

Minority Science Writers Interns Program

Information Manual 2015



ADVANCING SCIENCE, SERVING SOCIETY

American Association for the Advancement of Science
1200 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Important Dates

Tuesday, June 2 – Thursday, June 4

Three-day Orientation Session

Friday, June 5

Report to Science magazine offices

Friday, June 19

Submit first Biweekly Exchange

Friday, July 3

Submit second Biweekly Exchange

Friday, July 17

Submit third Biweekly Exchange

Friday, July 31

Submit fourth Biweekly Exchange

Friday, August 14

Last day on site.

Monday, August 17 – Tuesday, August 18

Presentations and Wrap-Up Session

Friday, August 21

Submit Final Report, Tips & Suggestions sheet, and Program Evaluation

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Program Overview

2015 marks the 11th year of the AAAS Minority Science Writers Interns Program. Science is a global activity, and becoming more so every year. But the demographics of the journalists who cover its developments don't reflect that diversity. There are few people of color on the staffs of science-related news publications in the United States, and the science-writing community has put scant effort into attracting a more diverse workforce.

Enter the AAAS Minority Science Writers Interns Program. This program is designed for undergraduates committed to a career in journalism. In the past it was sponsored by the nonprofit American Association for the Advancement of Science - AAAS (www.aaas.org/mswi). In 2013, the Pitts Family Foundation took over sponsorship, at which point the internship became the "AAAS Pitts Family Foundation Minority Science Writers Interns Program."

Interns spend 10 weeks at *Science* magazine, the world's leading interdisciplinary science journal, under the guidance of award-winning reporters and editors. They'll have the chance to experience what science writers do for a living, and learn why they're committed to what they do. Interns will be expected to contribute to the weekly news section, including the chance to write bylined articles for both the print and electronic news service.

The experience is intended to give them a better idea of how science affects the communities they will be covering as journalists. Interns are expected to integrate that message into the next step of their careers, either back on campus, completing a degree, or as part of the work force.

Travel

Logistics

AAAS pays for Interns to travel to and from Washington, D.C. and home (i.e. one round trip ticket). AAAS program staff will book economy airfare or train travel for all Interns. Interns are expected to only expense necessary and reasonable economical meals and transportation that meet the outlined requirements, with due consideration to safety and scheduling. All travel for AAAS Minority Science Writers Interns must be pre-approved by AAAS program staff. Travel expenses incurred while on site are the responsibility of the Intern.

Reservation Details:

PLEASE USE THE EXAMPLE TABLE BELOW WHEN REQUESTING YOUR TRAVEL.

An Intern who lives in San Francisco might request the following travel:

Reservation Details	
Home City and State	San Francisco, Ca
Preferred Airport Code	SFO
Flight Date to DC	May 31, morning
Flight Date home	August 19, evening

Please also include the following information:

Official Name on ID	
Date of Birth	
Frequent flyer miles (if applicable)	
Preferred seating, aisle or window	

Note in the above example I asked for your “preferred” airport codes. While SFO might be your preferred airport, OAK – Oakland is another Bay Area airport that may be used. DCA – Reagan, IAD – Dulles, BWI – Baltimore, are all DC area airports. AAAS may book your flight into any of these airports.

Please keep all boarding passes and receipts for any and all forms of transportation, meal and lodging expenses.

As stated in your official acceptance letter, you must provide your reservation details NO LATER THAN 5PM PT Thursday, April 30. AAAS makes every effort to accommodate travel preferences, but budget considerations will prevail when making final flight reservations. **Please note that an expense cap of \$750 will be applied for the travel associated with traveling to and from D.C. for the summer.**

Once reservations have been made, the Fellow will be responsible for any fees associated with ticket changes. Any changes to the Fellow’s flight reservations MUST be approved by the Program Director.

Transportation

Arriving in Washington, DC by Airplane

When scheduling travel, AAAS flies Interns into any of the three D.C. area airports, which include Reagan National (DCA), Dulles International (IAD) and Baltimore-Washington International (BWI). Travel costs to and from D.C. to these airports can be expensed. **Please retain all boarding passes and receipts from your travel.**

Please note that whenever possible we expect Interns to seek out cost effective travel options. DCA is approximately 20 minutes from downtown. BWI and IAD are both approximately 45 minutes to one hour and thirty minutes from D.C. depending on traffic. Keep in mind when traveling to and from the airport that you will need to call for a shuttle in advance.

- **Reagan National (DCA)**

From Reagan National you may either take the Metro (subway) for about \$2.00 each way or, due to its close proximity to the city, or hail a taxi outside the terminal for ~\$25.

- **Dulles International (IAD)**

As of recent, you can now take the Silver Line Express (<http://www.mwaa.com/dulles/7161.htm>, \$5.00) from Dulles to the Metro's Silver Line which will bring you directly into the city and will cost about ~\$6 each way. You can also make reservations for *SuperShuttle's* Door-to-Door Shared-Ride Service (approximately \$35 one-way). For more information about the *SuperShuttle* or to make reservations, call 1-800-BLUEVAN or visit www.supershuttle.com. *SuperShuttle* stops are clearly identified on the Ground Transportation Level roadway outside the Main Terminal at Washington Dulles. You will find the ticket on the Ground Transportation Level. AAAS requests that you do not take a taxi to or from Dulles as taxi's run upwards of \$85.

- **Baltimore-Washington International (BWI)**

From BWI, you may take a free shuttle to the MARC train, which is relatively inexpensive (\$6.00) and runs every day of the week (<http://www.bwiairport.com/en/travel/ground-transportation/trans/marc>), and transfer to the Metro (Red line) at Union Station. For more information about transportation at BWI see: <http://www.bwiairport.com/en/travel/ground-transportation>. The Renaissance and AAAS are accessible from the Red line Metro Center stop or you can easily catch a cab at Union Station. Alternatively, you can also make reservations for *SuperShuttle's* Door-to-Door Shared-Ride Service (approximately \$35 one-way). For more information and reservations, call 1-800-BLUEVAN or visit www.supershuttle.com. You will find the SuperShuttle ticket counter on the Ground Transportation Level (baggage claim).

Arriving in Washington, DC by Train

Amtrak and other regional train systems operate in and out of Union Station. The Metro (subway) also stops at Union Station, using the Red Line.

Arriving in Washington, D.C. by Car

It is highly recommended that you do not bring a car to Washington, DC as parking is difficult and without a neighborhood permit, can be very expensive.

If automobile transportation is used to travel to and from Washington, DC, reimbursement will be made at the current mileage rate (currently .575 cents per mile – subject to change). You will need to submit a google maps printout with the start and end address of your destination so AAAS can

accurately record the distance driven for reimbursement. Any Intern wishing to drive between home and DC needs to first get this approved by Internship management. *Mileage reimbursement cannot exceed the cost of the alternative airfare or train ticket. Mileage reimbursement cannot exceed the cost of the travel cap (\$750) as stated in the travel policy on page 6.*

Travel Expenses

Travel Expenses

Expenses you incur (meals, lodging if appropriate and transportation) while traveling to/from Orientation & Wrap-Up sessions will be submitted on an expense report form, which you will receive at Orientation. ***You must submit itemized receipts to receive reimbursement.*** Since the majority of your meals will be provided by AAAS, reimbursement will only be provided for meals other than those provided at AAAS sessions. AAAS does not pay per diem. Cost per meal must be broken out; reimbursements will be issued considering exact expenses. All expenses will necessitate an itemized receipt. You will receive more information on how to complete and submit expense forms during orientation. **NOTE: to receive reimbursement, expense forms must be returned within 3 weeks after orientation and wrap-up.**

Please keep all boarding passes and receipts for any and all forms of transportation & meal expenses.

- *All receipts must be itemized*—this includes receipts from restaurants. You must provide the itemized receipt listing exactly what you ordered.
- *All receipts must display the last 4 digits of your credit card number* (this is usually only an issue with receipts that were emailed for things like airline tickets and shuttle vans).
- If automobile transportation is used, reimbursement will be made at the current mileage rate (currently .575 cents per mile – subject to change). *Mileage reimbursement cannot exceed the cost of the alternative airfare or train ticket. Mileage reimbursement cannot exceed the cost of the travel cap (\$750) as stated in the travel policy on page 6.* You will need to submit a google maps printout with the start and end address of your destination (ex. home to airport) so AAAS can accurately record the distance driven for reimbursement.

Lodging

All Interns are responsible for finding their own accommodations during their internship in Washington, D.C. and are responsible for paying all cost of living expenses. Your best possibilities for finding housing may be through local ads, university housing and bulletin board listings, or online. Washingtonpost.com and Craigslist.com are two sites with good local housing coverage. Roll Call and the City Paper are two additional local newspapers which may have short term lease or roommate listings. AAAS does not provide transportation supplements.

Please be sure to secure lodging for the entire internship calendar (June 1 – August 18). Correspondingly, if looking at university housing, be sure that the university dictated move-out date is not before the end of the internship.

Moving Expenses

You can request reimbursement for the cost of standard checked luggage, but please note that this will be applied toward the \$750 travel cap (please see page 5 for more details). In most cases, expenses associated with shipping personal belongings via mail *will not be permissible for reimbursement.* Excess baggage fees (levied by airlines for luggage exceeding a maximum

weight/size) will not be eligible for reimbursement. Please contact the Program Coordinator for prior approval for any additional moving expenses beyond travel and food.

IMPORTANT: Please keep all receipts for any and all forms of transportation and meal expenses while traveling to and from D.C. You will be submitting these receipts to AAAS for reimbursement. Please note that you must include ITEMIZED receipts and not just credit card slips.

Orientation

Overview

Please note that you will be attending the 2015 Mass Media Fellows Program orientation in D.C. This “sister” program covers journalism basics for science and mathematics graduate students who will be working at mass media sites for the summer. It will be held at the AAAS Headquarters, where *Science magazine* is also located, June 2–4, 2015.

Sample* Orientation Agenda

*A final agenda will be emailed to you the week prior to orientation

Tuesday, June 2, 2015

- 7:30AM *Continental Breakfast*
- 9:00AM *Welcome & Introductions*
- 10:00AM *Overview of AAAS Communications*
Overview of Science Magazine
Overview of Science News
- 11:00AM *Science Writing Workshop I*
- 12:00PM *Lunch*
- 1:00PM *Science Writing Workshop II*
- 3:00PM *Break*
- 3:30PM *Interviewing Techniques*
- 6:30PM *Happy Hour with DC Science Writers Association*

Thursday, June 4, 2015

- 8:30AM *Continental Breakfast*
- 9:30AM *Writing for the Ear*
- 11:00AM *Nuts & Bolts*
- 11:30AM *Speaker*
- 12:30PM *Lunch*
- 1:30PM *Round Table Discussion*

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

- 8:30AM *Continental Breakfast*
- 9:30AM *Tour media site*
- 12:00PM *Lunch*
- 1:00PM *How to Frame a Story*
- 1:30PM *How to Pitch a Story*
- 2:30PM *Break*
- 3:00PM *Hands-on Practice*

Wrap-Up

Overview

At the conclusion of the internship, the Fellows will return to Washington, D.C. to attend a wrap-up session with the Interns. ***Your attendance at wrap-up is mandatory.*** Fellows & Interns present posters on their summer experiences and attend workshops to further their science communication expertise. All Interns should bring portfolios of stories and articles they have written and produced, including clippings of newspaper and magazine articles, scripts, and recordings of radio news stories that they will use during their presentation. You will receive more information about these presentations later in the summer.

Sample Agenda

Monday, August 17, 2015

- 9:00AM** *Continental Breakfast*
- 9:30AM** *Welcome*
- 10:00AM** *Individual Presentations*
- 12:00PM** *Lunch*
- 1:00PM** *Individual Presentations continued*
- 5:00PM** *Conclude for the day*

Tuesday, August 18, 2015

- 8:30AM** *Continental Breakfast*
- 9:00AM** *Freelance Workshop I*
- 10:15AM** *Break*
- 10:45AM** *Freelance Workshop II*
- 12:00PM** *Lunch*
- 1:30PM** *Conclusion*

Payment Information

Payment

You will be paid as a AAAS employee. This means taxes and social security will be taken out of your stipend. You will be paid every other Friday beginning June 26. Please note that the AAAS two-week pay periods run one period behind. This means the check you receive on June 26 will include payment for the weeks of June 1 and June 8.

Your income is taxable under IRS regulations. AAAS cannot provide tax advice to Interns. There is no clear, standard answer regarding your tax status. Each case is different. AAAS urges Interns to contact a CPA or the IRS before coming to Washington. You will receive a W-2 Form from AAAS prior to the filing season. PLEASE notify AAAS of any address changes prior to the January filing season so that you receive your W-2 in a timely fashion.

Dress Code

Orientation and Wrap-up are business casual. Suit and tie are not necessary but please, no jeans. AAAS/*Science* magazine is traditionally business casual.

Reporting

Biweekly Exchange (Informal)

These brief updates should help keep you and the internship coordinator connected on anything that may arise during the Internship, including work in progress, reactions to daily assignments, interactions with staff, and questions about a reporter's role and responsibilities. These four informal reports are submitted via email and are strictly for the use of the Fellows/Interns and the Manager. One to two paragraphs on the activities at your site for that time period are sufficient. Due dates are listed in the manual on the *Important Dates* (page 3) page.

Collective Story Log

Each Intern and Fellow is required to update a group story log, listing the title and websites of all finished stories, as soon as they are published. You will be able to access this form online.

Final Report (Formal)

A Final Report must be submitted by August 21, 2015.

1. **A Closing Report** (3–4 pages) must be submitted by August 21, 2015. The heart of your report should describe your experiences as an intern, what you have learned about communicating science to the public, and how the program might be improved.
2. **A summary statement** (not to exceed 250 words) must be submitted by August 21, 2015. The summary statement should highlight the most important experience, article/story written, skill gained, or lesson learned during your 11-week internship. This summary will appear in the published report submitted to sponsors, sites, and the general public.
3. **Clips**, articles, or stories you have written or contributed to must be submitted by August 21, 2015. It is the Intern's responsibility to provide high-resolution PDFs of their submissions. Large clips must be shrunk to 8 ½ x 11 size or broken up.
4. **“Tips and Tricks”** must be submitted by August 21, 2015. These are your notes on what's good to know both professionally and in terms of moving or living in a city as a future Intern. These are not shared with your host site mentors, so feel free to be as honest as you like. While it's ok to include tips from 2014 and/or expand on an intern's experience, do not turn the identical tip sheet from the year before.
5. **A Program Evaluation**, to be provided near the end of the Internship experience, must be submitted by August 21, 2015.

Program Contact Information

Dione L. Rossiter, PhD
Manager, Minority Science Writers Interns Program
1200 New York Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20005
202-326-6645
drossite@aaas.org

Jeff Mervis
Deputy News Editor, SCIENCE
1200 New York Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20005
202-326-7012
jmervis@aaas.org

Suggested Reading

It is strongly recommended, and to your advantage as well as the advantage of your host site, that you do some reading prior to orientation. These titles should be available at the library, a local bookstore, or online. Please, jot down any questions that may arise during your reading so you can ask the science journalists, AAAS Staff, and others who will participate in the orientation program.

It is also strongly recommended that Interns familiarize themselves with *Science's* style of media coverage by visiting their website prior to arrival.

1. *The Science Writers' Handbook: Everything You Need to Know to Pitch, Publish, and Prosper in the Digital Age*, (to be mailed) by Writers of SciLance (including Fellow alums), edited by Thomas Hayden & Michelle Nijhuis. In this essential guide, 35 leading science writers share their hard-won wisdom and illuminating stories, going beyond the basics to cover everything else you need to survive and thrive as a science writer.
2. *A Field Guide for Science Writers*, edited by Deborah Blum and Mary Knudson. The official guide of the National Association of Science Writers (NASW) includes a foreword by Carl Sagan and chapters by 39 contributing authors, all of whom are leading science writers and science communicators.
3. *Associated Press Guide to News Writing: The Resource for Professional Journalists*, by René J. Cappon. This practical handbook is the ideal writing style guide for all reporters, writers, editors, and journalism students. It covers all the essentials of good news writing, according to the styles and guidelines set forth by the Associated Press.
4. *Associated Press Stylebook & Briefing on Media Law*, edited by Norm Goldstein. Each media outlet likely has a supplemental style guide, but this “journalists’ bible” has more than 5,000 entries regarding AP rules on grammar, spelling and punctuation; as well as usage directives on brand names, datelines, country names, numbers, titles and more. *Please flip through a copy and familiarize yourself with the type of style items it outlines.*
5. *Health Writer's Handbook*, by Barbara Gastel. Expert practical guidance in writing about health and medicine for general readerships.
6. *The Art & Craft of Feature Writing*, by William E. Blundell, Wall Street Journal feature writer. “Filled with expert instruction on a complex art, it provides beginners with a systematic approach to feature writing and deftly teaches old pros some new tricks about: How and where to get ideas; What readers like and don’t like; Adding energy and interest to tired topics; Getting from first ideas to finished article; The rules of organization; How – and whom – to quote and paraphrase; Wordcraft, leads and narrative flow; Self-editing and notes on style; plus sample feature articles.”
6. *Letting Go of the Words: Writing Web Content that Works*, Janice (Ginny) Redish
From Amazon: Ginny Redish, the technical communication guru, gives the most practical and useful advice about writing for the web.