

Federal Work Study Program

Community Work Study Program Sponsorship

The Federal Work Study (FWS) Program is a federally funded financial-aid program administered by Cornell University and the Public Service Center, and is designed to assist students in meeting the cost of higher education by promoting access to meaningful work experiences. If you qualify as an eligible employer, Cornell may subsidize up to 75 percent of the wages you pay your eligible student workers.

To qualify as an eligible employer, your agency must meet the following conditions:

1. It must be a public or private nonprofit agency, and work performed must be in the public interest. Work in the public interest is defined as work performed for the welfare of the nation or community, rather than work performed for a particular interest or group.
2. Work is not “in the public interest” if
 - it primarily benefits the members of an organization that has membership limits, such as a credit union, a fraternal or religious order, or a cooperative;
 - it involves any partisan or nonpartisan political activity or is associated with a faction in an election for public or party office;
 - it is for an elected official, unless the official is responsible for the regular administration of federal, state, or local government;
 - it is work as a political aide for an elected official;
 - a student’s political support or party affiliation is taken into account in hiring him or her; or
 - it involves lobbying on the federal, state, or local level.
3. You must be able to offer work experiences that do not exist on-campus at Cornell, and these work experiences must offer a direct service to the community designed to improve the quality of life for its residents, particularly low-income individuals, or to solve particular problems related to their needs.

Your agency’s eligibility will be determined when you return the completed Letter of Intent and accompanying paperwork and job description(s).

After confirming that your agency is an eligible employer, the Public Service Center will post your job offer(s) with the Student Employment Services Job Listings through Bear Access. Students will review jobs and contact your office directly for an interview. The final hiring decision is yours alone. The agency or participating program needs to inform the Public Service Center office at Cornell of which candidate(s) they wish to hire, and direct students to that office so paperwork appointing them to the payroll can be prepared.

Cornell University acts as the Paymaster and supplies students with timesheets to be completed and submitted to the Public Service Center office according to the University’s payroll schedule. Students receive payroll training at the time their paperwork is prepared. At the end of the semester (or at the end of the summer), your agency will be billed for its share of students’ gross wages.

If you would like to participate, complete the Letter of Intent form and return it to the Public Service Center with the supporting documentation and a description of the position(s) you are offering. Please note that the Letter of Intent does not constitute a contractual agreement.

CORNELL WILL NOT MAKE ANY PAYMENT TO A STUDENT PRIOR TO ALL PAPERWORK BEING COMPLETED AND APPROVED BY THE PUBLIC SERVICE CENTER OFFICE. THE AGENCY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT UNTIL ALL PAPERWORK HAS BEEN PROCESSED AND APPROVED.

Employers are encouraged to contact the Public Service Center office *before* a student begins working in order to verify that all required documentation is completed. If you have any questions about the Community Work Study Program, please call 255-1148.

(Letter of Intent Form on back)

