

This UX Design Internship will focus on engaging a select group of 12 students from area high schools in Jackson County, Clinton, and Scott Counties.

We will engage with the principals and guidance counselor at these schools to identify and invite high school students to apply for this program. Invited students will meet our demographic criteria, have demonstrated an interest in, or who are deemed to have potential for, design or technology related careers, or who are otherwise recognized by school administration as someone who would greatly benefit from this exposure and engagement. Finally, invited students will meet low income criteria, with particular emphasis on at-risk or other barriers to academic success.

The application process will require students to complete an application form, answering a few brief questions about their interest and perspective. Candidates will be reviewed by the school administration and by team members at Innovate 120 and a final cohort will be selected. While the above submissions are a required part of the application, specific preference will be given to those students who have been identified as one who could contribute to and benefit most from this opportunity. Specifically, this opportunity is well-suited for a student in “the margins”, as it is equipped to be the catalyst to set him/her on a productive forward path. Engagement with each selected student will be tuned not only to their specific skills, but also their specific challenges and circumstance, in order to improve outcomes.

We will attempt to maintain gender balance in the cohort when reviewing intern applicants, as well as share representation across school systems. This is important since many technically-oriented fields heavily skew male, and representing a more diverse perspective in the planning of user experiences ensures more equity from the start.

The demand for UX (User Experience) Design has skyrocketed in the last 10 years and will continue to grow over the next 10 years, with a median salary of \$90,478.

UX is a career with great potential to influence how we interact with everything from digital apps to products. Unfortunately, junior and high school students, particularly those from rural and/or disadvantaged areas, are rarely exposed to this as a career option. This career entry point does not require high level skills. Therefore, successful engagement with these students will not only pique their interest, but will also offer them an edge as they pursue further education or enter the field. This is the case even more so for rural students, who have fewer opportunities for UX knowledge and experience.

Internship schedule

Innovate 120's UX Design internship will actively immerse participants in a **6 week experience from June 17-July 25**. The participants will engage in the program for **20 hours each week from 9 am to 2 pm, Monday through Thursday**.

The Maquoketa cohort will meet at Innovate 120's collaboration center at 120 S. Main Street in Maquoketa. The schedule will include 1 hour of professional development, followed by 4 hours of collaborative project-focused work.

Participants will learn about the discipline of User Experience Design through workshop instruction and apply their learnings through hands-on collaboration to understand, explore and propose solutions for real client projects. It will conclude with preparation and delivery of presentations to their client.

Participants will be assigned to one of 4 different UX design challenges from large US companies. Last year's clients included

1. UpHealth, innovative global telehealth platform provider
2. Scotts Miracle-Gro, leading lawn and garden products company
3. GAF, world's largest manufacturer of roofing systems
4. Google, global leader in online search, media and productivity tools

We will leverage the UX text “UX Design for Non-UX Professionals” by Edward Stull to provide a foundation for their understanding and providing motivation for participants to work toward and complete their professional certification after the 6 week internship. You will have an opportunity to engage with the author of this book and you will receive a certification for successfully completing the internship. You would be among the first high school students in Iowa to have this opportunity.

The internship will focus on exposing and developing the following competencies in program participants.

1. Demonstrate professional standards/employability skills.

The participant will be expected to:

- a. Employ effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills
- b. Solve problems and think critically
- c. Demonstrate leadership skills and function effectively as a team member
- d. Identify job opportunities in UX and accompanying job duties and tasks

2. Apply professional communications strategies.

The participant will be expected to:

- a. Apply active listening skills to obtain and clarify information
- b. Interpret and communicate information, data, and observations
- c. Deliver formal and informal presentations

3. Describe the emerging field of UX.

The participant will be expected to:

- a. Identify terminology associated with UX including Agile, sprint cycles, back and front-end development, design thinking, empathy mapping, journey mapping, quantitative and qualitative data, end user, iteration, persona, wire-framing, prototype, scrum, user interface design, journey, and empathy mapping
- b. Identify and explain the differences between effective and ineffective design
- c. Explain how design affects our everyday lives

4. Identify and demonstrate introductory observation and research methods.

The participant will be expected to:

- a. Explain the difference between qualitative and quantitative data
- b. Conduct user interviews to gather insights into what users think about a site, an application, a product, or a process
- c. Define customer journey maps that show a user's interactions with a company or product to understand business solution opportunities
- d. Develop a user persona

5. Create effective, accessible, usable, and meaningful solutions for the end user by using UX design principles.

The participant will be expected to:

- a. Identify where an existing product or process can be improved for the end user by using empathy and journey mapping
- b. Sketch and revise designs to understand the concept of wire-framing, prototypes, and rapid iteration
- c. Apply design thinking methodology to understand users, challenge assumptions, redefine problems, and create solutions to prototype and test
- d. Perform various ideation techniques such as prototyping, storyboarding, and game-storming to visually predict and explore a user experience with a product.

6. Develop initial hands-on design skills using professional software.

The participant will be expected to:

- a. Use design elements such as typeface, color, shape, texture, space, and form
- b. Use design principles such as unity, harmony, balance, scale, and contrast
- c. Create wireframes using design software
- d. Create mobile and application layout designs and functions

The UX120 internship is a partnership between Innovate 120, Inc. a non-profit focused on design innovation, and Context Digital, an award-winning experience strategy and design agency with a global client portfolio.

Innovate 120 will provide state-of-the art facilities and support for the program, including the ability for program participants to use Apple workstations and Adobe Creative Suite software for exploring and documenting their solutions. Participants will have access to group meeting spaces, as well as desks for individual or small group focus.

Context Digital will provide its deep industry experience and proven processes, its network of subject matter experts, and leverage its global client base for practical experience opportunities for participants.

From its inception in 2004, Context Digital has focused on digital strategy, experience design and technical development. Their solutions are primarily delivered in the form of complex web sites, mobile apps and software for clients around the world, including Deutsche Bank, Panasonic, Bacardi Global Brands, GAF, Nationwide Insurance, John Deere and BMW. Specific examples include the design for the first in-cab interface for John Deere's precision farming software, the design of the global travel website for the Government of Jamaica, the design of the first online banking solution for Brazil, and recently, a comprehensive telemedicine platform to remotely connect patients with doctors. The practitioners who drove these solutions will be directly engaged with program participants.

The Context Digital mentors will share their professional experience, passion and success with program participants, and challenge them to expand their processes and thinking, to envision new ways of solving old problems.

Client partners

Our client partners for this cohort are still to be named and will bring a range of UX challenges, across diverse industries.

Last year's cohort engaged with projects and senior leadership at the following companies:

UpHealth (www.uphealthinc.com) is a global digital health services company focused on digital transformation of healthcare for patients, care providers, specialists and non-healthcare service providers. They want to engage this cohort in digital management of juvenile diabetes within the broader health network.

Scotts Miracle-Gro (www.scotts.com) is a leading consumer lawn, garden and pest control products company, providing gardening resources and advice to help gardeners and growers transform their own piece of the Earth. Scotts wants to engage this cohort in mobile solutions to guide gardening success.

GAF (www.gaf.com) is North America's largest manufacturer of roofing materials for residential and commercial applications. They want this cohort to explore how to interest and engage high school students in roofing careers.

Google (www.google.com) is a multinational technology company that focuses on artificial intelligence, search engine, online advertising, cloud computing, computer software, quantum computing, e-commerce, and consumer electronics.

Deere & Company (www.deere.com) is a global manufacturing company that focuses on agricultural, construction and forestry equipment and technologies. They engaged this cohort to explore how technology can increase sustainability in agriculture while improving crop yield.

Participants in this internship cohort will gain a deep exposure to the UX field, through professional development instruction and practical application of planning, research and design skills, and use of professional software.

At the conclusion of the cohort, each participant will receive an evaluation, scored in a proficiency rubric that includes the following key measures:

1. Critical thinking
2. User research
3. UX process design
4. UI and visual design
5. Participation and collaboration
6. Presentation skills

This evaluation will be performed by the program facilitators, professional mentors, and each team's respective client.

Each participant will package their individual and team work for their respective client into a project summary and portfolio. They will also develop a complete LinkedIn profile, establishing valuable connections with all of the clients, mentors and professionals who visit our program.