

\$1.1 Million for UW System to Connect Students to Internship Opportunities

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Fast Forward Grants will expand internship opportunities, help bolster Wisconsin's workforce

MILWAUKEE — Gov. Tony Evers, together with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), today announced the University of Wisconsin (UW) System has been awarded \$1.1 million through the Wisconsin Fast Forward Program to expand internship opportunities in high-demand fields, from cybersecurity to agriculture to green energy and clean water jobs. The grants will increase paid internship opportunities for UW System students with state employers by incentivizing businesses in high-demand fields to provide paid internships to Wisconsin students.



“Our UW System is a major economic driver in our state and a critical resource for building our state’s next-generation workforce. These grants will help students earn while they learn, ensuring greater access and opportunities for our homegrown talent to start growing their careers right here in Wisconsin,” said Gov. Evers. “Recruiting and retaining talented workers, maintaining our state’s economic momentum, and preparing our workforce for high-demand

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fields of the 21st century are major priorities in my 2023-25 biennial budget. We must continue to invest in programs like Fast Forward while also working to bolster our UW System, support working families, and build an economy and workforce for our state's future."

This week, Gov. Evers has been touring the state to highlight investments in his 2023-25 biennial budget proposal to bolster Wisconsin's workforce. Today, he continued his tour with a visit to the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, which is a partnering employer with UW-Milwaukee's Green Energy and Clean Water Fast Forward grant, details of which are provided below.

In addition to several significant investments, the governor's 2023-25 biennial budget proposal also includes \$2 million in additional funds for the Wisconsin Fast Forward Program to expand job training opportunities in green jobs. More information regarding Gov. Evers' 2023-25 budget investments to continue the state's economic momentum, support working families, and strengthen the state's workforce is available [here](#).

"DWD is proud to support innovative internship opportunities for Wisconsin students through our strong partnership with the UW System. Students who intern for a Wisconsin company are more likely to stay in the state after graduation, making internships a valuable workforce retention strategy," said DWD Secretary Amy Pechacek. "We continue to identify new ways to build Wisconsin's next-generation workforce, providing job seekers with skills in high-demand fields and employers with high-skill job seekers."



"As Wisconsin's talent generator, we educate students to think critically while they also learn valuable skills needed in the workforce," said UW System President Jay Rothman. "These internships will help students kick-start their careers while meeting employer demand for talent."

The more than \$1.1 million Wisconsin Fast Forward funds will support several projects, including:

Green Energy and Clean Water: UW-Milwaukee received \$382,000 to promote and coordinate paid internships in Wisconsin's green energy and clean water industries. The university will partner with businesses in these industries to enroll 42 interns in three-month paid internships.

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Agriculture: UW-River Falls received \$244,426. In collaboration with industry partners, leaders will create innovative experiences in agriculture for students. Through this effort, 20 students will be placed in 14-week summer internships or 28-week academic year internships and be provided a career development seminar focused on resume-building workshops and strategies for career advancement.

Cybersecurity: UW-Stout received \$298,771 to establish a comprehensive cybersecurity internship program and place 40 students in paid internships with industry partners. Interns will work 15 to 20 hours per week for a minimum of three months.

Humanities, Social Sciences: UW-Milwaukee received \$208,624 to develop paid internship opportunities for 20 students in the areas of humanities, social sciences, and other majors where students are often offered unpaid internships. However, applications to the program will be available to any students interested in the internship positions. Interns will also take a career course focused on resume-building, interviewing, professional writing, and other important skills. Students will engage in a paid internship for three, six, or nine months, depending on the needs of the partner employer and the student's academic schedule.

The Wisconsin Fast Forward Program awards grants to businesses from all Wisconsin industry sectors that reimburse the costs of customized occupational training for unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers. More information is available [here](#).