



# GLOBAL HEALTH FIELD EXPERIENCE GUIDE

Yale College  
Center for International and  
Professional Experience





# A Guide to Finding and Funding a ▪GLOBAL HEALTH FIELD EXPERIENCE▪



This guide was written for students who are interested in getting on-the-ground experience in global health and looking for guidance on where to begin. It provides valuable information about choosing the right type of experience, finding opportunities, accessing resources, and considering the ethics of global health field work. With the suggestions and tools listed here, we hope that students new to global health will gain a better understanding of how to find and fund a global health field experience. We hope that these experiences will help develop students' interests and, most importantly, help them engage with communities in the best way possible.



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LAYOUT AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

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# As you begin to plan

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It is important to think about your global health field experience as something that has value to people beyond yourself. While you have your own goals, those with whom you are working and whom you are helping will have goals that may differ from yours. Listen to these ideas every step of the way. Think about how you can contribute most effectively in collaboration with those who confront these issues daily as patients, NGO staff, family members, and researchers. You will learn more, produce better research, and have a greater impact if you focus on how you can contribute to improving the health of others in a way that makes the most sense for them.

As you consider these issues, realize that Yale offers many courses in which these and other relevant topics are discussed. Prepare yourself by taking courses that focus on the region of the world to which you would like to travel. Courses on economic development, public health, and other related topics will be valuable as you begin to make decisions about your plans. Statistics courses will also prove helpful if you plan to collect data that will need to be analyzed. Check out the Global Health Initiative's list of recommended courses here: <http://ghi.yale.edu/courses>.

## Types of global health field experiences

The two main ways for students to gain experience in global health are through internships and research. Both are equally important; however, depending on your previous experience and your aims for the summer, one might be a better fit than the other.



## RESEARCH

**Overview:** Work independently (under the mentorship of a faculty member or other expert) or with a research team to design a study and collect data. You should aim to answer a question, keeping in mind that it might be possible to write up your findings for publication or policy recommendations. Reach out to faculty members here at Yale (including faculty members in the professional schools) for guidance early on, especially if you plan to design your own research project. Some students have experience working abroad with teams from other U.S.-based universities or from universities in the country where they are working, so it may be helpful to look beyond Yale for research opportunities as well.

**To consider:** Conducting independent research requires a great deal of work before you depart in order to design an appropriate study and gain the required ethical approvals (see information about Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval in this guide). The absence of a structured program means that you must hold yourself accountable and that you will not have much, if any, support on the ground beyond your research team (if you have one). Independent research might not be the best option for those just beginning to explore global health or for those who have not traveled alone extensively before.

**\*Tip\*** Students interested in doing research should take “Methods and Ethics in Global Health Research” (HLTH 325). This course will make applying for IRB approval, doing methodologically rigorous data collection, and writing up results much easier and much more effective.

## INTERNSHIPS

**Overview:** Work with a non-profit organization, for-profit company, or hospital to help them fulfill their overall mission. Internships might involve direct service with a local organization or office work on policy or advocacy. Some organizations have formal internship programs to which students can apply, while others will allow interns to design their own programs relevant to the overall work of the organization. This is a great way to learn as well as to build a network of mentors within global health.

**To consider:** Internships are a way to directly help an organization, gain useful skills, and explore potential careers. While there is often the opportunity to develop a project over which you have ownership, there may not be a great deal of flexibility since your work must fall within the purview of the organization or company. As such, this might not be the ideal choice for those hoping to have more autonomy in their summer global health experience.

### **An important note about time**

As you consider whether you would like to participate in an internship or take on a research project, keep in mind that a summer global health experience will be over before you feel it has even begun. You cannot "save the world" in only eight to ten weeks, and you shouldn't expect to! As you begin to map out your experience, keep your goals and expectations in check so that you make the most productive use of your time rather than falling short of inappropriate expectations.



# Finding a global health field experience

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## Center for International and Professional Experience (CIPE)

[www.yale.edu/cipe](http://www.yale.edu/cipe)

CIPE is a group of offices that work together to advise students on a wide range of opportunities, including those relevant to global health. In particular, check out:

***Undergraduate Career Services*** (UCS, [www.yale.edu/career](http://www.yale.edu/career)): UCS develops and advertises a number of internship opportunities within the U.S. and abroad; many of these opportunities could be of interest to those searching for global health experiences. Visit the UCS website and sign into the UCS Symlicity System to see a list of open positions. Also consider meeting with a UCS adviser, particularly the adviser dedicated to careers and opportunities in global health, for one-on-one guidance.

***Fellowship Programs*** ([www.yale.edu/fellowships](http://www.yale.edu/fellowships)): While there are fellowships administered in many offices across campus, Fellowship Programs at CIPE is the only office that has application advice on their website (including information about how to make contacts abroad), holds information sessions and workshops, and has one-on-one advising appointments available. These resources are helpful whether you're just beginning to think about what you'd like to do or you have a near-final proposal draft on which you would like feedback.



## **Yale Global Health Leadership Initiative (GHLI)**

<http://ghi.yale.edu>

GHLI periodically posts opportunities and fellowships available to students and faculty. These can range from structured research opportunities with mentorship to internship programs to unstructured fellowships for original research endeavors and clinical experiences. Be especially careful when looking at the opportunities, as many are limited to faculty or to master's and Ph.D. candidates. Although you cannot apply for those opportunities, they can be helpful in identifying organizations with which you may want to work or from which you may want to get advice. Additionally, GHLI selects undergraduate or master's students as Fellows for the summer to work on a policy challenge with a delegation from a developing country (note that this fellowship opportunity is listed as "Conference Fellow" and the application has historically been due in mid-February).

## **Yale World Fellows**

[www.yale.edu/worldfellows](http://www.yale.edu/worldfellows)

Each fall, Yale selects a group of emerging global leaders to spend a semester in New Haven taking classes and working with members of the Yale community. The World Fellows are tremendous resources, even when their work is not directly related to global health issues. Each residential college has two World Fellow Liaisons who are responsible for introducing the current World Fellows to undergraduates. Ask at your Master's Office to find the liaisons for your college. Additionally, a database of the World Fellows from past years is online, and you can reach out to current or former Fellows via e-mail. Many of the Fellows have given useful insight to students pursuing a wide range of projects, and some Fellows have even hired undergraduates for the summer and beyond. In many cases, World Fellows choose to work with Undergraduate Career Services to promote internship opportunities with the organizations they manage.

## **Global Health Fellows**

<http://ghi.yale.edu/gh-fellows>

<http://ghi.yale.edu/gh-fellows/projects/current>

One of the greatest resources at Yale is your strong network of peers! The Global Health Fellows are undergraduates that have completed a very wide range of field experiences both in the United States and abroad. Visit the Global Health Fellows website to learn about some of your fellow Yalies' experiences. Feel free to contact current or past Fellows who have completed interesting projects to learn more about their field experiences and how they found these unique opportunities (the faculty and staff of Global Health Studies may have contact information for alumni of the Global Health Fellows program). These students can tell you if it would be possible for other Yale students to complete a similar project, describe their experiences in further detail, and talk about how they found and funded their summer opportunity. If applicable, please indicate in the initial e-mail that you are a Global Health Fellow.

## **Outside Databases**

Many students are becoming involved in global health during their undergraduate, graduate, and professional training, and many non-profit organizations are emerging because of student interest and initiative. Some of these organizations have been developing jobs and internships databases. One such database is provided by the Akili Initiative: [www.mappinghealth.com/akili](http://www.mappinghealth.com/akili). If you find other global health opportunities databases, please send them to the Global Health Studies Program so that they can compile a list to share with students interested in global health opportunities.

## **Professors and other professional contacts**

Send well written and well conceived e-mails to professors and professionals with relevant expertise and in whose work you are interested. Be as specific as possible in these e-mails,

and do not wait until a just few weeks before you must submit your proposal. Describe what you are seeking in a summer experience (e.g., area of the world, type of work, whether or not you expect funding), link your interests to your contact's work or research (i.e., why are you reaching out to this person?), and ask the contact if he/she would be willing to speak with you to provide advice. Do not immediately ask for a job or to join a research team. It is more polite, and your conversation will be more productive, if you ask for guidance first. While your contacts may not be able to provide you with an opportunity, they may be able to point you toward other options or refer you to colleagues of theirs. If you are designing a research project, a mentor will be able to suggest changes to your methodology or research question that will help your project develop appropriately.

## Friends and peers

If you hear of other students who have done interesting summer projects, contact them to see if they would be willing to talk with you about their experiences. A good way to explore this would be to visit the CIPE Fellowships Program website to look through winners' reports ([www.yale.edu/fellowships](http://www.yale.edu/fellowships)). By reading reports written by previous fellowship recipients, you will learn what challenges these students faced during their projects and what it was like for them to live in a developing country. You may also find the name of an organization or two with which you would like to work. Another option is to access the peer networking lists made available by Undergraduate Career Services ([www.yale.edu/career](http://www.yale.edu/career)). These lists of students' summer and post-graduate employment experiences can be found within the 'Document Library' of the UCS Symplicity System. Use this information to get in touch with students who were affiliated with organizations or industries about which you are hoping to learn more.





# Ethics

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As you plan and engage in your global health research or internship, it is important to adhere to certain fundamental ethical principles and maintain the highest degree of moral conduct in the field. Maintaining respect for the patients and families you are serving must always be your top priority, and there are guidelines and procedures in place to help ensure this is the case.

## **Ethics workshops**

Students are strongly encouraged to attend workshops on ethics prior to departing for their projects. One session will be held early in the spring semester prior to deadlines for fellowship applications. This session will cover IRB approval (see below) and basic research ethics. The second session will be held after fellowships have been awarded but prior to your summer departure. This second session will focus on examples of ethical dilemmas that may arise while you are abroad. These sessions will be co-hosted by the Global Health Studies program and the Center for International and Professional Experience.

## **Clinical experiences**

Students planning a clinically-based internship experience or research experience should review the guidelines set forth by the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC). This document reviews some of the things you must keep in mind when you find yourself in a clinical or other care-giving environment (e.g., do not perform any procedure for which you have not been adequately trained). This document also provides crucial information for those considering applying to medical school. [www.aamc.org/download/181690/data/guidelinesforstudentsprovidingpatientcare.pdf](http://www.aamc.org/download/181690/data/guidelinesforstudentsprovidingpatientcare.pdf)

## Requirements for research projects (including IRB approval)

Students traveling abroad for research purposes MUST complete the appropriate HIPAA and HIC training and MUST obtain IRB approval for their projects prior to departure.

Yale University's Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) maintains Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) to provide the ethical review and oversight of its human research endeavors. The IRBs have the authority to grant exemption from review, approve, disapprove, and/or require modification in research protocols and to monitor research to ensure that the rights and welfare of research participants are adequately protected.

To begin thinking about the IRB process, read the resources made available by the HRPP: [www.yale.edu/hrpp/forms-templates/behavioral.html](http://www.yale.edu/hrpp/forms-templates/behavioral.html). For information about student projects specifically, be sure to click on "Student Projects" toward the bottom of the page; often, review of your projects will fall under the purview of Social, Behavioral, & Educational Research. As such, ensure that your proposal adheres to the formatting and instructions they provide.

The key to the IRB approval process, as with planning research more generally, is to start early. Approval can potentially take over two months, so prepare in advance. Not only will this save you from a last-minute panic, but the process of preparing materials for IRB approval will also help you to refine your project ideas and make your research stronger.





# Funding a field experience

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## International Summer Award (ISA)

[www.yale.edu/isa](http://www.yale.edu/isa)

Students who receive financial aid from Yale can receive an ISA to support one summer experience abroad. Check the ISA website for details and to determine your eligibility.

## Fellowships

Fellowships are merit-based awards meant to financially support a purposeful activity. There are many fellowships at Yale that are available to fund global health internships and research; these fellowships are administered by a number of offices around campus (e.g., Fellowship Programs, MacMillan Center, Yale College Dean's Office). It is possible to get more than one fellowship to fund your experience; in this case each fellowship would contribute to a portion of your budget.

Applications generally consist of a proposal, letter of recommendation, budget, resume, transcript, and language evaluation (if applicable). Deadlines tend to fall between January and March, and winners are notified in April.

***Student Grants Database*** (<http://studentgrants.yale.edu>): Fellowships available to Yale College students are listed in the Student Grants Database. Start by doing a search by eligibility, then read through the search results and determine the ones for which your project qualifies. Many of these fellowships have a common application, and students can apply for them directly through the Student Grants Database.

Fellowships offered through the Global Health Initiative and the Global Health Studies Program can be found in this database. These fellowships are specifically for global health or health-related projects, but there are many other fellowships in the database that can be used to support global health projects.

***Global Health Fellows Program:*** The Global Health Fellows Program has limited funding available, but only for Fellows. The deadline for this funding will be in late March, and the program administrators will provide more information to the Global Health Fellows as the date approaches.

## Fellowship application and interview advice

CIPE Fellowship Programs offers proposal workshops in which they discuss the elements that committees look for when evaluating proposals. These sessions also cover how to create an effective budget. Fellowship Programs also provides guides for writing proposals, creating budgets, asking for letters of recommendation, writing a resume, and preparing for an interview. These guides can be found on their website: [www.yale.edu/fellowships](http://www.yale.edu/fellowships). Review these materials thoroughly as you begin to plan your experience so that you are sure to keep the right things in mind as you develop your ideas. It is important to review these materials again as you prepare your applications.

Keep in mind that a fellowship proposal is unlike the type of essays you wrote to apply to college or to win tuition scholarships. Work closely with the Fellowship Programs office, your residential college writing tutor, and your faculty mentors to produce an effective proposal.





# Timeline for planning a global health field experience

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MONTHS	ACTIVITY
September - December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Start thinking about the types of Global Health summer opportunities you may want to pursue</li><li>• Reach out to faculty advisers and other relevant mentors for insight and suggestions (and, if applicable, to develop research methodology)</li><li>• Start making necessary contacts with peers who have had similar research/internship experiences and with prospective host organizations/institutions to secure internships and affiliations</li><li>• Attend a fellowships information session (hosted by Fellowship Programs of CIPE; <a href="http://www.yale.edu/fellowships">www.yale.edu/fellowships</a>) to learn about funding options</li></ul>
January - February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meet with mentors to refine your ideas and to secure letters of recommendation (ask for letters no later than three weeks in advance of a deadline)</li><li>• Attend the Global Health Field Experience workshop</li><li>• Attend a fellowship proposal workshop (hosted by Fellowship Programs of CIPE; <a href="http://www.yale.edu/fellowships">www.yale.edu/fellowships</a>)</li><li>• If applicable, begin the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval process at Yale and/or at the institution with which you will be conducting your research (check out <a href="http://www.yale.edu/hrpp/forms-templates/behavioral.html">www.yale.edu/hrpp/forms-templates/behavioral.html</a> and click on “Student Projects” for more information)</li></ul>
mid-February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most summer fellowship applications are due; search the Student Grants Database (<a href="http://studentgrants.yale.edu">http://studentgrants.yale.edu</a>) for details</li></ul>
February - March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to work out the details of your internship or research</li><li>• Make arrangements for housing and travel (e.g., flights, visas, immunizations)</li></ul>

MONTHS	ACTIVITY
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winners of fellowship funding are announced</li> <li>• Attend mandatory Global Health Field Experience pre-departure session</li> <li>• Review CIPE's Health and Safety Checklist (<a href="http://www.yale.edu/yalecollege/international/predeparture/healthsafety.html">http://www.yale.edu/yalecollege/international/predeparture/healthsafety.html</a>) and register your travel with Yale (<a href="http://world.yale.edu/services">http://world.yale.edu/services</a>)</li> </ul>
May - August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete your global health experience!</li> <li>• Stay in contact with your faculty adviser (if applicable) to provide updates and to ask questions when problems arise</li> <li>• Keep a blog or journal not only to preserve memories, but also for valuable reflection</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write required reports for fellowships</li> </ul>
September - October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with research mentors to discuss your data and determine next steps for your project</li> </ul>



*EUGENE LEE (YSPH '13) and other World Health Organization (WHO) interns gather for a group photo.*





# What to do after the field experience

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Your field experience does not end when you are back on campus! There are a number of ways to follow-up on and expand the impact of your summer work.

***Fellowship reports:*** Most fellowships require recipients to write a short report on their summer experience by mid-September. These reports are given to the donors who sponsored your summer experience, so make sure you're putting appropriate thought and time into your writing. Many reports are also made available to other students who are exploring their summer options; producing a good report is a great way to help other Yalies!

***Presentation opportunities:*** Look for forums or conferences on campus and off campus where you could present your internship experience or research findings. You did great work—find ways to share it!

***Senior essay:*** Even if you did not do research as a part of your field experience, consider writing a senior essay that is related to and draws on your internship or summer project. Perhaps your project caused you to think of research questions that need to be answered or inspired you to delve into a new topic. If you choose to write your senior essay on something related to your project, try to stay in touch with the people who are actively working on the issue so that they can put your research findings to use.



**Publication:** Consider trying to publish an academic paper, editorial, or personal experience story in a journal, newspaper, or Yale student publication.

**Recruiting other Yale students:** Could other Yale students work on a project like yours? Talk to other students about what you did, including both the positive and the negative aspects. If you think that other students could continue the work you were doing, try to connect them with the appropriate contacts and help facilitate future summer field experiences.



*JAKARA MATO '10 (BR) caught a light-hearted moment during her field experience in Uganda.*





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