

Internships and Social Capital

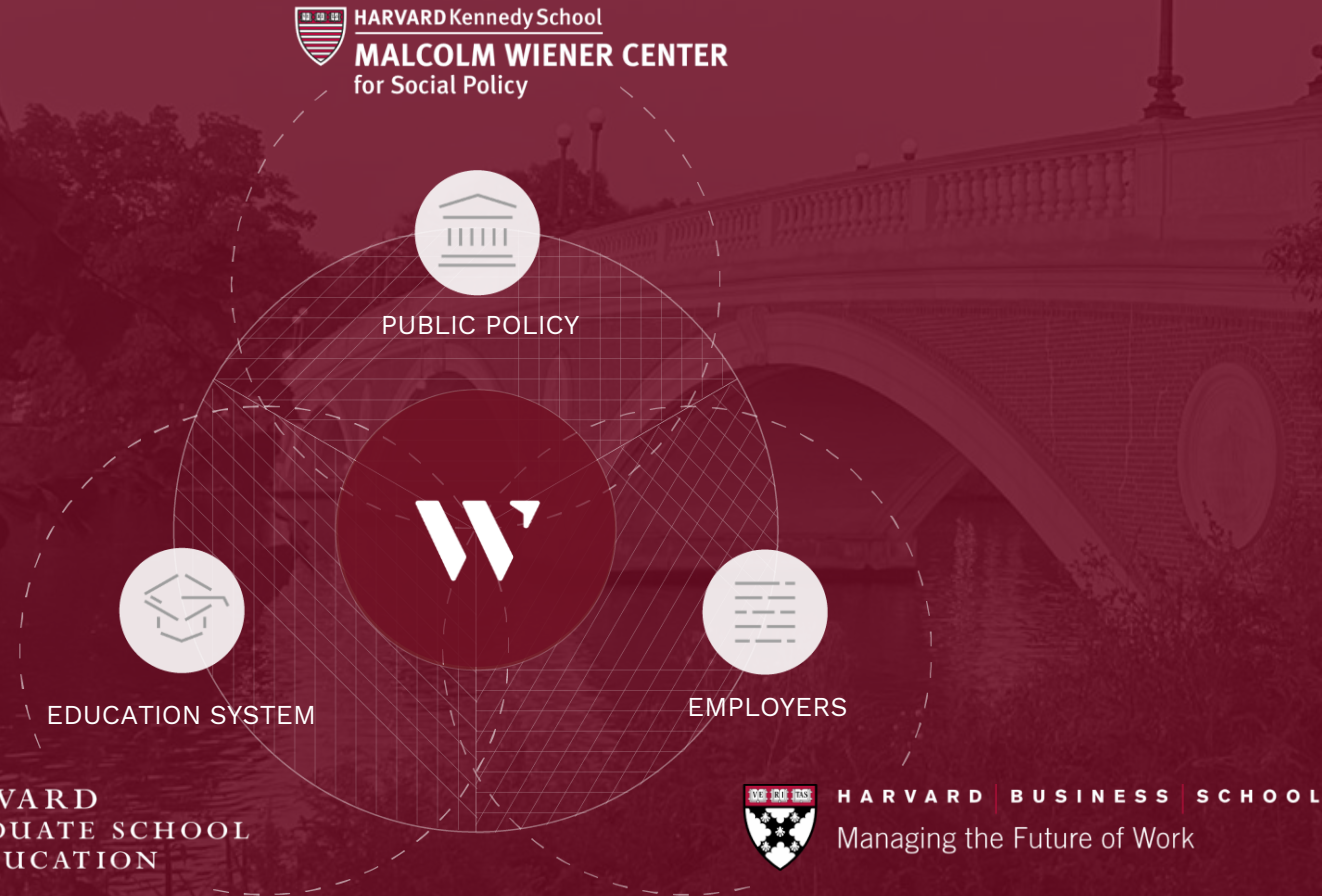
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Exploring unpaid internships: Issues of access, equity, and learning

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ABOUT THE PROJECT ON WORKFORCE



The Project on Workforce is an *interdisciplinary, collaborative project* between the **Harvard Kennedy School** Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy, the **Harvard Business School** Managing the Future of Work Project, and the **Harvard Graduate School of Education**.

Networks and Connections Make a Difference in Getting a Family-Supporting Job

Access to internships can help students forge social and professional connections that will help them in the job search

- Well-established literature on importance of social networks in the job search
- Internships are a primary setting where students meet professional contacts and learn about pathways in an industry
- Study of Florida State graduates: First-generation students have a harder time getting high-quality jobs than better-connected classmates with the same credentials (DeOrtentiis; Van Idekkinge; Wanberg 2021)
- First-generation students are significantly less likely than their peers to have networked with alumni or professionals, discussed career interests with faculty, or interviewed someone in a career field that interests them (National Survey of Student Engagement and Strada Education Network 2022)

Social capital + internship connection

Stronger social networks → increases paid internship opportunities

Access to paid internship → Strengthens social & professional network for transition to labor market



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