Cape Town Social Transformation Cohort

Internships through the Center for Social Impact’s Cape Town Social Transformation Cohort introduce students to social transformation in a city home to many of South Africa’s changemakers and leaders. Students are placed within social sector organizations that continue to drive this change at the individual, community, and structural level.

Program Overview

* Cohort of 6 students
* 10-week, full-time summer internship in Cape Town, South Africa
* Internships are in-person, either at the organizational offices or out in the community
* Shared housing provided by DCSI
* $2,500 (subject to slight change) living stipend to cover daily transportation and food
* Professional development programming throughout the 10-week period

Impact Focus – Social Transformation

Many current social issues such as racism, xenophobia, and gender inequity, require corrective measures beyond what we may normally associate with social impact work (ex. service delivery and social support, advocacy, policy change, etc). In order to truly address these issues, a fundamental shift in value systems and societal paradigms must usually take place – what we may call “social transformation”.

One contemporary example of changemakers driving social transformation can be found in the country of South Africa. In its transition from an apartheid state, South Africa did much to upend the systemic oppression that existed within its borders, but communities are still grappling with the country’s legacy of settler colonialism and the apartheid system.

Students in DCSI’s Cape Town Social Transformation Cohort will intern with organizations focused on social transformation from a variety of angles including restorative justice, community development, and combating gender-based violence.

Relevant Terms

* [Social Transformation](https://transform.ucsc.edu/about/social-transformation/)
* [Gender justice](https://www.oxfam.org/en/what-we-do/issues/gender-justice-and-womens-rights) / [gender-based violence](https://www.rescue.org/article/what-gender-based-violence-and-how-do-we-prevent-it)
* [Restorative justice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Restorative_justice) / [social crime prevention](https://www.aic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-05/crm001.pdf)

Program Details

Selected program participants will be matched to a pre-scoped internship role by DCSI with one of our community service organization (CSO) partners.

Internship roles vary greatly across organizations. In general, all roles will expose students to the inner workings of a social transformation focused CSO and to the community they are aiming to support (relating to specific social norms or value systems such as gender norms or perspectives on social vs individual responsibility for crime).

While every effort is made to match students with roles/organizations that suit their interests, students should be prepared to contribute to the organization based on their assigned internship role as these roles reflect the real and actual needs of both our CSO partners and the communities that they serve. Students do not select the organization or internship role they are assigned to.

Internships will involve full-time work (35-40 hours / week) for a period of 10 weeks covering the summer term (although exact program dates are subject to change).

**City Profile:** Cape Town is in the Western Cape of South Africa and is known for its many important historical and cultural sites. The city is also well known for its beautiful surrounding scenery that includes the majestic Table Mountain, numerous public beaches, and the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens as well as an incredibly delicious and diverse food scene. The months of June through August are South Africa’s winter and temperatures during the day can range from 50 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

It is important for applicants to note that the U.S. Department of State lists South Africa as a Level 2 Travel Advisory due to crime and civil unrest. As with any travel destination, students should be attentive and thoughtful when exploring potentially unfamiliar environments.

**Housing and meals:** Interns will be housed in Observatory, near to the University of Cape Town, and less than a fifteen-minute drive from the city’s Central Business District and the V&A Waterfront. Students will have single rooms with private bathrooms and a shared kitchen and lounge space with members of their cohort as well as other international students and young professionals. They are expected to buy groceries and cook in the shared kitchens.

**Transportation:** Students will be expected to use Uber when traveling to their internship site and expected to always move around the city with a buddy. Average transportation time is about fifteen minutes (travel time is potentially longer during rush hour).

**DCSI support:** DCSI staff are available in case of an emergency, but they are also available to help students in other instances such as problems with background checks, work duties, or in general instances of professional development and mentoring.

**Reflection opportunities:** Students will be required to read a book about social transformation in South Africa throughout their internship experience. Additionally, they will be required to produce written reflection papers at both the midterm and final points of the term. Upon return to campus, they will participate in a group reflection with their cohort as well as a reflection meeting with a DCSI staff member. While they are in Cape Town, they will be encouraged to participate in the individual reflection method of their choice. Suggestions include journaling, photography, etc.

2024 CSO Partners

Roles within each organization will vary but may include administrative support, communications, research, and program management and delivery support.

* [Sonke Gender Justice](https://genderjustice.org.za/): Sonke strengthens the capacity of governments, civil society, and citizens to advance gender justice and womxn’s rights, prevent gender-based violence and reduce the spread of HIV and the impact of AIDS, and in this way contribute to social justice and the elimination of poverty.
* [Khulisa Social Solutions](https://khulisa.org.za/): Khulisa empowers vulnerable children, youth, those who are marginalized, and the community at large to unlock their full potential to develop resilient pathways and skills that lead to a sustainable future with programs spanning across South Africa. Specifically, the internship roles at Khulisa will focus on the peace making and justice programs which provide restorative interventions at all levels of the crime cycle from pre-charge, pre-trial, incarceration and reintegration, and deals with both “minor” offences and serious/violent crimes.

As a reminder, students will not be able to select or express preference for a specific CSO or role. They will be matched according to the needs of the CSO and the community it serves.

Professional Development

DCSI’s professional development programming aims to achieve the following goals:

* Increased knowledge around the cohort’s theme
* Exposure to the cohort city’s history, and culture
* Opportunity to process the experience through self-reflection and group discussion
* Community building with internship hosts and other local organizations

Practically speaking, professional development programming includes dinners with various guests, guided discussions with your cohort, reflection assignments, and site visits.

A True Cohort

Social Transformation Interns in Cape Town live and learn together, creating a new community for the summer. They support each other when days are challenging and celebrate together when there are victories. They may enjoy cooking meals together or simply share the bounty when they make too much. Students in this cohort are actively engaged in the process of caring for one another on their own terms.

Program Requirements

**Language Requirement**

None (Fluency in French, Portuguese, Zulu, Xhosa, and Afrikaans could be helpful)

**Personal Qualities**

Flexibility, An Open Mind, Humility, Curiosity, Empathy, Initiative

**Availability**

Must be available for the entire program dates (June 14th – August 31st)

**Important Travel Information**

To participate in this program, students must have a passport which is **valid through October 1st, 2024**. The passport **must contain at least two consecutive blank pages**. In addition, please check the [list of visa exempt countries](http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/immigration-services/exempt-countries) for South Africa. If your country of citizenship is not on the list, be prepared to make additional arrangements to secure the required visa. **All students may have to undergo a visa application process regardless of citizenship.**

Rising sophomores are more than welcome to apply but preference will be given to more senior students.