



Sustainability

Internships

SUMMER 2019



Sustainability Initiative Internship Program

The MIT Sloan Sustainability Initiative is committed to empowering leaders everywhere to take action. We connect our sustainability interns with leading organizations ready to move toward more effective and sustainable uses of natural and human resources, creating value for business and society.

The internships are summer-long positions for first-year MBAs focused on sustainability initiatives. The Sustainability Initiative and MIT Sloan's Career Development Office award internship grants to both students and organizations who participate in our program. The grants are made possible by donations from alumni and friends.

Interested in hosting an internship? Reach out to us at sustainability@sloan.mit.edu for more info.



Ellena Kim
MBA '20



At REI's headquarters in Seattle, I primarily focused on understanding how the co-op might maximize the value it provides to customers and brand partners via product sustainability. I also worked on a secondary project analyzing relevancy of financial institutions' focus on ESG metrics with respect to REI's businesses.

The Sustainability team at REI has unique reaches across the co-op, from the supply chain to the strategy team to the media group. I was able to conduct primary interviews with sixty employees and brand partners during the first-half of my internship. The process helped me get up to speed quickly and identify gaps within the organization and with brand partners that corroborated the secondary, more data-driven research I conducted in parallel. Both pieces formed the foundation of my recommendations.

▣▣ **Working in a sector that is broadly facing challenges helped me better understand the relationship between demand and sustainability's value proposition in new ways.** ▣▣

- Ellena Kim

I learned a year's worth of knowledge in ten weeks. The ownership, flexibility, and creativity that my team empowered me with was extremely valuable, especially since this industry and geographic region was totally new to me. It was humbling to collaborate with so many talented, driven people who choose to work at REI.



Shuang Ji
MBA '20

Scaletech

Scaletech supports market-ready impact technologies as they enter emerging markets. My research focus was on the clean tech industry in Asia and waste management industry in South America. I conducted needs assessments of emerging markets and developed entry strategies and investment criteria for selected sectors and markets.

Through my project, I gained a better understanding of different cleantech hubs in Asia and the startup ecosystem of the industry. I also learned about the solid waste management sector, which I had little experience with before. The internship helped me learn more about the career opportunities in the industry. I'm prepared to provide additional assistance to the company when they decide to enter the China market in the future.



Huili Song
MBA '20



PANAGORA

PanAgora Asset Management is forward-thinking about sustainable investment. The firm's goal is to achieve consistent performance on behalf of their clients, while at the same time providing them a reliable and transparent investment process. The idea of doing well while doing good is what drives their fresh and systematic approach to sustainable investment. As an intern in the Equity Group, my responsibility was to conduct quantitative research for the firm's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) strategy.

I built a quantitative framework to systematically discover ESG materiality metrics. At PanAgora, investment materiality metrics (IMMs) are metrics that seek to maximize the efficacy of ESG alpha factors. These ESG alpha factors differentiate from traditional alpha factors by investing in companies making measurable, beneficial social, governance and/or environmental impact. My findings will be incorporated as an ESG integration into the construction of other equity portfolios at PanAgora.

During this practical research project, not only did I hone my technical skills in the financial industry, but also my fundamental reasoning and sensibility. I now have a clearer vision for my future career path in quantitative research.



Filipe Monteiro

MBA '20

Valutus

Valutus is a business consulting firm that specializes in creating value through sustainability and responsibility. It not only helps clients along their sustainability path, but also develops tools to automate routines in the sector. To support one of Valutus' tools, I compiled a list of the sustainability trends of the next ten years and assessed the "submerged value" (a term coined by Valutus' CEO) of these trends for several different industries.

I worked extensively on the research side of a consulting project for a pharmaceutical company, analyzing the results of a materiality analysis with both internal and external stakeholders. I also benchmarked the entire industry for philanthropic trends and giving programs—from their annual giving figures to their signature philanthropic initiatives. Finally, I investigated best practices for CSR design and benchmarked several CSR and Corporate Foundation leaders.

☐☐ **During my internship I saw that sustainability will be part of every company's path.** ☐☐

- Filipe Monteiro

Without any prior experience in sustainable business, my only expectation for this internship was to learn a lot. And I did—about the industry, its current status, and its future challenges. I was lucky to attend the Sustainable Brands conference in Detroit during my first week and get immediate exposure to industry leaders.

The most important thing I learned was that there is still a huge misalignment between what today's companies think sustainability is and what it actually is. I experienced companies that think sustainability does not create value and is merely a sacrifice that has to be made (to please customers and investors), when it actually can create real value for companies, and sometimes even be the differentiating factor in an industry.



Sloan Social Impact Fund

Sponsored by the Net Impact Club and supported by the MIT Sloan Sustainability Initiative, Sloan Social Impact Fellows get the opportunity to apply the skills they are learning in school to local, national, and international social impact organizations.

These internships are self-sourced, with funding provided to assist with salary requirements.





Babette Paping

MBA '20



DaytoDay Health is an MIT healthcare startup improving patients' experiences and outcomes. The company's mobile platform provides step-by-step, tailored care journeys for hospitals to guide patients daily throughout the preparation and recovery process. DaytoDay's nurses, dieticians, and physiotherapists monitor patients for concerning symptoms and are available to answer questions. As a business intelligence manager, I collaborated with the product, operations, and engineering team to improve data collection, map the existing and future data infrastructure, and create a dashboard that tracks KPI's.

As a result of the dashboard I built, the company had, for the first time, insight into the numbers related to their operations. These insights help DaytoDay to continuously improve their product and processes

▮▮ **I saw what a small company can do to improve the way healthcare is delivered for more than 800 patients in only one year.** ▮▮

- Babette Paping

Coming from a consulting background, I loved the hands-on experience and immediately seeing the impact of my work. I had the opportunity to do what I thought needed to be done. What struck me most is that even though it was a very free environment, where people work from different places over the world and from home whenever they want, there was a shared sense of purpose for which everyone was willing to go the extra mile.

This internship helped me see the importance of this kind of innovation and confirmed my interest in an industry where there are so many improvement opportunities.



Armondo Flores

MBA '20 | MPP/ID '20



Center for International Development
at Harvard University

At Harvard's Center for International Development, I worked hand in hand with some of Venezuela's leading economic and industry experts seeking to fix two of the main causes of the current social and economic crisis: the recent plunge in oil production and the collapse in the provision of basic services such as electricity, water and gas.

The lack of public information about Venezuela's most important sectors makes it very hard for researchers to assess the gravity of the country's current situation and think about policy responses. Given this, I believe that having local knowledge and networks helped me to add value to the Center's research.

I found it incredibly surprising that, by almost any conceivable measure, Venezuela is experiencing the largest collapse in human welfare in modern history. Hyperinflation has caused real wages to plunge, leading to record-high poverty levels of more than 90% of the population. It was rewarding to leverage the knowledge and resources I acquired at MIT to contribute to solving one of the world's major economic and social catastrophes.



Sean Sutherland

MBA '20



Shift Capital is a Philadelphia-based real estate development firm creating commercial and residential spaces for local business owners, service providers, artists, and families in the North Kensington neighborhood of the city. My role involved developing the business case and financing strategy for the Kensington Corridor Trust (KCT), Philadelphia's first neighborhood trust that will vest ownership and control of properties along the neighborhood's commercial corridor to help protect and maintain long-term affordability.

I was able to hit the ground running and add depth, texture, and analytical rigor to their already well-conceived plan. It was so inspiring and rewarding to see Philadelphia's impact investors, foundations, academic institutions, service providers, and community organizers come together to tackle the tough challenges facing Kensington residents.

I am eager to remain engaged with the city's impact ecosystem as it continues to grow, and I fully expect everything I learned from them about coalition building and implementing bold new ideas to help me throughout my career.



Jasmine Qin

IDM '20



Upstream Tech is a startup that brings together the power of remote sensing technology with machine learning to measure and monitor environmental change. With specialized toolkits based on remote and ground data, the company helps leading environmentalists and scientists automate time-consuming workflows that make projects scalable, and let environmental stewards measure and monitor more efficiently.

Working at the center of business, technology, and design, aligned perfectly with my career goals and gave me insights into the sector of civic tech and water management.

- Jasmine Qin

I joined their Growth and Partnership team to help expand the company's reach and impact and led market research to analyze new opportunities in applying remote sensing and data science in wetland restoration and protection, particularly on market sizing, competitive landscape analysis, and user research planning.

I helped the company set a solid foundation as they expand into new territories in wetland monitoring, coastal resilience, and conservation finance. With my background in design and data platform development, I provided new perspectives that helped improve Upstream Tech's product efficacy and engagements with users, better integrating the company's system with a wide-range of conservation and restoration activities that will lead to tangible environmental and social benefits.

The experience gave me firsthand exposure to the importance and challenge of product development across teams. One of the real-world lessons I will takeaway is that with a relatively small client pool, business development and design research and testing with clients are much more intertwined in the process of user engagement than platforms for a large pool of users, such as Twitter.



Rebecca Allen
MBA '20



Alter Global is a venture capital (VC) firm that identifies exceptional tech founders in global markets underserved by VC funding and matches them with talent, expertise, and investments from the world's most prolific entrepreneurial ecosystem—Silicon Valley. Alter's mission is to support tech founders as they grow their startups, and more broadly, contribute to new tech ecosystems around the world. At a macro level, these new tech ecosystems help drive job creation, boost standards of living, and revitalize local economies.

As a Strategic Operations MBA Intern, I focused on how Alter could improve its value-addition services for ventures, as it rapidly scaled its portfolio. I conducted primary market research with early stage founders and VC firms to understand what services are most valuable to ventures and how those services are implemented by firms.

This internship enabled me to strengthen my data analysis, project management, product/service development, and communication skills, all of which will be valuable to my career.



Thomas Wilder, III
MBA '20



At PowerGen Renewable Energy in Lagos, Nigeria, I worked as a Business Development Manager, charged with initiating relationships between our company and potential customers, building financial models, and pitching to clients. I was able to create relationships between PowerGen and new customers, and helped the company form guidelines and expectations for new employees.

This experience exceeded my expectations. It was great to not only get to learn a new industry and a new function, but also get to do it in a new location. What surprised me most about this experience was that I had assumptions about some things that were important to our clients that were absolutely incorrect. I was also surprised to learn firsthand how Americans are regarded in Nigeria.

I believe this experience will be beneficial to my career because it stretched me to the point of exhaustion and helped me gain strength that I did not have previously.



Anant Upda
MBA '20 | MPA '20



IDEO.org is a global, human-centered design and innovation firm designing products, services, and experiences to improve the lives of people in poor and vulnerable communities. As a Business Design Intern, I worked with a last-mile solar distributor in rural India to create pitch materials for investors and other strategic partners. I supported a microfinance bank in Nigeria with the rollout of their flagship savings product. Based on our qualitative research, we identified a subset viable for national scale, and prepped the leadership team for implementation.



I created positive social impact by helping our mission-driven clients achieve scale and commercial success, and by promoting the adoption of human-centered design thinking and principles within the social sector. My projects improved access to high-quality, fast-moving consumer products among rural, last-mile communities in India, and helped low-income populations in Nigeria build positive savings behaviors, and plan for their futures.

Working in the field, I learned about the difficulties of launching and scaling bottom-of-the-pyramid business models in emerging markets. I developed strong empathy for the communities we were designing for, which brought me closer to the challenges they faced. The solutions we developed with our partners were designed through “in-context observation” – meeting customers where they lived and worked, and learning about their daily lives.



Daniel Rosengard

MBA '20



As an MBA Summer Fellow for the Boston Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, I supported the rollout of Boston Saves—a children's savings account program aimed at helping Boston children and families save for college, while building their financial literacy.

As the program prepared to expand from an eleven-school pilot to 80+ Boston Public Schools, I led the development and implementation of a network of faculty and parent champions across all participating schools to help promote awareness, drive adoption, and increase family engagement. I also co-led a cross-functional initiative across City Hall to incorporate free "financial checkups" into the Boston Saves program and integrate Boston Saves into the city's existing suite of financial empowerment and workforce development resources.

☐☐ **One of the most pleasant surprises of my internships was to see how efficiently and effectively local government can move to launch an initiative and make things happen.** ☐☐

- Daniel Rosengard

The experience was a fantastic introduction to working in the public sector and at a local level. It provided me with a new set of experiences and connections, and bolstered my professional skill-set. I have no doubt that this experience will help me with my future career. It was incredibly fulfilling to see the immediate impact of my work supporting Boston Saves.



Anna Coonrod
MBA '20



Kargo is an Indonesian tech startup transforming the logistics sector in Indonesia with a marketplace platform. As part of the Product Management team, I helped build out a product roadmap and launch features to make it easier for transporters using the Kargo app to find transportation jobs relevant to them. I also piloted and launched a Net Promoter Score data collection feature to help the company better understand how it is meeting customer needs.

It was interesting to learn about both the opportunities and challenges that a startup at that stage faces. I knew very little about the Indonesian economy prior to working for Kargo, but was amazed to see such a robust tech scene. The economy is growing rapidly there, and so are tech opportunities.

I came to business school to explore areas where businesses can have social and environmental impact, and discovered that I'm excited about challenges in the logistics space. In making logistics more efficient, there is huge potential for both environmental and social impact. I hope to continue to work at the intersection of the tech and logistics space in some format.



Caroline Constable
MBA '20

**Mentor
Volunteers
Uganda**

AT MVU, I worked to empower female student-orphans-entrepreneurs in Uganda by developing an onsite mentoring program with local female business owners, educating students on how to launch businesses (leveraging MIT's Disciplined Entrepreneurship approach), and raising funds and awareness for this MVU program in the United States.

Historically, the majority of business owners in Uganda have been own and run by men, but exposure and ample training, MVU hopes to inspire girls to think about starting businesses themselves. With the new initiative I worked on, MVU hopes to shift the mindset of female student-orphans and transform them into community businesswomen

I am committed to staying involved with MVU because I believe strongly in their mission. The skills I learned this summer—getting comfortable with being uncomfortable, defining priorities for the team, and leading a team of local and remote workers—will absolutely be useful moving forward. I am extremely grateful to MIT and SSIF for allowing me to spend a summer working on such an important cause.



Ilan Slovin
MBA '20 | MPP '20



The Partnership for Los Angeles Schools (PLAS) is an independent, non-profit, in-district school transformation organization that manages 18 of the highest-need Los Angeles Unified School District public schools. Serving over 14,000 predominantly low-income students, PLAS has the autonomy to pursue innovative new approaches that improve outcomes. My main project, part of the PLAS College Compass program, centered around developing a new college readiness report card tool, to provide students and families with timely data regarding their progress toward college readiness and actionable guidance on upcoming milestones/next steps to get or stay on track.

I took a leadership role in advancing an innovative initiative that will impact thousands of students and their prospects for college. Of PLAS students, 94% qualify as low-income; most would be the first in their families to go to college. For these students, earning a college degree has the potential to fundamentally re-shape their opportunities in life, yet the barriers to doing so can be especially daunting. I'm grateful to have had the chance to contribute toward the development of this new College Compass tool, which will instill in students the belief that college is part of their future, and provide critical feedback and guidance to help them get there.

After graduating, I plan to return to LA to work in the local government, non-profit, or private-sector social impact space. This might entail something focused specifically on education or, alternatively, a broader/related set of issues. Through – everything I learned, the experience I gained, and the people I met during my internship will be critical to helping me succeed in any of those environments.

OUR MISSION

**Deliver the best
education.**

**Apply academic
rigor to real-world
problems.**

**Empower leaders
everywhere to
take action.**



Sustainability Initiative

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