# High School Internships
## Host Institution Solicitation (FY2024, FY2025)
## Request for Proposals



*Issued January 2, 2024*

A career development initiative, AEOP Internships and Fellowships provide high school, undergraduate, and graduate students, as well as postdoctoral scientists and engineers, with immersive STEM research opportunities in Army and postsecondary educational institution laboratories across the United States and its territories. AEOP Internships and Fellowships offer participants the unique opportunity for mentorship and training from Army, Army-sponsored, or collaborating professional subject matter experts (SMEs) while conducting real-world research. Through hybrid e-learning made available by the AEOP Learning Hub and Speaker Series, Interns and fellows learn about education and career opportunities in a variety of STEM fields and develop soft skills to help make informed career decisions, support their retained interest in STEM, and diversify their STEM skill sets.  All participants submit a research abstract representative of their work for publication in the AEOP Research Journal. Interns and fellows receive an educational stipend in recognition of their participation and their research achievements.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks to identify host institutions to participate in summer AEOP High School Internships for a two-year period, FY2024 and FY2025. The initiative is administered by the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) on behalf of the U.S. Army.  RIT is a member of the AEOP Consortium, a group assembled to provide and/or oversee STEM programs designed to support the goals and mission of the AEOP.  The lead organization for the consortium is Battelle Memorial Institute.

**POINT OF CONTACT**

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**RIT**

**Rochester Institute of Technology**

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# I. INTRODUCTION

The United States has long recognized that a scientifically and technologically literate citizenry is our nation's best hope for a secure, rewarding and successful future.  For over 50 years, the Army has supported a wide range of educational opportunities in STEM for our youth, college and graduate students, postdoctoral scientists and engineers, and their teachers.

Our country's economy has greatly benefitted from the technological achievements of the last century and is destined for greater achievements throughout the 21st century.  The demand for STEM literate citizens has become increasingly high and STEM talent increasingly valuable and necessary, as it will continue to play a dominant role in all aspects of life.  For this reason, the Army created the Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP), which provides a portfolio of Army STEM educational opportunities for the future generations of America's workforce and their teachers.

AEOP offers competitions, enrichment activities, research internships, and teacher resources designed to spark inspiration, exploration, and achievement in STEM literacy and career development.  From elementary through postdoc, learners of all proficiency levels, interests, social and economic backgrounds are encouraged to participate in real-world STEM experiences at Army research organizations and partner universities while also engaging with Army-sponsored mentors.

**AEOP Vision**
A nation of STEM-inspired change makers, problem solvers, and innovators prepared to solve the country's biggest challenges.

**AEOP Mission**
To provide an accessible pathway of STEM opportunities to attract, develop, and mentor the next generation of our nation's diverse talent through U.S. Army Educational Outreach Program.

**AEOP Priorities**
1. **STEM Literate Citizenry:** Broaden, deepen, and diversify the pool of STEM talent in support of our defense industry base.
2. **STEM Savvy Educators:** Support and empower educators with unique Army research and technology resources.
3. **Sustainable Infrastructure:** Develop and implement a cohesive, coordinated, and sustainable STEM education outreach infrastructure across the Army.

**AEOP Internships and Fellowships**
A career development initiative, AEOP Internships and Fellowships (formerly known as AEOP Apprenticeships

and Fellowships) provide high school, undergraduate, and graduate students, as well as postdoctoral scientists and engineers, with immersive STEM research opportunities in Army and postsecondary educational institution laboratories across the United States and its territories. AEOP Internships and Fellowships offer participants the unique opportunity for mentorship and training from Army, Army-sponsored, or collaborating subject matter experts (SMEs) while conducting real-world research. Through hybrid e-learning made available by the AEOP Learning Hub and Speaker Series, interns and fellows learn about education and career opportunities in a variety of STEM fields and develop soft skills to help make informed career decisions, support their retained interest in STEM, and diversify their STEM skill sets. All participants submit a research abstract representative of their work for publication in the AEOP Research Journal. Interns and fellows receive an educational stipend in recognition of their participation and their research achievements.

The K-12 University Center at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT K-12) administers AEOP Internships and Fellowships on behalf of the U.S. Army. The mission of RIT K-12 is to inspire and prepare the next generation of STEM innovators by fostering collaborations among the university and community to provide high-quality education and workforce development experiences that will shape the change-makers and problem-solvers of the future. This comes with a commitment to recognizing strength in differences, to removing barriers to access, and to supporting varied pathways to success.

Founded in 1829, RIT is a diverse and collaborative community of engaged, socially conscious, and intellectually curious minds. Through creativity and innovation, and an intentional blending of technology, the arts and design, RIT provides exceptional individuals with a wide range of academic opportunities, including a leading research program and an internationally recognized education for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. With over 20,000 students and more than 145,000 graduates from 50 states and over 100 nations, RIT is driving progress in industries and communities around the world.

## II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks to identify host postsecondary educational institutions to participate in the summer AEOP High School Internships for a two-year period, FY2024 and FY2025. The U.S. Army funds the program through the AEOP Cooperative Agreement, administered by RIT as a sub-awardee of lead organization, Battelle Memorial Institute. Program implementation is contingent upon the availability of Army funding.

**Total Funding and Number of Awards**
RIT intends to award 10 to 15 vendor contracts to postsecondary educational institutions through this solicitation, with a summative anticipated award value of $618,000. Funding for FY2025 host sites is contingent on successful implementation (meeting program requirements) in FY2024.

**Eligible Postsecondary Educational Institutions**

Eligible postsecondary educational institutions, hereafter referred to as "host sites," include universities and colleges, community or junior colleges, as well as trade schools, vocational schools, and certificate programs. Each host site must demonstrate its ability to provide interns with a hands-on STEM research experience.

**Program Objectives**

In support of AEOP priorities, AEOP High School Internships aim to expose, spark interest, enrich, and support high school students from underserved populations to encourage their pursuit of education and careers in STEM. Measured through post-program survey of interns and their mentors, the initiative seeks to accomplish the following objectives:

1.  **Grow participant interest and engagement in STEM**
    Expose interns to an array of activities that enable them to work collaboratively as part of a team, analyze data or information and draw conclusions, design their own research or investigation based on their own question(s), design and carry out an investigation, solve real-world problems, interact with STEM researchers, present their STEM research to a panel of experts, work with a STEM professional on a real-world STEM research project and/or an assigned project, and use laboratory procedures and tools.

2.  **Increase STEM competencies among participants**
    Improve intern knowledge of STEM topics and increase their knowledge of how scientists and engineers work on real-world problems. Grow intern awareness of research processes, ethics, and rules for conduct in STEM.  Increase their understanding of what everyday research is like in STEM. Improve intern skills related to planning and carrying out investigations (defining a problem, creating a hypothesis, creating procedures, carrying out an experiment, recording data accurately, analyzing and interpreting data, and presenting an argument that uses data from the investigation to make a point).

3.  **Increase participant interest in STEM education and careers**
    Spark and further intern interest in pursuing postsecondary education in STEM fields and working in a STEM careers through exposure to various STEM education/career pathways.

4.  **Increase participant awareness and interest in Army and DoD STEM research and careers**
    Expose interns to the breadth and importance of Army and DoD STEM research (it advances science and engineering fields, it develops new cutting-edge technologies) and the value this research has to society. Increase intern awareness of STEM workforce needs and career pathways within the Army and DoD.

5.  **Increase participant interest in pursuing future STEM activities**

Spark and further intern interest in STEM-related activities such as: working on a future STEM project, participating in a STEM camp, club, or competition, mentoring other students about STEM, helping with a community service project connected to STEM, talking with friends and family about STEM, and doing STEM in their leisure time (tinkering, computer programming, reading/watching nonfiction STEM materials, etc.).

6. **Increase participant awareness and interest in future AEOP opportunities**
Expose interns to information about future AEOP opportunities and resources including: the Junior Science & Humanities Symposium (JSHS), undergraduate internships, graduate and postdoctoral Fellowships, the SMART Scholarship Program, the National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate (NDSEG) Fellowship, the AEOP travel award, AEOP alumni council, AEOP Near Peer Mentor Roles, and volunteer opportunities with eCYBERMISSION.

7. **Impact participants through mentorship from professional scientists and engineers**
Utilize a mentorship model and mentorship strategies to impact intern development in STEM. Provide interns with additional support as needed. Supervise interns while they practice STEM research skills. Give interns constructive feedback to improve their STEM competencies, encouraging collaborative learning (team meetings, journal club, etc.). Help interns understand how STEM can improve their own community and the role it plays in their everyday lives. Encourage interns to exchange ideas with others who have different viewpoints or backgrounds. Utilize mentorship to support the diverse needs of interns as learners, establishing the relevance of learning activities, fostering development of communication and interpersonal skills, and supporting STEM activities and educational pathways.

## III. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

The FY2024 and FY2025 AEOP High School Internships program will provide a hands-on summer STEM research experience for a cohort of high school students under the mentorship of professional scientists or engineers at an eligible postsecondary educational institution. AEOP Internships is free to all participants. The program will be offered at no cost to participants (no application, registration or other fees may be charged).

- **Host Site:** Eligible postsecondary educational institutions include universities and colleges, community or junior colleges, as well as trade schools, vocational schools, and certificate programs.

- **Program Director:** Each host site must identify one Program Director (PD) to serve as the primary contact between the host site and the AEOP Internships and Fellowships office at RIT. The PD will provide oversight and coordination of the project at the host institution, ensure completion of program requirements, participate in monthly meetings facilitated by RIT, and submit reporting. While the PD may also serve as a program mentor, this is not a requirement.

- **Cohort Size**: Each site will host 6-12 interns during each program year. (The same number of interns for each of FY2024 and FY2025.)

- **Intern Eligibility:** To be eligible for the AEOP Internships program, candidates must be:
  - Enrolled in high school (rising 9th-12th graders) or within 60 months of earning their high school degree without starting a postsecondary educational program. Rising high school graduates (in 12th grade at the time of application, but will be in the summer between high school and college at the time of the Internship) are eligible to participate. Host sites may require that candidates meet specific age requirements.
  - U.S. citizen or permanent legal resident.
  - Meet AEOP's definition of underserved.

**AEOP Definition of Underserved:**

AEOP's goal is to broaden participation of underserved populations in STEM and have diverse participation in AEOP's programs to reflect the nation's demographics. Participants in AEOP High School Internships funded through this solicitation must self-identify with **two or more** of the following:
- attends a rural, urban, Title I, or frontier/tribal school
- is a female and pursuing research in physical science, computer science, mathematics, or engineering
- is as a racial/ethnic minority in STEM (Alaska Native, Native American, Black or African American, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander)
- is low-income (eligible for free- and reduced- lunch in school, FARMS)
- speaks English as a second language (ELL)
- will be a first generation college student
- has or previously had a disability (physical or mental impairment, medical condition, or learning disability)
- is a military-affiliated child (dependents of members of the active-duty Armed Forces, National Guard, Reserves, or a Veteran) or attends a military connected school (where a minimum of 15% of the student population is military-connected)

- **Recruitment, Selection, Registration, and Onboarding of Interns**
  - **Recruitment:** The host site is responsible for recruitment of all participants through connections with area schools and community organizations, or other extracurricular programs that support the development of youth from underserved groups in STEM (ex. Upward Bound). Host sites that also participate in AEOP's UNITE program are encouraged to recruit interns from

UNITE alumni. The AEOP Internships office at RIT will post information about the host site on its website and social media to assist with recruitment. Because this program aims to encourage new students to pursue STEM, the participation of children and relatives of the PD and mentors must be approved by RIT prior to the start of the program.

- o **Selection:** All interns must meet the aforementioned eligibility requirements and the definition of underserved. Host sites may require additional qualifications (ex. age requirement, pre-requisite coursework, etc.). Host sites must utilize a pre-determined, common selection process and rubric in the review of all applicants. Candidate interviews are strongly encouraged.
- o **Registration:** The host site must ensure that all selected interns complete the AEOP registration process prior to the start of the program. RIT will provide PDs with the link for the web-based registration platform.
- o **Onboarding:** In addition to any registration and onboarding paperwork required by the host site, interns must complete a virtual orientation webinar hosted by RIT. The orientation will introduce the AEOP Learning Hub, the AEOP outreach specialists, and other central resources. PDs may work with RIT to schedule an orientation webinar for the cohort or may assign interns to attend in their own time.

- **Research Experience**
    - o **Duration:** Research will take place over the course of six to ten weeks in the summer (typically June-August), for 200 to 300 hours.
    - o **Modality**: Onsite, virtual, or hybrid experiences are allowable.
    - o **Location:** The cohort of interns may be placed at one or more labs at the host site. If multiple labs are utilized, opportunities should be organized to bring the cohort together for networking and skill-building opportunities.
    - o **Mentors:** The PD will identify formal and informal mentors to support interns throughout the research experience. Mentors must include professional STEM practitioners, but may also include additional staff, undergraduates, and graduate students. Prior to the start of the program, mentors must complete the web-based AEOP Internships Mentor Registration. RIT will provide the link to the PD.
    - o **Projects:** The PD will work with mentors to identify meaningful research projects for Interns. Projects should contribute to the furthering of STEM knowledge. They should not be the canned experiments.
    - o **Training:** The PD will work with mentors to ensure that all interns receive training in safety, methods, protocols, data collection, instrument use, etc. Canned experiments may be utilized in training.
    - o **STEM Culture:** PDs and mentors are encouraged to engage interns in journal club, lunch and learn sessions, and other activities (formal and informal) that will expose the interns to the comprehensive experience of a STEM researcher.

- o **Cohort Activities:** PDs and mentors are encouraged to schedule opportunities for interns in the cohort to engage with each other, nurturing community among the group. For example, interns may come together to view the weekly AEOP webinar.
- o **Research Abstract:** Interns are required to submit an abstract for their research to the AEOP before the end of their summer program. The last date for submission is September 30. RIT will provide directions for the submission process, which will take place through the AEOP Learning Hub.
- o **Presentation:** Each host site will hold an event at the end of the summer in which interns will present their research. The format of the event and presentations is left to the discretion of the PD. PDs should make arrangements so that a representative from the AEOP Internships administrative team at RIT may participate virtually.
- o **Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS, https://jshs.org):** All host sites will encourage and prepare participant to submit their research to a JSHS regional symposium. JSHS is a DoD-funded STEM competition through in which high school students have the opportunity to present their STEM research in a forum of their peers and professional STEM personnel representing the DoD, federal research laboratories and academia. JSHS regional events cover all 50 United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Department of Defense Schools in Europe and the Pacific. There is a virtual region for students who have geographical or financial barriers to participating in their home regions and for students who do not live in a JSHS region. To participate in JSHS, students submit a paper that represents their original research investigations in STEM. Selected students give oral presentations at the regional event and compete for scholarships and recognition. All regional symposia student finalists are invited to present their research and compete for further recognition and scholarships at the National JSHS. JSHS Regional Symposia registration opens October-January (deadlines vary by region), with events being held January-February. National JSHS takes place in May. Given the timeline, PDs should develop a plan to support interns' participation in JSHS after the culmination of the summer research experience.

- **AEOP Central Activities administered by RIT:** The AEOP Internships administrative team at RIT provides central resources and services.
  - o **AEOP Orientation:** All interns must participate in a virtual AEOP Internships orientation facilitated by RIT. The orientation will introduce participants to the AEOP portfolio and its benefits (next step opportunities, the travel fund, and alumni group, etc.) as well as central requirements (research abstract, submit to JSHS, complete a masterclass in the learning hub, and participate in weekly webinar).
  - o **AEOP Outreach Specialists:** RIT AEOP staff dedicated to supporting interns facilitate central services, check in with participates, host supplementary workshops and meetings based on student interests/needs, and provide guidance to aid in the completion of research abstract

and JSHS requirements.

- o **AEOP Learning Hub:** The PD, mentors, and interns will have access to the AEOP Learning Hub, a virtual learning management system (LMS). The learning hub contains a set of masterclasses, each with a combination of self-paced e-learning and webinars that have been created to support the development of Interns along STEM education and career pathways. The learning hub includes a variety of reference materials to support the AEOP experience for all stakeholders.
- o **AEOP Speaker Series:** RIT AEOP will facilitate a weekly webinar, open to all AEOP interns and fellows, that highlights STEM career pathways through presentations from STEM professionals and near-peers (alumni of AEOP Internships and Fellowships). PDs should incorporate the webinar series into their program schedule.

- **Program Evaluation**
  - o All interns and mentors are invited to complete a survey at the culmination of the summer program. This survey will be administered by the Education Development Center (EDC), an AEOP consortium member, to all participants in AEOP Internships and Fellowships. De-identified data will be analyzed against program objectives and presented in a final report that will be made available on the AEOP website and used to inform evidence-based program changes.
  - o Pending availability of resources, EDC and/or RIT may arrange to visit a small number of host sites in support of the assessment process.

- **Reporting**
  - o **Meetings:** All PDs are required to participate in a monthly 15-minute synch for information sharing with members of the RIT administrative team. PDs, or their designees, will also attend monthly 30-minute group meetings in April, June, August, and October.
  - o **Annual Report:** Each PD will submit an annual report, due September 13th. The format for this report will be provided by RIT with the reward letter.

- **Intern Stipend Payments:** AEOP Internships must be free to all participants. The intern stipend is issued in recognition of work that contributes to education. Additionally, this payment is intended to alleviate the opportunity cost of summer employment. The need to generate income through work outside of the home can be a barrier to participation – especially for participants from underserved groups.
  - o **Incremental Stipend Payments:** The host site will distribute stipend payments to interns in the format of incremental educational stipend payments. At the discretion of the PD, limited stipend funds may be issued in advance of the internship (no more than $500) to enable participants to cover travel and meal costs at the beginning of their program term and/or the

cost of personal safety supplies (ex. steel toed shoes). Outside of the aforementioned permissible advance payment, stipend payment should occur upon completion of work with a minimum of two payments during the performance period.
- o **Tax Implications:** Host sites are responsible for communicating with interns regarding tax implications related to the method of compensation.
- o **Documentation of Student Participation:** The PD will maintain documentation to reflect interns' participation in the research experience. They will complete and submit a Stipend Payment Validation Form to RIT as part of the annual reporting process.
- o **Record Retention:** Pursuant to federal policy regarding the retention of records relating to the procurement of federal funds, adequate substantiation should be maintained by the host site until 2032, seven years after the culmination of the AEOP grant with RIT.

- **Host Site Fund**
  - o The host site fund will be administered, at the discretion of the PD, in direct support the administration of the AEOP Internships program. Examples for authorized use include research and program supplies, supplies and hospitality to support group meetings or the culminating showcase event, mentor wages, costs to support the intern's participation in a STEM conference or an activity related to the intern's research.

- **Communication**
  - o **Good News Stories:** Host sites are encouraged to share photos and good news stories reflecting the experiences and ongoing achievements of interns. These materials may be shared over AEOP social media channels and/or with the funding agency to highlight the partnership with the host site and the achievement of the program.
  - o **Photo Releases:** All interns and mentors will complete an AEOP photo and media release during the application/registration process.

- **Protection of Minors**
  - o **Protection of Minors Policy:** The host site will have a policy or protocols for protection of minors that meets or exceeds the requirements of RIT's Protection of Minors Policy: https://www.rit.edu/k12/protection-minors-policy and includes checks against the sex offender registry for all faculty, staff, student workers, and volunteers working with the intern; training in the recognition and reporting of minor abuse, neglect or sexual harassment; and a mechanism for reporting the suspected abuse, neglect, or sexual harassment of a minor. Selected host sites will be required to complete a form that documents the site's youth protection policies.
  - o **Reports of Non-compliance:** If RIT receives a report that questions compliance with youth protection policies at a participating host site, the RIT administration team will work with the

host site to address the reports and may pause or shut down the program at a host site until an appropriate investigation can be completed according to the host site's youth protection protocols.

- **Insurance**
    - o The host site insurance policy will provide liability insurance for its interns. Note that coverage is not provided by RIT, Battelle Memorial Institute or AEOP.

- **Changes Due to Covid-19**
    - o **Closures:** If the host site closes onsite operations due to COVID-19 concerns, the PD should contact RIT to explore alternative options for interns. These options may include remote delivery of the Internship.
    - o **Vaccination:** If the host site requires interns to be vaccinated in order to participate, it is the responsibility of the institution to request, verify and record such information in compliance with the institution's policy. AEOP and RIT will not request or review vaccination records on behalf of the applicant or institution.
    - o **Absences and Stipend Payments:** The host site should develop and implement a clear and consistent policy regarding the impact of COVID-related absences on stipend payment.

## Budget

RIT will distribute funding to host sites at the rate of $6,000 per intern. This rate includes $4,500 for the participant stipend and $1,500 for the host site. Host site funds support program administration (ex. supplies, staff costs, conference travel, etc.). Indirect charges are not permissible.

| Number of Interns | Total Funds | Participant Stipend | Host Site Fund |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| 6 | 36,000 | 27,000 | 9,000 |
| 7 | 42,000 | 31,500 | 10,500 |
| 8 | 48,000 | 36,000 | 12,000 |
| 9 | 54,000 | 40,500 | 13,500 |
| 10 | 60,000 | 45,000 | 15,000 |
| 11 | 66,000 | 49,500 | 16,500 |
| 12 | 72,000 | 54,000 | 18,000 |

AEOP Internships funds may be used for a standalone AEOP STEM summer internship program, to supplement an existing initiative by enabling the inclusion of more participants, or to add a new element to a an existing high school summer STEM experience (ex. AEOP UNITE).

**Administrative Timeline**

| Date (2024) | Activity |
|---|---|
| February 12 | DUE: Proposals to RIT |
| February 23 | Awardees Announced |
| March* | MEETING: Site PD + RIT (15 min) |
| March 8 | DUE: Site Onboarding Paperwork to RIT |
| April* | MEETING: Site PD + RIT (15 min) |
| April 10 @ 4:00 – 4:30 EST | MEETING: All Program Directors and RIT |
| May* | MEETING: Site PD + RIT (15 min) |
| June* | MEETING: Site PD + RIT (15 min) |
| June 12 @ 4:00 – 4:30 EST | MEETING: All Program Directors and RIT |
| June 18 @ 3:00 – 4:00 EST | EVENT: AEOP Speaker Series (Required for Interns) |
| June 25 @ 3:00 – 4:00 EST | EVENT: AEOP Speaker Series (Required for Interns) |
| July* | MEETING: Site PD + RIT (15 min) |
| July 2 @ 3:00 – 4:00 EST | EVENT: AEOP Speaker Series (Required for Interns) |
| July 9 @ 3:00 – 4:00 EST | EVENT: AEOP Speaker Series (Required for Interns) |
| July 16 @ 3:00 – 4:00 EST | EVENT: AEOP Speaker Series (Required for Interns) |
| July 23 @ 3:00 – 4:00 EST | EVENT: AEOP Speaker Series (Required for Interns) |
| July 30 @ 3:00 – 4:00 EST | EVENT: AEOP Speaker Series (Required for Interns) |
| August | Program Evaluation (Surveys for Interns and Mentors) |
| August | End of Program Presentations at Host Sites (Required) |
| August* | MEETING: Site PD + RIT (15 min) |
| August 14 @ 4:00 – 4:30 EST | MEETING: All Program Directors and RIT |
| September | MEETING: Site PD + RIT (15 min) |
| September 13 @ 5:00pm EST | DUE: Annual Report to RIT |
| September 30 | DUE: All Research Abstracts to RIT (Required for Interns) |
| October * | MEETING: Site PD + RIT (15 min) – FY2024 Program Review |
| October 9 @ 4:00 – 5:00 EST | MEETING: All Program Directors and RIT – FY2024 Program Review with Army |
| October – January, 2024 | DUE: Intern registration for JSHS Regional Events (strongly encouraged) - **https://jshs.org**<br>DUE: Regional JSHS Submission Tracking Form to RIT |
| January – February, 2025 | JSHS Regional Events (for invited students, interns must apply for consideration |

* Specific dates and times for PD/RIT monthly meetings will be determined in consult with the PD.

The FY2025 timeline will be distributed in October 2025.

**Program Deliverables**

Host sites are required to produce the following deliverables (FY2024 dates):

- Host site onboarding paper work (due March 18).
- Host Site Intern Roster Form (two weeks prior to the start of research).
- Mentor Roster Form (two weeks prior to the start of research).
- Intern completion of web-based AEOP registration (two weeks prior to start of research).
- Mentor completion of web-based AEOP registration (two weeks prior to start of research).
- Host site program calendar that shows blocking for AEOP Speaker Series, end-of-program presentations, and other supportive programming (two weeks prior to start of research).
- Facilitate a meaningful, 200-300 hour, hands-on STEM research experience for AEOP interns. Issue incremental stipend payments.
- Support all interns in their creation and submission of research abstracts to RIT (prior to end of program, September 30th at the latest).
- Facilitate end-of-program research presentation event.
- Encourage mentors and interns to complete the evaluation survey (August).
- Annual Report to RIT (due September 13th).
- Encourage and support all interns in their submission of research to JSHS regional events (October – January). Submit Regional JSHS Submission Tracking Form to RIT (due following regional registration deadline).

Participate in the following meetings (PD or designee):

- Bi-monthly meetings between RIT and all program directors (April-October).
- Monthly synchs between PD and RIT (March-October).
- October program review (during aforementioned meetings).

The FY2025 deliverable checklist will be distributed in October 2025.

# IV. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

The AEOP Internships Administrative Office at RIT welcomes proposals from all eligible host sites following the instructions detailed below.

## Formatting

- **Font:** Proposals should be written in 12-point font.
- **Proposal Template:** Structure the proposal with the template below, copying all headings (bolded in black) into the proposal.
- **Title:** Utilize the following title in the proposal document.
    - **AEOP High School Internships (FY2024, FY2025)**
    - **Host Site Name**
    - **Proposal**
    - **Date of Submission**

## Proposal Template

1. **Contact Information**

   **Host Site**
   - **Name:**
   - **Address:**
   - **Website:**

   **Program Director**
   - **Name:**
   - **Title:**
   - **Phone Number:**
   - **Email Address:**

   **Alternate Contact**
   - **Name:**
   - **Title:**
   - **Phone Number:**
   - **Email Address:**

2. **Host Site Information**

a) **Overview:** Provide information about the host site that demonstrates its ability to support AEOP Internships. What type of postsecondary institution is the host site (ex. university, college, community college, trade school, vocational school, certificate-granting institute, etc.)? How do the objectives of

AEOP Internships fit with the mission of the institution? How would collaboration with AEOP Internships benefit the host site? How would the collaboration benefit AEOP?

b) **Designations of Note:** List any special designations held by the host site in relation to under-served populations. (For example, is the host site designated as a Minority Serving Institution? is it recognized as Military Friendly? etc.). If none, write N/A.

c) **AEOP Experience:** List any past or current engagement with AEOP initiatives. Note if the host site submitted an application to the recent RFP to solicit AEOP UNITE hosts. If none, write N/A.

d) **Existing STEM Programs for High School Students:** Name and describe any existing programs for high school students in STEM facilitated by the host site. Include the number of youth served, program goals, and type of program (ex. internship, camp, school-based, etc.)

e) **Existing Programs for High School Students from Underserved Groups:** Name and describe any existing programs for high school students from underserved groups facilitated by the host site. Include the number of youth served, program goals, and type of program (ex. internship, camp, school-based, etc.)

3. **Program Director Information**

a) **Bio:** Provide a brief bio (not a full CV) on the PD that speaks to their ability to administer the program. Highlight any prior experience with program administration, STEM research and career development, youth development and enrichment programs, and/or work with students from underserved groups.

b) **Administrative Approach:** Explain the PD's approach to administering the program and ensuring achievement of all program requirements. Explain the staffing plan. If the AEOP Internships program will leverage staff/resources/participants from other initiatives, discuss it here.

c) **Meetings:** The PD, or their designee, are required to participate in bi-monthly meetings with all AEOP Internships PDs (April-October) and monthly synchs with RIT (March-October). Acknowledge this requirement with the statement: "The PD, or their designee, will participate in required bi-monthly PD meetings and monthly synchs with RIT."

4. **General Program Information**

a) **Number of Requested Interns:** Indicate the number requested per year (6-12).

b) **Total Funding Requested:** $6,000 per intern

c) **Requested Funding for Intern Stipends:** $4,500 per intern

d) **Requested Host Site Fund:** $1,500 per intern

e) **Summer Research Program Start Date:** Anticipated date that the cohort of interns will begin the program at the host site.

f) **Summer Research Program End Date:** Anticipated end date.

g) **Summer Research Program Schedule:** Anticipated days and hours. (Ex. Monday – Friday, 9am-12noon and 1pm – 5pm).

h) **Total Summer Research Program Hours:** Anticipated duration (200-300 hours).

i) **Summer Research Program Modality:** Indicate modality (onsite, virtual, or hybrid).

j) **Location:** What specific laboratory or laboratories will host AEOP interns? Explain the general area of STEM research at the laboratory/laboratories.

k) **Summative Program Description:** Provide a concise (one-paragraph) description of the proposed AEOP Internships program at the host site.

5. **Recruitment of Interns**

a) **Recruitment Plan:** Describe the host site's approach to recruiting eligible participants. What schools, organizations, or groups will be targeted? Describe any pre-existing relationships that the PD and/or host site has with these schools, organizations and groups.

b) **Selection Plan:** Describe the application and selection process that will be used by the host site to identify interns. Explain how the host site will use to ensure that participants meet AEOP eligibility requirements and the AEOP definition of underserved.

c) **AEOP Registration:** Interns are required to complete the web-based AEOP Intern Registration. Acknowledge this requirement with the statement: "All mentors will complete the AEOP Intern Registration prior to the start of the program."

6. **Mentorship Plan**

a) **Overview:** Mentorship is a critical element of AEOP Internships. Describe the process for recruiting and training mentors (formal and informal). How will the mentors support achievement of program objectives? How often will interns engage with their mentors? How will the PD/host site support the development of mentors and the mentorship process?

b) **Mentor Registration:** Mentors are required to complete the web-based AEOP Internships Mentor Registration. Acknowledge this requirement with the statement: "All mentors will complete the AEOP Internships Mentor Registration"

7. **Research Plan**

a) **Projects:** How will research projects be determined? Will interns work alone or in groups?

b) **Training:** Describe the training and instruction interns will receive prior to the start of their research.

c) **Approach:** Describe the approach that the PD and/or Mentor(s) will take to encourage participant growth and development in STEM research skills (see program objectives).

d) **STEM Culture:** How will interns be exposed to the comprehensive experience of a STEM researcher (ex. journal club, lunch and learn sessions, etc.)?

e) **STEM Pathways:** Explain the site's approach to exposing interns to STEM careers, educational pathways in STEM, STEM careers with the Army or DoD, and next step opportunities with the AEOP. How will the AEOP Speaker Series be incorporated into the intern experience? If the site is awarded funding for AEOP UNITE (proposals currently under review), how will you provide opportunities for participants in UNITE to interact with interns?

f) **Research Abstract:** All AEOP interns are required to submit an abstract to represent their research. Acknowledge this requirement and describe how the PD/mentor(s) will support interns in this achievement.

g) **Summer Final Presentation:** Describe the culminating event and the anticipated format of research presentations.

h) **JSHS and Ongoing Support:** All host sites will encourage and prepare participants to submit their research to a JSHS regional symposium. Acknowledge this requirement and describe how the PD/mentor(s) will support interns in this achievement beyond the culmination of the summer research experience.

8. **Additional Administrative Requirements**

a) **Program Evaluation:** Interns and mentors are encouraged to complete the web-based program evaluation survey at the end of the program. Acknowledge this program element with the statement: "All interns and mentors will be encouraged to participate in the program evaluation survey."

b) **Incremental Intern Stipend Payments:** Describe the host site's approach to issuing stipend payments. When and how often will stipends be issued?

c) **Host Site Fund:** Describe how the host site fund will be used to support the program.

d) **Protection of Minors:** Provide details on the host site's protection of minors policy (ex. link, etc.). Describe how the host site will implement these policies with the AEOP Internships initiative (ex. what is the screening and training process, who will be screened/trained, etc.).

e) **Reporting:** Each host site will submit an annual final report to RIT (mid-September) and will participate in an annual program review meeting (October). Acknowledge this requirement with the statement, "The host site will submit an annual program report and participate in the annual program review meeting."

9. **Signatures**

Copy the text that follows into your proposal and provide the requested information and signatures.
**We believe that the all information contained in this proposal is accurate.**
**Proposing Institution:** Host Site Name
**Project Director:** Print name and title. Provide signature and date.
**Institution Supervisor:** Print name and title. Provide signature and date. (Note that the Institution Supervisor is someone other than the PD who provides oversight. This may be the PD's supervisor, a representative of the grants office, etc.)

**Budget Template**

Use the chart below as a guide to complete a simple program budget for FY2024 including intern stipends and the host site fund. Add lines for additional budget categories as needed. Under each column provide a brief description of the expenditure and show the calculation of cost.

Funding for FY2025 host sites is contingent on successful implementation (meeting program requirements) in FY2024. A FY2025 budget will be requested at the end of the FY2024 program year.

RIT will distribute funding to host sites at the rate of $6,000 per intern. This rate includes $4,500 for the participant stipend and $1,500 for the host site. Host site funds support program administration (ex. supplies, staff costs, conference travel, etc.). Indirect charges are not permissible.

| Budget Categories | AEOP Internships Funds |
|---|---|
| **Personnel Salaries and Wages** <br> *Provide job titles and include salary calculations for each.* | |
| **Personnel Fringe** <br> *Provide the fringe rate and show calculations.* | |
| **Materials/Supplies** <br> *Provide a breakdown of costs for instructional supplies, meeting/event costs (including hospitality), registration fees for conferences, etc.* | |
| **Other** <br> *Provide a description and breakdown of each expense.* | |
| **Intern Stipends** <br> Number of Interns: _____ <br> Stipend per Intern: $4,500 <br> Total Intern Stipend Cost: ____ X $4,500 = _____ | |
| **TOTAL** | |

## Submission of Proposals to RIT

- **Directions for Submission:** Host sites should submit their proposal and budget electronically to Donna Burnette (dabk12@rit.edu) with a cc to Heather Storti (hmsk12@rit.edu) **no later than 11:59 pm ET, Monday, February 12, 2024**. Use the subject line, "AEOP Internships 2024-2025 Proposal – Host Site Name". You will receive an email from RIT confirming receipt of your proposal materials within 48 hours of submission. If you do not receive this confirmation, please contact Donna Burnette by email.

- **Award Notifications:** All sites that submit a proposal will receive notice of award or non-award by February 23, 2024.

- **Questions:** Questions about the RFP should be submitted to Donna Burnette by email.

- **Info Session:** RIT will host an informational session about the AEOP Internships Program and proposal process on Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 1:00pm ET. This session is open to all interested host sites. Register here: https://rit.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUqdO2hpzksHNU73-GIQmeeTprBzHaQ5vH1

Thank you for your consideration of this opportunity to collaborate with the AEOP High School Internships