

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SAWIP APPLICATION FORM 2012

Be sure to read all these instructions before you fill in the online application form.

WHAT DOES SAWIP LOOK FOR IN A CANDIDATE?

This is NOT just another program application that you might have filled out for other international programs. **You are applying to join a team**, a team whose mission will be to lead and to serve the future of South Africa. You are also applying to join a network of young professionals who share a commitment to excellence. Of course, we will select people who can excel in their professional and public/community service internships, but we are looking for more than that. **We are looking for people who will give back, people who want to join together to shape the future**, not just be shaped by it. The question at the core of this application is- How can you make a significant contribution to this team?

What makes a great team? Think of a successful sports team. It is not the individuals alone who win games but the mix that one gets from the range of skills and talents of all the players. Likewise, we are trying to select as diverse a team as possible.

We want to know about anything that makes you unique or different from other applicants because difference for us means enrichment and learning opportunities. **How can anyone make a difference by being the same?** Ideally, our team will include a balance of men and women, introverts and extroverts, town and country, working class and middle class, the much traveled and the less traveled, experienced and inexperienced. We are searching for the stars who show outstanding talent, but we are also looking for people with quieter potential. We are building a star team, rather than a team of stars. Hence, do not think that you are too inexperienced to apply. Some people have mistakenly thought this program was only for final years or only for budding politicians. It is not!

We seek students from as large a diversity as possible, from as many disciplines that we can possibly attract, not just Law or Politics. If you are studying Business, Engineering, Art, Equine Studies, Agriculture, or Medicine, SAWIP wants you too! And if you think you or your family don't have the financial resources to afford it, think again. SAWIP strives to be accessible to everyone, especially those who otherwise would not get this chance of a lifetime. For SAWIP, lack of means does not mean lack of opportunity and therefore the SAWIP experience is fully funded by our generous funders and sponsors.

Lastly, remember our first and perhaps only chance to meet you is reading your application. That means we want you to take time to express yourself in a compelling way. No need to oversell or undersell yourself. Just be honest. What will catch our attention is your own authentic voice, one that tells us the story "unique" to you, and what you are about. We appreciate it when applicants display clear signs of research, present their ideas in an organized and succinct way and display a passionate engagement in their world.

Good luck and thanks for all your time and effort. We wish you all the best with your studies.



APPLICATION FORM – SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

The application form is an online application and you will only have **one attempt to complete it**. The form **cannot** be downloaded or saved. **Please prepare your answers ahead of time based on the questions below; this will help you avoid any problems.** The application may take several hours to complete; hence, doing it at the last minute may prove difficult. If leadership is about preparation, communication and persuasion, then welcome to your first big test.

The application is asking for:

- typical information about you (i.e. your background)
- specific questions that help us understand how you would fit into the program
- questions about your choices for professional exposure and your plan for community service
- personal questions that aim to give us a sense of your individuality and motivation

Note that most questions are required. The system will not allow you to proceed to the next set of questions without answering all of the questions marked with a red asterisk (*). For each question, we give you a maximum word count and an allotted space to fill in. We know many of you have much to say, but we strongly encourage you to be succinct.

SECTION ONE- PERSONAL INFORMATION

This section deals with pertinent personal information.

1.1-1.7 US Immigration is a stickler for having your correct passport number, your full name, identity number and all other details exactly as they are written in your travel document. Failure to write this information properly here could result in visa processing delays.

1.8-1.9) Please provide your current email address and mobile number so we can contact you about interviews. Failure to provide the correct information may result in your loss of program participation.

1.15-1.17) We want to know your nationality, culture and the faith you were brought up in or identify with. Questions such as these are simply ways we can ensure we have as diverse a pool of applicants as possible.

1.20-1.21) Please be sure to make it clear what your course is, what year you are currently in, and how many years you have to complete the course.

1.22) We want to know what subject most inspires you. If you are selected for an interview you will be required to bring a certified copy of your most recent academic transcript. Note, that should you be selected for the program SAWIP will inform your university and department.

SECTION TWO- PROGRAM PREPARATION

2.1. Why are you applying? Why now? What do you hope to gain from SAWIP? (100 words) One of the big issues is readiness. Why is SAWIP right for you just now and what does it offer? Why do you see it fitting your needs and aspirations?

2.2. Please tell us about yourself. Remember, we are looking for a diverse group of young leaders to form the SAWIP team. What particular skills, perspectives and experiences can



you offer that will make your contribution to the 2012 team so vital? (300 words). We want to get to know you as well as possible on the page. How would you describe yourself, your personality, interests, talents, things you like to do and what gets you excited or sets you off?

- 2.3. Please share a little about your family (250 words).** Tell us about Mom and Dad and siblings and what strikes you as significant about your family. This will help us get a better picture of you.
- 2.4. Please share a little about your home community. Write about your South African story and why you represent a young person in this country (250 words).** We are looking for the flavour of your local community; tell us about your South African story, where you fit in and what insights you have as to where you live, whether you are from a big city or a small country town or a rural community. It all gives us a better context of who you are.

Your Values and World View

- 2.5. What has been the most life-shaping influence on who you are and what you believe? (350 words).** Note that we are asking for up to 350 words here, meaning that we are particularly interested in your reflections and the sense you have of your own personal history. How does what you value relate to how you were raised or what you have experienced in your growing up years?
- 2.6. What issues do you care most deeply about and why? Have you ever acted on these issues? In what way? (300 words).** How do you connect your concerns with your actions in the world?
- 2.7. Tell us about your community service involvement to date. SAWIP looks for students with a strong commitment to public service. (300 words).** SAWIP trains its leaders to give something back to their communities. Prior to the US portion, participants must work a minimum of 30 hours on a public service project that will either expose them to grassroots issues of people's lives or stretch their own leadership experience in new ways. Upon their return, they commit to work as a team in a self-designed public service project

SECTION THREE- WASHINGTON D.C

Professional Exposure

- 3.1 Professional work exposure in Washington, DC is just one part of the whole program. Please note your general field of interest so we can have an idea of the type of institution you think you'd like to experience. Remember that this is an opportunity to also try something outside of your comfort zone. We do not guarantee any particular institutional placements. Be creative and BE REALISTIC (100 words).** Since the work exposure can vary from year to year, we ask you here for your general preferences and an open mind. Specific exposure is not guaranteed, and student experiences differ each year, so what you may have heard from alumni may not actually pertain to you. **Please do not list specific institutions/organizations.** If you are selected, SAWIP staff will have a further conversation with you about your possible placement opportunities.
- 3.2 Professional work supervisors like to know in advance what kind of intern we are sending them. They want to know what skills and experiences you have and what you can offer their work environment. Write a short bio that we can use to introduce you to them. Think what is most important to say about yourself in a professional context? (150 words).** This will be shared with your supervisors, in addition to your CV.

Host Families

- 3.3 **Host families are eager to know about the person they are hosting. Write a short letter of personal introduction that we can share with your potential host family. Families have requested that you share information about your family/background and what makes you tick. They're just as excited to get to know you! (300 words).** Forget this is an application form and imagine you were emailing them directly for the first time. *We will share with host families.

SECTION FOUR - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 4.1 **Although the program is fully paid for, SAWIP requires that each student contribute R6000 to the program. This contribution forms part of the Leadership Curriculum. How do you plan to raise this money? Be creative! (300 words) - PLEASE NOTE: YOU ARE NOT TO ASK YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY FOR THE MONEY!**
- 4.2 **Is there anything else you would like to tell us about yourself to strengthen your case for selection? (200 words) – Please DO NOT repeat yourself.** SAWIP is not your typical leadership program. It is for young people who stand out, who have ambitions or intuitions that are unconventional, and who have a unique story to share. We want you to think of how you will bring something different to this team.
- 4.3 **How did you hear about the program?** It is always helpful for us to know how you heard about SAWIP. This informs the SAWIP self-evaluation and marketing.
- 4.4 **What have you heard about the program?** It is always helpful for us to know what you have heard about SAWIP. This informs the SAWIP self-evaluation and marketing.
- 4.5 **Have you ever participated in any other program with similarities to SAWIP?** If you have been to the US before, had other overseas experience, or been on other programs, we would like to know. It helps us assess your readiness for SAWIP. If you have applied before, we particularly want you to make a strong case to advocate why you should be selected this year.
- 4.6 **Have you ever applied to SAWIP before?** If Yes, please describe the trip, your impressions and what you learned from your experience.
- 4.7 **Please supply the name, title, address, telephone numbers and email address of one academic referee and one personal referee. These need to be people whom we can readily contact and who can speak about your personal and academic qualities.** You will be asked to bring a recent letter of reference from these individuals to your interview and these referees will be contacted before final offers of places are made. Make sure your information is correct and you alert your referees that you have nominated them.

SECTION FIVE – MEDICAL INFORMATION

Medical and health costs in the US are extremely expensive; thus every member of the team is covered by a comprehensive health insurance. If you have any pre-existing health issues, it is very important that you tell us here. The health insurance does not cover pre-existing health issues and therefore should you be selected for the team you would need to cover your existing medication. **Health issues will not disqualify you for selection.**

SECTION SIX- PLEDGE OF VERIFICATION



We want you to assure us that all this information is correct and can be corroborated.

Instructions for when you have finished filling in the application

THE APPLICATION PROCESS AS AN EXERCISE IN SELF LEARNING

When you have completed the application, we hope that you have not just completed a task for SAWIP. We hope we have been a positive excuse for you to ask yourself some key questions about your future, about what you believe in, and what contribution you want to make to your world. If young people are to shape the future, we believe that you have to grapple with these questions anyway. As Gandhi urged, "You must be the change you want to see in the world."

IF YOU ARE NOT SELECTED...

In previous years, people who have not received an interview are disappointed. Most of the time it was because they misunderstood what we were asking, or they did not take sufficient time to care about how they sounded on the page. Others failed to convince us that they were ready for the program right now. To be successful, you will need to take particular time and care.

Every year the competition for SAWIP becomes more and more competitive, so to get an interview is a major achievement. We want people to feel a sense of pride to have made it that far. Some candidates have gone on to fulfill public service commitments in other ways. We invite you to contact us after the selection process if you are still interested in finding ways to become involved.

APPLY NEXT YEAR

If you are still a full time student in 2013, all may not be lost. In fact, over the years, candidates who have tried a second time often present a much more compelling case. There is never any guarantee, of course. However, people who miss out one year and take that as the program's challenge to prove their skills and ability next time around are the people we are eager to see again.

All applicants can participate from a distance and log on to SAWIP's web journals and Facebook page to read and comment.

Good luck from the SAWIP Team!

Claire Shoolin, Executive Director
claire@sawip.org

Kim Williams, Program Manager
kim@sawip.org

