Innovation Academy Sustainability Internships

Innovation Academy Sustainability interactive

Freiburg Institute for Interactive Materials and Bioinspired Technologies & Cluster of Excellence Living, Adaptive and Energy-autonomous Materials (livMatS)

Internship at FIT / livMatS - www.fit.uni-freiburg.de / www.livmats.uni-freiburg.de/en

At the University of Freiburg, the Freiburg Institute for Interactive Materials and Bioinspired Technologies (FIT), the Freiburg Materials Research Facility (FMF) and the Cluster of Excellence Living, Adaptive and Energy-autonomous Materials (livMatS) are dedicated to the development of new materials and technologies for a more sustainable society. At the three research centers, we take a holistic view of sustainability as an interdisciplinary undertaking that encompasses chemistry, physics, biology and engineering. In addition, we also explore the societal impact of new technologies by conducting research on technology acceptance and sustainability analysis as well as philosophical questions arising from disruptive processes.

Fields of activity of the internship:

Assist in performing research in a highly international and interdisciplinary setting. Different options are offered for students of natural sciences or engineering, for example:

Option A: 3D printing / additive manufacturing
Maskless photolithography using digital light processing (DLP) enables the fast, flexible, and cost-effective fabrication of complex microscopic structures on surfaces of various shapes and substrates. It allows precise direct writing of surface functionalization patterns with diverse geometries and chemical properties.

Option B: Bioinspired adaptive architecture
Natural, plant-based materials and 4D printing enable smart building facades that adapt to changing weather conditions. Cellulose, a sustainable material that responds to humidity and temperature like certain plants, can be used to develop responsive shading systems. These systems could improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions by regulating indoor temperatures without external energy input.

Depending on your academic background and interests, other projects may also be suitable. The specific project focus will be determined in consultation with Prof. Jürgen Rühe as part of the selection process.

Required application documents

CV, grade record, Certificate of enrollment at home university

Internship language:

Good command of english (oral and written) is a key requirement

Possible major(s)/areas of study

Chemistry, Engineering, Physics
Biology (bioinspiration), Material Sciences

Other subjects are also possible for candidates who are interested in the research topic.

Learning outcomes:

- Get a first understanding of the performance of research in an interdisciplinary and international setting
- Becoming trained in interdisciplinary scientific communication
- Learning of scientific methods to address complex questions
- Understanding of the complexity of sustainable technologies

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Öko-Institut e.V.
Institut für angewandte Ökologie
Institute for Applied Ecology

- **Internship with Oeko-Institut** - https://www.oeko.de/en

Founded in 1977, the Institute develops principles and strategies for realising the vision of sustainable development at global, national and local level. Based on value-oriented scientific research, the Oeko-Institut provides consultancy services for decision-makers in politics, industry and civil society on topics such as Digitalisation, Energy Transition and Climate Policy, Just Transition, Nuclear Power, Mobility Transition, Sustainable Economy, Resources Transition and Environmental Law.
Main clients of the Institute include German ministries at the federal and regional-state level, businesses and the European Union. It also takes on commissions from NGOs and environmental organisations. The Oeko-Institut is a non-profit association. Its financial resources come mainly from third-party project-based funding.

Fields of activity of the internship:

Support for ongoing consulting and research projects on the heat transition in Germany. Possible topics are to be determined jointly:

- Business Models for Community-Owned Heating Networks
- Implementation of Heating Plans in Small Municipalities
- Coordination of energy infrastructure development incl. phase out of gas
- Methods: literature and internet reasearch, expert interviews

Qualifications:

- Interest in the topic and in municipal climate protection
- Basic knowledge of climate and energy policy at international, national and/or local level
- Basic knowledge of financing instruments and mechanisms, incl. citizen participation
- Ability to work independently and reliably
- If possible, experience in research and reporting in scientific projects

Required application documents

CV, Motivation letter & Certificates

Internship language:

Working language is English. German language skills are an advantage in everyday life and to get inside views into other projects.

Possible major(s)/areas of study

Preferably a student of economics, finance management, industrial engineering or comparable

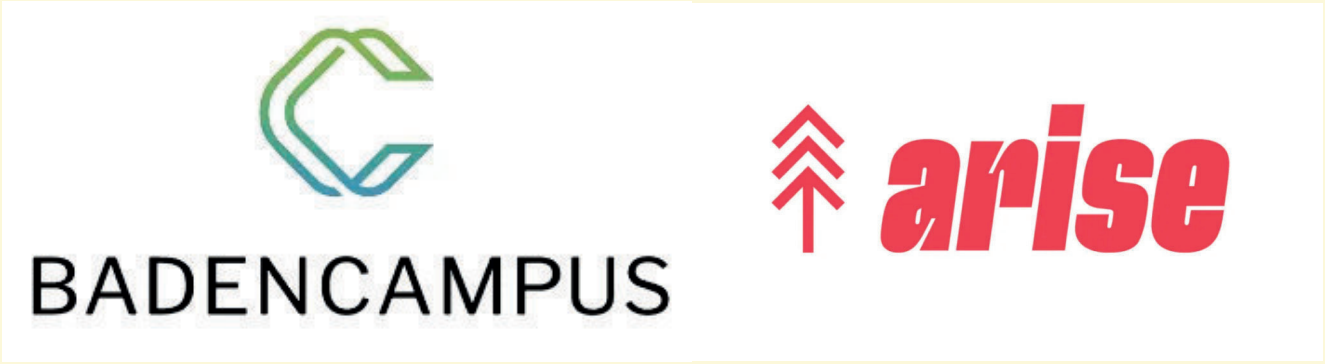
Other subjects are also possible as long as there is a clear connection to the field of work of the internship.

Learning outcomes:

- In-depth insight into the work of an institute for scientific policy advice: project management and administration
- Insight into the processing of a scientific project: structure, methods, analyses, report
- Specialist knowledge of the decarbonization of (municipal) energy infrastructure and financing challanges and opportunities

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BadenCampus (www.badencampus.de) and ARISE Accelerator (www.arise-accelerator.de)
BadenCampus is a dynamic innovation and technology hub fostering collaboration between startups, established companies, researchers, and investors. It provides an inspiring environment for innovation, entrepreneurship, and the development of future-oriented technologies and business models.

The ARISE Accelerator is BadenCampus' deep-tech acceleration program supporting early-stage founders in turning innovative ideas into scalable businesses. Through tailored coaching, expert mentoring, workshops, access to a strong network, and connections to corporate and industry partners, ARISE helps startups accelerate their growth and successfully enter the market. Interns are primarily assigned to the arise division and work in a dynamic, small team with flat hierarchies and personalized guidance.

Fields of activity of the internship:

- **Startup Ecosystem:** Assistance with startup initiatives, as well as partner support and acquisition.
- **Events:** Coordination, organization, and active support for events.
- **Content & Materials:** Preparation of presentations, event materials, and documentation.
- **Teamwork:** Participation in team meetings and independent handling of tasks based on personal interests.

Required qualifications:

- Strong initiative, independence, and a solution-oriented approach to work.
- Enjoyment of working in a dynamic, small team and an interest in the startup scene.
- Strong communication skills and a confident demeanor when interacting with startups and partners.
- A hands-on mindset and enthusiasm for innovation, entrepreneurship, and networking.

Required application documents

Résumé und Cover Letter

Internship language:

English is possible — since German is the standard working language, knowledge of German is an advantage

Possible major(s)/areas of study

- Economics & Engineering
- Environmental Sciences
- Communication & Media Studies
- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Open to related fields of study

Learning outcomes:

- **Practical Insight & Hands-On Experience:** Gain an understanding of how an innovation hub, an accelerator, and the regional startup ecosystem work.
- **Responsibility & Methodology:** Work independently with structured guidance and regular feedback sessions with a dedicated mentor.
- **Networking:** Build connections with founders, universities, and industry partners.

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Internship at Biosphärengebiet Schwarzwald - www.biosphaerengebiet-schwarzwald.de
The Black Forest biosphere area is designated as a UNESCO biosphere reserve. Biosphere reserves are regions in which the coexistence of man and nature is promoted. Cultural landscapes that have grown over centuries have created valuable habitats for man and nature. The Black Forest biosphere area includes a variety of natural and cultural landscapes such as mixed mountain forests, moors, rivers and lakes, rocks and boulder heaps. They provide valuable habitats for the animal and plant world. The central task is to find a balance between the natural cycles and the use for regional value creation.

Three counties, 28 municipalities and the city of Freiburg joined forces in 2016 to form the Black Forest Biosphere-Reserve. Its office is located in the small town of Schönau im Schwarzwald.

Fields of activity of the internship:

Research activities / Social Media / various other tasks
Collaborate in one or more of the following areas:

- Land use: forestry and agriculture
- Nature conservation, monitoring, research
- Regional development, economy, tourism
- Education, society, culture, and social affairs
- Public relations and service

Qualifications:

Required

- Ability to work independently
- Team player with creativity & curiosity
- Organizational and problem-solving skills

Preferred

- Good oral and written communication skills
- Social media and web marketing experience
- Positive attitude

Required application documents

Résumé & Cover Letter

Internship language:

German language skills at level B1 or similar are a prerequisite for the internship.

Possible major(s)/areas of study

Environmental Sciences
Biology / Geography / German / Politics / Education Science

Other areas of study are possible as well, as long as there is a general interest in our work.

Learning outcomes:

- Understand the interaction of agriculture, regional development, nature conservation and environmental education in the biosphere area.
- Analyze successes in the Black Forest biosphere area and get to know the networking of UNESCO biosphere reserves
- Deepen cross-cultural understanding and German language skills

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IVU Umwelt GmbH
Umweltplanung - Informationssysteme

Internship at IVU Umwelt GmbH - www.ivu-umwelt.de

IVU Umwelt GmbH has been active in the field of air quality management for more than 30 years. Its core expertise includes consulting, the development and application of air quality models, emission inventories, software solutions, and the integration of models and data into Geographic Information Systems (GIS). IVU also specializes in GIS-based modelling as well as the analysis, processing, and visualization of measurement data and statistics. The company develops and distributes the IMMIS model family for modelling vehicle-related emissions and pollutant dispersion at different spatial scales, as well as FLADIS, a software system for automated, area-wide visualization of environmental data. IVU carries out numerous projects for the German Environment Agency, federal states, municipalities, and private clients in Germany and elsewhere in Europe. Its interdisciplinary team includes experts in physics, meteorology, systems science, civil engineering, hydrology/geosciences, and computer science.

Fields of activity of the internship:

- Assisting with current projects
- Preparing, verifying, and visualizing geospatially referenced data using QGIS
- Preparing, verifying, and analyzing complex time-series data
- Writing simple scripts in R or Python
- Assisting with the programming of complex tasks
- Assisting with the preparation of documentation and reports

Required qualifications:

- Willingness to do “desk work”
- Experience with Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Basic programming skills in R or Python
- Scientific mindset
- Experience with computer software (Windows, Office, statistics)
- Ability to work independently and take initiative
- Reliability and a responsible approach to work

Possible major(s)/areas of study

Engineering or natural sciences related to meteorology, physics, or mathematics

Required application documents

Résumé & Cover Letter

Internship language:

English is possible — basic knowledge of German would be an advantage

Learning outcomes:

- Learn about the work processes of an engineering firm
- Gain experience and develop skills in the project-based application of the mentioned activities

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GartenCoop Freiburg - https://www.gartencoop.org
Gartencoop Freiburg is a community-supported agriculture (CSA) cooperative based in Tunsel, a village in the region of Freiburg, Germany. It brings together farmers and consumers who jointly share responsibility for sustainable food production. Members finance the farm collectively through annual contributions and, in return, receive a share of fresh, organic vegetables each week. This solidarity model ensures fair wages for farmers, ecological cultivation without chemical fertilizers or pesticides, and transparency in production and costs. What characterizes Gartencoop Freiburg is its strong emphasis on community participation — members not only share the harvest but also take part in decision-making, farm workdays, and educational activities. The project promotes local food sovereignty, short supply chains, and a cooperative economy based on trust, sustainability, and social justice.

Intern‘s Expected Tasks:

- Supporting the farming team in agricultural activities
- Assiting CSA members during community deployment
- Participation in the preparation, implementation, and follow-up of GartenCoop activities as part of the „**AgriKultur Festival**“.
- Assisting with food distribution

Qualifications:

- Enjoy working outdoors in all weather conditions (work clothes provided)
- Ability to work in a team and enjoy working in small and large groups
- Interest in climate protection, food issues, and the mobility transition
- Passion for gardening
- Willingness to participate sometimes in community projects on Sundays
- Interest in cycling is an advantage

Required application documents

CV & Motivation letter

Internship language:

German language skills are not necessary for the internship but allow a broader deployment. In addition, German language skills are an advantage in everyday life in Freiburg.

Possible major(s)/areas of study

The field of study is not of central importance. What is important is that there is a strong general interest in agriculture, sustainable food supply and climate protection and a willingness to perform demanding physical work.

Learning outcomes:

- Learn about Sustainable food production
- Gain knowledge about climate change and the role of the global food system
- Understand community-based solutions and self-organization in a group

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Internship at Weingut Andreas Dilger - www.weingut-andreas-dilger.de/
Andreas Dilger Winery is an organic winery located in Freiburg, Germany. The winery specializes exclusively in PIWI grape varieties, which are fungus-resistant grape varieties that support environmentally friendly and sustainable viticulture. The winery handles the entire production process, from growing and harvesting the grapes to processing the grapes and producing the wine. In addition to wine production, Andreas Dilger Winery also sells its wines directly to customers and operates as an event venue. As a small, independent winery, it combines organic farming, innovative grape varieties, the production of alcoholic and non-alcoholic wines, sales and event management.

An internship at the winery can therefore provide practical experience in different areas of organic viticulture and winery operations, but also in the fields of marketing and event management.

Fields of activity of the internship:

- Vineyard work and maintenance
- Cellar work and assisting with wine production
- Bottle preparation, labeling and packaging
- Marketing and promotion of the winery and its wines
- Assisting with the organization and coordination of events

Required qualifications:

- Enjoyment of hands-on work and working outdoors in nature
- Ability to work independently and take initiative
- Willingness to learn and try new tasks
- Reliability and a responsible approach to work
- Flexibility and willingness to work as part of a team

Internship language:

English is possible — basic knowledge of German would be an advantage

Possible major(s)/areas of study

- Environmental Science / Environmental Studies
- Business Administration / Business Management
- Marketing / Digital Marketing
- Agriculture / Agricultural Sciences

Learning outcomes:

- Gain an understanding of organic farming and sustainable viticulture
- Learn about the production of natural, low-intervention wines
- Gain insight into the challenges of organic grape growing and small-scale wine production
- Develop an understanding of direct marketing and self-promotion in a small winery

Required application documents

Résumé & Cover Letter

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Internship at ASF Freiburg - www.abfallwirtschaft-freiburg.de

ASF is Freiburgs municipal service company responsible for waste collection, street cleaning, and waste management. Its activities contribute to maintaining a clean urban environment and promoting the responsible use of resources.

ASF operates various recycling centres as collection points for recyclable materials and household waste that cannot always be disposed of through regular household collection. These include electronic devices, furniture, metals, paper, cardboard, and certain hazardous substances The collected materials are directed towards appropriate recycling or disposal processes. Anything that's too good to throw away ends up at the FUNDFABRIK, the new secondhand store of ASF. The FUNDFABRIK focuses on reuse by sorting, inspecting, refurbishing and selling second-hand items. Together, these areas provide insight into waste management, resource conservation, and the circular economy.

Fields of activity of the internship:

Main focus will be the work at at FUNDFABRIK. Depending on preferences and personal aptitude, work at the recycling center can also be part of the internship.

- Sorting and categorising second-hand items
- Cleaning and preparing items for resale
- Helping with inventory management and stock organisation
- Assisting customers and answering basic questions about products.
- Supporting daily operations and maintaining an organised workspace.

Required qualifications:

- Interest in sustainability, recycling, and the circular economy.
- Teamwork and good communication skills.
- Physical fitness for handling and moving items.
- Basic customer service skills.

Required application documents

Résumé & Cover Letter

Internship language:

German language skills at level B1 or similar are a prerequisite for the internship.

Possible major(s)/areas of study

- German
- Environmental Sciences and Engineering
- Circular Economy and Resource Management
- Business Administration and Logistics
- Environmental Educational

Learning outcomes:

- Learn about the challenges of sustainable waste management in practical operations.
- Trace the path from waste collection to recycling or reuse.
- Compare recycling and reuse in terms of their environmental benefits.
- Understand the importance of waste prevention and resource conservation.

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Internship with Innovation Academy e.V. - www.innovation-academy.de
Innovation Academy sees itself as part of a global movement that aims to contribute to societal transformation through educating on sustainable development. The cornerstones of our educational work are sensitization, knowledge acquisition, activation, exchanging of experiences and the understanding that all of us can be influenced by positive, practical set examples. We organize specialized trips, excursions, and educational tours on the themes of innovation and sustainable development. Topics covered include sustainable development topics, such as renewable energy, architectural rehabilitation, climate and environmental protection, organic farming, and water and waste management. Long-term projects with project partners expand our own realms of experience and provide new insights that contribute to everyday education work.

Fields of activity of the internship:

The intern will help Innovation Academy with activities related to sustainability education, including:

- Participating in guided tours
- Translating projects into English for the website
- Documenting activities (photo, video)
- Researching sustainability-related topics
- Collaboration with educational projects
- Marketing and social media activities for English speaking countries

Qualifications:

Required

- Ability to work independently
- Team player with creativity & curiosity
- Organizational and problem-solving skills

Preferred

- Good oral and written communication skills
- Social media and web marketing experience
- Positive attitude

Required application documents

CV & Motivation letter

Internship language:

German language skills are not absolutely necessary for the internship, but allow a broader deployment. In addition, German language skills are an advantage in everyday life in Freiburg.

Possible major(s)/areas of study

Environmental Sciences / Geography / Economy / German / Politics / Education Science

Other areas of study are possible as well, as long as there is a general interest in our work.

Learning outcomes:

- Getting a deep insight into Freiburg as a sustainable city and learn about the history and actors behind the development
- Gaining an understanding of working with an NGO related to sustainability
- Deepen cross-cultural understanding and German language skills

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STIFTUNG WALDHAUS FREIBURG





Internship at Stiftung Waldhaus Freiburg - www.waldhaus-freiburg.de
The WaldHaus Freiburg is an innovative environmental education center operated by the nonprofit foundation of the same name. The WaldHaus Foundation aims to educate people of all generations about forests, climate, and sustainability in the spirit of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). In doing so, the Waldhaus is guided by the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda. Its programs are targeted at the general public and, in particular, at school classes.

As a bridge between the forest and society, the WaldHaus collaborates with other educational institutions, hands-on partners, and research organizations. In this way, it brings together existing expertise in the region, connects it across disciplinary and national boundaries, and facilitates knowledge transfer on a broad scale.

Fields of activity of the internship:

Interns are assigned to our environmental education programs. They are involved in the planning, implementation, and follow-up of a wide variety of forest-based ESD formats, ranging from morning programs to project weeks, and from large weekend events to small-group workshops. Interacting with a diverse range of visitors is a core component of the internship.

Required qualifications:

- Interest in the topics of forests and sustainability
- Flexibility regarding a 39-hour workweek
- Experience working with and leading groups of children and youth
- Reliability and sense of responsibility
- Openness and communication skills
- Ability to work in a team and enjoy collaborating with others

Required application documents

Résumé & Cover Letter, FBI Identity History Summary Check, Proof of immunity to measles

Internship language:

German language skills at level B1 or similar are a prerequisite for the internship.

Possible major(s)/areas of study

Environmental Sciences
Biology / Forestry
Geography / Geology / Hydrology
Education Science / Environmental Education / Teacher Training

Learning outcomes:

- Gaining practical teaching experience
- Gaining insight into the wide range of target-group-specific methodologies and teaching approaches within the context of ESD
- Insights into the daily operations of a public educational institution at the intersection of nature and the city.
- Improving German language skills