

Virginia Film Festival

Internship Program for University of Virginia Students



The Virginia Film Festival (VAFF) Internship Program gives current, full-time University of Virginia undergraduate students hands-on experience in all aspects of planning and implementing a premier regional festival. The VAFF Internships are focused on the development and training of future talent to advance leadership in the arts, film, non-profit, and entertainment fields. VAFF Interns will gain unique experience in all aspects of planning for and implementation of one of the largest and most significant cultural events in the mid-Atlantic region through intensive training and project-based work.

Fall 2020 Internships are available in the following key areas:

- Fundraising
- Production & Guest Services
- Publicity & Marketing
- VAFF Scholars Program
- Youth Education Programs

Requirements and Structure

The VAFF Internship program requires 10-15 hours per week from late-August through November in support of the preparation, execution, and wrap-up of the 2020 Virginia Film Festival. Interns must be available to work at the Festival office a minimum of 10 hours per week during regular business hours (Monday-Friday between 9:00 AM-5:00 PM). Specific office hours will be scheduled and circulated in August. **Attendance is required at all weekly staff meetings, to be held Wednesday mornings at 9:00 AM in the VAFF's office.**

The **first required staff meeting will be on Friday, August 21 and weekly office hours will begin the week of August 24.** Exceptions for students who are unable to be in Charlottesville on August 21 will be considered on a case by case basis and discussed individually with final candidates.

Special Note: The Virginia Film Festival will be held on October 21-25, 2020. The weeks preceding the Festival are exciting and demanding. Interns are asked to clear personal schedules as much as possible from October 12-28 for additional hours and unplanned work during these weeks. Interns are expected to be “on-call” during the 5 days of the Festival. It is not expected that interns miss regularly scheduled classes but to practice good judgment in time management with academics and other professional responsibilities. Advanced planning for these dates is needed in accepting the internship position. The VAFF team will work with interns to request any required approval to work 20+ hours per week during this time.

Networking and Mentorship

The VAFF Internship program offers students learning and mentorship from professionals in the field. Interns will be supported weekly with supervision by the VAFF leadership: virginiafilmfestival.org/staff. Interns will also receive personalized support to help them connect and network with peers, UVA Alumni, VAFF industry guests, VAFF Advisory Board members, former VAFF interns, and local and national leaders in the arts, entertainment, and film industries. There will be opportunities during the Festival for direct networking with VAFF Advisory Board members and industry professionals.

Payment

The VAFF Internships pay \$10/hour. Returning interns may be eligible for a higher rate.

Application and Recruiting Timeline

We are now accepting applications for the Fall 2020 Internship program. Applications for 2020 VAFF Internships are due to Erica Barnes, eb4va@virginia.edu **on Wednesday, April 29 at noon**. You may apply for more than one internship position, and “2020 VAFF Internship Application [Last Name]” should be your email subject. Please provide:

- Resume
- Cover letter detailing your position(s) of interest from the five key areas and reason for your selection(s). If you are applying for more than one position, you only need to submit one cover letter.
- Supplemental materials – please submit #1 and choose two more to submit from #2 - #6 with your application (we are looking for three total):
 - 1- **All applicants:** Visit the VAFF’s Archives page here: virginiafilmfestival.org/archives/ and read a variety of individual film descriptions from past years. Get a sense of the preferred length, tone, style, and purpose of our descriptive film blurbs, and draft your own blurb for the following: A 45th anniversary screening of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, presented in partnership with the Library of Congress. Also suggest what you think would be a successful screening slot and venue for such an event, and explain your reasoning.
 - 2- Choose one film from the 2019 VAFF program and write three social media posts promoting this event (one for Twitter, one for Facebook, and one for Instagram) to promote the screening. Find a list of our 2019 films here: virginiafilmfestival.org/festival-year/2019/. Be creative in your film selection! We like to see innovative ways to promote our lesser-known films.
 - 3- Tell us about a marketing and promotional campaign that you personally felt was highly effective. Please choose one that was targeted to the UVA student community and that was active during this most recent Fall or Spring semesters. What do you believe were the goals of this campaign? And why do you feel it was so memorable/successful?
 - 4- Write a press release to announce this fictitious scenario: The Virginia Film Festival has announced Sissy Spacek as a special guest, coming to the VAFF for a screening of a film from her career of your choosing at The Paramount Theater on Saturday, October 24 at 7:00 PM. Following the screening, she will participate in an interview with TCM host Ben Mankiewicz. The release should include a quote from VAFF Director Jody Kielbasa, a brief synopsis of your chosen film, and a short biographical paragraph on Spacek and her career.
 - 5- The Festival plans to screen a sidebar series of films focused on climate change and sustainable growth. You need to raise \$2,500 to bring in a renowned documentary filmmaker to lead discussions around these films. What two companies, organizations, or foundations would you solicit to help underwrite these costs, and why? Please provide one local example and one national example. Additionally, please choose one company from this scenario and draft a brief acknowledgment letter for their contribution.
 - 6- For the Festival’s Family Day, you are tasked with reaching out to potential collaborators to present free entertainment and arts activities for youth and families. List 3 local non-profit organizations and 3 student UVA groups you would reach out to participate as performers or activity leaders and tell us why you chose each.

For **returning interns**, a letter of interest and updated resume can be submitted in lieu of a formal application. The letter of interest should include reflective comments on your experience and growth during and since your VAFF position, what specific positions you would like to be considered for now, and why you feel you are uniquely qualified to serve in this position.

VAFF Staff will review applications and finalists will be invited to interview via video or phone. Internship offers will be extended during the summer.

2020 Position Descriptions

All Positions: Qualified candidates will possess excellent verbal and written communication skills, and the ability to organize and execute tasks in a fast-paced environment. Applicants must be detail-oriented, self-motivated, flexible, and be able to work in a team situation.

Fundraising (1) This position will report directly to the Assistant Director of University Arts Development. Qualified candidates will possess the ability to organize and execute tasks pertaining to the development agenda; experience with data systems, Excel, and website management; and strong customer service skills.

Fundraising Intern duties include, but are not limited to:

- Draft donor and sponsor solicitations, correspondence, invoices, and gift acknowledgments via phone calls and Outlook and WordFly emails.
- Track and maintain accurate records of all individual donors in MS Excel and Advance (UVA donor database system).
- Track and maintain a record of all corporate, media, and in-kind sponsors and their associated sponsorship benefits in an MS Access database.
- Utilize UVA and VAFF databases, along with online resources, to conduct corporate and individual prospect research.
- Assist in the fulfillment of all individual donor and corporate sponsor benefits.
- Manage and update all sponsorship content on the VAFF Website (WordPress).
- Prepare and proof donor scrolls for print, web, and on-screen acknowledgments.
- Act as a personal concierge for select donors and sponsors.
- Professionally interact and communicate with sponsors and donors.
- Work with the Publicity and Marketing team to create a social media engagement strategy for top sponsors and donors.
- Assist with general administrative tasks such as the coordination of gift acknowledgements, annual fund solicitations, event planning, gift tracking, and post-festival reporting.
- Liaise between the Assistant Director of University Arts Development and VAFF Director and Managing Director in fundraising matters.
- Help manage communications plans, event invitations, and RSVP tracking for donor-centric events leading up to and during the Festival.

Production & Guest Services (2) These two positions will report to the Operations Manager. A strong interest in and connection to the fields of arts administration and film exhibition is necessary for an applicant for these positions.

Production Intern duties include, but are not limited to:

- Support the coordination of all film trafficking, venue logistics, and screening presentation.
- Maintain a comprehensive database of accepted film and screening information. Maintain inventory of film exhibition copies in office.
- Acquire, organize, and maintain records for press kits and publicity materials for accepted films.
- Assist in drafting of operational/technical scripts for venues and house managers.
- Assist in managing and tracking the shipping and print traffic of film copies in the weeks leading up to, days of, and week after the Festival.

PLEASE NOTE: This is NOT a film production/producing position.

Guest Services Intern duties include, but are not limited to:

- Support the coordination of Festival guest and discussant invitations, confirmation, and hospitality.
- Research and write invitations to talent and industry members to attend the Festival.
- Research and write invitations to academic and other non-industry members to participate in the VAFF.
- Maintain a comprehensive database of industry guest and discussant contact information.
- Assist in the creation of badges and welcome packages for our guest and industry check-in.
- Draft schedules and itineraries for Festival industry guests and discussants.

Both intern duties include, but are not limited to:

- Assist in distribution of film prints, exhibition equipment, signage, and logistic materials to venues.
- Coordinate with staff and other interns to write, edit, and produce web and print program copy.
- Liaise between tech crew, staff, talent, and industry members during the Festival, as needed.
- Assist in preparing venues for special events and Festival screenings.

Publicity & Marketing (2) These positions will report to the Managing Director. Qualified candidates are eager to act as an ambassador for the VAFF, have strong people skills for interacting with a cross section of the public, experience promoting events, and an interest in building community engagement with cultural events.

Publicity & Marketing Intern duties include, but are not limited to:

- Create and implement targeted outreach marketing campaigns to the UVA and local communities in collaboration with the PR & Marketing team.
- Contribute as a writer, editor, and marketing strategist on a variety of promotional pieces, such as email newsletters, social media, film synopsis, guest bios, and other promotional copy.
- Assist in maintaining the Festival's website: upload photos, content, schedule, ticketing info, etc.
- Assist PR & Marketing team in organizing press conferences, press credentials, and other press communications.
- Identify strategies for VAFF to engage inclusively with the UVA student body and our local community. Support the implementation of identified strategies aimed to grow community and student awareness, engagement, and attendance at Festival events.
- Help to identify areas of industry guest engagement broadly across UVA classrooms, programs, departments, and student groups.
- Help to plan, organize, and manage pre-Festival community outreach events.
- Maintain database and communications regarding programs, contacts, and outreach efforts.
- Create promotional materials such as flyers, handbills, banners, etc.

VAFF Scholars Program (1) This position will report to the Outreach Coordinator. Qualified candidates will be detail-oriented, highly organized, and have a strong interest in fostering dialogue around filmmaking, UVA student outreach, and the field of Arts Administration.

VAFF Scholars Intern duties include, but are not limited to:

- Plan timeline with Lead Scholar around recruitment, marketing, application deadline and review process, and program dates.
- Review, create, communicate, and manage Scholars application process.
- Market and recruit VAFF Scholars opportunity widely to UVA students.
- Create week-of program schedule with Lead Scholar, Production team, and VAFF's Programmer.
- Coordinate logistics for week-of Program including meeting locations, catering, films, and discussion schedule.

- Act as main point-of-contact for all stakeholders: communicate expectations, schedule, and logistics to Scholars, guest artists, and Lead Scholar.
- Contribute as a writer, editor, and marketing strategist on a variety of promotional pieces, such as email newsletters, social media, film synopsis, guest bios, and other promotional copy.
- Maintain database and communications regarding programs, contacts, and outreach efforts.
- Create promotional materials such as flyers, handbills, banners, etc.

Youth Education Programs (1) This position will report to the Outreach Coordinator. Qualified candidates have the ability to organize and execute detailed plans for large public events, an interest in education and youth development, and skills in film production and editing.

Youth Education Intern duties include, but are not limited to:

- Assist in planning, organizing, and managing all VAFF Youth Education events and programs, including Family Day, Young Filmmakers Academy (YFA), Sensory-friendly Screening, Filmmaker Classroom visits, and School Screening.
- For all Youth Education Programs: create promotional materials, lead outreach and recruitment efforts to local parents and educators, manage enrollment/registration, lead communication with all stakeholders (parents, instructors, educators, performers, and participants), and serve as on-site host during events.
- Additionally, for Family Day: engage with and invite area arts leaders to participate in events, plan entertainment, schedule performances, organize hands-on youth art-making activities, recruit UVA student volunteers, and coordinate schedule of events.
- Additionally, for YFA: communicate timelines, expectations, and schedule to participating schools; organize and produce recognition materials for participants; produce trailer and edit 600 short films together for screening package; schedule volunteers; and speak publicly as host at premiere event.
- Additionally, for School Screening: draft classroom lesson plan related to the selected film; and communicate timelines, expectations, and schedule to participating schools.
- Additional general responsibilities: manage education email accounts; maintain webpages and databases; collect participant data; survey attendees; and produce event reports.

About the Virginia Film Festival

The Virginia Film Festival stands as one of the most significant regional film festivals in America. Entering its 33rd year, this program of the University of Virginia is widely celebrated by audiences and industry professionals alike for offering a dynamic and multi-layered exploration of film as an art form and cultural cornerstone.

Each fall, the VAFF combines one of the strongest, deepest, and most diverse programs in the industry with an array of remarkable guests from across the entertainment industry – a list that has recently included: Ann Dowd, Will Forte, Ethan Hawke, Werner Herzog, Allen Hughes, Ashley Judd, Wanuri Kahiu, Spike Lee, William H. Macy, Shirley MacLaine, Meg Ryan, Richard Roundtree, Oliver Stone, Liv Ullmann, and Christoph Waltz.

The Virginia Film Festival’s unique UVA connections and partnerships are key to the dynamic discourse it inspires between acclaimed industry and cultural experts and audience members. These include regular series presented in conjunction with the Library of Congress; UVA’s Center for Politics; Miller Center for Public Affairs; and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity.

Virginia Film Festival website: virginiafilmfestival.org

More about internships: career.virginia.edu/internships