the opportunity to meet interns and staff from participating organizations.

Is the Washington, DC Internship Program a paid internship? No, the Washington, DC Internship Program is not a paid internship. As a non-profit organization that works to commit the maximum level of resources to our communities, we cannot offer paid internships. Some former interns were able to intern with us by securing scholarships through their schools or other outside resources. We encourage students to look into the scholarship and grant opportunities offered by their own colleges and universities. We strongly recommend that applicants look into how to financially support themselves during their internship before arriving in DC. Additionally, upon request we can send candidates a document that suggests a few options for affordable housing options in the DC area.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

To learn more about Tostan and the Washington, DC Internship Program, please visit www.tostan.org

When should I apply? We accept applications on a rolling basis throughout the year. If you are a student who wishes to undertake an internship with Tostan as part of your degree program, you are encouraged to apply by the following dates:

- Fall Internship: deadline July 20th
- Summer Internship: deadline March 15th
- Spring Internship: deadline December 2nd

We encourage you to visit our [Washington, DC Internship Program](#) page and the [Professional Opportunities](#) page often in order to be aware of the most up-to-date volunteer and internship openings.

Should I mail a hard copy of my application? No. Only applications received by email will be accepted. In addition, the online application form is an integral part of the application. The [form](#) can be completed only online. The rest of the required materials (CV, cover letter, and writing sample) must be submitted to internshipsdc@tostan.org.

After submitting my application form and my application materials, how long does it take to hear back from Tostan? After submitting your complete application documentation, you will receive a confirmation email from the Volunteer and Internship Program Assistant. Within a week or two, promising candidates will receive a request for a phone interview. These requests are usually sent out around the deadline date of the period the applicant had applied to.

I am/ live in Washington, DC, can I come to the office for the interview? No, interviews are only conducted by phone.

I would need to do my internship for credit, how does Tostan manage this need? Some former interns managed to intern for credit. If you are a student and wish to apply to the Tostan DC Internship program for credits, please ensure you leave sufficient time for making necessary arrangements. Please also include details of your school's requirements in your application.