

MEKONG RIVER COMMISSION SECRETARIAT



MRC Internship Guidelines

1 June 2011

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1. Introduction

The MRC sees the importance of internship for graduate and post graduate students who would like to seek knowledge and skills for a new career in the field of Integrated Water Resource Management and related disciplines.

The MRC therefore offers different opportunities for internship in the areas of:

- Agriculture and Irrigation
- Basin Development Planning
- Environment
- Flood Mitigation and Management
- Fisheries Management and Development
- Human Resources Management
- Integrated Capacity Building (IWRM, Organisation Development, Gender, and M&E)
- Integrated Water Resource Management
- Information and Knowledge Management
- International Cooperation and Communication
- Navigation
- Sustainable Hydropower

MRC considers internship process is also a process to transfer knowledge and skills from and to riparian countries through giving internship opportunities to riparian fresh graduates. International interns are also eligible to apply.

The purposes of the Internship Programme are to:

- provide opportunities for Mekong Basin interns to expose to and exchange of IWRM and related knowledge and skills in a regional river basin organisation like the MRC;
- expose the interns to the day-to-day work and mission of the MRC so to promote a better understanding of the regional collaboration on Mekong related matters and to introduce the interns to the multicultural work context of the MRC;
- provide the MRC programmes and Sections with the assistance of highly qualified students specialised in various IWRM and related disciplines.

2. Purposes of the Guidelines

The purpose of the internship programme is to:

The purpose of the Internship Guidelines

- To provide guidelines for the Mekong Basin graduate and post-graduate students with relevant academic backgrounds to apply for an intership period at the MRC
- To provide guidelines for MRC Programmes to select and host interns.

3. Office Locations

MRC has two Secretariat Offices, one is in Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR (OSV), and one is in Phnom Penh Capital, Cambodia (OSP). Interns may be offered at any MRC office locations.

4. Eligibility

To qualify for the MRC Internship Programme, candidates should be graduates from recognised universities or academic institutions. Both riparian and international candidates are eligible for the MRC internship programme. MRC may accept intern(s) who have the following conditions:

- Having good internship proposal that shows a clear learning road map at the MRC and a commitment to apply the knowledge and skills into the future work; Priorities are given to riparian interns coming from the four Member Countries.
- Having excellent English language skills are required for the internship programme at the MRC Secretariat (or demonstrated IELTS level 5.0 or higher);
- Internship opportunities may be awarded to international students who have IWRM or related discipline backgrounds.
- Financial supports are only for riparian interns (see 10 – Financial support)
- Interns from other countries (not from the four Member Countries: Cambodian, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam) are not eligible for the stipend;

5. Intern status

As a short-term intern (2 months to 6 months), interns are not considered as MRC staff members. Interns may not be accepted as substitutes for staff to be recruited against authorised posts, and interns may not represent the MRC in any official event.

The hosting programme at MRC is responsible for the development of an appropriate terms of reference (TOR) for the assignment;

6. Obligations

- The rights and obligations of the interns are strictly limited to the terms and conditions of the internship agreement signed by the intern and the MRC;
- The interns must keep confidential any and all unpublished information during the duration of the internship and not publish any reports or papers on the basis of information obtained if without authorisation of the MRC;
- The interns need to comply to all MRC internship programme policy and rules¹
- The MRC shall not cover any health insurance to interns, therefore, all interns must provide proof of health insurance cover prior to commencement of the internship;
- The interns need to provide written notice in case of illness or other unavoidable circumstances which might prevent him/her from fulfilling the internship;
- The interns need to strictly follow the guidance and coaching of the MRC assigned staff during the internship period.

¹ More details on the code of conduct for interns will be included in the letter of agreement.

- All required papers, documents, and reports are to be turned in to MRC assigned staff in a timely manner.

7. Duration of Internship

- The duration of the MRC internship programme is between 2² to 6 months based on the proposal of the interns and the consideration of the hosting MRC Programme or Section. The internship should not exceed six months, with a minimum duration of three months;
- MRC Secretariat has the rights to not (a) appoint interns to a full time job, (b) obligatorily recruit interns after the internship period is finished, and (b) dismiss the internship period any time if the intern show disrespect to any of the MRC and MRC interns policy and regulations.

8. Applications

The MRC Internship Programme is offered 4 interns with 2 for each Secretariat Office twice a year starting in (a) mid-January and (b) mid-September:

| Posting of Announcement in MRC Website | Deadline for Applications | Internship Start Date |
|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| March | Mid May | Mid-September |
| Mid July | Mid September | Mid-January |

Among other required documents, interested students must send the following documents directly to the Human Resources Section of the MRC Secretariat:

- A completed MRC internship application form;
- A copy of his/her most recent resume or curriculum vitae and cover letter;
- A letter from his/her university confirming current enrollment and graduation date;
- A copy of his/her school transcript;
- Letter of interest providing reasons why he/she is seeking an internship with the MRC and what is expected from the experience.

9. Selection Process

- Internship applications received by the MRC Secretariat should be directed to the Human Resources Section (attention to: Human Resources Development Programme Officer – HRD PO) who will maintain an intern candidate roster).
- The HRD PO will periodically circulate intern applications to MRC Programme Coordinators and Section Chiefs (according to the submission time) for consideration.
- The interns will then be considered based on (a) relevance of background, (b) relevance to the TOR requirement, (c) English competencies, (d) purpose of the internship, and 9e)

² This applies to students who are introduced to MRC by riparian Universities. 2 months interns are normally not eligible for internship financial support. Only students with a 3 month internship and above may have the eligibility to access financial support for their internship.

- The HRD PO will support the MRC Programmes to recruit interns through different approaches either by desk review of related information or through one-on-one interviews;
- HRD PO will then announce scholarships to selected applicant(s). Successful candidate(s) will be contacted through email at least 1 week after selection and 4 weeks after the MRC Secretariat received his or her application;

10. Financial Support and Logistic Arrangement

- For non-resident interns to MRC Secretariat who do not have a sponsoring organization, a maximum stipend of US\$250 per month may be made available to cover accommodation and travel costs (the stipend will be for interns normally non-resident in the duty station of MRC Secretariat Offices or who can prove that they do not reside in the host city);
- Interns are responsible for arranging their own accommodation and travel to/from the place of assignment;
- If required, the MRC Secretariat will assist the processing of multiple visas for internship assignments at the OSV and OSP;
- If work-related travel is required by the host Programme or Section during the internship period, DSA and travel costs shall be paid by the host Programme or Section;
- It is the responsibility of the intern to coordinate with the host Programme / Section to ensure that official approval is received for all travels related to work during the assignment.
- The MRC Secretariat will not cover any costs arising from accidents and/or illness incurred during an internship and interns are to have health insurance covered prior to commencing internship at the MRC Secretariat.
- Internship opportunities may be awarded to candidates who are NOT from the four Member Countries and two Dialogue Partner Countries. However, these interns are not eligible for any financial support
- Any other cost e.g. the MRC Secretariat book and documents purchase or non-work-related travelling during the internship period will not be covered by the MRC Secretariat.

11. Working Conditions,

- Interns shall enjoy the holiday policy applied at the MRC Secretariat Offices
- Interns shall not have the entitlement for annual leave;
- The internship programme is full-time therefore, interns are expected to work five days per week from 8.00 a.m. – 4.30 p.m. and are under the supervision of the assigned supervisor from the host Programme/Section;
- Interns can have allowed access to resources available at the assigned Programme or Section e.g. stationary, documents or related information work station, office equipment, desktop computer and internet access;
- No official MRC email addresses will be provided to interns for their internship period;

12. Supervision

- One intern should have one assigned supervisor from whom s/he will get learning guidance and coaching, and to whom the intern will report to. If the supervisor leaves for an extended period of time or is transferred, the Programme/Section Chief is to assign an alternative mentor to the intern;
- At the beginning of the assignment, the supervisor/mentor should go through the TOR with the intern to agree on expected learning results from both sides;
- Upon completion of internship, the supervisor should assess the performance according to the agreed TOR and learning results;
- A letter of recommendation if so required shall be prepared by the supervisor.

13. Administrative

The ICBP (Integrated Capacity Building Programme) HRD PO is responsible for all administration work including managing the internship agreement of interns to finalising the intern's contract. Once the selection process was finalised, the following documents are to be submitted to the HRD PO

- Copy of ID card or passport as appropriate;
- Medical certificate of Good Health/Proof of medical insurance cover;
- Signed copy of the internship agreement including the terms of reference for the assignment;
- Other related documents that might be required by the MRC Secretariat.

14. Contacts at MRCS for internship application

Ms. Sam Leakhena, HRD Programme Officer

Email: leakhena@mrcmekong.org

Office of the Secretariat in Phnom Penh, Cambodia (OSP)



Annex 1: Internship Application Form

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Instruction: Please complete this form clearly and completely. Read carefully and follow the instruction | |
| Family Name: | First Name: |
| Nationality: | Age: |
| Contact Address: | |
| 1). What is your objective of the Internship? | |
| | |
| 2). What is your expected result (knowledge and skills) from the internship? | |
| | |
| 3). What is your plan to apply those knowledge and skills to your work? | |
| | |
| 4) Which MRC programme would you like to apply for: | Please provide your reason, why? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment Programme <input type="checkbox"/> Basin Development Plan Programme <input type="checkbox"/> Information and Knowledge Management Programme <input type="checkbox"/> Mekong Integrated Water Resource | |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Management Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Flood Mitigation and Management Programme <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Irrigation Programme <input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries Programme <input type="checkbox"/> Navigation Programme <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Capacity Building Programme (IWRM, Organisational Development, Gender and M&E) <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative on Sustainable Hydropower <input type="checkbox"/> International Cooperation and Communication Section <input type="checkbox"/> Finance and Administration Section <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resource Section | |
| <p>5). What would be your possible contribution to the selected programme during internship period?</p> | |
| | |
| <p>6). What would be a concrete result of the internship period?</p> | <p>7). What is your expectation in terms of support throughout the internship assignment?</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A report? <input type="checkbox"/> A case study? <input type="checkbox"/> A work plan? <input type="checkbox"/> A story? <input type="checkbox"/> A strategy? <input type="checkbox"/> Etc.(please identify) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Self Financial Support <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking for financial support |
| <p>8). Indicate the duration of your internship assignment.</p> <p>Duration of (<i>indicate no. of months</i>):</p> <p>Fromto</p> | <p>9). When will you be available?</p> |
| <p>Please attached your Curriculum Vitae (CV)</p> | |