



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
Office of the Comptroller  
Business Management Group



**Student Conservation Association**  
Conservation Internships

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## National Parks Business Plan Initiative Request for Applications

### Overview

The National Parks Business Plan Initiative (BPI) is a creative public/private partnership designed to promote the long-term health of our national parks through development of improved financial planning and management tools. The BPI is a joint effort of the U.S. National Park Service (NPS) and the Student Conservation Association (SCA). Each summer, graduate students from leading business and public policy schools become management consultants in selected national park units. Selected consultants will work with park staff to produce a business plan that clearly outlines park operational requirements, identifies financial resources that are currently available, and analyzes any funding gap that exists. Consultants also work with park staff to identify operational and investment priorities and develop strategies for meeting those needs. In addition, a handful of park units that have produced business plans in the past will be revisited to update their plans and/or perform various in-depth analyses to assist in program development.

Up to 25 consultants will be assigned to two- or three-person teams at national park units across the country. The group of parks participating during the summer of 2007 session has not yet been finalized. While we will attempt to accommodate individual preferences for location (among the parks on the final list only) consultants should be aware that they **may be placed in any park** on the final list.

### Job Description

The eleven-week program typically begins the first week in June with a week-long orientation session in a national park and ends in mid-August. **Consultant attendance at training is mandatory.** For 2007, the internship will begin Sunday, June 3rd and conclude on Saturday, August 18th.

Over the course of the summer, teams of consultants will interview park staff and review budgets and other relevant documents in order to:

- Analyze the park's programs and operations
- Determine how park resources are applied to core versus non-core activities
- Identify standards of operation for each program
- Document current sources and uses of funds
- Quantify future funding requirements
- Identify gaps between park needs and current funding
- Develop financial and management strategies for addressing funding shortfalls
- Perform ancillary analyses to support the business plan

At the end of the summer the teams of consultants will present a report of their findings to park management. A business plan, based on a template developed specifically for the BPI, is the forum for these findings. Each consultant will report directly to their park's superintendent, with oversight provided by NPS staff in Washington, D.C. who will provide program leadership, offer technical guidance, and

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ensure consistency of the analysis. Additionally, SCA staff in Arlington, Virginia will be available to the consultants for logistical support.

### **Qualifications**

Both first- and second-year graduate students are encouraged to apply.

Required:

- Exceptional financial and/or quantitative analysis skills
- Excellent time management/project management skills
- Superb oral and written communication skills, including presentation skills (English)
- Entrepreneurial outlook, resourceful work habits, and ability to work independently
- Experience in working with people from a broad range of backgrounds
- Ability to work as a team player; a positive attitude
- Understanding of and commitment to the mission of the National Park Service
- Interest in conservation
- Flexibility in work style, an open-mind, and a sense of humor
- Availability for all program dates

Desired:

- Consulting, government or nonprofit experience
- Work in or with a national park unit

### **Compensation**

Each park will provide housing and office space. Utility costs are typically included. A vehicle for local use is typically also available for shared use by the team of consultants. Each consultant will be provided a stipend of \$650 per week (\$7150 total for the internship), as well as reimbursement for travel to and from the training program and the park assignment. SCA provides 24-hour accident/injury insurance and the opportunity to purchase low-cost medical coverage during the consultancy.

### **Application Process**

Application packages must include each of the following:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Names and contact information for at least two references
- Writing sample (two to five pages)

In your cover letter, be sure to explain how your specific work experience and educational qualifications relate to the requirements of this internship. Also include the dates that you are available to work in the summer according to your school schedule. Your writing sample may be from any area of your work, and should be representative of your current writing skills.

Application packages should be sent via e-mail (preferred), fax or mail to:

Kristen Jontos  
National Park Service  
ATTN: Business Management Group, Office of the Comptroller  
1849 C Street NW  
MS - 2711 - MIB  
Washington DC 20240  
[NPS\\_BP\\_Help@nps.gov](mailto:NPS_BP_Help@nps.gov)

Applications will be accepted through January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007, by close of business. Applying early is recommended. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Staff from the National Park Service will be conducting interviews at some institutions beginning in early February. **Please contact your career center to determine if interviews will be held on your campus.** If so, your career center will likely establish dates for resume submission and interview registration, which will be in advance of the deadline. For schools where on-campus interviews will not be held, viable candidates will be interviewed by telephone.

Positions will be offered on a rolling basis. Final park assignments will not be made until after the team is complete (after all employment offers have been accepted). Final park assignments will be made on the basis of students' relevant experience and unique park needs, making every effort to accommodate student preferences.

For more information:

- The National Park Service, visit <http://www.nps.gov>
- The Student Conservation Association, visit <http://www.thesca.org>
- Channel Islands National Park Business Plan  
<http://www.nps.gov/chis/parkmgmt/business-plan.htm>
- Valley Forge National Historical Park Business Plan  
<http://www.nps.gov/vafo/parkmgmt/upload/Business%20Plan%202006.pdf>