

# Internship portal helps students, graduates find employers

There is a particularly desperate need to find work for more than 600,000 unemployed graduates in South Africa; 25% of the country is unemployed and 70% of people under the age of 35 are not working.



A new tax incentive should give hope to these graduates and will help those businesses that are unable to afford new staff hires. The incentive is to employ young people aged between 18 and 29 by offering a subsidy of up to 50% on salaries of R6000 or less.

Internfit, a new online internship portal aims to help students and graduates connect with employers. It was developed by two university students who understood at first hand the problems that graduates face in finding work experience.

## Skills-starved economy

David Feinberg, the founder of Internfit, said: "Only around 12% of South Africans have a tertiary education. One would imagine that in a skills-starved economy they are in high demand, but, unfortunately, finding an internship can be an extremely frustrating experience for both employers who get many requests and for the students who often have to contact each company individually.

"Traditionally, corporates have been the main employer of interns with structured programmes that help to maximise the experience for the intern and to meet the long-term HR requirements of the company. However, increasingly, small and medium-sized businesses are also making more use of interns. These businesses are able to get more done at a lower cost while giving graduates the opportunity to get practical experience.

"Internfit has around 6000 students and graduates available nationally for positions. They have qualifications in IT, marketing, finance/accounts and graphic design amongst others. All interns have a tertiary education and are university or college educated. They have either degrees or diplomas.

"We are working with listed companies like Bidvest, Discovery and Liberty Life as well as many smaller companies

including start-ups. Ninety percent of internships listed on our site are filled successfully. Businesses struggling with their workload should consider interns to ease the pressure as this is an extremely cost-effective approach."

## **Paid or unpaid**

Internship positions may be paid or unpaid. Sometimes an employer offers only an allowance for food and/or travel, which is around R2000 to R3000 a month. Those who are paid are offered in the region of R8000 to R10,000. Businesses can take advantage of the Employment Tax Incentive if the intern earns R6000 or less. The amount paid and whether to pay depends on the sector and what the intern has studied.

An internship is a way that a final-year student or a recent graduate can gain work experience and learn to implement what he has studied. Companies benefit because they are able to hand-pick talent and they are able to train and retain future industry leaders.

Internfit is free for interns. Rates start at only R400 to fill internship positions for employers.

For more, go to [www.internfit.co.za](http://www.internfit.co.za)

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