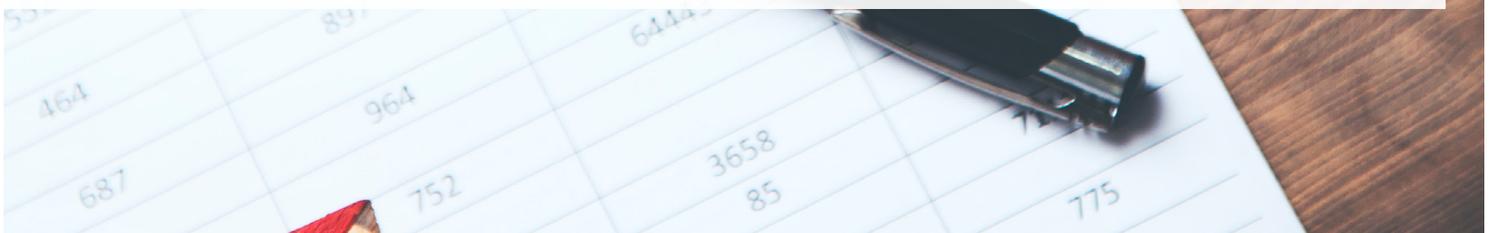




CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUNDING YOUR FIELD WORK TERM EXPERIENCE

The Career Development and Field Work Term Office staff are not financial advisors, and as such, the strategies outlined in this resource are recommendations, not directives. Students are encouraged to consult with appropriate financial professionals or resources for such guidance.





FIELD WORK TERM PLANNING

FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

Field Work Term expenses can fluctuate significantly, contingent on your chosen experience, location, and housing arrangements. These costs can span from minimal expenses to exceeding \$3,000, particularly if you must budget for long-distance travel, housing, and meals.

To assist students in budgeting effectively and ensuring the feasibility of their annual Field Work Term experience requirement, review the Career Development and Field Work Term Office's Funding Guidelines for Field Work Term Experiences.

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EXPLORE FIELD WORK TERM OPTIONS

Students often associate Field Work Term (FWT) as an internship-exclusive requirement and may not consider the various options that may constitute a FWT Experience. This clarification is important to emphasize as students explore the multitude of available FWT experiences, including select on-campus student employment, volunteer opportunities, fellowships, and independent study, to name a few.

It is possible to identify a FWT experience that has minimal expenses. Students are advised to explore FWT options with a Career Advisor in the Career Development and Field Work Term Office by **requesting a FWT Search Planning appointment** via Handshake.

PLAN EARLY

As the academic year approaches, it's prudent to contemplate the nature of your desired Field Work Term experience and any financial factors that might influence your decision. For instance, if a remote internship is your preference, travel expenses may not be a concern. The Career Development and Field Work Term Office advises students to proactively strategize for their Field Work Term (FWT), emphasizing early planning and suggesting the exploration of alternatives if their chosen experience surpasses their budget constraints.

While the primary focus is on early planning for the Field Work Term (FWT) experience requirement in the current academic year, it's also prudent to construct a proactive strategy for future FWT experiences that might entail higher associated costs. For instance, if you're a first-year student with aspirations for an exclusive internship at a San Francisco-based publisher but recognize the current costs are prohibitive, it may be beneficial to earmark this opportunity for your second or third year, affording you more time to save and prepare for an enriching experience with higher expenses.

Once again, early planning emerges as a recommended approach, providing students with the valuable time needed to explore a diverse range of budgetary options and avenues for funding their FWT experience costs.

COMBINE PAID AND UNPAID WORK

For supplemental income to help offset planned and unplanned expenses associated with certain Field Work Term (FWT) experiences, students have the option to engage in a part-time job during their FWT that falls outside the scope of their academic Plan. These additional positions can contribute up to a maximum of 60 hours toward fulfilling the 200-hour FWT experience requirement. These hours, classified as supplemental hours, offer students the flexibility to explore employment opportunities that do not directly align with their educational plan while still contributing to their overall FWT commitment. The Career Development and Field Work Term Office acknowledges that securing a part-time job concurrently with your FWT experience might not be a suitable or attainable choice for every student. However, it remains a viable pathway pursued by many students to augment their financial resources.

CREATE A BUDGET

As an integral component of your early planning for a Field Work Term (FWT) experience, whether paid or unpaid, creating a comprehensive budget for anticipated expenses signifies a forward-thinking approach. This process will assist with the management of foreseeable costs (e.g., travel, housing, and food expenses) while equipping you to effectively address any unforeseen expenses that may arise during your FWT experience.

Access, download, and devise a budget for your FWT Experience using the Career Development and Field Work Term Office's [Expense Tracker Template](#) to prepare a FWT experience budget.

HOUSING CONSIDERATIONS

The cost of housing can significantly impact your Field Work Term (FWT) expenses. Thoughtful budgeting in this category is key to enhancing the feasibility and affordability of your FWT experience. If you have already secured a FWT experience, consider cost-sharing by seeking shared apartments. In major cities like New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, or San Francisco, exploring less expensive (but safe) neighborhoods and relying on public transportation for your daily commute can be a cost-effective strategy.

Alternatively, explore local colleges and universities within your desired geographic area, searching for housing options via their social media (e.g., Facebook) groups or Reddit communities. These avenues often yield short-term sublets at reduced prices, provided by fellow students on break.

Many students opt to stay with relatives in other parts of the country, with family or friends of fellow students, or by sharing housing with peers working in the same city. If you're still in the early stages of your FWT search and haven't secured a position, consider targeting experiences in locations where you have access to accommodations through family or friends. Think broadly about your existing professional network and any potential contacts who may be knowledgeable about different housing opportunities or leads. Consider proactively developing professional connections in regions that you anticipate being located for future FWT experiences.

Finally, don't hesitate to reach out to potential employers to discuss additional support for housing. While some may include housing as part of their compensation package, most are open to providing guidance or addressing concerns, ensuring a smoother transition for your FWT experience.

COST SAVINGS THROUGH STUDENT DISCOUNTS

Explore student discounts and benefits related to transportation, housing, dining, and entertainment in your chosen Field Work Term (FWT) location by using online resources like **Unidays**. While certain discounts may offer only modest savings, they can still contribute to alleviating some of the expenses associated with your FWT experience.

EXTERNAL RESEARCH GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

5th Term Students and above who have successfully completed at least one Field Work Term (FWT) experience have the opportunity to engage in Independent Study work. This may involve non-credit research or applied fieldwork, and it is carried out under the supervision of a full-time faculty sponsor (not a visiting faculty member). Some research and applied projects may qualify for **private funding** through external grants and fellowships, providing additional financial support to students.

FIELD WORK TERM FELLOWSHIPS

Field Work Term fellowships are selective programs that offer funding, mentorship, and the opportunity to be part of a cohort of students working in a particular focus area. The fellowship programs focus on equipping students to make social change through various lenses: environmental protection, food insecurity, population health, theater, public action, and entrepreneurship.

Fellowships are open to returning students (3rd-term through 7th-term) from all academic discipline areas who demonstrate strong merit in their applications. Awards typically range from \$1,000 - \$3,000 and will be determined based on the proposed student budget, cohort size, and available funds. Awardees must meet a minimum need threshold, as determined by the Office of Financial Aid.

Applications for **Field Work Term Fellowships** open in early Fall with hiring decisions made by the end of October.

NEED-BASED FIELD WORK TERM STIPENDS

At Bennington College, our Faculty, Staff, and Administrators are fully aware that the costs associated with Field Work Term (FWT) experiences can, at times, present a challenge for students. To address this, we offer Limited Need-Based Field Work Term Stipends, which are designed to assist students facing financial constraints. These stipends are available to students who meet specific need-based criteria, as determined by the Office of Financial Aid, to help support their FWT experiences.

Eligible students will be notified during the fall term about their qualification for the limited Need-Based Field Work Term Stipend. While there are constraints on the number of students who can receive the stipend and the total amount available, this initiative serves as one of the steps we take to promote equity within the FWT process.

STUDY AWAY AND STUDY ABROAD

Students who are presently enrolled in or have intentions to participate in study away or study abroad programs are not eligible to register a Field Work Term (FWT) experience during their time away from Bennington College. Students who engage in and complete full-term study away or study abroad experiences are eligible to request a FWT waiver upon returning to campus.