



Idealist.org is a wonderful resource for internship and job seekers in the non-profit and service sectors. Here are some pieces of advice and some resources from the people at Idealist:

Idealist for Job Seekers: Five tips, Fifteen Free Resources

1. **Know what you want.** Spend the time to accurately assess exactly what it is that you want in your career. By making this time commitment early on, you will be able to create a more focused, efficient job search for yourself. To start, try these two exercises from *The Idealist Guides to Nonprofit Careers* (free at idealist.org/careerguide):
 - a. The Career Tracks exercise lets you see where your passion fits into the nonprofit sector (in Chapter Three)
 - b. The Four Lens Framework exercise helps you pinpoint what draws you to the sector (also in Chapter Three)
2. **Know what's out there.** Once you have an idea for what you want, it's important to begin to get a sense of all the organizations that are doing work that interests you-not just the ones that are currently hiring. While there are many ways to this, here are two suggestions that can make the process particularly effective:
 - a. Conduct informational interviews (See Chapter Four of *The Idealist Guides* for tips and advice on networking)
 - b. Use the organization search on Idealist (idealist.org/if/as/Org) to explore over 85,000 organizations and the range of opportunities that they offer (Idealist has many resources; see tip #5)
3. **Explore ways to become a stronger candidate.** There's no such thing as the perfect applicant, so while you are searching for a job you should also work on strengthening you candidacy. This can mean gaining experience, getting certifications or academic credit, learning new skills, or brushing up on your "nonprofitspeak." While you may not know exactly which skill, qualification, or certification will get you that job offer, it's a safe bet to try a diverse range of efforts to strengthen yourself as a candidate. Here are a few ways to start:
 - a. Pursue the Idealist Public Service Graduate Education Resource Center (idealist.org/psgerc) to learn more about a variety of education options
 - b. Browse the Idealist Volunteer Center (idealist.org/volunteer) and International Volunteerism Resource Center (idealist.org/ivrc) to learn how volunteering can expand your career choices
 - c. Discover how to conduct local, national, and international job searches (See Chapter Six of *The Idealist Guides*)
 - d. Learn the nonprofit lingo (See Appendix One of *The Idealist Guides* for a crash course)
4. **Customize your cover letter and resume for each position.** While it can seem like extra work, taking a bit of time to tailor your resume and draft a unique cover letter *for each position*, it can make the difference between your application ending up in the recycling bin or you ending up with an interview. Customizing doesn't mean starting over from scratch. Instead, it's a matter of analyzing the position description and tweaking your resume to emphasize the most relevant skills you have. Likewise, avoid formulaic cover letters and ensure that your letter conveys how your experience and skills meet the position's requirements.
 - a. Read how to craft a cover letter and resume (See Chapter Eight of *The Idealist Guides*)
5. **Use idealist.org to explore opportunities.** Idealist.org offers many free resources to assist you in your job search.
 - a. Create a free member profiles on Idealist and then activate the free email alerts-simply select your preferences and Idealist will email you when relevant opportunities are posted. At www.idealism.org, click in the Member Login box on the right to get started
 - b. Browse the Idealist Career Center (idealist.org/career)
 - c. Listen to our Podcast series for advice and interviews with social impact professionals (idealist.org/podcasts)
 - d. Read Idealist's blog (idealist.org) for career tips and a range of stories that can clue you in to the late strands in the social sector.

All this and much more is free at idealist.org