



GreenPAC Parliamentary Internship Proposal

April 2018

Overview

Beginning in September 2018, in partnership with the University of Ottawa Institute of the Environment, UBC's School of Public Policy and Global Affairs, and other post-secondary partners, GreenPAC will place six recent university graduate environmental leaders into MP offices while the House of Commons is sitting (mid-September-June). The placements will be in the offices of Conservative, Liberal, NDP and Green Party MPs. The interns will be given a stipend, as well as staff support to help them find places to live. We would also organize educational and networking activities such as lectures and meet and greets for the interns, as well as an alumni program.

Rationale

Over time, the GreenPAC Internship Program will help establish a generation of experienced, savvy and dedicated environmental leaders in the public, private and non-profit sectors.

We will seek intern candidates from university campuses, student networks and environmental and Indigenous organizations across Canada. GreenPAC's unique cross-partisan network will facilitate high-quality placements with MPs from each major party on Parliament Hill. Following their hands-on experience on Parliament Hill, many of the interns will find employment as political and government staff, advocates and ultimately candidates.

Currently, Parliamentary Interns often end up as political staff on Parliament Hill, and several have ultimately run for office¹. The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs also runs an internship program (in which GreenPAC's current Executive Director was a participant) that has also had impressive results. Out of 8 interns from last year's program:

- One works in the Office of the Leader of the Opposition
- One is at Conservative Party headquarters
- One works for the Minister of Foreign Affairs
- One is in the Liberal Whip's office

The sector-wide benefits of the GreenPAC program will be transformative. The interns will strengthen the environmental sector's relationships with MPs as well as political parties. And in addition to pursuing careers in politics, it is expected that interns will also go on to populate the ranks of the environmental sector, bringing a ramped-up level of political sophistication to the sector's public

¹ Example: Parliamentary Internship Program Alumni (see "Our Alumni" page: <https://pip-ppsp.org/alumni/>)

education and policy development efforts. (Consider that currently, the number of ENGO advocacy staff in Canada who have Parliament Hill experience can be counted on the fingers of one hand.)

Perhaps the best advocates for GreenPAC's Internship Program are those who will be responsible for mentoring the interns and overseeing their work. GreenPAC has found no other initiative that has garnered the level of support and enthusiasm among the elected environmental champions the organization works with. Consider the following testimonials:

An environmental internship program on Parliament Hill would help raise the profile of environmental issues in federal politics by providing support to MPs wanting to advance these issues. Even more importantly, it would help develop a new generation of well-informed environmental leaders. The experience of working on the Hill is often formative for young Canadians wanting to make a difference, and MPs are eager to provide these opportunities to the right candidates.

GreenPAC is perfectly positioned to develop this program. It has close working relationships with policy leaders and takes a non-partisan approach. This will ensure the program attracts high-quality candidates and placements, providing exciting program opportunities for the interns, and future professional opportunities for them."

- Conservative MP Michael Chong

Parliamentary internships represent important opportunities to expose young Canadians to the inner workings of our democratic processes. As such, they can inspire and inform those who seek careers in the field of law, politics and beyond.

GreenPAC's profile and track record of success in promoting environmental leadership make it the logical choice to lead this initiative. I am confident this program can become a game-changing institution in Canada's environmental sector.

Establishing an internship that would focus on environmental themes would invite engagement in the democratic process from a sub-sector of young Canadians who might not see themselves in « politics », but who may well see themselves within the frame of « environmental issues ». As such, this kind of internship could render the political process even more accessible to Canada's youth.

- Liberal MP Will Amos

The investment in an internship program can have the longest and largest effect in the lives of young people and one of the greatest impacts on our politics. One reason I'd be interested in this program is that GreenPAC has a clear mandate and a good reputation for getting good things done.

- NDP MP Nathan Cullen

I am so grateful to GreenPAC for their support for strong green candidates. Now they are proposing an innovative way to help Members of Parliament that are working hard - struggling uphill to improve and enhance our environmental laws. I would be so grateful to have a GreenPAC intern. My workload is punishing, but the work is fascinating. Any young person would benefit from the experience. I know my work would be assisted enormously with a GreenPAC intern.

- Green Party Leader Elizabeth May

Proposed Timeline

- February-March 2018: Secure funding for Program, hire staff person to manage program
- March-April 2018: Secure MPs for Interns
- April 2018: Interviews for interns
- Summer 2018: Assist interns with housing and other logistics
- September 20018-June 2019: Internship, activities and ongoing evaluation

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