Innovate Carolina

Partnership Research & Intelligence Fellows Intern

Job Type: Summer Internship (In-Person Preferred / Remote Eligible)
Location: Junction, 136 E Rosemary St, Suite 100
Employer: UNC Chapel Hill – Office of the Chief Innovation Officer
Job Category: Research / Strategy
Hours: 20–40 hrs/week (Full-Time Preferred)
Rate: Tier 4 $15.00–$18.00/hr

Job Description
The UNC Office of the Chief Innovation Officer is launching a first-of-its-kind university partnership program designed to connect UNC's research enterprise, talent pipeline, and innovation ecosystem with corporate and industry leaders nationwide. This summer cohort will serve as the intelligence engine behind that effort .
As a Partnership Research & Intelligence Intern, you will build the foundational data layer that makes meaningful outreach possible: mapping UNC alumni in executive leadership, identifying companies and sectors aligned with UNC's research strengths, and benchmarking against existing university partnership models. This is rigorous, consequential research work—not busywork—and the output will directly shape how UNC pursues its most strategic external relationships.

Interns will be organized into sub-teams by geography, industry vertical, or organization type (e.g., Fortune 500, PE-backed, public sector, nonprofits). A lead intern will coordinate across sub-teams and serve as the primary point of contact for the supervising team.

AI tools are a core part of how this team works. Interns are expected to use AI actively—for research acceleration, synthesis, drafting, and pattern recognition across large datasets—and to develop judgment about where AI adds leverage and where human verification is non-negotiable.

Responsibilities
- Map UNC alumni holding C-suite, VP, or Board-level positions using LinkedIn, publicly available databases, and UNC alumni records.
- Format and clean data as input to a structured contact database with verified outreach information, organizational context, and relationship-to-UNC notes.
- Research and analyze existing corporate partnership programs at peer institutions to identify best practices, gaps, and differentiation opportunities.
- Segment and prioritize target accounts by geography, industry, org type, and strategic fit with UNC research and talent assets.
- Synthesize findings into briefing documents, ranked target lists, and landscape maps for leadership review.
- Collaborate with database and operations team to ensure research outputs are structured and integration-ready for batch loading.

Job Requirements

- Currently enrolled UNC undergraduate or graduate student in good academic standing.
- Strong research instincts — able to find signal in noisy, incomplete information.
- High proficiency with spreadsheets (Excel), including data organization, quality control, cleaning, and filtering.
- Exceptional attention to detail and commitment to data accuracy.
- Ability to work independently and meet deadlines in a fast-moving, startup-like environment.

Preferred Qualifications

- Background or coursework in business, economics, public policy, information science, or related field.
- Familiarity with LinkedIn Sales Navigator, Nexis Uni, CB Insights, LiveAlumni, PitchBook, or similar research tools.
- Prior experience with market research, competitive intelligence, or data journalism.
- Comfort working with ambiguity and building structure where none exists.
- Experience using AI tools (ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, or similar) for research, synthesis, or writing — and an understanding of their limitations.

Learning Outcomes

Strategic research, stakeholder mapping, competitive intelligence, database management, executive-level communication, applied AI for research and synthesis.

How to Apply

Complete this brief form along with a sample project that demonstrates your abilities.