DataArts
Request for Haverford College Hurford Intern for Summer 2018

Contact:

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Description of organization:

DataArts (formerly the Cultural Data Project) in a national nonprofit organization, based in Philadelphia, which serves 18,000+ arts and cultural organizations (museums, theaters, dance troupes, etc.). We are a cross between a nonprofit arts service organization and a technology company, with a dash of research institute/think tank.

DataArts equips arts and cultural organizations to collect, learn from, and use data effectively. Primarily, organizations enter their financial and programmatic data into our online data collection system, then can run reports to better understand their own data, and the dataset allows us to produce reports for other organizations, such as Americans for the Arts, the League of American Orchestras, and the National Guild for Community Arts Education.

Starting in 2016, DataArts began a series of studies related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the arts and cultural community. We have built and launched a survey system that allows us to measure the demographics of the arts and cultural workforce in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, LGBTQ identification, age, and disability status. Also, we have been working to better identify organizations that serve or represent underserved populations in the U.S.

Proposed work for an intern:

We propose that a Haverford student intern with the Research Team at DataArts, which is focused on analyzing data about arts and cultural organizations, their workforces, and their audiences. In the summer of 2018, we will be in the midst of several studies related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the arts and cultural community (see above). The Research intern would work closely with the Research staff to write new reports, develop new iterations of existing reports, test methodologies, and work with our newly-launched automated data systems (including data visualizations for the web).
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Qualifications/interest:

The most important qualifications would be (1) an interest in nonprofit organizations, especially nonprofit arts organizations and (2) an interest - or at least a lack of fear - in working with large datasets. Qualified students would be welcome from most any discipline, but those with interest or experience in Computer Science, Public Policy, Politics, Sociology, Anthropology, Economics, as well as the Fine Arts, would be most welcome. While not required, experience working in Excel, statistics programs (SPSS, SaaS, Stata, R), mapping systems (ESRI, QGIS), data visualization (Adobe Creative Suite, Tableau), or programming (Java, HTML, PHP, Python) would be welcome. In recent years, Hurford interns have frequently worked in Excel, R, and Python and been able to develop their expertise and work quite independently.

Tasks:

In 2018, we expect to be working on demographic surveys and reports on arts and cultural audiences and workforces in several large cities (e.g. Los Angeles, New York City), as well as completing a large study looking specifically at LGBTQ identification at major arts funders. We work generally on a wide variety of topics, such as:

- the role of arts and culture in economic development
- measuring social impacts of arts programs
- Creative Placemaking
- financial health of arts and cultural organizations
- the impact(s) of wider social and economic trends on arts and culture
- gentrification in cities and the role of arts and cultural organizations
- arts and cultural events calendars as leading indicators of neighborhood change

Skills and experience offered:

The internship will afford candidates the opportunity to experience what it is like to work with “Big Data” in the context of working with nonprofit organizations, while trying to understand and influence public policy decisions. As such, it will provide a somewhat unique window onto three different professional works, which could be invaluable to a student with the willingness and will to take advantage of it. Depending on the projects involved and the student’s interest, we will offer the opportunity to gain hand-on experience and learn to use a variety of software tools that can be professionally and academically valuable. In particular, we would be willing to train a student to use advanced statistical, mapping, and data visualization software.

Challenges for undergraduate students:

DataArts is a pleasant, collaborative organization with a highly motivated and experienced staff. The pace of work in our organization is quite high. A student would be expected to function semi-independently at first and mostly-independently as the summer went on.
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Rewards for interns:

DataArts takes seriously the idea that an internship should offer opportunities for both professional and educational development. We will ensure appropriate mentoring on both counts and are committing to the student having a fruitful summer. The intern’s direct supervisor is a Haverford alum, and the organization has successfully hosted Hurford interns in the past. Finally, the student will complete the internship with a portfolio of work that they would be welcome to use or cite as they pursue future employment or academic opportunities.

Conditions of work:

Work takes place during normal weekday working hours, Monday-Friday. No evening or weekend work is anticipated. Little or no travel is anticipated (possibly a day trip to NYC or DC, if appropriate to project work). DataArts office is located a half-block from the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, in Old City Philadelphia. About 30 staff work at DataArts, which is a fast-paced but friendly and often overly-snack-filled environment.

Supervising the student:

The Research Manager (Nick Crosson HC’93) will train and directly supervise the student for work conducted at DataArts, with assistance from the Research Associate (Rebecca Johnson), as appropriate.