



Job Shadow Program

Job Shadow Program Sponsor Guidelines for 2025-26

Thank you for volunteering as a Job Shadow Sponsor this year. Through this program, which emphasizes exploration and reflection, students have the opportunity to learn about a variety of professional pathways. We appreciate you for sharing your knowledge, skills, and professional story with them.

Making the initial connection

As a first step, we will **send an email** to you and your student(s) to introduce you to each other. From there, **we ask that you, the sponsor, make the first outreach to the student(s) to begin making plans for the shadow.** Together, you and the student(s) should find a mutually convenient date and time anytime between December 2025 and late-May 2026. You should also work with the student(s) to solidify the format (if you had chosen the “Flexible Format” option) and/or the location of the shadow (for Flexible and In-Person Format shadows). You can always reach out to us if you have challenges.

Key Dates

On 12/15/25

The **PW Job Shadow team will send an introductory email to you and the student(s)** matched with your shadow on December 15, 2025.

By 1/23/26

Establish a date or general timeframe for the shadow with your student(s). **Please confirm the date by emailing jobshadow@bates.edu.** Be mindful that students **matched with In-Person Format shadows, who also qualify for financial transportation assistance, may be slightly delayed** in their ability to quickly schedule a shadow while we begin to administer our funding program between late-December and early-January.

12/15/25 – 5/23/25

Job shadows can take place ANY time between these dates at a time that works well for you and the student(s). **Job shadows should be completed by Commencement Weekend, which is May 29 - 31, 2025.**

Please note that students may inquire about scheduling their job shadows during one of the following school breaks:

- December 16, 2025 - January 13, 2026 (mid-year break)
- February 14 - February 22, 2026 (February recess)
- March 18 - March 22, 2026 (March recess)
- April 25 - May 3, 2026 (April recess)
- May 4 - May 27, 2026 (Short Term)

SHADOW FORMAT

When you registered to participate in the Job Shadow program this year, you selected from one of four format options: **In-Person, Virtual, On-Campus, or Flexible**. Based on your selection, we advertised your job shadow to the students as such. Therefore, students are aware if their shadow will be in-person, virtual, on-campus, or that there is some flexibility between in-person and virtual experiences.

In the case of “**Flexible Format**” we expect that you will have a conversation with the student(s) about your location, their ease of travel to your location, and any other relevant variables. The format is ultimately your decision, but please note that **due to financial limitations, Purposeful Work is unable to provide transportation funding support to students matched with shadows that were advertised as “Flexible Format”** because of their ability to be conducted in a virtual format.

IN-PERSON Shadows: Information for Hosts

In-person shadows typically last one day, during regular business hours, and can be structured however you see fit. In the event that you are not able to be with your student for part of the time during their visit, please designate a colleague to do so in advance.

Some ideas to help you design your shadow include:

- Take the students on a tour of your work space
- Present an overview about the industry, organization, and profession
- Share the story of your career path including training, coursework, and skills
- Have students sit in on meetings or practice hypothetical tasks, related to your work such as research, writing reports, making a product, etc.
- Schedule informational interviews with other colleagues in various specialties and roles

Overnight accommodations, meals, and local transport for the student(s)

Students may be traveling a great distance from home or campus for this opportunity. In some cases, this may be their first time traveling to a new city on their own. If you indicated during registration that you were able to offer student(s) overnight accommodations and/or meals and/or transportation in your local area, that information was shared with them during the application phase of the program. Please discuss these details with the student so they know what to expect.

Travel logistics and Clearance Paperwork

We recommend that you discuss as many specifics as possible with the student(s) *before* their arrival so that they have realistic expectations and smooth experiences. Topics may include the location of your workplace, your home, travel recommendations, and required clearances, paperwork, etc. The student may be unfamiliar with your area, so any local travel information and help with travel planning to/from the airport, bus, or train station would be appreciated. If you offered to provide local transportation, that detail was also shared with the student(s). If a student plans to arrive by car, please provide information about parking (e.g., in company lot, on street, in garage) if available.

VIRTUAL Shadows: Information for Hosts

If you are hosting a virtual Job Shadow, you are welcome to **design your own experience and offer to connect with student(s) for anywhere between two hours and two days**, depending on your availability and situation. The framework for the job shadow can be determined by your role in your organization, your technical capabilities, and your comfort in sharing information with the student.

Some ideas to help you design your shadow include:

- Meet via video conference for one to two hours, discussing your work and professional pathway
- Set aside additional time to share information about your identity, how it connects to your personal and professional choices, and talk with the student(s) about their identity
- Offer a virtual tour of your work through screen sharing of websites, documents, etc.
- Include the student(s) in your meetings, appointments, and events for the day
- Arrange video meetings between your colleagues and the Bates student(s)

ON-CAMPUS Shadows: Information for Hosts

If you are hosting an On-Campus Format job shadow, you are welcome to **connect with students for anywhere between one to three hours** depending on your availability. We encourage you to design the program however you like, providing an overview of your organization, your industry, and your role.

The Center for Purposeful Work can arrange a space on campus for your meeting with the students, however we are not able to support shadow sponsors' travel or accommodation costs related to the shadow visit. If the cost of travel to campus is prohibitive, please consider changing your shadow to a Virtual Format.

Some ideas to help you design your shadow may include:

- Consider offering a presentation to students about your organization, industry and function
- Share the story of your decision to pursue this work and your pathway to where you are now
- Arrange videos or images that provide details about your work
- Encourage students to prepare questions and make time to answer them during the presentation
- Some hosts will offer individual follow-up meetings with students that same day or virtually after the on-campus shadow, to address individual questions the student(s) may have

GROUP SHADOWS

In some instances, multiple students may have been matched with your job shadow. If this is the case with your shadow, you are welcome to create a grouped job shadowing experience (please note that based on your registration form answers, we have already shared your group shadow preferences with students). If you would prefer to not coordinate a group shadow, we suggest that you ask for a student volunteer to lead the planning process, as a group leader. If you would like our assistance in finding a group leader, please let us know.

DAY OF THE SHADOW

Job Shadows are designed to provide students with career exploration experiences. The students applied because they are interested in learning about you and your professional pathway. They may not have any experience in your industry, but they recognize an alignment between your job shadow offering and their interests, their academics and, potentially, their long-term career goals and dreams.

You may design a job shadow visit (or zoom presentation) however you like. Consider that the students may want to understand your industry in general, as well as the specific function you are in, the tasks involved, the skills required, and the preparation needed. They may want to know about the values of your organization, the purpose of your work, and even meet other colleagues (as appropriate). Additionally, you may want to share the story of your own career, including your experience in college, your first job, and how you made your professional decisions along the way.

Please note that a job shadow is not the same as an internship or temporary job. ***Students should not perform any work for your organization*** (this is especially critical for international students who are studying at Bates with an F-1 Visa, as any work in the U.S. must be reviewed and approved through the Curricular Practical Training Process). Students may be included in conversations and meetings, as appropriate, offered suggested reading, and even practice the tasks related to the work, but should not be considered an intern or employee.

As you develop your plan for the shadow day, please communicate directly with the student(s) about the details and provide them with the appropriate links or address for the experience. Also, please advise the student(s) in advance of the shadow about appropriate attire and any other expected preparation.

Photos

Consider taking a photo or screenshot of you connecting with the student(s). If you have this opportunity, please forward pictures to us at jobshadow@bates.edu.

Questions

If you have any questions or issues along the way, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at jobshadow@bates.edu. Thank you in advance for working with your student to prepare for a positive and rewarding job shadow experience!

Thank you again,

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