Career realities for rising scientists have changed dramatically in recent years. In recognition of UNC’s prominent national role in responding proactively to these changes, UNC was one of a handful of institutions awarded a Broadening Experience in Scientific Training (BEST) grant from the NIH common fund. This 5-year award allows us to offer an innovative new internship program to the life science graduate students and postdocs in your laboratory. Here are answers to some FAQs many faculty mentors have when they first hear about the program.

1. Can my trainee participate in an internship without my consent?
   No. As part of the internship application, trainees submit a signed Faculty Member Consent Form (blank form available at: http://tibbs.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/PI-Consent-Form-ImPACT-2016.pdf).

2. How long does an internship last?
   ImPACT can fund a trainee for 160 hours. How those hours are used is up to the trainee, the faculty mentor, and the internship host. Some hosts prefer a full time arrangement (which would last roughly 4 weeks), whereas others prefer a part time arrangement.

3. Will students and postdocs be allowed to “keep projects going” by coming in to lab on nights and/or weekends while doing their internships?
   Yes! And we encourage them to do this so that the effect of internships on students’ time to degree and trainees’ publication records are not negatively affected by the internship experience. We also encourage mentors to discuss this with the trainees to develop a realistic set of goals and expectations for their effort in the lab during the internship. Note this is especially critical for trainees doing a part time internship where the 160-hour internship is spread out over several months.

4. Who pays for the internship?
   ImPACT is funded through an NIH BEST grant, university funds, and industry partnerships. Graduate students’ and postdocs’ salary level will not change during the internship. The Office of Graduate Education will coordinate with your department finance and HR contacts to move the trainee’s stipend/salary/fees/health insurance to another source for the time corresponding to the internship.

5. Can any graduate student or postdoc participate? How many internships will you fund?
   Both grad students and postdocs are eligible for funded internships. We anticipate funding about 30 internships this year, with ¾ of those being graduate student internships. Graduate student must have passed their qualifying exam.
6. When will the internships start?
   Full time ImPACT internships should take place during the summer. ImPACT encourages part time interns to begin their internship during the summer and all internships in this round need to be completed by December 31st 2017.

7. Will an internship affect my trainee’s annual effort reporting?
   The US government recently stated that predoc and postdoc trainees paid on any federal grants (NIH, NSF, DoD, etc) are expected to engage in career development activities (Uniform Guidance 200.400-2). NIH has interpreted this policy statement to mean that trainees participating in professional development and experiential non-bench training (including short-term internships such as these) do not need to report their effort differently. For more information see http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_magazine/previous_issues/articles/2014_12_17/caredit.a1400315

8. In what career areas are internships available?
   There are internship opportunities in the following broad career areas:
   a. Business Development, Technology Transfer, and Entrepreneurship
   b. Science Policy
   c. Industry Research and Development
   d. Teaching Intensive Careers
   e. Outreach, Research/Program Administration
   f. Science/Medical Writing

9. Which companies/organizations will be hosting interns?
   The list of companies is always growing and includes institutions in RTP such as BD, EPA, RTI, Rho, Sigma Xi, ETSI, AgBiome, Bayer Crop Science, NCBC, NC Board of Science and Technology, Parion, NIEHS, UNC Office of Tech Dev. An up to date list is maintained at http://tibbs.unc.edu/unc-impact-program/unc-impact-program-internship-partner-list/

10. I know of a local company that would be a great internship provider. Whom should I tell?
    We are always looking for new internship providers. Please contact Dr. Patrick Brandt (pdb@unc.edu), Director of the ImPACT program, to make an introduction.

11. If I give my consent is my trainee guaranteed an internship?
    There is no guarantee that trainees who pass phase 1 will be chosen by an internship provider since each provider will make the final placement decision. That said, ImPACT will only accept the number of trainees we believe we can place with internship hosts. We will help broker relationships, and each internship provider has already stated an interest in hosting an intern.

12. What does the internship application consist of?
    The application process consists of two phases – 1) an internal UNC application wherein trainees are chosen by the ImPACT leadership team (deadline is February 1st, 2017), and 2) placement of the internal winners with one of our internship providers. Besides completing an online application, trainees must also submit the following documents.

b. A personal statement that addresses what career path they are preparing for, and how their career development will benefit from an internship.

c. Current CV

13. Is there a place I can go to learn more about the ImPACT program?
   • ImPACT section of the TIBBS website: http://tibbs.unc.edu/unc-impact-program/
   • ASBMB Today article, summer 2016: http://www.asbmb.org/asbmbtoday/201605/Education/

If you have a question that is not answered here please contact Dr. Patrick Brandt at pdb@unc.edu