INTERNSHIPS & MASTER'S PROJECTS

February 2026

School of Computer and Communication Sciences

Computer Science | Cyber Security | Data Science | Digital Humanities | Communication Systems

Meet
the Team

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Internship & Master's Project Requirement
Professional experience validation options

🎓 **All Master's students are required to complete a professional internship.**
This requirement may be fulfilled through **one of the following three options**:

Short Standalone Internship	Long Standalone Internship	Industry-based Master's Project
• Conducted **during the summer** • **Minimum 8 weeks**, full-time • Allows students to **graduate earlier**	• Completed **during an academic semester** • **Temporary suspension of Master's cycle** • Offers **extended professional immersion**	• Undertaken **after Master's cycle** • **Joint supervision** by academic and industry advisors • Combines the **Master's project and internship** into a single experience

💡 **Reminder**: Only **one** of these options is required to validate the internship component of the Master's degree.

IC – Internships & Master's projects

Why professional experience matters
Benefits for students, industry and EPFL

Apply academic knowledge in **real-world professional settings**
Enhance **career readiness and employability**
Gain **industry insight** and build professional networks

Access **highly motivated, skilled talent**
Benefit from **fresh perspectives and innovative solutions**
Build a **long-term recruitment pipeline**

Strengthen **partnerships with industry**
Foster **collaborative research opportunities**
Gather feedback to **continuously improve academic programs**

Internship vs. Master's Project
Professional practice vs. academic research

Aspect	Standalone Internship (Practical Project)	Master's Project (Academic Project)
Purpose	• Professional exposure and applied practice	• Academic research and scientific contribution
Goal	• Apply theoretical knowledge in a real-world setting	• Conduct in-depth academic research work
Setting	• Industry or applied research organization	• University, research lab, or industry research
Focus	• Practical skills, teamwork, professional culture	• Research methods, critical analysis, **new** knowledge or innovation
Supervision	• Industry supervisor	• Academic supervisor (+ industry co-supervision)
Deliverable	• Internship evaluation	• Written thesis and oral defense
Timing	• During the Master's program (studies are put on pause)	• After all credits or < 8 ECTS (final step before graduation)

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Mandatory Industry Experience & Options
Internship / Industry-based project pathways available

Option	Duration	When	Notes
Short Standalone Internship	8 weeks	Summer (Jul 7 - Sep 7)	May precede a long internship or Master's project
Long Standalone Internship	6 months 100% full time, only ≤40% remote	Spring (Feb 15 - Mar 1) or Autumn (Aug 1 - Oct 1) start	No courses allowed in parallel
Industry-based Master's project	6 months 25 weeks + 1 week vacation	Final step after all credits of Master's cycle or < 8 ECTS	Counts as mandatory internship if none completed

Key rules:
- **EPFL Internship Agreement required**: Signed by **company → student → EPFL (IC Section)**
- **Two consecutive long internships during the Master's cycle not permitted**
- **Possible sequence**: Short summer internship → academic semester → long internship **or** Master's project
- **Internship semester does not count** toward the 6-semester Master's cycle limit
- **Tuition fee during internship semester**: **CHF 50.-**

Eligibility
When students can start a standalone internship

Students with an EPFL Bachelor

- **Eligible after 1 semester**
- Example: start **Autumn 2025** →
  Internship possible from **Spring 2026** onwards

Students without an EPFL Bachelor

- **Eligible after 2 semesters**
- Example: start **Autumn 2025** →
  Internship possible from **Summer 2026** or **Autumn 2026** onwards

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Required documents
Agreements for Internships and Master's Projects

MASTER'S PROJECTS

✓ **No NDA by default**

✓ If confidentiality is essential, an **optional EPFL Master's Project Agreement** may be proposed by the **EPFL supervisor**

✓ **No modifications or substitute documents permitted**

INTERNSHIPS (STANDALONE)

✓ **Mandatory EPFL Internship Agreement**
(Tripartite: student · company · EPFL)

✓ **No alternative agreements accepted**
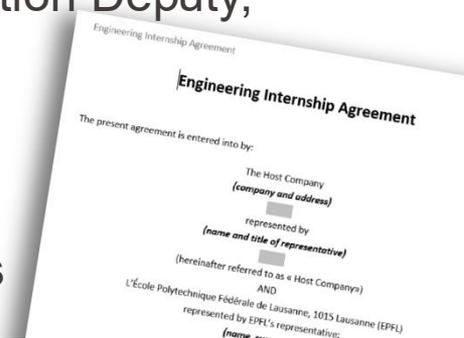(e.g., company NDAs or "convention de stage")

☞ Download agreements and instructions: **go.epfl.ch/IC-internships**

Recap: EPFL Internship Agreement
Key points to remember

- **Mandatory for all internships** (short & long)
- Defines responsibilities of **EPFL, the company, and the student**
- Must be signed by **company → student → EPFL** (IC Section Deputy, Eileen Hazboun)
- **Without it, the internship is not validated**
- **No other agreements are accepted**
- Internet agreement available at **go.epfl.ch/IC-internships**

NO SIGNED EPFL INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT = NO INTERNSHIP VALIDATION

Master's Project: Last step before graduation
More information: go.epfl.ch/masterproject

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In Industry

- Can be completed **with or without** a prior internship
- If no internship was completed, **counts as the mandatory industry experience**

25+1 Weeks

At another University

- **Requires a prior internship** (short summer or long semester internship)

25+1 Weeks

At EPFL

- **Requires a prior internship** (short summer or long semester internship)

17+1 Weeks

Important Tip!

- **Plan early** if you intend to pursue a PhD
- **Complete the mandatory industry internship first**
- Then carry out your Master's project **at EPFL or another university**

Confidentiality of Master's Project
What you can and cannot share

What "Confidential" means

Confidential information is any information shared by the company with the student & the EPFL academic supervisor during the Master's project:

- Provided **in writing** and clearly marked as confidential, or

- Shared **orally** and explicitly declared as confidential

What is NOT Confidential

- Was **already public** or later becomes public

- Was **already known** to the student or EPFL with no disclosure restrictions

- Was obtained **lawfully from a third party** without confidentiality obligations

- Was **independently developed** by the student or EPFL without violating any obligations

Confidentiality & NDAs
Before you commit

Important

- **EPFL professors generally do NOT sign NDAs**
- EPFL is an **open academic environment**
- Research results are expected to be **publishable and shareable**
- NDAs **conflict with EPFL's academic principles**

What can be used instead?

- If confidentiality is required, the **EPFL Master's Project Agreement** may be proposed by the professor **(optional)**

⚠️ **Always clarify confidentiality and agreements with both the company and your professor *before* committing.**

Recap: EPFL Master's Project Agreement
Optional & professor-driven

What is it?

- Defines the roles and responsibilities of:
  - the **EPFL academic supervisor**
  - the **company**
  - the **student**
- Focuses on **confidentiality & IP**

Important rules

- The agreement is **optional,** not mandatory
- **No amendments or company-requested changes** are accepted (by the Section or EPFL Legal)
- It is **not publicly available** on the internship website

Why it exists?

- Allows the EPFL supervisor to **access and evaluate project results**
- Avoids the need for the supervisor to **sign an NDA**
- Applies to **industry Master's projects without existing collaborations**

Who can propose it?

- **Only EPFL professors** may propose its use
- By doing so, they take responsibility for **EPFL's engagement in research**

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How do you find an Internship or Master's Project?
Options & responsibilities as a student

Your role

- You are responsible for finding your internship or Master's project
- Start early and apply to multiple opportunities

Use the EPFL internship portal

- Access the internship portal via IS-Academia
- 7,000+ company contacts worldwide
- 500+ proposals per semester

Find one on your own

- You may secure an internship or Master's project independently
- **Important**: The internship must be pre-validated by the Internship Office before you commit to the company

Tip!

Quality over quantity!

Apply early– competitive process

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How to Apply (via IS-Academia portal)
Your application checklist

1. **Registration in the IS-Academia portal**
2. **Select your project(s)**
3. **Upload your CV and cover letter**
4. **Indicate the project type:** Internship or Master's project
5. **Specify the dates**
6. **Upload additional documents**
   - Your transcripts (not mandatory but recommended)
   - Recommendation letters (if any)

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| 1 Register in IS-A portal | 2 Select your project(s) | 3 Upload your CV & Cover Letter | 4 Indicate project type (Internship / Master's Project) | 5 Specify the dates | 6 Upload additional documents |

How to select your Internship or Master's Project:
Match your skills to the project requirements

Courses: Align core and optional courses you've completed / Relevant theory and methods

Research experience: Highlight previous projects, labs, etc. / Topics and tools you already know

Technical skills: List programming languages and proficiency / Tools, platforms, and methodologies

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How to register
Registration steps for Internships and Master's Projects

NOTE: All forms and instructions: available at ***go.epfl.ch/IC-internships***

Master's Project (Industry or another University)

- **Define the project topic** with the company or host institution
- **Submit the project description** via the **Master's Project Validation Form**
- After section validation, **contact an IC professor** to supervise the project
- **No internship agreement required** for the Master's project
- If hosted at a university, **ensure your internship requirement is already validated**

Master's Project @ EPFL

- **Contact the EPFL laboratory** to discuss project topics
- **Submit the registration form** signed by the host professor
- **Internship requirement must be validated before starting** the Master's project

Standalone Internships (short or long)

- **Submit the EPFL Internship Agreement**

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Special company considerations
Requirements to check in advance

FRENCH COMPANIES

- Often request an internship agreement ("convention de stage") **for a Master's project**

- **Important:** A Master's project is not an internship → EPFL will not sign internship agreements

CERN

- Requires EPFL to sign a Home Institution Declaration (HDI) (includes insurance for occupational accidents)

- EPFL cannot sign the HDI because students do not have do not have a contractual (employee) status with EPFL

👉 Always clarify this with CERN before applying

Administrative Procedures
Plan ahead: permits/authorizations take time

Work Authorization (Switzerland)

- **Student B permit:** only allows you to work max.**15 hours/week** during the semester
- **For full-time internships:**
  - **EU/EFTA:** employer must notify local authorities
  - **Non-EU/EFTA:** employer must obtain **labor-market approval**
    (EPFL provides the required attestation)
- **Changing canton:** keep your **primary address in Vaud** and register a **secondary residence**
- **Details: go.epfl.ch/workauthorizations**

Abroad

- **Check visa requirements early** (processing may take **8+ weeks**)
- **Working for a foreign company while residing in Switzerland is not allowed**
- **100% remote internships or Master's projects are not permitted**

Respect the deadlines
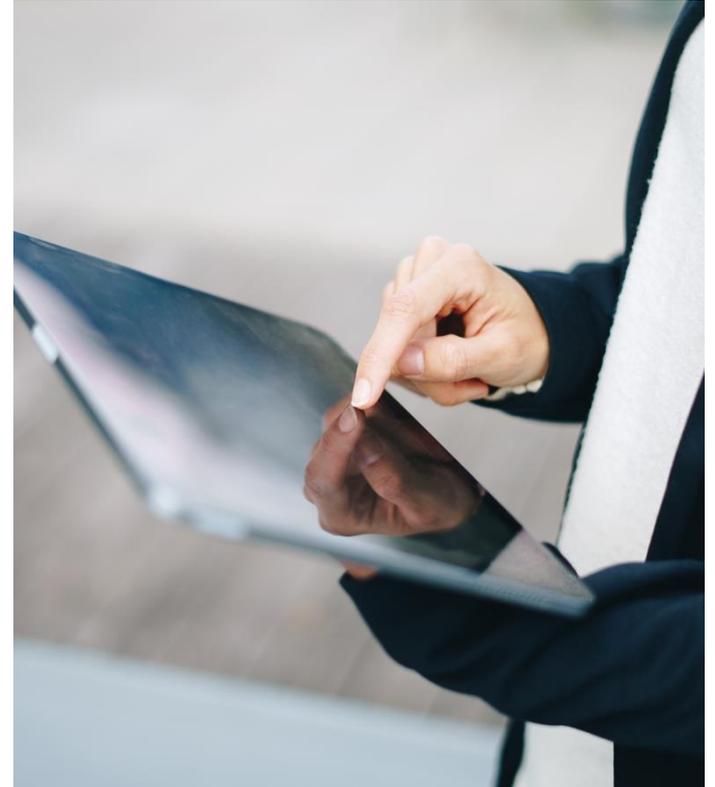## Plan ahead to avoid last-minute issues

Find and confirm an internship or Master's project by **June 30th 2026**.

This ensures enough time for exams, work authorizations, and visas (if required).

Contact **patricia.genet@epfl.ch** for individual guidance, e.g., Discuss options; review CV/cover letter; clarify procedures

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Academic status, fees & leave
During internships and the Master's Project

Activity	Academic Status	Semester Fee
Long Internship	Internship status	CHF 50
Master's Project	Regular student (on campus)	CHF 780 / CHF 2,240 (Fall 25)

Key rules

- The **internship semester** does not count toward the **6-semester Master's limit**

- A **leave of absence (up to 1 semester)** is possible **after completing 90 credits** and **before** starting the Master's project

- **No documents can be signed** while on a leave of absence

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During & after …
your internship or Master's Project

- **Any issue (accident, illness, conflict, etc.)**
  - Contact patricia.genet@epfl.ch immediately

- **Internship**
  - No EPFL report required (company may ask)
  - Evaluation form completed by student + supervisor→ sent 2 weeks before the end of the internship

- **Master's Project**
  - Written report + oral defense
  - Submission details sent ~4 weeks before the deadline

Follow procedures and deadlines to ensure validation

Professional conduct
Your role, your responsibility, shared impact

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You represent EPFL as an ambassador in the industry

Work professionally & respectfully; your reputation strenghtens EPFL's networks & helps future students

It is your responsibility to know and follow all rules and regulations → <u>No exceptions</u>

Your actions shape your opportunities—and EPFL's reputation

EPFL

Master Project in Start-up Project Program

Contact:

Marius CONTI

Program Leader

Requires the validation of the mandatory internship

EPFL

Career Support & Events
Resources to prepare for your career

Career Skills Workshops

Offered by the EPFL Employability & Development Center (EDC)

- CV and cover letter writing
- Networking skills
- Interview preparation
- Making the most of job forums
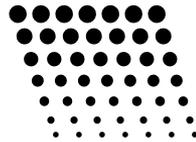 - 👉 Register:

    epflcareer.ch/en/trainings

Key Career Events

ICBD
IC BOOST DAY

March 11 2026
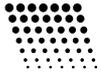
FORUM EPFL

October 2026

Need help?
Get in touch

- **Website**: go.epfl.ch/IC-internships
- **Email**: patricia.genet@epfl.ch
- **Phone**: 021 693 56 41
- **Office**: INN 131
- **Office hours**: Tues & Thur 10:00–12:00 | 14:00–16:00

Patricia Genet

Internships & Master's Projects