



Network of European
Museum Organisations

Political Internship in Museums – A Manual for Museums

Why an internship?

The aim is to build a **sustainable relationship** with political stakeholders by offering them a unique experience working behind the scenes of your museum



How it came about (1)

- Netherlands Museums Association (NMA) started the initiative in 2012.
- The initiative was part of the NMA's '[More than worth it](#)' campaign in 2011 as a reaction from the NMA to the massive cuts in the museum funding due to the financial crisis.



Barbera Wolfensberger. Director General of Culture and Media at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science Internship at the Fries Museum and Keramiekmuseum Princessehof. 2018



Paula Risikko, Speaker of the Finnish Parliament, working in EMMA - Espoo Museum of Modern Art



Alexander Salomon, member of the State Assembly of Baden-Württemberg, is now chairman of the museum's friends' association

How it came about (2)

- Since then, the political internships in museums initiative has been successfully carried out by members in Germany, Belgium, Finland and Denmark.
- Since 2018, NEMO organises internships for European politicians and key stakeholders

MEP Julie Ward at the Bonnefantenmuseum in Maastricht, 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33bZpcbW464>



...selling tickets



...turning the lights off



...filling out a condition report

Getting started!



1. Select a politician/stakeholder and determine why you select him or her
2. Select a museum that fits with the interests/bio of the politician
3. Determine which values and messages are the most significant for the museum of your choice

Preparing your museum

- **Think** of a programme for around 4 hours, allowing time to exchange with staff and volunteers and hands-on moments in different departments
- **Include** a good balance of places behind the scenes and in the public space incl. visitors
- **Make** sure the departments/staff/volunteers know that they are the experts showing the politician around
- **Prepare** interesting facts & figures on visiting numbers, initiatives, etc at the different stations to “feed” to the politician



Organising a good media coverage

- **Organise** a photographer to accompany the internship
- **Announce** and debrief the internship on social media channels and connect to the politician's office
- **Prepare** a meeting with press after the internship
- **Consider** filming the internship



Practical Tips

Do's

- ✓ Drinking coffee in the pantry
- ✓ Let them carry out work
- ✓ Introducing them to your staff members in different depts
- ✓ Occasionally provide interesting facts and figures
- ✓ Aim for an unforgettable day, a fun program and finish the internship with a good lunch/coffee

Dont's

- × Reception in the director's room
- × Private tours through exhibition
- × PowerPoint presentations
- × Drop requests or urgent needs
- × Moaning about museum situation