

IMMS RESEARCH INTERNSHIP FAQ

Is the Research internship paid?

IMMS is currently not offering paid internships, however interns are given a weekly grocery reimbursement of \$30.

Does IMMS' Research Internship Program accept international students?

IMMS is currently not accepting international student applications.

Can interns receive school credit for the internship?

University accreditation for completion of the internship program must be coordinated by the student through their school. IMMS will provide validation of participation upon completion.

Can interns complete a project during the internship?

No, at this time we do not offer opportunities for intern research projects. In addition, we do not provide opportunities for graduate student research during internships.

Does IMMS provide housing for interns?

IMMS does not provide housing. However, following acceptance, IMMS staff will assist interns in finding rooms available to rent, usually with other staff members. IMMS also has an agreement with a local college dorm, Friendship Oak Village, to allow interns to stay there.

Do interns need to have a car if accepted into the program?

Yes, interns are responsible for their own transportation, and a private vehicle is necessary to traverse the local area. Gulfport is a spread out city with little public transportation, and most shopping locations in Gulfport are not within walking/biking distance. Additionally, there are limited housing options within walking distance to IMMS, and we cannot guarantee other interns or staff will be able to arrange car pools.

What is the weather like in coastal Mississippi?

During the summer months the weather can be extreme with a high heat index (often above 100°F) and high humidity. The winter months are mild, typically in the 40's °F, with a very low possibility for snow. However, on the boat the wind chill is typically 20° colder.

What do interns do on boat trips and how often are boat trips?

Interns will learn all aspects of data collection, including filling out paperwork, using a YSI and GPS, and photo ID techniques. Weather permitting, boat trips occur seven times per month, sometimes multiple days a week, in the Mississippi Sound.

What does an average day in the Research Department look like?

Interns will spend the majority of their internship in the office at a computer. Upwards of 80% of their time may be spent cropping photos, inputting data, matching dorsal fins and collecting photo-based data. Interns are guaranteed three cross-training days in other departments (Animal Care, Stranding and Education/Aquarist), but they may attend other events if they arise, such as necropsies, animal surgeries, sea turtle releases and sea turtle nesting surveys.

What do interns do in the Animal Care Department?

Interns will learn about animal husbandry, how to prepare fish, clean fish buckets, clean bird cages, and assist with the feeding of resident animals.

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What do interns do in the Education/Aquarist Department?

The Education/Aquarist Department provides public tours of our touch pool and sting ray rooms. Interns will assist the department with caring for fish and reptiles as well as learn about public presentations.

What do interns do in the Stranding Department?

Interns will assist the Stranding Department in caring for marine mammals and/or sea turtles currently undergoing rehabilitation. Interns may also assist in examining a marine mammal or sea turtle stranding, collecting samples, and recording data. Lastly, during the summer, interns may help survey sea turtle nests on the barrier islands of the Mississippi Sound.

Does IMMS have marine mammals at the facility?

Yes. IMMS does have resident Atlantic bottlenose dolphins, an Atlantic bottlenose/Common dolphin hybrid, and California sea lions.

What are the current ongoing projects at IMMS?

IMMS has several ongoing research projects involving dolphins and sea turtles. Our dolphin projects include studies investigating the population dynamics, social networks, habitat utilization and characteristics of Atlantic bottlenose dolphins in the Mississippi Sound. We also study the movement of satellite-tagged Kemp's ridley sea turtles in the Northern Gulf of Mexico.

Where is IMMS located?

IMMS is located in the heart of the gulf coast. Our facility is located off Hwy 605, along Bayou Bernard in Gulfport, Mississippi. Our facility can be seen on Google maps.

Institute for Marine Mammal Studies
10801 Dolphin Lane
Gulfport, MS 39503

What airports are near the IMMS facility?

Gulfport-Biloxi International airport (GPT) is located less than 10 miles from the IMMS facility. New Orleans and Mobile airports are approximately 70 miles from Gulfport.

Does IMMS offer medical insurance?

Medical Insurance is not provided by IMMS. Interns are responsible for their own insurance coverage while carrying out the duties in the internship position. Prospective interns may benefit from travelers' insurance.

What is the dress code?

IMMS will provide interns with 3 intern/volunteer t-shirts and a hat. Additional clothing may be purchased at a discounted price. Each intern is responsible for bringing khaki shorts and/or pants for office attire, and appropriate clothing for outdoor work. All footwear must have a heel strap.

How many applicants are accepted each term?

IMMS offers internships in the spring, summer and fall. The number of accepted applicants varies depending on the season and the current research projects we are conducting.